Department of Commerce (DOC)

National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Transit Benefit Integrity Awareness Training

updated July 2014

Next

Topics

- **Program Overview**
  - **Background and Objectives**
  - **TRANServe's Role**
  - **Employee's Role**
  - **Website Content**
  - **Legal Implications**
- **Understanding the Certification Statement**
- **Knowledge Checks**

Next

Program Overview

- Transit Benefit Program:
  - Reduce air pollution
  - Reduces traffic congestion
  - Increases use of mass transit
- Studies show that congestion wastes:
  - 3.7 billion hours of travel delays
  - $63 billion per year nationally
  - $850 and $1,600 in lost time and fuel each year per commuter
- Tax-free subsidy for *actual* costs of transportation
  - Up to the maximum statutory limit

Background

- **Program History**
  - **1991 - Federal Transit Administration pilot program**
  - **1993 - Clean Air Initiatives Act**
  - **2000 - Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit**
  - **2005 - SAFETEA-LU**
- **Eligibility**
  - **All DOC NOAA employees working in full or part time paid status**
  - **All DOC NOAA interns and volunteers working in a non paid status**

Next

Mass Public Transportation

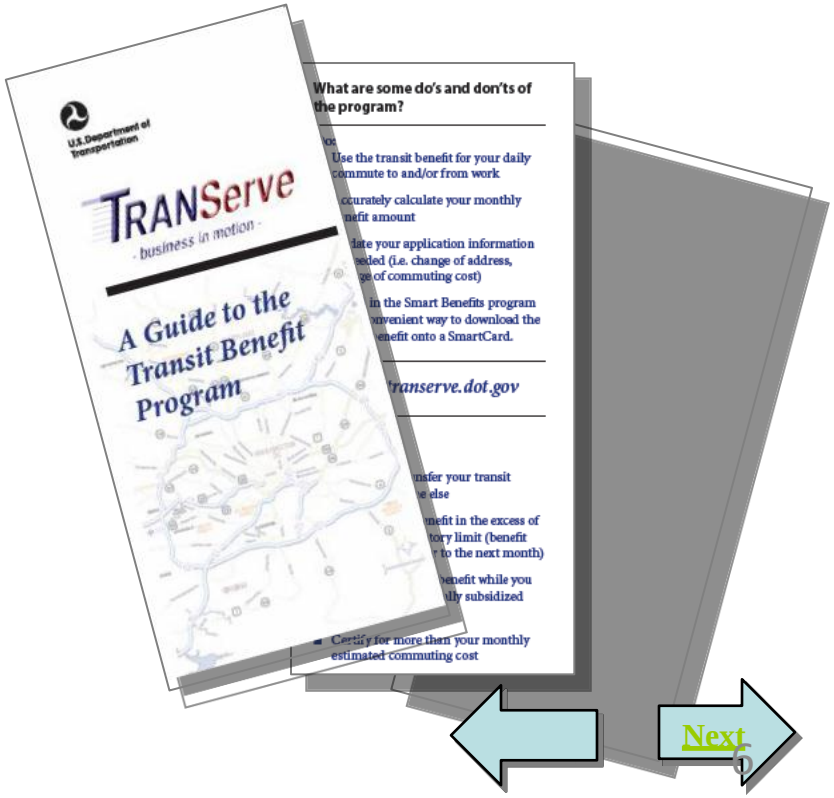
- Rail
  - Subway
  - Commuter
  - Light
- Bus
  - Transit authority
  - Commuter
- Ferries

- Qualified vanpools
  - Commercial/private vehicle
  - At least six adults excluding the driver

Next

TRANServe

- Provides fee for service
- Distributes transit benefit to qualified employees
- Administers the Transit Benefit Program
- Establishes best practices
- Provides answers and support



Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- **Understand the scope and limitations of the Transit Benefit Program**
- **Not to sell or transfer the benefit or make false claims**
- **Understand the penalties involved in misuse or false claims**

It is a violation of law to provide false or fraudulent information to obtain the transit benefit, to transfer, or to sell the transit benefit.

Next

Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- Not to be named on a worksite parking permit at any Federal agency, nor participating in a carpool
- Use transit benefit only for home to work and work to home transportation
- Ensure the amount of transit benefit received does not exceed actual monthly commuting cost of public transportation
- Responsible for updating commuting costs upon changes to commuting method, work schedule, or change of address

Next

Employee Roles and Responsibilities

When paper fare media is distributed, employees are responsible for its safekeeping. Lost, stolen or damaged fare media will not be replaced.

