Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA)

Integrity Awareness Training

Annual Requirement

Transit Subsidy Program

Last updated 11.17.2020

Topics

Program Overview

- Background
- TRANServe Role
- Employee Role
- Website Answers
- Legal Implications

They are very similar.

- Understanding the Certification Statement
- Knowledge Checks (Questions and Answers)

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Program Overview

Transit Subsidy Program:

- Protects Nation's Infrastructure
- Reduces air pollution & traffic congestion
- Increases use of mass transit

Studies show traffic congestion:

- Wastes 1.9 billion gallons of gas
- Costs over $100 billion in wasted fuel & lost time
- Reduced commutes save individuals $200 monthly

Tax-free subsidy for *actual* costs of mass transit commutes

- Up to the maximum set by the IRS statutory limit

Background

Program History

- 1991 - Federal Transit Administration Program Pilot
- 1993 - Clean Air Act
- 2000 – E.O. 13150 Federal Workforce Transportation
- Fringe Benefit
- 2005 - SAFETEA-LU

Eligibility

- All federal employees working in full or part time paid status
- All federal interns and volunteers working in a non paid status

The Mechanism

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The TRANServe Card provides agency approved federal employees the ability to pay for and receive their transit benefit electronically anywhere Visa credit cards are accepted.

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In the National Capital Region, the WMATA SmarTrip Card also provides agency approved federal employees the ability to pay for and receive their transit benefit electronically with certain public transportation providers.

Mass Transportation

Rail

- Subway
- Commuter
- Light

Bus

- Transit authority
- Commuter

Ferry

- Pedestrian or bicycle

Trolley

Qualified Vanpools

- Commercial or private vehicle with at least six adult passengers, excluding the driver

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- Service Provider to Federal Agencies
- Administers the Transit Subsidy Program
- Distributes the transit subsidy to agency qualified employees
- Establishes best practices
- Provides education, answers and support to Program Offices and participants

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The Federal Government's Largest Transit Benefit Service Provider

RELIABLE • EFFICIENT • CERTIFIED COMPLIANT • SECURE

Capability Statement

Program Overview

The U.S. Department of Transportation has been distributing the transit benefit to federal employees since the early 1990s. TRANServe enables federal agencies to make use of a single established system with effective internal controls over the receipt, maintenance and distribution of the transit benefit to over 200,000 federal employees.

TRANServe is a fee for service program within the Department of Transportation that provides transit benefit program administration and distribution services for federal agencies. We alleviate the administrative burden of running the transit benefit program for our customers by assuming all data entry responsibilities in addition to providing best practices and resource tools. TRANServe has developed a staff with excellent qualifications and expertise on this program.

TRANServe provides unique advantages due to its size and breadth of experience and does this by working together with customers to ensure eligible employees receive their transit benefit and use it appropriately.

Past Performance/Clients Supported

U.S. Department of the Navy	U.S. Department of State	U.S. Deparmtnet of Education
U.S. Department of Justice	Internal Revenue Service	U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Department of the Army	Homeland Security	U.S. Department of Treasury
U.S. Department of Commerce	U.S. Department of Agriculture	U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Key Features

GAO Approved: The U.S. Government Accountability Office determined that TRANServe's Debit Card program was compliant with all Federal standards and our various internal control activities align with GAO's Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government. Validating the on-going work performed by TRANServe to protect against fraud, waste, and abuse.

Program Controls: TRANServe's enterprise risk management approach produces measurable benefits to your agency. Our Internal Controls Officer takes proactive steps to block unauthorized purchases across the nation and reports fraudulent activity to your Program Offices.

Budget Performance: Through cost projections and benefit usage data we provide our customers with in depth analysis of their transit benefit programs to reduce funding requirements.

Information Technology: The electronic application system is customized for each agency and feeds directly into the TRANServe system of record. TRANServe maintain s financial and program records in accordance with the Privacy Act and NARA guidelines and requirements.

