

# Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Transit and Smart Benefits Program

## **Q1: What are the requirements to be a participant?**

**A1:** To participate in the Transportation Subsidy Program whether it is transit for Commuter Train/Bus or the Smart Benefits Program you must first complete a NOAA 42-28 application.

**A1a:** Once employee has completed NOAA 42-28 and would like to be a part of the Smart Benefits program they should presently own or purchase a SmarTrip Card. They should then register card with WMATA. Employee should complete the Smart Benefits application (application can be found with your Transit Coordinator or your agency website)

Employees should be Federal employees enrolled in the USDA Commuter Transit Subsidy Benefits Program and use METRO rail, METRO bus, and/or a METRO-registered or authorized vanpool in order to participate. For a listing of METRO-registered vanpools, please visit:

<http://www.wmata.com/regional/vanpools.cfm>

## **Q2: When are Smart Benefits effective?**

**A2:** If the application is received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, Smart Benefits start at the beginning of the following month. Applications received after the 10<sup>th</sup> will be effective the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month after receipt. Metrocheks may be authorized for the months before Smart Benefits becomes activated.

## **Q3: How do I register my Smartrip Card?**

**A3:** Employees must visit METRO's web site at [www.wmata.com/riding/smartrip.cfm](http://www.wmata.com/riding/smartrip.cfm) to register their card. Registration takes effect within 48 hours.

## **Q4: Why must the SmarTrip Card be registered?**

**A4:** Without a registered SmarTrip Card, the DOT cannot apply transit benefits to the card. Furthermore, registration protects and reinstates the value on the card if lost or stolen.

## **Q5: How can I obtain Smart Benefits?**

**A5:** Once the application is processed, Smart Benefits participants can download their benefits on a monthly basis any time during a given month at METRO farecard machines. Existing balances remain on the card. Unclaimed benefits do not carry over. Employees may not claim retroactive benefits or future benefits.

Downloading instructions may be obtained from your Commuter Transit Benefits Program Coordinator or by visiting METRO's web site at:

[www.wmata.com/bus2bus/Smart Benefits/pages/sbclaimbenefits.html](http://www.wmata.com/bus2bus/Smart%20Benefits/pages/sbclaimbenefits.html) 2

**A5a:** For Commuter Train riders with Smart Benefit card you must go on line to Commuter Direct by the 15<sup>th</sup> of a month in order for them to receive funds for the following month to pay for passes. This only needs to be done once unless funds change than you would go back into Commuter Direct to reallocate funds. If you use Commuter Train and a form of Metro

you allocate to Commuter Direct how much for Commuter Train and the rest of your funds should be downloaded for Metro.

**Q6: What happens if my card is lost or stolen?**

**A6:** SmarTrip cards can be replaced by contacting the SmarTrip Hotline on 1 (888) 762-7874. METRO will transfer your balance minus the \$5 replacement fee to a new SmartTrip card and mail it to you. You may also go directly to METRO Center, other Metro sales offices and Commuter Stores (<http://www.wmata.com/riding/faresales.cfm#salesoffices>) and purchase a new card. In this case, you will need to contact the SmarTrip Hotline to ensure the monies are transferred from the old card.

For Smart Benefits to be downloaded onto the “replacement” card, employees must complete a new SmarTrip application electing “change” and mail it to their designated Commuter Transit Benefit Coordinator for processing.

**Q7: Can my Smart Benefits be used for parking?**

**A7:** No. Employees must add their own money to their SmarTrip Card to cover parking costs. Agency funds must only be used for commuting.

**Q8: Can you use Metrochek/Smart Benefits Vouchers to purchase a SmarTrip Card?**

**A8:** No, however you may add both used and unused Metrocheks to a SmarTrip Card to increase the existing value of the card.

**Q9: If I am a Senior Citizen or disabled METRO rider, what should I do to join Smart Benefits?**

**A9:** You must first purchase a senior citizen or disabled SmarTrip Card with a valid METRO ID before enrolling into the Smart Benefits Program.

**Q10: Will I receive the discounted fare onto my Senior Citizen or disabled SmarTrip Card for Smart Benefits?**

**A10:** Yes. The SmarTrip card will be coded to automatically charge the discounted fare when used.

**Q11: What if I leave the agency and I've already downloaded benefits for that month?**

**A11:** You may continue to use the benefits currently on the card; however, you must complete another Smart Benefits Application electing “Withdrawal”, AND page 1 of the AD-1147, Public Transportation Benefit Program Application to cancel from the program. If applicable, employees will be billed for any overpayment of Smart Benefits for the month(s) AFTER the separation effective date.

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**Q12: I use Commuter Bus and Metro Rail/Bus what do I do?**

**A12:** You will need a Smart Benefits Card and register with WMATA, complete the Smart Benefits application and check the box SPLIT. For the amount you would indicate how much you need for the Smart Benefits card and the difference would be picked up in Smart Benefits Vouchers at scheduled distribution or you can go to DOT. The Smart Benefits Vouchers would be disbursed quarterly and your SmarTrip card funds are available once a month.