The City of New York
www.nyc.gov/payroll

OFFICE OF PAYROLL ADMINISTRATION
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Commuter Benefits Program Overview FAQs
What You Should Know About the Commuter Benefits Program

What is the Commuter Benefits Program?
Under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 132, the City offers eligible employees the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to cover certain public transportation costs through the Commuter Benefits Program.

What are the options in the expanded program?
The City of New York has selected WageWorks as a provider to significantly expand the TransitBenefit Program and to offer access to new Transit Plans and many more transit providers throughout the New York Tri-State area.

Below is a brief description of each of the plans available to you in the Commuter Benefits Program.

1) **Commuter Card Plan** – The Commuter Card is a stored value card loaded with your pre-tax and post-tax payroll deductions that can be used to purchase transit passes and tickets at transit providers throughout the New York Tri-State area. The Commuter Card works at many more transit providers than supported under the previous program. To see a list of where the Commuter Card will work - visit **http://getwageworks.com/nyc/transitcard**. This stored value card works just like a credit card at transit provider ticket vending machines, ticket windows and online/web stores. It can also be used to apply for MTA programs such as the Reduced-Fare MetroCard and EasyPayXpress. Your card is funded with your deductions each pay date. For more details about the Commuter Card program – visit **http://www.nyc.gov/html/opa/html/transportation_benefits/commuter-card-program.shtml**.

The Commuter Card plan offers two options:

- **Commuter Card – No Admin Fee**: Under this option, you will have a set deduction amount equivalent to the cost of the MTA NYCT 30-Day Unlimited Ride MetroCard, $104 as of 12/30/2010, pre-tax per month. You will receive a Commuter Card that can be used to purchase the 30-Day Unlimited Ride MetroCard at NYCT MetroCard vending machines or to enroll in the MTA EasyPayXpress program which supports an unlimited ride MetroCard. You can also purchase any qualified transit pass up to the available balance. The City will pay the administrative fee of $1.77 per month for this plan.

- **Commuter Card – Unrestricted:** Under this option, you can elect to have any deduction amount up to Federal pre-tax transit limits which is currently set at $230 pre-tax per month.[1] Deductions exceeding the monthly pre-tax limit are allowed but the amount over the pre-tax limit will be deducted post-tax. You will receive a Commuter Card that can be used to purchase qualified transportation media from local and regional carriers' vending machines, ticket booths or websites such as the Long Island Railroad, Metro-North Rail Road and New Jersey Transit. You will pay an administrative fee of $1.77 per month through payroll deductions.

2) **Transit Pass Plan** – This plan allows you to arrange for home delivery of your transit provider passes and tickets through the City's provider, WageWorks. You can select from their extensive catalog of transit providers and transit passes covering the New York Tri-State area. To see a list of the providers available in the Transit Pass Plan – visit **http://getwageworks.com/nyc/transitplan**. In this plan, you fund an account with WageWorks with your pre-tax and post-tax payroll deductions and you can select a pass on

[1] Congress will need to take legislative action to extend the $230 monthly pre-tax transit limit past 12/31/2010, otherwise the limit will revert to $120 in 2011.

the WageWorks system using the funds in your account. WageWorks will deliver your pass or ticket to your designated mailing address by the 1st day of each calendar month. WageWorks also allows you to securely supplement purchases on their website with your personal credit card to ensure you always have enough funds for your purchases. And you can purchase multiple items such as a train ticket and MetroCard. With the Transit Pass option, you pay an administrative fee of $3.05 per month through payroll deductions. Visit **http://www.nyc.gov/html/opa/html/transportation_benefits/transit-pass-plan-information.shtml** for more details about the Transit Pass Plan.

3) **Access-A-Ride/Paratransit Plan** – This plan allows you to participate in Access-A-Ride if you are an employee who receives paratransit service from MTA New York City Transit. In this plan, you fund an account with WageWorks with your pre-tax and post-tax payroll deductions and you can select your Access-A-Ride coupons or other paratransit options on the WageWorks system using the funds in your account. WageWorks will deliver your Access-A-Ride coupons or tickets to your designated mailing address by the 1st day of each calendar month. The City pays the administrative fee of $3.05 for participants in the Access-A-Ride Plan. For more information on the Access-A-Ride/Paratransit plan – visit **http://www.nyc.gov/html/opa/html/transportation_benefits/access-a-ride-plan-information.shtml**.