For more information on how TRANServe can assist you please contact our
Quality Service & Outreach Office
Email: Cheri.Johnson@dot.gov Tel: 202-366-5700 • Email: James.Perry@dot.gov Tel: 202-366-6760

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Your Roles and Responsibilities

- Understand the Transit Subsidy Program's scope and limitations
- Understand it is a violation of federal law to transfer or sell the transit subsidy or to provide false or fraudulent information in order to obtain the subsidy
- Understand the potential penalties for misuse or false claims

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Your Roles and Responsibilities

- To not be named on a worksite parking permit at any Federal agency, nor participate in a carpool
- To use the transit subsidy for home to work and work to home transportation *only*
- To ensure the amount of transit subsidy received does not exceed actual monthly commuting cost of public transportation
- To recertify your application to update commuting expenses during annual recertification and whenever your commuting method, work schedule or address changes

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Legal Implications

- Employees who misuse the transit subsidy are subject to appropriate administrative action including discipline and/or disqualification from future participation in the Transit Subsidy Program
- Disciplinary penalties can range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal Service, depending on the severity of the abuse

Keep Current:

www.transportation.gov/transerve/

- ✓ Apply
- ✓ Recertify
- ✓ TRANServe card
- ✓ News
- ✓ FAQs
- ✓ Research mass transit commute
- ✓ Subscribe

Knowledge Check: Question #1

The Transit Subsidy Program objective is to:

- ❑ A. Increase compensation of federal employees per month
- ❑ B. Incentivize federal employees to use public transportation to reduce their contributions to traffic congestion and air pollution
- ❑ C. Reward the employees for their hard work

☑ The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #1

The Transit Subsidy Program objective is to:

- ❑ A. Increase compensation of federal employees per month
- ❑ B. Incentivize federal employees to use public transportation to reduce their contributions to traffic congestion and air pollution
- ❑ C. Reward the employees for their hard work

The Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit Program under Executive Order 13150 is designed to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

Knowledge Check: Question # 2

True or False?

If I misuse my transit subsidy by selling it or over estimating my need for the subsidy, I can be removed from federal service

The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #2

True or False?

If I misuse my transit subsidy by selling it or over estimating my need for the subsidy, I can be removed from federal service

The answer is....

TRUE: Disciplinary action can range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal Service, depending on the severity of the abuse.

Knowledge Check: Question #3

TRANServe's Role is:

- ❑ A. To distribute the transit subsidy to federal employees
- ❑ B. To administer the Transit Subsidy Program
- ❑ C. To establish Best Practices
- ❑ D. All of the above

The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #3

TRANServe's Role is:

- ❑ A. To distribute the transit benefit to federal employees
- ❑ B. To administer the Transit Benefit Program
- ❑ C. To establish Best Practices
- ❑ D. All of the above

TRANServe delivers Transit Subsidy Programs and establishes Best Practices.

Knowledge Check: Question #4

Martha plans to start teleworking.

The next step is to:

- ❑ A. Inform her supervisor
- ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit subsidy without change
- ❑ C. Submit an updated application

☑ The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #4

Martha plans to start teleworking.

The next step is to:

- ❑ A. Inform her supervisor
- ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit subsidy without change
- ❑ C. Submit an updated application

You are responsible to update your transit subsidy application and commuting cost worksheet whenever you change your commuting method, work schedule, or address.

The Transit Benefit Certification Statement

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Certification Is Required

Certify:

"To formally and legally attest a specific statement to be true"

Before you can enroll in the Transit Subsidy Program you must first certify that certain conditions are true about you

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Read the Certification Statement Carefully

WARNING !

This certification concerns a matter within the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States. Making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may constitute criminal violations punishable under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001, by imprisonment up to five years and fines up to $10,000 for each offense, and/or agency disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

- I certify that I am employed by the U.S. Federal Government.

- I certify that I am not named on a federally subsidized parking permit at this or any other federal agency.

- I certify that I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work by public transit or vanpool, and will not give, sell, or transfer it to anyone else.

- I certify that in any given month, I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit. If my commuting costs per month on public transit exceed the month statutory limit, then I will supplement those additional costs with my own funds rather than use a Government-provided transit benefit designated for use in a future month.

