



Public Transportation Program



OIG will subsidize the public transportation expenses of full- or part-time OIG employees to encourage them to use mass transit when commuting to and from work.

It is important to know that employees may only receive subsidies for approved commuting costs up to the maximum amount allowed by law (currently \$110). Employees may not get and keep more subsidy than required for approved commuting to and from work.

What types of public transportation subsidies will I get?

We will give you the type that your public transportation provider accepts: paper Metro checks or commuter checks or fare system electronic deposits. We do not pay you with cash.

What is the monthly value of the subsidy?

You may accept a subsidy to pay your actual or the monthly maximum permitted by law (currently \$110) commuting expenses, whichever is less. We issue electronic fare monthly and paper checks quarterly. Quarterly recipients need to remember to divide paper checks among the three months.

You may not use any government-provided paper checks or electronic fare to pay for parking.

This is a monthly, not daily, subsidy program. This means that we do not prorate your subsidy evenly by the number of days that you commute (except when a subsidy recipient uses a government vehicle and/or government parking for part of the month). People that commute long distances may use their entire subsidy in a week, while those closer to the office may see the subsidy last a month.

If you get more fare than you need for your monthly commuting, you may not keep it. You may not keep fare for days when you do not commute to work, such as when you are teleworking, on leave, away for travel, driving to work, etc.

Commuters may contribute to shared van-pool transportation or purchase monthly passes as long as the OIG finds it is in the employees' and in the government's best interests. When payments to these services are required in full before or at the beginning of a month, commuters may pay the entire monthly fee (up to the maximum subsidy). Van-pool and monthly pass commuters are expected to refund the government for unused fare if the service offers refunds. We recognize that in many cases these types of monthly programs do not offer refunds. If you allocate your subsidy to a van-pool or monthly pass program that does not offer refunds, and then you get sick or have to go on travel for part of the month, we would not expect you to refund the government for the subsidy.

Note: All personal funds that you add to an electronic fare card are yours and are not impacted by this policy.

Some Examples:

1. John travels by subway using an electronic SmarTrip card. His train fare is \$5.20 per day, roundtrip. When he rides the subway to and from work in a month with 21 work days, he is entitled to \$109.20 in subsidy (assuming he doesn't miss a day of work). However, one month John caught the flu and missed 5 days of work. He reduced his subsidy by the 5 days (\$5.20 per day; \$26 total) and accepted only \$83.50 for that month (for the 16 days he commuted).
2. Mary travels by commuter bus and subway using commuter checks. Her daily combined fare for both modes of transportation is \$11. When she commutes to and from work in a month with 21 work days, she is entitled to \$110 in subsidy. However, one month Mary caught the flu and missed 5 days of work. She did not need to reduce her subsidy by the 5 days (\$11 per day; \$55 total) and instead accepted the entire \$110 because she still traveled 16 days at \$11 per day for \$176 total. \$66 came out of her pocket for her commuting costs that month.

3. Mike travels by van pool and bus to which he gives his entire \$110 monthly subsidy on the first day of each month. The government approves of this monthly purchase because it reduces Mike's travel costs and it does not increase the government'-provided subsidy. One month Mike purchased his pass on the first of the month, but on the second of that month he caught the flu and was out of the office for the remainder of the month. Since the payments he made to the van pool and the bus pass service are non-refundable, he was not required to return any of the government-provided subsidy to the government.
4. Sally travels by subway using an electronic SmarTrip card. Her train fare is \$10 per day, roundtrip. When she rides the subway to and from work in a month with 20 work days, she is entitled to \$110 in subsidy (assuming he doesn't miss a day of work). However, one month Sally drove a government vehicle to work for 10 days. She reduced her subsidy by the 10 days she drove (\$110 prorated at \$5.50 per day for 10 days; \$55 total) and accepted only \$55 for that month (for the 10 days he commuted by public transportation).

What do I do if I accepted more fare than I needed for the month?

Washington fare card recipients need to return unused paper cards/checks to the Office of Management within 5 work days from the beginning of the next month.

Electronic fare recipients need to reduce the fare by the unused amount in the previous month that you accept in your next monthly download.

Boston recipients receive commuter checks and need to consult with the Boston coordinator about how to return the unused fare on a case-by-case basis.

How do you apply for or cancel this subsidy?

To apply in Washington, submit to the Office of Management; and to apply in Boston, submit to the Boston coordinator: the 2-page application form at the end of this policy and a print-out that shows your schedule/calculations for the requested amount from:

- For commuting in the Washington, D.C., area: www.wmata.com
- For the Boston area: www.mbta.com/rider_tools/trip_planner

If your commuting expenses or address change, you need to submit a new application and printout. If you want to withdraw from the public transportation program and stop getting a subsidy, send an email to Brad Gordon and Deb McGruder (and additionally for Boston, your local coordinator).

