



POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement 5200

Policy Area: Employee Transit Subsidy

Effective Date: **MAY 10 2005**

Approved: *Paul A. Quander, Jr.*
Paul A. Quander, Jr., Director

EMPLOYEE TRANSIT SUBSIDY POLICY

I. COVERAGE

This Policy Statement applies to all Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) employees. CSOSA employees include full-time, part-time, temporary employees, and interns paid directly from CSOSA funds. This Policy does not apply to contractors, volunteers, and individuals whose salaries are not paid by CSOSA, or to the Pretrial Services Agency. This Policy does not apply to the use of transit fare for local travel to conduct Agency business. See Operational Instruction MA-2005-51-1 for implementation guidelines on this Policy.

II. BACKGROUND

Executive Order 13150, Federal Workforce Transportation, dated April 21, 2000, requires Federal Agencies to offer qualified Federal employees a non-taxable transit subsidy in amounts approximately equal to the employee's commuting costs, not to exceed the maximum allowable by law.

III. POLICY

CSOSA employees who meet eligibility requirements may participate in the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) transit subsidy program to recover the approximate cost of commuting to and from work up to prescribed limits when using certain area bus, rail and vanpool commuter services such as MARC, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), Metrorail and Metrobus. Each CSOSA employee that participates in an eligible transit subsidy program must certify quarterly that he or she will personally use the benefit to subsidize his or her commute to and from work, and that his or her regular commuting mode and route is as specified on the certification form. The transit benefit will be offered in the form of Metrochek vouchers and distributed as paper fare or electronically transferred to a SmarTrip card for up to the amount allowable by law. The maximum amount is specified in the Operational Instruction which implements this policy. Participating CSOSA staff who abuse the privilege of participation in the transit subsidy program will be subject to disciplinary action.

IV. AUTHORITIES, SUPERSEDURES, REFERENCES, AND ATTACHMENTS

A. Authorities.

Executive Order 13150 – Federal Workforce Transportation

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century; P.L. 105-178; Title IX; Section 9010 (as amended)

26 U.S.C § 132 (f); Paragraph 2A

B. Supersedures.

Memorandum from Jim Williams, Associate Director, Management & Administration, dated October 1, 2000, subject Employee Transit Subsidy

C. Procedural References.

Operational Instruction OD-2004-xx, Employee Transit Subsidy.

D. Attachments.

Appendix A. Responsibilities

Appendix B. General Procedures

APPENDIX A
RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Director of the Agency is responsible for setting general policies governing the employee transit subsidy benefit program and for allocating adequate funding for the subsidy within projected budget restrictions.
- B. The Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM), is responsible for overall implementation of the employee transit subsidy program, to include developing and maintaining operational instructions for the administration and audit of the employee transit subsidy program.
- C. The Director of OFM is the financial operating plan manager for the Agency-wide employee transit subsidy benefit program budget.
- D. The Associate Director of Management & Administration is responsible for general oversight of the employee transit subsidy program, including responsibility for ensuring adherence to all policies governing the audit review process.
- E. Supervisors of eligible transit subsidy employees are responsible for verification of the CSOSA Transit Subsidy Request form. Supervisors certify an employee's actual work schedule, transportation mode, and commute amount to be correct to the best of the supervisor's knowledge.

APPENDIX B GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. Employee Eligibility and Benefits

In addition to the eligibility criteria defined entitled III. Policy in the Employee Transit Subsidy Policy, the following criteria also applies.

1. Employees with assigned CSOSA parking spaces are not allowed to retain the space and participate in the transit subsidy program. Only one option is allowed. If an employee is granted a temporary parking space, (for example, a one day assignment for a specified purpose), the employee must reduce their transit subsidy request in the following month by the amount of the unused benefit, if the change reduces the allowable subsidy below the maximum monthly subsidy amount. This is done by the employee re-submitting a revised certification form for the month following the change
2. Commuter parking and non-WMATA transit costs are not included in determining an employee's allowable commuting costs, except when using MARC, VRE, and any WMATA participating vanpool.
3. Employees must make every effort to use discounts provided by transit providers, including reduced-fare bus passes, when calculating transit costs.
4. Employees will receive the transit benefit as calculated one of two ways. It is calculated either based on the employee's daily commute rate multiplied by the monthly commuting days or based on a fixed weekly/monthly commuting fee.
5. Employees participating in Alternate Work Schedule (AWS) will not receive the transit subsidy for days scheduled to be on AWS. Employees who switch to AWS from a regular schedule must submit a revised certification form to the CSOSA Transit Subsidy Coordinator as soon as possible.
6. Employees with planned telecommuting workdays will not receive the transit subsidy for the days working from home.
7. Employees will not receive the transit subsidy for days in training and other events unless WMATA transportation was used for those days.
8. Employees who report for testing under the agency's Drug Free Workplace Program (DFWP) during the previous quarter, may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred commuting by public transportation to/from testing by providing cost information on the current quarterly certification form.