- I certify that I will not claim the transit benefit in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense. If at anytime during a given month I am out of work due to sickness, vacation or any other reason, on official travel, or use a private vehicle for commuting, I will claim less and adjust the amount of my transit benefit the following month if appropriate.

- I certify that my parking fees are not included in the computation of the daily, weekly or monthly commuting costs for my transit benefit.

I Agree | I Do Not Agree

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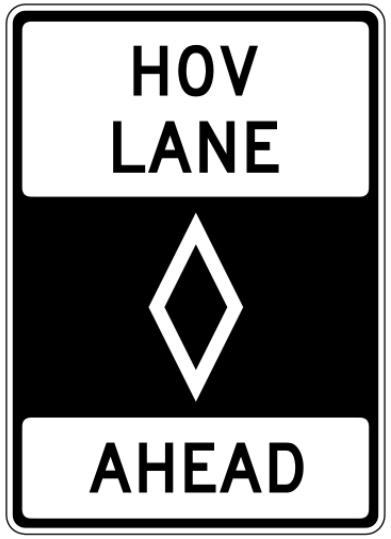
To What Must I Agree?

You Must agree:

- ✓ I am employed by the U.S. Federal Government
- ✓ I am not named on a federally subsidized parking permit, anywhere
- ✓ I am eligible for a public transportation fare subsidy
- ✓ I will use the subsidy for my daily mass transit commute to and from work
- ✓ I will not give, sell or transfer it to anyone else
- ✓ I will not use the Government provided subsidy in excess of the IRS limit
- ✓ I will not claim an amount in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense
- ✓ I will not include parking fees as part of my commuting cost worksheet

I Agree | I Do Not Agree

Knowledge Check: Question #5

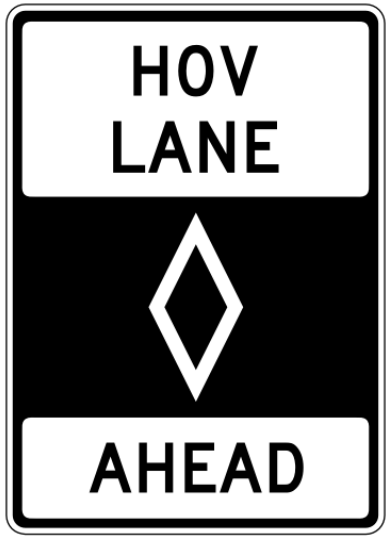


Keeva joined a carpool after commuting on the train for 5 years. She received the maximum subsidy per month for her commute. She sold her subsidy since she believes the subsidy belongs to her. Was this the correct course of action?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #5



Keeva joined a carpool after commuting on the train for 5 years. She received the maximum benefit per month for her commute. She sold her benefit since she believes the benefit belongs to her. Was this the correct course of action?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

It is against the law to give away or sell the Transit Subsidy

Knowledge Check: Question #6

Hayly commutes from Virginia to get to work. Her commuting costs are $284 per month. She is eligible to receive additional transit subsidy since her commute is so costly.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #6

Hayly commutes from Virginia to get to work. Her commuting costs are $284 per month. She is eligible to receive additional transit subsidy since her commute is so costly.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

The federal government may provide up to the IRS maximum for mass transportation commuting costs. Hayley must cover the additional amount, “out of pocket”.

Knowledge Check: Question #7

Becky chooses to ride in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit subsidy.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

☑ The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #7

Becky chooses to ride in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit subsidy.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

False. The Federal Transit Subsidy is for federal employees who choose to commute on mass transit in a commuter highway vehicle. This includes bus, rail, light rail and an authorized vanpools.

Knowledge Check: Question #8

Ivan rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. He includes his parking fees in the computation of his monthly commuting cost. He is right to do this.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

The answer is....

