



**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

# **Transit Benefit Program FAQ's**

[IT-Support-Center@FERC.gov](mailto:IT-Support-Center@FERC.gov) • (202) 502-8163



### **I am new, how much will my commute cost?**

[These transit authority websites](#) will help you accurately estimate the cost of your commute. Calculate your mass transit fare for a round-trip to and from work.

### **My commuting costs have changed, what do I do?**

You must update your Transit Benefit application to document a permanent change to your commuting costs. To make these changes, use the [TRANServe Electronic Transit Benefit System](#) and choose the Certify/Enroll/Change option.

### **Does everyone receive the maximum amount?**

No. The benefit is based on your personal commuting cost and will vary from person to person. You may apply for a Transit Benefit that equals, but never exceeds, the amount you spend when using mass transit for your home-to-work-to-home commute. Receiving a higher benefit than the cost of your commute is illegal.



### **I use my Transit Benefit for my carpool?**

No. A carpool does not meet the definition<sup>1</sup> of mass transportation and its riders are not eligible to receive the Transit Benefit. According to the Department of Transportation, "mass transit" includes bus, rail, or ferry.

### **Is the Transit Benefit taxable?**

No. The Transit Benefit is not taxable and does not have to be reported as income<sup>2</sup>.

### **Is the Transit Benefit Application Worksheet required every month?**

No. The Transit Benefit Application Worksheet, sometimes referred to as the Commuting Cost Worksheet, is only required during the initial application, recertification, and whenever changes are made to your application<sup>3</sup>.

### **How do I Register my SmarTrip Card?**

1. Go to <https://smartrip.wmata.com/Account/Create>.
2. Enter the requested information and click submit.
3. Then log into your [SmarTrip® account](#) and click on "Add SmarTrip® Card"<sup>4</sup>.

### **I live in the Washington DC area, My SmarTrip card stopped working. What should I do?**

Call 1-888-762-7874 to cancel your card and to request a new one. If the problem is in the chip, WMATA will transfer your benefits to a new card and send the card to you. Once you receive your new SmarTrip card, immediately register it at [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com) to protect your funds and complete a Transit Benefit Application Change form so your transit benefit can be re-assigned to the new card<sup>5</sup>.

### **What do I do if I lose my SmarTrip card?**

Call 1-888-762-7874 or email [smartrip@wmata.com](mailto:smartrip@wmata.com) to cancel your card and request a new one. The [Washington Metro Area Transit Authority](#) will transfer your benefits to a new card. Register your new SmarTrip card to protect both your personal funds and your



transit benefits and complete a Transit Benefit Application Change form so that the transit benefits are available on your new card<sup>6</sup>.

**Can I receive my Transit Benefits while on extended leave?**

No. This is a monthly benefit based on the actual cost of your home-to-work-to-home commute. The transit benefit is only available to people commuting using mass transit. You must adjust your benefit to account for the time you are out and return the benefit amount you do not use during the month for which it was intended.

*NOTE: Users of certain electronic fare media, including the TRANServe Card and the WMATA SmarTrip card, are not required to return unused funds. Unused funds are automatically returned at the end of each monthly funding cycle.*

**What should I do when I have some of my Transit Benefit left over?**

If you find you have overestimated your monthly benefit amount, you should go to the [TRANServe Electronic Transit Benefit System](#) and adjust your benefit for the following month using the Certify/Enroll/Change option. When employees enroll in the Transit Benefit Program, they must certify that the benefit amount requested does not exceed their actual monthly commuting costs. To do otherwise constitutes a false statement. The statement on the enrollment form reads, "This certification concerns a matter with the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States. Making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to criminal prosecution under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001, providing for a fine and imprisonment. Agency disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal may also be pursued."

**If I do not use all my benefit, can I give it to my co-worker?**

No. The Transit Benefit is non-transferable. It may not be loaned, given away, or sold.

It is against the law to sell or give your federal Transit Benefit to someone else. The benefit was designed to assist employees with public transportation costs and support initiatives that cut down on air pollution and relieve traffic congestion.

When you retire, leave FERC, or otherwise separate, you must return all unused fare media - even if you are accepting employment with another federal agency. Each federal employer funds their own program. You must withdraw from the FERC Transit Benefits program and apply with the new agency.

**I am leaving FERC and have some transit benefits I have not used, what can I do?**

The SmarTrip and TRANServe Cards will automatically return unused funds to FERC. To return unused paper fare media, please contact [TransitBenefitProgram@ferc.gov](mailto:TransitBenefitProgram@ferc.gov) for specific instructions<sup>7</sup>.

**What should I do if I don't see the answer to my question?**

Please send an email with your question directly to [TransitBenefitProgram@ferc.gov](mailto:TransitBenefitProgram@ferc.gov).



## References

1. [Publication 15-B \(2025\), Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits | Internal Revenue Service](#)
2. [TRANServe Frequently Asked Questions | US Department of Transportation](#)
3. [https://www.transportation.gov/transerve/faq?combine=transit&field\\_faq\\_category\\_target\\_id=29141&page=1#views-bootstrap-faqs-transerve-faq-block-collapse-2](https://www.transportation.gov/transerve/faq?combine=transit&field_faq_category_target_id=29141&page=1#views-bootstrap-faqs-transerve-faq-block-collapse-2)
4. [TRANServe Frequently Asked Questions | US Department of Transportation](#)
5. [TRANServe Frequently Asked Questions | US Department of Transportation](#)
6. [TRANServe Frequently Asked Questions | US Department of Transportation](#)
7. [TRANServe Frequently Asked Questions | US Department of Transportation](#)