- **In the National Capital Region (NCR), lost, stolen or damaged SmarTrip® cards may be replaced. Contact Metro via a sales office or online at www.wmata.com.**
- **For lost, stolen or damaged TRANServe Cards, contact JP Morgan Chase at UCARD Center (https://ucard.chase.com)**

Next

Legal Implications

Employees who misuse the transit benefit will be subject to appropriate administrative action including discipline and/or disqualification from future DOC NOAA transit benefit program. Disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal service depending on the severity of the abuse.

Next

TRANServe Website

TRANServe.dot.gov

Website Pages:

- Home
- Participants
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- TRANServe Card
- Resources
- Return of Excess
- Contact Us

Next

Enrollment Process

Does not apply to Annual Pass Holders
(Yearly Pass Holders continue to use the NOAA 42-28 and Recertification Forms)

1. **Log into the TRANServe Electronic Transit Benefit Application System (https://transitapp.ost.dot.gov)**
2. **First time enrollments click the "Register" button and create your profile information (temp password comes by email)**
3. **Login using your government email address and password**
4. **Click on "Transit Benefit Application"**
5. **Choose what to do:**
   - **Request information**
   - **Withdraw from the program**
   - **Certify/Enroll**

Next

Knowledge Check 1

The Transit Benefit Program objective is to:

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

Next

Knowledge Check 1 - Answer

The Transit Benefit Program objective is to:

- ☐ A. Increase compensation of federal employees per month.
- ☑ **B. Provide incentive to federal employees to use public transportation to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.**
- ☐ C. Reward the employees for their hard work.

The Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit Program under Executive Order 13150 was put in place to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.

Next

Knowledge Check 2

- **If I misuse my transit benefit, such as selling my benefit or over estimating my need for the benefit, I could be removed from service to the federal government.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Next

Knowledge Check 2 - Answer

- **If I misuse my transit benefit, such as selling my benefit or over estimating my need for the benefit, I could be removed from service to the federal government.**
  - ☑ **True**
  - ☐ **False**

Disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal service depending on the severity of the abuse.

Next

Knowledge Check 3

The role of TRANServe is:

- ❑ **A. Distribute the transit benefit to NOAA employees.**
- ❑ **B. Administer the Transit Benefit Program.**
- ❑ **C. Establish Best Practices.**
- ❑ **D. All of the above.**

Next

Knowledge Check 3 - Answer

The role of TRANServe is:

- ❑ A. Distribute transit benefits to NOAA employees.
- ❑ B. Administer the Transit Benefit Program.
- ❑ C. Establish Best Practices.
- ☑ **D. All of the above.**

TRANServe administers the Transit Benefit and establishes best practices.

Next

Knowledge Check 4

- **Dale plans on teleworking. The correct course of action based on this is:**
  - ❑ **A. Inform her supervisor.**
  - ❑ **B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.**
  - ❑ **C. Submit an updated application.**

Next

Knowledge Check 4 - Answer

Dale plans on teleworking. The correct course of action based on this is:

- ☐ A. Inform her supervisor.
- ☐ B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.
- ☑ **C. Submit an updated application.**

You are responsible to update your application whenever your commuting method, work schedule, address changes.

Next

Transit Benefit Certification

Back

Next

Certification Required

- **Anyone who enrolls for the Transit Benefit Program must certify that certain conditions are true.**

***Certify*:**

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

Next

Certification Statement

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 with 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

Next

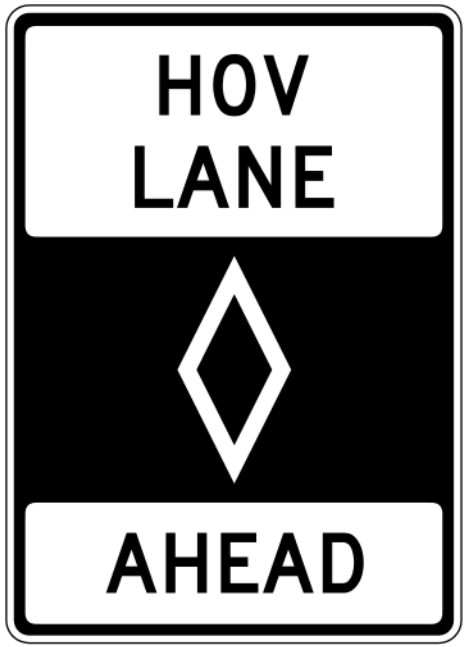
Certification

What did I just agree to?