Knowledge Check: Answer #8

Ivan rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. He includes his parking fees in the computation of his monthly commuting cost. He is right to do this.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

FALSE - The Federal Transit Benefit is exclusively for your home-to-work-to-home commute on mass transportation. Any other use is actionable as fraud, waste, or abuse of federal funds

Knowledge Check: Question #9

Ciera and her supervisor agree she may telework two days each week, indefinitely. Her transit subsidy is $25 per week. Now that she does not commute every day, her correct course of action is to:

- ❑ A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding.
- ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit subsidy without change.
- ❑ C. Change her transit subsidy to $15 per week or $60 per month.

☑ The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #9

Ciera and her supervisor agree she may telework two days each week, indefinitely. Her transit subsidy is $25 per week. Now that she does not commute every day, her correct course of action is to:

- ❑ A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding
- ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change
- ❑ C. Change her transit subsidy to $15 per week or $60 per month

You must update your application and change your subsidy amount whenever your commuting expenses change.

Knowledge Check: Question #10

Chris is going to an off-site meeting. He is using mass transportation to travel to and from the meeting. Since he has extra funds on his TRANServe Card he decides to use his transit subsidy. This is the correct course of action.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

☑ The answer is….

Knowledge Check: Answer #10

Chris is going to an off-site meeting. He is using mass transportation to travel to and from the meeting. Since he has extra funds on his TRANServe Card he decides to use his transit benefit. This is the correct course of action.

- ❑ True
- ❑ False

Travel to an off-site meeting or training class is an office expense. The Transit Subsidy is provided solely for your home-to-work-to-home commute via mass transportation. "Extra" funds are swept back to your Agency at the end of the monthly cycle. A permanent change requires that you update your application so you do not tie up much needed funds.

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Thank you for choosing to commute using mass transit.

Additional information is available on our Website:
https://www.transportation.gov/transerve/faq

For Agency specific questions, please contact:

TIGTAOMSPTSP@tigta.treas.gov

CONGRATULATIONS!

(NAME)

has successfully completed the

Transit Subsidy Integrity Awareness Training

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More Helpful Information

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TRANServe Card Funding Cycles

Benefit Month	Benefit Funded	Funds Available
October	September 10th	September 10-October 9
November	October 10th	October 10-November 9
December	November 10th	November 10-December 9
January	December 10th	December 10-January 9
February	January 10th	January 10-February 9
March	February 10th	February 10-March 9
April	March 10th	March 10-April 9
May	April 10th	April 10-May 9
June	May 10th	May 10-June 9
July	June 10th	June 10-July 9
August	July 10th	July 10-August 9
September	August 10th	August 10-September 9

TIP: Purchase by the 4th to Avoid wasting your benefit. This is to allow your vendor enough time to post the charges before the subsidy month resets.

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SmarTrip Card Funding Cycles

Benefit Month	Benefit Funded	Funds Available
October	October	October 1-31
November	November	November 1-30
December	December	December 1-30
January	January	January 1-30
February	February	February 1-28
March	March	March 1-31
April	April	April 1-30
May	May	May 1-30
June	June	June 1-30
July	July	July 1-31
August	August	August 1-31
September	September	September 1-30

TIP: To Avoid wasting your benefit.
Allow your vendor enough time to post
the charges before the subsidy month resets.

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Will You Be Using A TRANServe Card?

Learn More: www.transportation.gov/TRANServe/my-transerve-card
Monitor Your Benefit: https://www.access.usbank.com
Customer Service: 1-800-994-6722
Organization Code: TRANSV

Tip: To allow your Transit Authority enough time to process your payment, please make all purchases by the 4th of each month.

Funds become unavailable on the 9th of each month

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Consult Detailed User Guides:

www.transportation.gov/TRANServe/Participants

Quick Steps to Enrollment:

1. Go to: https://transitapp.ost.dot.gov
2. First Time Users click "Register"
   a. Create a simple profile using your government email address
   b. Get a temporary password from government email
3. Login using your government email address and the temporary password
4. Change from temporary to unique password
5. Click "I Agree" to the Rules of Behavior
6. Click "Transit Benefit Application System"
7. Choose "Certify/Enroll"
8. Read the "Warning" certification statement carefully
9. Click "I Agree" (if you do)
10. Complete Application

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