



UPCOMING ENROLLMENT DEADLINES:

Next:
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
(for January benefit)

Future:
Thursday, December 17, 2015
Wednesday, January 20, 2016



NO INCREASE AGAIN. WHAT'S THE IRS DOING?

For the second year in a row, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) decided not to adjust the maximum benefit for qualified transportation fringe benefits. What does this mean for my transit benefit? The maximum benefit can be increased in two ways: 1) the IRS can announce a cost-of-living or an inflation adjustment to the current maximum benefit amount, or 2) Congress can increase or decrease the maximum benefit by passing a law.

On 21 October 2015, the IRS announced in Revenue Procedure 2015-53 that there would be no inflation adjustment to the mass transit maximum benefit for tax year 2016. This means the maximum benefit will likely remain at \$130 per month for another year. Why no change? While the revenue procedure does not go into the details as to what factors ultimately determined the IRS's decision, low gas prices is likely the leading reason. The United States Energy Information Agency reports that the national average for a gallon of regular gasoline was \$2.23 at the end of October 2015. This time last year the average price per gallon was \$3.06 and in 2013, it was \$3.29. The fact that gasoline is more than \$1 cheaper per gallon in the last two years is likely the driving reason for the IRS's decision to keep the maximum benefit where it is since the price of fuel is a large component of transportation costs. I guess the news could be worse. At least the IRS didn't lower the maximum benefit.

So does this mean there is no chance of a change for next year? Congress could still take action before the end of the year to raise the maximum benefit. The House has introduced a "Commuter Parity Act of 2015," and the Senate has introduced the "Commuter Benefit Equity Act of 2015." Both bills, if passed by Congress and signed by the President, would increase the maximum benefit for commuters. Both of these bills were referred to committee, but they have not progressed any further. Congress does have work left to do this year that could impact the maximum benefit. Highway funding will expire in November and several popular tax-extendors will expire at the end of the year. Either of these legislative initiatives could be used as a vehicle to increase the maximum benefit. We'll just have to wait and see. The Office of Financial Operations will continue to monitor any legislation that moves forward on the Hill and will announce any changes to the maximum benefit in the newsletter.



OFFICE OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS WEBSITE FACELIFT

The Office of Financial Operations recently updated their website reorganizing the content to make information more accessible for users. While most participants and reviewing officials rely on the Transportation Incentive Program System (TIPS) to access important transit benefit information, the FMO website is a good resource for employees and transit providers who do not have an account in TIPS, but who are still interested in learning more about the Transportation Incentive Program. The website has information on participant eligibility, upcoming enrollment deadlines, and basic information on how the benefit program works. Users can find policy documents, user guides and other tools to learn more about the program. The latest newsletter, as well as an archive of previous editions is available as a reference library to help employees stay up-to-date on changes in the transit benefit program. Check out the new website at:



<http://www.secnav.navy.mil/fmc/fmo/Pages/fmo3/tip.aspx>.

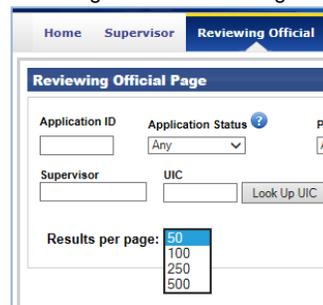
QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

By what day of the month do vanpool logs need to be submitted to the local reviewing official?

Vanpool logs must be submitted to a local reviewing official by the fifth day of the month following the commuting period.

REVIEWING OFFICIAL EMAIL FUNCTION IMPROVES

In the past, the Transportation Incentive Program System (TIPS) limited reviewing officials to sending email notifications to only 250 participants at one time. This required reviewing officials with programs with more than 250 participants to send the same email to multiple groups of people to ensure that each participant received the notification. In the most recent technical release, reviewing officials can now select up to 500 results to display at one time on the Reviewing Official tab in TIPS. This new capability now allows reviewing officials to send an email notification up to 500 participants at one time. Ninety-eight percent of all reviewing officials can now send a single email notification to their entire participant population.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS CONTACT INFORMATION**

PROGRAM MANAGER: 202-685-0399
PROGRAM ASSISTANT: 202-685-0374

MAILING ADDRESS FOR MONEY ORDERS:
Director, Office of Financial Operations
720 Kennon St., SE, Bldg 36, Rm 115
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5025
ATTN: Transportation Incentive Program

E-MAIL ADDRESS: TIP@navy.mil
APPLY ONLINE AT: <https://tips.navy.mil>
TIPS HELP DESK: 619-553-4684 **EMAIL:** tips@spawar.navy.mil



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRANSERVE CONTACT INFORMATION**

TRANSIT BENEFIT MANAGER: 202-366-1641
ELECTRONIC MEDIA SUPPORT TEAM: 202-366-9244

MAILING ADDRESS FOR RETURNING VOUCHERS:
DOT/TRANServe
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Room W12-190
Washington, DC 20590

JP MORGAN CHASE:
LOST OR STOLEN CARD CONTACT NUMBER: 866-891-6951
TRANSACTION HISTORY ACCOUNT ACCESS: <https://ucard.chase.com>