How often will you receive your subsidy?

In Washington and Boston, the Office of Management distributes paper Metro checks and commuter checks to recipients quarterly on or about October 1, January 1, April 1, and July 1.

Employees who receive subsidies on the SmarTrip card get it themselves by touching their SmarTrip card to Metro fare machines each month.

How does the SmarTrip card work?

If you travel on a mode of transportation that accepts the SmarTrip card, you need to purchase a SmarTrip Card on your own. (Visit www.wmata.com for a listing of sales offices.) We require you to register your SmarTrip Card online at www.wmata.com or by filling out the form you receive with your SmarTrip card within 30 days of your first using it.

Employees who ride D.C. Metro trains/busses add value to their SmarTrip card each month at a fare card machine at Metro stations. (Those that commute on modes of transportation that do not accept the SmarTrip Card will continue to receive paper fare checks.)

What should I do if I lose my SmarTrip card?

Contact WMATA immediately at 1-888-762-7874 and for a \$5.00 fee they will send you a new card with the remaining value of the lost card. To ensure your benefits are not interrupted be sure to register your new number with the Office of Management before the 15th of the month.

How do commuter checks work?

Commuter checks are issued in Boston. Fare media used depends on the transportation system. The subway/streetcar transportation system uses Charlie tickets, Charlie cards, and monthly passes. The commuter rail uses 12-ride tickets and monthly passes. Bus companies use daily, weekly, or other time period tickets. Recipients must work with the Boston coordinator to determine which check denominations work best for them. Recipients do not receive change back when they purchase fare media using commuter checks, so to receive full value from their commuter checks they must use exact denominations or combinations of checks that fall below the actual cost of the tickets.

What is your responsibility as a PTP recipient?

Certify your agreement with and follow all of the terms on the application form.

If you receive a subsidy, can you also get other transportation subsidies offered by the Federal Government (e.g., carpool parking)?

No. If you decide to join a carpool (with the OIG or any other government organization), you need to turn in any unused fare media, inform your local coordinator, and forego your subsidy.

There is one exception: Employees may use OIG vehicles and parking and receive a subsidy, provided they prorate and reduce their subsidy for all days when they use the OIG vehicles/parking.

Will you incur a tax liability for your subsidy?

No. There is no tax liability for the subsidy.

What internal controls prevent subsidy abuse?

1. We require applicants to provide specific, supervisor-verified information on their application form; and a third-party, proof of calculation for the requested amount, when available.
2. Applicants must certify they will comply with the program rules listed on the application form.
3. Separating employees have their subsidies canceled during exit procedures.
4. Monthly reviews ensure subsidy recipients are not issued government paid POV parking passes.
5. We educate employees by:
 - a. Informing them of the rules of the program on the application form.
 - b. Maintaining Policy Directive 560-04 to clarify program requirements and internal controls.
 - c. Sending monthly email notices on program requirements.
6. Monthly, we compare a random sample of participants' actual hours worked; subsidy distributions; fare calculations; addresses; leave requests; and travel authorizations/vouchers, to ensure recipients are receiving appropriate subsidies.

If you have a question about this policy, whom can you contact?

Headquarters employees: Please contact the Office of Management at (202) 927-5200 or email at OIG-OM@oig.treas.gov. Boston employees: Please contact your local coordinator.

OIG APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SUBSIDY

New Application I already get a subsidy, but my address, commute or expenses have changed

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (M.I.)

Home Address: _____
(Number/Street/Apt. No.) (City) (State) (Zip)

Work Address: _____
(Number/Street/Apt. No.) (City) (State) (Zip)

I hereby certify (initial each line and sign and date below):

_____ I work for the Office of Inspector General and am eligible to participate in this program.

_____ I am not listed as a member of a government-funded commuter vanpool or carpool and am not receiving transportation benefits from another Federal organization.

_____ I am not the holder of a workplace privately-owned-vehicle parking permit dedicated for my use only.

_____ If assigned a government vehicle and/or parking, I will prorate and reduce my subsidy for each day of government vehicle and/or parking use.

_____ I will use the subsidy for my specific work-related commuting between my home and office and will not use any portion of the subsidy to pay for parking.

_____ I will not sell or transfer the subsidy to anyone else.

_____ The monthly subsidy I get may not exceed what I pay for public transportation. I usually spend \$ _____ per month on public transportation to and from work, as calculated on the next page.

_____ I have attached a schedule/costs calculation from www.wmata.com or www.mbta.com/rider_tools/trip_planner.

_____ If I get cards/checks, it is my responsibility to return unused ones to the OIG each month.

_____ If I get electronic fare, it is my responsibility to reduce the fare I take by the unused amount in the previous month.