- I am employed by the DOC NOAA
- I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit
- I will only use the transit benefit for my daily commute to and from work
- I will not give, sell, or transfer my transit benefit to anyone else
- I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit
- I will not claim the transit benefit in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense
- I will not include parking fees in the computation of the daily, weekly, monthly or annual commuting costs.

Next

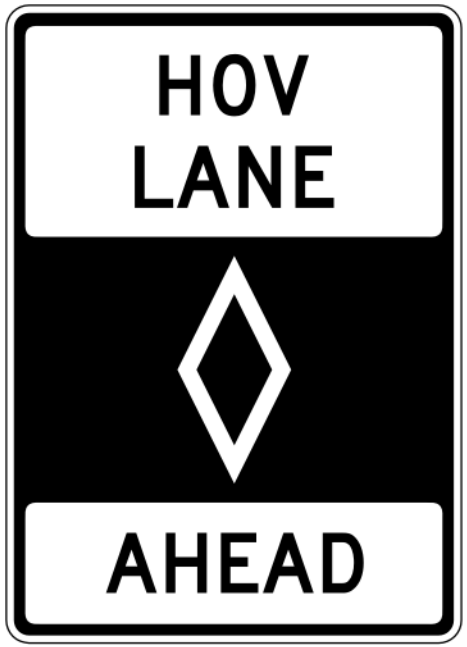
Knowledge Check 5



Rick joined a carpool after commuting by train for 5 years. He received the maximum benefit per month for his commute. He sells his benefit since he believes the benefit belongs to him. Is this the correct course of action?

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No**

Knowledge Check 5 - Answer



- **Rick joined a carpool after commuting by train for 5 years. He received the maximum benefit per month for his commute. He sells his benefit since he believes the benefit belongs to him. Is this the correct course of action?**
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☑ No

It is against the law to sell or give away your transit benefit.

Next

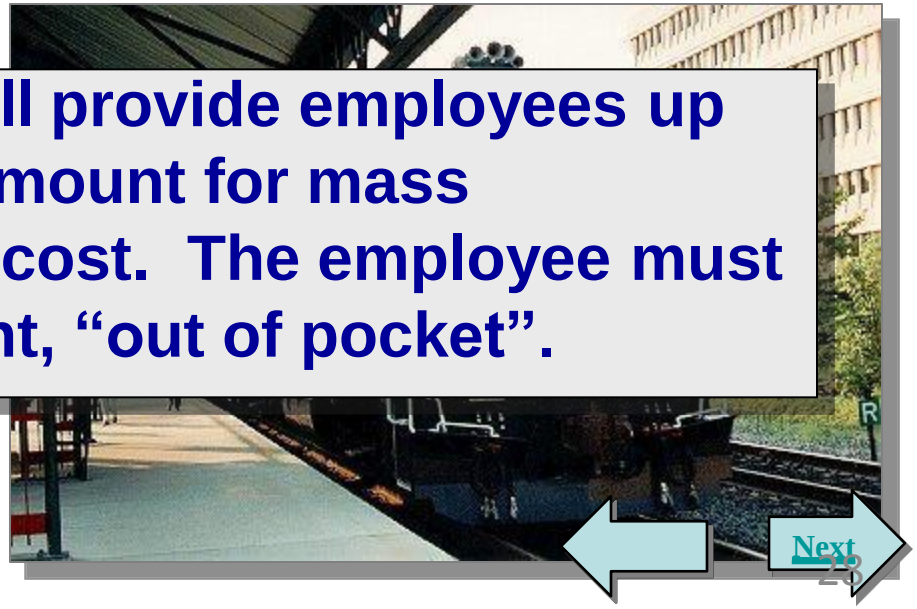
Knowledge Check 6

- **Carrie commutes from Maryland to get to work. Her commuting costs are $284 per month. She is eligible to receive additional transit benefit since her commute is so costly.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Next

Knowledge Check 6 - Answer

- **Carie commutes from Maryland to get to work. Her commuting costs are $284 per month. She is eligible to receive additional transit benefit since her commute is so costly.**
  - ❑ True
  - ☑ **False**



The federal government will provide employees up to the maximum subsidy amount for mass transportation commuting cost. The employee must cover the additional amount, "out of pocket".