9. CSOSA fulltime, part-time and temporary employees are eligible for the transit subsidy for those days actually worked, upon verification of their work schedules by their supervisor.
10. Contractors, volunteers, or other individuals whose salaries are not paid by CSOSA are not eligible for the transit subsidy.
11. Employees whose actual commuting costs are less than the monthly benefit amount provided, must reduce their benefit request in the following month by the surplus amount. It is the responsibility of the employee to make the reduction by submitting an updated certification form.

B. Transit Benefit

1. Transit Subsidy Benefit Amount

The method for determining the effective monthly distribution amount is calculated one of two ways. It is calculated either based on the employee's daily commute rate multiplied by the monthly commuting days or based on a fixed weekly/monthly commuting rate. Days for AWS and telecommuting days are not reimbursed. Days in training or conferences for which employees do not commute by an authorized transit provider are also not reimbursable. Employees with special circumstances (for example, the employee commutes several days by bicycle or the employee is a "stay-in-schooler" who only commutes three (3) days per week) must provide this information to the distribution office on their quarterly certification form. Reduction of the monthly distribution amount for AWS, telecommuting, training, conferences or other special circumstances is only applicable when these events cause commuting costs to drop below the agency maximum subsidy amount.

2. SmarTrip Card

Employees who commute to work on WMATA-specified forms of transportation have the option of receiving their approved monthly transit benefit by an electronic transfer to an individual SmarTrip card. The WMATA SmarTrip program allows the cardholder to receive his/her certified monthly transportation benefit by electronic transmission to the employee's SmarTrip card on or after the 1st day of each benefit month. Employees may receive authorized transit benefit amounts through their SmarTrip card or Metrochek vouchers, not both. SmarTrip program participation, including card purchase and replacement, is the choice and sole responsibility of the employee.

CSOSA distribution office certifying officers provide WMATA with certified benefit amounts for participating employees each month. The employee retrieves funds by inserting his/her SmarTrip card in specified kiosks located throughout the WMATA system. Use of the SmarTrip card benefits the employee by saving time spent visiting the distribution office to receive the benefit; provides the employee a way to recoup losses if the card is lost or

stolen; and gives the employee the ability to consolidate all transit benefit funding in one place, including adding money of their own, up to the card's maximum funds capacity.

Employees who do not download the monthly benefit to their SmartTrip card by the last day of the benefit month lose that month's funding, which will automatically revert back to the agency. If a qualified employee does not obtain their SmartTrip benefit for a qualified benefit month, both the employee and their Supervisor will be notified. The employee will be asked to re-certify and to provide an explanation, through the Branch Chief or Associate Director level, as to why the benefit was not acquired the previous month. Employees must provide this information to the distribution office prior to receipt of the next month's transit benefit.

3. Metrochek Paper Fare

Employees who choose not to use SmartTrip or who commute to work on any form of transportation that does not accept SmartTrip, have the option of receiving their approved monthly transit benefit by Metrochek paper fare. The distribution office will distribute Metrochek paper fare to employees the last three (3) workdays of the prior month and the first 10 workdays of each qualified benefit month. Employees who do not obtain their Metrochek paper fare benefit within the allotted distribution period, forfeit their benefit for that particular month. If a qualified employee does not obtain their Metrochek paper fare for a qualified benefit month, both the employee and their Supervisor will be notified. The employee will be asked to re-certify and to provide an explanation, through the Branch Chief or Associate Director level, as to why the benefit was not acquired the previous month. Employees must provide this information to the distribution office prior to receipt of the next month's transit benefit.