_____ I will submit a new application and schedule/costs calculation if my address/commuting expenses change.

_____ My subsidy will be canceled when I leave the OIG and I will not accept a subsidy after I depart.

_____ I have read Policy Directive 560-04 and understand the Public Transportation subsidy requirements.

_____ I understand that the OIG will review a random sample of participants' actual hours worked; subsidy distributions; fare calculations; addresses; leave requests; and travel authorizations/vouchers, to ensure recipients are receiving appropriate subsidies.

_____ This certification concerns a matter with the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and making false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to criminal prosecution, fine (up to \$10,000 per violation), imprisonment and disciplinary action up to and including removal from Federal service.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

My employee above has initialed all of the blocks on this page; I have reviewed his/her mass transit expense worksheet on the next page and attached schedule/costs calculation; and I concur that the requested subsidy is appropriate.

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: This information is solicited under authority of 5 U.S. C. Sections 301 and 7905. Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in disapproval of your request for a public transit fare benefit. The purpose of this information is to facilitate timely processing of your request, to ensure your eligibility, and to prevent misuse of the funds involved. This information may be matched with lists at other Federal agencies to ensure that you are not listed as a carpool or vanpool participant or a holder of any other form of vehicle work site parking permit with any Federal agency.

MASS TRANSIT EXPENSE WORK SHEET

NOTE: Application for Public Transit Fare Benefit, requires OIG participants to calculate their usual monthly mass transit commuting cost to the nearest dollar for their daily commute to work. This work sheet must be completed to receive subsidy benefits and will assist employees in computing their usual monthly mass transit commuting cost.

INSTRUCTIONS: Calculate your *Total Monthly Mass Transit Expenses* by the way you pay for commute. List your mode of mass transportation, and how much it cost you: *daily*, or if paid *weekly*; or if purchased in *monthly* passes. Then using the work sheet below, convert all costs to a total monthly amount. It is possible that an employee may have a combination of daily, weekly or monthly expenses in computing their total monthly mass transportation expenses.

REMEMBER: Parking fees are not allowed and cannot be included when computing monthly transit costs. If you are a person with a disability or senior citizen receiving reduced fare rates, you must calculate the reduced rates you pay.

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION			DAILY EXPENSE	WEEKLY PASS EXPENSE	MONTHLY PASS EXPENSE
BUS TO WORK <i>(Local)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$		
BUS FROM WORK <i>(Local)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$	\$	\$
OTHER BUS MODE TO WORK <i>(Commuter or County)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$		
OTHER BUS MODE FROM WORK <i>(Commuter or County)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$	\$	\$
RAIL TO WORK <i>(Light Rail or Subway)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FROM WHAT STATION	\$		
RAIL FROM WORK <i>(Light Rail or Subway)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FROM WHAT STATION	\$	\$	\$
COMMUTER RAIL TO WORK <i>(Train)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$		
COMMUTER RAIL FROM WORK <i>(Train)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NAME OF COMPANY	\$	\$	\$
OTHER <i>(Specify)</i>	LIST MODE TO WORK	NAME OF COMPANY	\$		
	LIST MODE FROM WORK	NAME OF COMPANY	\$	\$	\$
VAN POOL COST PER MONTH		NAME OF COMPANY			
TOTAL ••					

CONVERTING DAILY AND WEEKLY COST TO MONTHLY COST

40-HOUR WORKWEEK SCHEDULE CONVERSION

EIGHT HOUR WORK DAY CONVERSION			NINE HOUR WORK DAY CONVERSION			TEN HOUR WORKDAY CONVERSION		
DAILY COST	NO. DAYS WORKED	TOTAL DAILY COST PER MONTH	DAILY COST	NO. DAYS WORKED	TOTAL DAILY COST PER MONTH	DAILY COST	NO. DAYS WORKED	TOTAL DAILY COST PER MONTH
\$	X	\$	\$	X	\$	\$	X	\$
LESS THAN 40-HOUR WORKWEEK SCHEDULE CONVERSION					WEEKLY PASS CONVERSION			
<i>Complete if you work less than 40-hours per week (Telecommuter, part-time, etc.)</i>					WEEKLY PASS COSTS	NUMBER OF WEEKS PER MONTH	TOTAL WEEKLY COST PER MONTH	
DAILY MASS TRANSIT COST	NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED PER MONTH	TOTAL DAILY COST PER MONTH			\$	X 4		
\$	X	\$						

NAME OF EMPLOYEE <i>(Please print your name clearly)</i>		
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE		
	GRAND TOTAL COST PER MONTH (if any) ••	
MY GRAND TOTAL MONTHLY MASS TRANSIT COMMUTING COSTS ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR <i>(Round either up or down to nearest dollar)</i>		•• \$