



REVISION: This revised directive supersedes TSA MD 200.11, *Public Transportation Benefit Program* dated October 23, 2003.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES: Office of Property Management replaces the Office of Real Estate throughout this directive; Section 3, Authorities, adds two (2) authorities: Parts C and G; Section 5, Responsibilities, adds a new responsibility: Part C(7); Section 6, Policy, Part B has been revised; and Section 7, Procedures, Parts F and H(7) have been revised.

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive establishes guidelines and policies for the administration and management of TSA's Public Transportation Benefit Program.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all TSA employees.
3. **AUTHORITIES:**
 - A. PL 107-71, Aviation and Transportation Security Act
 - B. PL 102-486, Section 1911, Treatment of Employer Provided Transportation Benefits, effective December 31, 1992
 - C. PL 103-172, Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act, effective January 1, 1994
 - D. PL 105-78, Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century dated June 9, 1998
 - E. 26 CFR, Part 1, Section 1.132-9, Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits
 - F. EO 13150, dated April 21, 2000
 - G. IRS Notice 94-3 dated January 14, 1994; Qualified Transportation Fringes Under Section 132(f)
 - H. [DHS MD 1540.1, Commuter Transit Subsidy Benefit Program](#)
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. Fare Media: Ticket, pass, token, fare card, voucher, or similar items entitling a person to transportation.
 - B. MetroChek: MetroChek is a Washington, D.C.-based fare card voucher that employers can provide to employees as a public transportation benefit.
 - C. Service Agreement: An agreement with an external source (either the Department of Transportation or a local transit authority) to administer transit benefits to eligible employees in the TSA workforce.

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- D. SmartBenefits Program: SmartBenefits is a Washington, D.C. web-based program that lets an employer digitally load the dollar value of an employee's MetroChek benefit directly into the employee's SmarTrip card account, instead of distributing paper vouchers. Washington, D.C. area employees are encouraged to use this program to reduce administrative costs, eliminate paper vouchers, and protect the employee's transit balance.
- E. SmarTrip Card: SmarTrip is a permanent, rechargeable, fare card used in association with the Washington, D.C. SmartBenefits Program. It is plastic and is embedded with a special computer chip that keeps track of the value of the card. In the event an employee's SmarTrip Card is lost or stolen, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) will issue a new SmarTrip card, replacing the value on the card at the time they are notified it was lost.
- F. Transit Benefits: Benefits provided to employees in the form of vouchers purchased and paid for by the agency. The employee can exchange vouchers for qualified fare media.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Office of Property Management is responsible for:
 - (1) Interpreting DHS and other applicable Federal Public Transportation Benefit Program policies and incorporating them into TSA's directives as applicable.
 - (2) Developing TSA-wide policy and guidance.
 - (3) Managing the TSA Public Transportation Benefit and SmartBenefits program for TSA.
 - (4) Conducting periodic evaluations of program to ensure compliance with applicable federal regulations.
 - (5) Establishing and publicizing dates and locations for the distribution of transit benefits for Washington, D.C. area employees.
 - (6) Providing Public Transportation Benefit Program Coordinator training as appropriate.
 - (7) Crosschecking lists of Washington, D.C. area employees receiving transit benefits and parking benefits, to ensure employees do not receive both. Initiates appropriate disciplinary action if an employee is found to be receiving both.
 - (8) Overseeing and coordinating all Public Transportation Benefit Program activities with Program Coordinators in the field.
- B. Field Locations to include Mission Support Centers (MSCs) and Federal Security Director (FSD) Offices are responsible for:
 - (1) Designating a Public Transportation Benefit Program Coordinator to manage the program locally.

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- (2) Conducting annual program evaluation to ensure compliance with applicable federal and TSA policies and directives.
- C. Public Transportation Benefit Program Coordinators (field locations only) are responsible for:
- (1) Completing TSA's Public Transportation Benefit Program Coordinator training, when provided by the Office of Property Management.
 - (2) Managing all aspects of the Public Transportation Benefit Program for the applicable office.
 - (3) Maintaining all Public Transportation Benefit Program applications, records, and lists for the required retention period for the appropriate office.
 - (4) Collecting and reviewing completed [TSA Form 205, *Transit Benefit Application*](#), for accuracy and completeness. Ensures that section D2, Accounting Classification, is completed and that the information is correct.
 - (5) Reviewing completed application to ensure transit option chosen is in the best economic interest of TSA and the employee. For instance, if purchasing a monthly bus pass is cheaper than paying the daily fare, then the cost of the monthly bus pass should be provided as the transportation benefit.
 - (6) Ensuring only eligible employees are approved to receive transit benefits by:
 - (a) Crosschecking current payroll records to ensure participant is a TSA federal government employee.
 - (b) Crosschecking list of employees receiving public transportation benefits and parking benefits (if applicable) to ensure employees do not receive both.
 - (7) Randomly (but at least every 5th Public Transportation Benefit application) reviewing applications utilizing a transit authority trip planner (available locally through the city's local transit authority) to verify accuracy of commuting costs.
 - (8) Submitting applications monthly via DHL or other traceable mail, directly to the Department of Transportation (DOT). In those instances where the Office of Property Management has entered into an independent service agreement with a local service vendor, submits applications to the Office of Property Management, Fleet and Transportation Services.
 - (9) Establishing and publicizing dates and locations for the distribution of transit benefits.
 - (10) Using TSA Form 205, documenting any change to the Public Transportation Benefit Program (out-of-cycle application, commuting cost change, cancellation due to employee withdrawal or break in federal service, commuting mode change, etc.) and promptly submitting to DOT or to the Office of Property Management, Fleet and Transportation Services, if an independent service agreement is in place with a local transit authority.