4) **Park-n-Ride Plan** – This plan allows you to use your pre-tax and post-tax payroll deductions to pay for parking at or near a public transportation stop or station that you use to commute to work. Only transit-related parking is eligible. You must be jointly enrolled in one of the above transit options in order to enroll in this option. You will incur an Administrative Fee of $3.05 per month for Park-n-Ride. For more details about the Park-n-Ride plan – visit **http://www.nyc.gov/html/opa/html/transportation_benefits/Park-n-Ride-Plan-Information.shtml**.

Which transit option is right for me?
Visit **http://getwageworks.com/nyc/whichplan** for online guidance on which transit plan may fit your individual needs.

How do I save on my taxes when I enroll in the Commuter Benefits Program?
Tax law, IRC Section 132, currently allows you to fund your Transit Account with pre-tax dollars up to $230 per month, through payroll deductions. As a result, up to the IRS limit, you do not pay federal, state, City, social security, and Medicare taxes on your Transportation Deductions. You can also put post-tax deductions in your account if you have monthly transit expenses exceeding the monthly pre-tax limit.[1]

Your commuting costs can be reduced by 20% to 40% depending on your tax rates. To calculate your estimated savings – visit **http://getwageworks.com/nyc/savings** for an online calculator.

In addition, if you drive to public transportation, you may be eligible to fund parking fees with pre-tax dollars up to $230 per month. Pre-tax and post-tax deductions for the Park-n-Ride program are kept in a separate account for you at WageWorks and cannot be comingled with your Transit Account.

What are the Commuter Benefits Plan Deduction amounts?
If you enroll in the Commuter Card – No Admin Fee plan, you will have a set deduction amount equivalent to the cost of the MTA NYCT 30-Day Unlimited Ride MetroCard, $104 as of 12/30/2010, pre-tax per month.

For all other Commuter Benefits Plans, including the Park-n-Ride plan, you will designate a payroll deduction amount to suit your commuting needs.

All Commuter Benefits plans will allow you to change, temporarily suspend or discontinue your payroll deductions as your commuting needs change.

Are there any restrictions on the amounts of my Commuter Benefits Deduction?
The average monthly amount of your Commuter Benefits Deduction should not exceed your average monthly cost of public transportation usage. If your cost of public transportation changes after you enroll, you should

[1] Congress will need to take legislative action to extend the $230 monthly pre-tax transit limit past 12/31/2010, otherwise the limit will revert to $120 in 2011.

change your Transportation Deduction to accommodate your new circumstance.

Are there any service fees for this program?
Yes, there is an Administrative Fee for account maintenance and transaction costs and the fee is based on the program in which you are enrolled. Depending on the program in which you are enrolled, the Administrative Fee will either be deducted post-tax **or** the value of this fringe benefit will be added to your taxable wages reported on your W-2.

The City pays the fees for the following programs and the value of this fringe benefit will be added to your taxable wages reported on your W-2:

- Commuter Card Plan – No Admin Fee option: $1.77 fringe benefit per month
- Access-A-Ride/Paratransit Plan: $3.05 fringe benefit per month

The Commuter Benefits Plans for which you incur Administrative Fees that you pay through monthly payroll deductions are:

- Commuter Card Plan – Unrestricted option: $1.77 per month
- Transit Pass Plan: $3.05 per month
- Park-n-Ride Plan: $3.05 per month

How is my W-2 affected?
Your taxable wages in Box 1, Social Security and Medicare wages in Boxes 3 and 5, and state and local wages in Boxes 17 and 20 will be reduced by the value of the pre-tax transportation deductions from your pay.

For the Commuter Card – No Admin Fee and the Access-A-Ride/Paratransit plans, the amount of the administrative fee paid to WageWorks in your behalf by the City will be shown in Box 14 as a fringe benefit and added to your taxable earnings in Boxes 1, 3, 5, 17 and 20. For all other Commuter Benefits Program plans and election amounts, the administrative fee will be deducted post-tax from your pay.

How does the program work?
After you enroll in the Commuter Benefits Plan of your choice, your monthly designated transportation deduction amount will be taken from your wages every pay day. During months with 3 biweekly pay periods and five weekly pay periods deductions will not be taken on the 3rd or 5th pay date of the month. You will receive your transit pass or Commuter Card in the mail.

