



UPCOMING ENROLLMENT DEADLINES:



Next:
Wednesday, May 21, 2014

Future:
Monday, June 23, 2014
Wednesday, July 23, 2014

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

If I recertified my application in March, do I need to recertify again?

Yes, all participants must recertify their transit benefit application between 1 April and 15 May 2014.

TIPS INTRODUCES NEW VANPOOL MANAGER MODULE

The Office of Financial Operations has developed a new vanpool manager module in the Transportation Incentive Program System (TIPS). This new tool will assist vanpool coordinators and local reviewing officials in managing the vanpools that serve TIP participants. Reviewing officials will more easily be able to help connect new riders with vanpools who are looking for more riders. The tool will also help streamline the application process for potential riders ensuring that all vanpool participants are certifying the correct commuting cost when they apply for transit benefits.

VANPOOL REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY 15 JUNE 2014

Any vanpool that serves a TIP participant will need to register the vanpool in TIPS so that participants can select the vanpool during the application and recertification process. All current vanpools must be registered by 15 June 2014. Effective 1 July 2014, all vanpool participants will be required to select an approved vanpool when recertifying their transit benefit application. If a participant's vanpool is not registered in TIPS, he or she will not be able to complete the recertification process. As a result the participant may experience a delay or disruption in transit benefits. Therefore, it is important that all vanpools that serve TIP participants properly register in TIPS.

Who needs to register the vanpool in TIPS? Each vanpool will need to identify one person to serve as the vanpool coordinator in TIPS. This can be a driver, treasurer, leaseholder, or any other member of the vanpool who is a Department of the Navy employee. The vanpool manager module requires vans to identify a primary coordinator, but also allows the primary to add alternate coordinators who can provide assistance as necessary.

The vanpool registration process is straightforward. The coordinator will simply walk through the registration screens answering questions about the vanpool. Coordinators will be helped if they have a current lease, invoice or receipt available to answer specific questions about the

vanpool such as the make, model and miles per gallon the vehicle is rated for.

Vanpool Coordinators will also be asked to provide the roundtrip commuting distance between the first pick-up location and the last drop-off location when registering. If this information is not already known, widely available Internet mapping tools can assist in providing the roundtrip commuting distance.

The vanpool registration process will also assist in determining the certified commuting cost for each seat in the vanpool. Per the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Operations Memo dated 6 February 2012, TIP participants are only eligible to receive transit benefits for one seat in a vanpool. Vanpool companies use a variety of pricing models to sell their services. This can sometimes make it difficult to calculate the commuting cost for each rider. The new vanpool manager tool assists coordinators in calculating the correct per seat certified commuting cost. The tool will ask which type of pricing model is used for the vanpool.



The two most common pricing models are 1) the individual seat pricing model and 2) the group pricing model. In the individual seat pricing model, each participant purchases one seat on a van and is provided an individual receipt directly from the vanpool company. The rider in this model is not responsible to pay the cost of any empty seat in the vanpool since the vanpool company bears the burden of empty seats and recruiting new riders. The group pricing model is used when a vanpool company provides one invoice or receipt for an entire vanpool and the riders on the vanpool are collectively responsible for paying the entire invoice. The riders in this model are responsible to pay the cost of any empty seat. And the riders primarily bear the burden to recruit additional riders when participants leave the vanpool. Vanpool coordinators will need to identify in TIPS which pricing model is used with his or her vanpool and will be required to upload supporting financial documentation (lease/invoice/receipt) that supports the certified commuting cost reported in the tool.

A Vanpool Coordinator Guide provides step-by-step instructions for completing the vanpool registration. The guide is available in TIPS under the Vanpool Management section.

2Q RECERTIFICATION DEADLINE IS 15 MAY 2014

TIP participants are required to recertify their transit benefit application using TIPS by 15 May 2014. More 11,000 TIP participants have already completed their recertification for this period. If you have not recertified your transit benefit application since 1 April 2014, you need to log into TIPS and select "Recertify." Once in TIPS the process only takes about 10 seconds to complete.

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