

**Department of Veterans Affairs
SmartBenefits® Program**

Application



SmartBenefits® is the “**electronic**” way to receive your VA Subsidy Benefits. Your Metrochek transit benefits are electronically added each month to your Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA/Metro) registered SmarTrip® card. The SmarTrip® card is a permanent plastic farecard that you register with WMATA.

Rules of Participation

1. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees who receive transit subsidy, and **use ALL of their benefits on Metrorail, Metrobus, Metro-authorized van pools, DC Circulator Bus, Fairfax Connector, DASH, CUE Bus, Loudoun County Transit, PRTC Omni Ride or Ride-On Bus** are required to participate in VA’s SmartBenefits® Program.
2. Participants must provide the serial number of a Metro **Registered** SmarTrip® Card when applying for SmartBenefits®. If you have not registered your card or are unsure that it is registered, you must do so by calling WMATA at (202) 962-5719, or on-line at <https://www.smartrip.com/streg/streg.entryfm>.
3. All Federal employees who participate in the SmartBenefits® Program must authorize the Department of Transportation (DOT) to verify the accuracy of the name, last four digits of their social security number, and registered card number assigned to their SmarTrip® Card.
4. You must attach a legible enlarged photocopy of the back of your SmarTrip® Card to this application.
5. SmartBenefits® are provided to recipients on a monthly basis. SmartBenefits® may be picked up at any time during the month by adding the benefit to your SmarTrip® Card at Metro Passes/Fare cards machines. Once downloaded, existing balances will remain on your card. However, unclaimed benefits for a given month may not be claimed once the month has passed.
6. SmartBenefits® not claimed during the intended month are returned to VA.
7. Funds cannot be removed from your SmarTrip® card once added. Since subsidy is given out in advance, if you leave the VA, you will have to pay back any benefits owed by **personal** check, or you may elect to have any outstanding subsidy balance deducted from your final VA **pay** check.
8. It is illegal to use transit subsidy benefits to pay for parking. VA employees parking at Metro operated parking lots paying for parking with their SmarTrip® card must do so by adding cash, or may add funds by credit or debit card to their SmarTrip® card to cover all parking expenses.

If you do not currently have a SmarTrip® Card, you **can** purchase one on-line. SmarTrip® Cards can be purchased for \$5 at Metro’s Sales Offices, Retail Outlets, Commuter Stores, and Regional Transit Stores <http://www.wmata.com/riding/faresales.cfm#salesoffices>. Be sure to register it at time of purchase. You may visit Metro’s **Web** site for more information at <http://www.wmata.com> (click on SmarTrip®).

Employees who misuse transit subsidies in any way will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by VA.

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To be eligible to participate in the SmartBenefits® Program, this application must be filled in completely and legibly and returned to your organization's Transit Manager. Please be sure to provide your SmarTrip® Card serial number (on the back of the card, lower right-hand corner). **A SmartBenefits® Application must be completed whenever you join, change information, or withdraw from the SmartBenefits Program.**

Please answer the following questions:

- Do you use all of the Metrocheks you receive on Metro bus, Metro rail, Metro registered van pool, DC Circulator Bus, CUE Bus, Fairfax Connector, Montgomery County Ride On Bus, Loudoun County Transit, PRTC, or DASH?
YES NO
- Is your SmarTrip® Card registered with METRO?
YES NO
- Do you authorize DOT to verify that the registration information on your SmarTrip Card is accurate?
YES NO

If your answer to all the above questions is "YES", provide the information requested below.
If any of the answers are "NO", you cannot participate in SmartBenefits at this time.

Please complete the requested information below, and return this form directly to you organizational Transit Manager:

New Application: _____
Change Current Information: _____ (indicate by circling change)
Withdraw From SmartBenefits®: _____

Agency: Department of Veterans Affairs

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Last Four Digits of SSN: _____ Work Phone: _____

SmarTrip® Card Serial No.: _____
(SmarTrip® Card must be registered in applicant's name!! If it is not, the application will not be processed.)

Applicant Signature: _____

Please attach an enlarged photo copy of the back of your SmarTrip® Card with the serial number showing clearly with this application. Van Pool participants should request a SmartBenefits van pool reference guide for instructions to establish a van pool passenger account.

TO BE COMPLETED BY
VA TRANSIT MANAGER

Authorizing Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Authorized Starting Month: _____ Authorized SmartBenefits® Subsidy Amount: _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: This information is solicited under authority of Public Law 101-509. Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in disapproval of your request for a public transit fare benefit. The purpose of this information is to facilitate timely processing of your request, to ensure your eligibility, and to prevent misuse of the funds involved. This information will be matched with lists at other Federal agencies of Government-assigned parking to ensure consistency with mode of transportation checked.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is it important to register your SmarTrip® card?

A: YES! Without a registered SmarTrip® card, there is no way to apply your benefit to your SmarTrip® account.

Q: If I lose the card or it is stolen, what happens?

A: The SmarTrip® card can be replaced without losing any of the fare value on the card with a simple phone call to Metro at (202) 962-5719.

Q: Can my SmartBenefits® be used for parking?

A: You cannot use VA Transit Benefits added to a SmarTrip® card to pay for parking at Metrorail parking lots. A good idea would be to add extra money to your SmarTrip® card to cover the parking fees. Just remember that it is against VA Transit Program Rules to include any amount you spend on parking, so do not include parking costs in your monthly estimate for transit expenses.

Q: Will my personal money be taken from my SmarTrip® card account?

A: No. Funds added to your account cannot be taken from your account. In addition, once you have claimed your SmartBenefits®, they are yours until you use them.

Q: Where can I pick up my SmartBenefits®?

A: Once you are enrolled in SmartBenefits®, you will be able to claim your benefits directly from any Passes/Farecards machine located at the Metrorail stations. Just add the benefits reserved for you to your registered SmarTrip® card by following easy steps given to you on the machine.

Q: Will Metro track where I go on Metrorail?

A: Metro does not track information related to where and when you use your SmarTrip® card, however, every **transaction** on the SmarTrip® Card **is recorded**. Metro **may** disclose information pursuant to applicable laws or for law purposes.

Q: Can you transfer Metrochek and Metrorail fares to your SmarTrip® card?

A: Yes. You can transfer used **or unused Metrochek and Metrorail farecards of any value** to your SmarTrip® card account.

Q: If I am a senior citizen or disabled Metro rider, do I need to do anything differently to join SmartBenefits®?

A: Yes, you must purchase a Senior Citizen or Disabled SmarTrip® card with a valid Metro ID before enrolling in the SmartBenefits® Program. That card must also be registered.

Q: Will I receive the discounted fare onto my Senior Citizen or Disabled SmarTrip® card for SmartBenefits®?

A: Yes, once you have purchased your Senior Citizen or Disabled SmarTrip® card. The SmarTrip® card is encoded to charge the discounted fare.