



# TRANSPORTATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

OUTSIDE THE NATIONAL CAPITOL REGION

ISSUE:  
SEPTEMBER 2011

## UPCOMING ENROLLMENT DEADLINES:



**Next:**  
**Friday, September 23, 2011**

**Future:**  
**Thursday, October 20, 2011**  
**Wednesday, November 16, 2011**

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

**When will Keesha Perry return?**

Keesha Perry is back. As of September 2011, the Department of Transportation is excited to have Keesha back in the office and serving the Department of the Navy as our transit benefit agent.

## THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT IS SET TO EXPIRE... AGAIN!

On December 17, 2010, President Obama signed a tax bill to provide tax relief and make investments in the United States workforce. The new law instructed the Internal Revenue Service to change the tax code to permit a tax exempt mass transit fringe benefit up to \$230 per month. As a result, the Department of Navy increased the maximum benefit that participants are eligible to receive to \$230. However, this increase is not permanent.



The law is set to expire on December 31, 2011, and unless Congress takes action, the benefit will revert back to the original schedule provided under 26 Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 132(f)2A as adjusted by the Internal Revenue Service.

This might seem like a familiar story to many of you since the transit benefit was in a similar position last year. On February 17, 2009, *the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)* amended the IRC by increasing the tax exempt transit benefit statutory limit to \$230, effective March 2009. However, the ARRA language only extended the maximum benefit through December 31, 2010. As 2010 was coming to a close and Congress was set to recess for the year, it looked like the benefit would indeed expire. However, in its waning hours, Congress passed the *Tax Relief Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act of 2010*, and President Obama signed it extending the maximum benefit for one more year.

Once again the temporary increase in the maximum benefit for the mass transit subsidy is set to expire at the end of this year on December

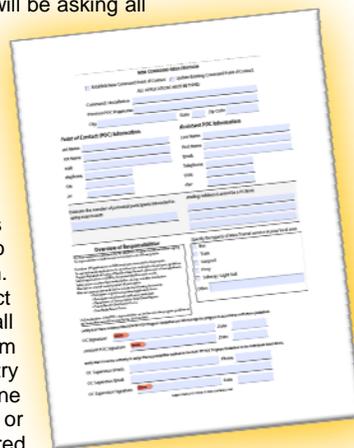
31, 2011. Given the current financial and political climate, it is impossible to predict what Congress will do. There is no guarantee that another extension will be passed. If no action is taken, the maximum benefit will expire. If Congress does not take action by October 31, 2011, the DON will be required to distribute transit subsidies for January, February, and March at the \$120 maximum benefit level. Any action that Congress takes after October 31, 2011 will take effect at the next regularly scheduled quarterly distribution.

The Office of Financial Operations will continue to monitor the situation and keep you posted on any actions that Congress may take. However, as the end of the year approaches it is important for everyone to be aware of the current law and how it may affect the Transportation Incentive Program in 2012.

## NEW COMMAND REGISTRATION FORMS

The Office of Financial Operations (FMO) recently updated the New Command Registration Form and will be asking all

commands to recertify their Installation Point of Contact (POC). The new form went into effect on August 1, 2011. Each local POC will be asked to submit an updated command registration form by December 31, 2011 if they have not already done so.



There are a couple of reasons why FMO is asking all POCs to comply with this re-certification. Foremost, it is important that correct information is on file for all Transportation Incentive Program (TIP) POCs. Frequently, FMO will try to call a POC and find that the phone number is no longer in service, or that the person has been transferred to another location. In addition, alternate POCs listed in the database are often no longer involved in the program and are unable to provide assistance when needed. It is important for all POCs to have an alternate and for FMO to maintain accurate information to help prevent disruptions in benefits for TIP participants. Particularly around the monthly application deadline, FMO will have questions regarding some applications and be unable to make contact with the POC and have no alternate on file for them. If FMO cannot reach the POC before the Department of Transportation deadline passes, benefits may be delayed.

These updated forms are also important for internal control purposes; FMO needs to have a signed record of all our POCs on file. Many POCs have served for years, and have completed a much older version of the command registration form, so now that the form has been recently updated, FMO has decided to use this opportunity to ensure all our files are complete and accurate.

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