Next

Knowledge Check 7

- **Sharon rides in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit benefit.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Next

Knowledge Check 7 - Answer

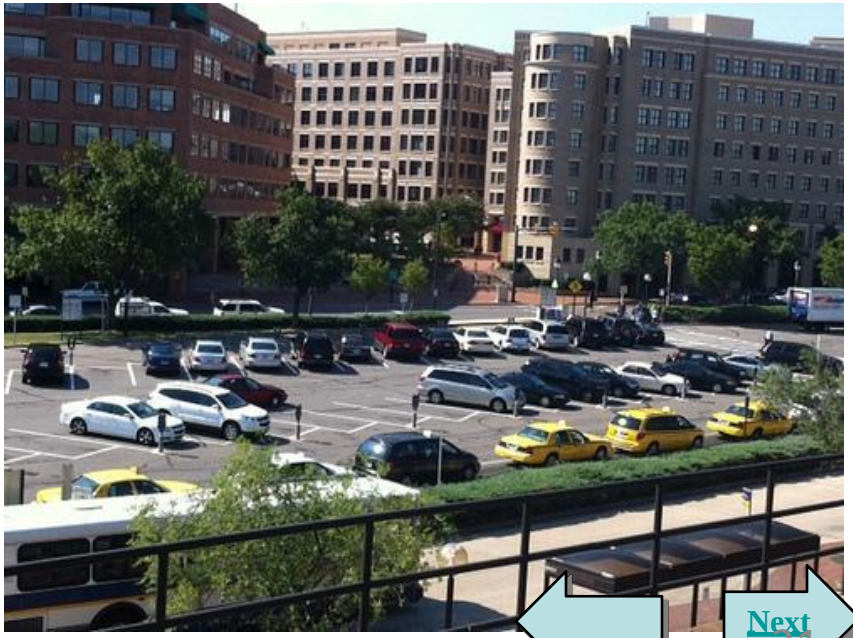
- **Gelitza rides in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit benefit.**
  - ❑ True
  - ☑ **False**

The Federal Transit Benefit is for federal employees who choose to commute using mass transit in a commuter highway vehicle. This includes bus, rail, light rail or an authorized vanpool.

Next

Knowledge Check 8

- **Alicia rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. She includes her parking fees in the computation of her monthly commuting cost. She is right to do this.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**



Next

Knowledge Check 8 - Answer

- **Alicia rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. She includes her parking fees in the computation of her monthly commuting cost. She is right to do this.**

  - ❑ True
  - ☑ **False**

The Federal Transit Benefit is provided solely for your home-to-work-to-home commute while using mass transportation. Any other use of the benefit is actionable as fraud, waste, or abuse of federal funds.

Next

Knowledge Check 9

- **Melinda has come to an agreement with HR and her supervisor to work in the office 3 days and telework 2 days per week indefinitely. She currently receives $25/week in transit benefits. The correct course of action based on this change to her schedule is to:**

  - ❑ **A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding.**
  - ❑ **B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.**
  - ❑ **C. Update her transit benefit application to reflect her new commuting expense.**

Next

Knowledge Check 9 - Answer

- **Melinda has come to an agreement with HR and her supervisor to work in the office 3 days and telework 2 days per week indefinitely. She currently receives $25/week in transit benefits. The correct course of action based on this change is to:**
  - ❑ A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding.
  - ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.
  - ☑ C. Update her transit benefit application to reflect her new commuting expense.

You must change your benefit amount if your commuting expense changes.

Next

Knowledge Check 10

- **Christian is going to an off-site meeting. He is using mass transportation to and from the meeting, and decides to use his transit benefit. This is the correct course of action.**

  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Next

Knowledge Check 10 - Answer

- **Christian is going to an off-site meeting. He is using mass transportation to and from the meeting, and 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 Benefit is provided solely for your home-to-work-to-home commute via mass transportation.

Next

Congratulations!

You have successfully completed

TRANSIT BENEFIT INTEGRITY TRAINING