- (11) Receiving, distributing, and accounting for fare vouchers, utilizing delivery receipt procedures provided by DOT.
- (12) Safeguarding transit benefits/vouchers.
- (13) Returning unused fare vouchers to DOT using media return instructions provided by DOT.

6. POLICY:

- A. All TSA employees, to include headquarters and field personnel, who meet the following criteria, and assuming a transit benefit program is in place in the employees city of employment, will be eligible to participate in TSA's Public Transportation Benefits Program. The TSA employee:
 - (1) Must be a TSA federal government employee;
 - (2) Must use a qualified form of transportation for at least 50% of their regular commuting trips; and
 - (3) Must not receive a free or subsidized federal parking benefit.
- B. Federal legislation allows employers to offer their employees public transportation benefits of up to \$105 per month. The value of the benefit is determined by individual commuting costs, with \$105 being the maximum per-month benefit allowable. Employees who commute using qualified transit facilities will receive \$105 (or the subsequent statutory limit), or their actual commuting cost, whichever is less, in the form of a transit voucher.

7. PROCEDURES:

- A. TSA has entered into an inter-agency agreement with DOT to manage TSA's Public Transportation Benefit Program. In some instances, individual service agreements have been negotiated with local transit authorities; but primarily, DOT is the overall manager of TSA's Public Transportation Benefits Program.
- B. Public transportation benefits are designed to encourage employees to use public transportation to commute to and from work in order to reduce air pollution, noise, and traffic congestion.
- C. Eligible employees receive a voucher, which can be exchanged for fare cards or passes for any participating public transportation system. The value of the benefit is determined by individual commuting costs, with \$105 being the maximum benefit per month.
- D. In the Washington, D.C. area, the benefit can be used to cover the cost of commuting to work on more than 100 area bus and vanpool commuting services, on Maryland Rail Commuter Service (MARC), Virginia Railway Express (VRE), Metrorail and Metrobus. Refer to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA's) web site at www.wmata.com

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for more information on participating transportation modes. Go to “Fares” at the top of the site, click on “MetroChek,” and then click on “MetroChek Participants.”

- E. Employees assigned to offices outside the Washington, D.C., area should check with their local transit authority to identify participating transportation modes. The subsidy is to be used only by the employee who receives the fare media and is not transferable.
- F. Where fare media is unavailable to employees, the Cash Reimbursement process can be used when approved by the Office of Property Management, Fleet and Transportation Services. Once approved, the employee submits the electronic SF 1164 via TEServ for electronic processing and payment.
- G. How to Apply:
 - (1) Eligible employees must initially complete both sides of the TSA Form 205. Participating employees must re-certify their program eligibility by completing a new application when requested to do so. In addition, participating employees must immediately complete and submit an amended TSA Form 205 to document any changes affecting their transportation benefit eligibility (i.e. commuting cost or mode change, cancellation due to employee ineligibility, withdrawal, or break in federal service).
 - (2) It is important to complete all sections of the application accurately. If an application is incomplete or if information is inaccurate, DOT or the local service provider will return the application to the employee and the distribution of benefits will be delayed.
 - (3) Headquarters employees should submit their completed form to the Office of Property Management, Fleet and Transportation Services. Employees assigned to field locations should submit their completed form to their local Public Transportation Benefit Program Coordinator.
 - (4) Eligible employees who have a valid reason for being unable to pick up their quarterly transit benefits may complete a [TSA Form 262, Third-Party Pick Up Authorization](#).
- H. Transit Benefit Coordinator:
 - (1) Transit benefits are distributed quarterly as determined by the Benefit Coordinator.
 - (2) New applicants should receive an “out-of-cycle” distribution of benefits from DOT. If DOT receives a new application by the 15th of the month, they have agreed to distribute “out-of-cycle” transportation benefits by the 1st of the following month.
- I. Incentives: The Office of Property Management, in its capacity as overall Program Manager, may elect to use incentives such as plaques, certificates and other forms of special recognition to reward employees or offices for participation in the Public Transportation Benefit Program and to encourage employee use of public transportation. Individual Office Program Coordinators, at their discretion, are encouraged to do the same.

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8. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION: This policy is effective immediately upon signature.

APPROVAL



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7/25/2006

Date

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