For Park-n-Ride expenses, you can schedule Pay My Parking monthly direct payments to your parking provider, have funds loaded on to the Parking Card or if your parking provider only accepts cash, you can submit receipts and be reimbursed for your out-of-pocket expenses.

How do I enroll, change, suspend or discontinue my enrollment in the Commuter Benefits Program?
For City employees to enroll, change, suspend payroll deductions or discontinue your enrollment in the Commuter Benefits Program, go to NYCAPS Employee Self Service at **www.nyc.gov/ESS** or contact your agency's TransitBenefit Coordinator. For a list of City Agency TransitBenefit Coordinators – visit **http://www.nyc.gov/html/opa/html/transportation_benefits/transitbenefit-coordinator-list.shtml**.

I am an employee of the Department of Education (DoE), how can I enroll, change, suspend or discontinue my enrollment in the Commuter Benefits Program?
DoE employees can enroll at the DoE **Web Employee Self Service/Web Payroll** application that can be accessed through the internet using your DoE Outlook email id and password at **https://payrollportal.nycboe.net**. You can also enroll by obtaining an enrollment form from the DoE website at **http://schools.nyc.gov**. DoE forms are mailed to the Department of Education, 65 Court Street, Room 1003, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

I am an employee of one of the Community Colleges of the City University of New York (CUNY), how can I enroll, change, suspend or discontinue my enrollment in the Commuter Benefits Program?
The Commuter Benefits Program has flexible options for CUNY Community College employees. CUNY employees are eligible to enroll in the following Commuter Benefits plans:

- Commuter Card – Unrestricted

- Transit Pass*
- Access-A-Ride/Paratransit
- Park-n-Ride

To enroll you may download an enrollment form from the CUNY website **www.cuny.edu/transitbenefit** or contact your TransitBenefit Coordinator.

**CUNY employees seeking MTA NYCT Access-A-Ride or other Paratransit Service providers must select the Transit Pass plan.*

Are there instances where I am entitled to a refund?
No. The Internal Revenue Code does not permit any funds remaining in your account to be refunded to you. The payroll deductions taken for this program must be used to purchase a qualified transit pass either from your account or with your Commuter Card. If you are leaving City employment, please see the question below.

What happens when I leave City employment?
Upon leaving City employment, any remaining funds in your account will not be refunded to you per the Internal Revenue Code. You will have access to your funds for a limited time as follows:

- Commuter Card Plan - If you are leaving City employment, you have 90 days after your separation date to spend the remaining funds on your Commuter Card.
- Transit Pass Plan - If you are leaving City employment, you have 90 days after your separation date to spend the remaining funds in your transit account.
- Access-A-Ride/Paratransit Plan – If you are leaving City employment, you have 90 days after your separation date to spend the remaining funds in your transit account.
- Park-n-Ride - If you have enrolled in the Park-n-Ride program, your access to the remaining funds in your parking account is limited to funds allocated to expenditures prior to your separation date.

Will my enrollment carry over if I switch to a new City agency?
Yes, your enrollment will carry over if you switch to a new City agency. In most cases, you will not need to re-enroll under your new agency. Your transit and parking deductions will continue in your new agency.

You may need to re-enroll to start payroll deductions if you switch from the Department of Education, a CUNY community college or a weekly paid agency like the Department of Sanitation to another City agency, however your account at WageWorks will stay intact.

If I have two jobs, am I entitled to Commuter Benefits from both agencies?
No, you may only enroll in the Commuter Benefits Program from one Agency at a time, your primary job agency.

How can I check my Commuter Card, Transit Pass and Parking account balance?
There are several different options to access your Commuter Card, Transit Pass or Parking account balance with WageWorks:

- By logging on to your account at **www.wageworks.com**.
- Call Customer Service at 1-877-WageWorks (1-877-924-3967) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time and follow the prompts to access your account balance. You will be required to provide the last four digits of your Employee Reference Number (ERN) and home zip code to access your balance via the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.
- You can also check your account balance via their mobile site at **m.wageworks.com**.

For additional information, contact:

- For questions on your Commuter Card, Transit Pass, Access-A-Ride/Paratransit or Park-n-Ride options, contact WageWorks at **www.wageworks.com** or call 1-877-WageWorks (1-877-924-3967) Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.