

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

Employee Transportation Coordinator

TRANSERVE MAKES CHOOSING MASS TRANSIT EASIER



In an effort to both save money and make choosing mass transit easier for federal employees, TRANServe, a program of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), is moving away from paper fare media to deliver the transit benefit electronically. The primary goal is to use a single fare media delivery system that offers enhanced internal controls and preserves the transit benefit by deterring fraud, waste, and abuse.

The transit benefit program encourages federal government employees to choose commuting options that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion instead of driving single-occupant vehicles.

DOT expanded its launch of this new, cost-efficient way for federal employees to receive their monthly transit benefit in 2013. Through the new method, government employees are able to use a personalized Visa® debit card to purchase benefits from a ticket agent, online, or at a station kiosk, saving the federal government approximately \$270,000 annually in eliminated shipping, travel, and on-site distribution costs.

An estimated 20,000 employees in over 50 federal agencies in the Washington, D.C. area and other cities no longer need to stand in line or lose time away from their offices to obtain paper vouchers. Unused benefits were returned to the government,

which lead to additional government savings.

This new process also allows greater oversight through monthly reports detailing where benefits are purchased and used. Lost cards can be quickly canceled and easily replaced, further safeguarding government funds.

In the Washington area, the TRANServe debit card can be used on Amtrak, MARC, MTA Maryland, VRE, and with Martz and vRide.

The U.S. Department of Transportation was one of the first government agencies to embrace the Transit Benefit Program. It began distributing transit benefits to employees in the early 1990s. The Department's program has evolved over the years to offer transit benefit distribution services to over 250,000 federal participants nationwide.

For more information on the TRANServe program, go to <http://transerve.dot.gov>.



SEET PROVIDES SUBSIDIES TO DOE EMPLOYEES

For Department of Energy (DOE) employees, use of public transportation is subsidized through the Subsidy for Energy Employees' Transit (SEET) program.

Designed to promote the use of public transportation to conserve energy resources and ease traffic congestion, DOE employees may enroll in the SEET program to receive a monthly transit subsidy that can be used to help offset the commuting cost of getting to and from work. Many regional transit providers accept fare media from the SEET Program.

As with other federal transit benefit programs, as of January 1, 2014, the subsidy amount through SEET decreased from \$245 to \$130.

To be eligible for the SEET program, participants must be DOE federal employees not listed on a federal parking permit, members of a vanpool (not to include the driver), and certain other employees who may be on temporary assignments to

DOE. As with other subsidy programs, applicants must certify that the benefit will be used only for commuting purposes and that the monthly amount received does not exceed the actual average monthly commuting costs.

Participants can receive their funds through the SmartBenefits (SmarTrip Card) program, which distributes transit benefits electronically.

Applicants must be enrolled in the SEET program before they can enroll in SmartBenefits. Once enrolled, applicants can purchase a SmarTrip card online at wmata.com, at the Metro sales office at Metro Center, the Pentagon, or Metro Headquarters. Cards can also be purchased at designated kiosks in Metro stations.

For more information on the SEET program, go to www.energy.gov and search "SEET".

CELEBRATE TELEWORK WEEK MARCH 3 - 7, 2014

Mobile Work Exchange's Telework Week 2013 saw vast numbers of participants as nationally more than 136,000 federal workers, and close to 24,500 people in the nonprofit and private sector, teleworked at least one day, nearly doubling 2013's participation.

"The numbers show continued and growing interest in mobility," Mobile Work Exchange general manager Cindy Auten said, as employee-driven initiatives at some agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, promoted working remotely that week.

The Office of Personnel Management's 2013 Status of Telework in the Federal Government Report to Congress provided an overview of nationwide federal agency telework implementation, as required in The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010. Key Findings are:

- 49 percent increase in telework eligibility from 684,589 eligible in 2011 to 1,020,034 eligible in 2012.
- 84 percent increase in telework agreements with 267,227 employees having signed telework agreements in 2012 (up from 144,851 in 2011).

- 24 percent increase in employees who are actually teleworking.

"Agencies want to be more efficient at what they do," Auten said. "I think that is a big part of why you're seeing so many people having a positive experience teleworking."

According to Auten, past studies indicate productivity gains in 70 percent of organizations that participate in Telework Week. For the week, it was estimated that \$12.3 million was saved in commuting, \$90 per individual, on average.

Telework Week 2014 will be held March 3 - 7th.

Mobile Work Exchange, previously known as Telework Exchange, is a public-private partnership focused on demonstrating the value of mobility and telework, and serving the emerging educational and communication requirements of the federal mobile/telework community.

For more information, go to www.mobileworkexchange.com.