

Commonwealth Commuter Choice Procedures

Effective Date of Procedure: April 1, 2010

Overview and Purpose

The University of Mary Washington (UMW) provides the fully paid, tax-free, qualified transportation fringe benefit not to exceed the actual commuting cost. The maximum amount is \$115 per month. The procedures below outline the employee application and enrollment process. Also outlined are procedures which outline how to set up an employee profile, and set benefit amounts.

On August 23, 2000 the Governor signed an Executive order ((71 (01)) that established a new tax-free fringe benefit program, beginning October 1, 2000, for executive branch state agency employees who commute to work by public transportation or vanpool. The program is known as Commonwealth Commuter Choice.

Scope

- Employees
- Finance
- Human Resources

Enrollment Procedure Detail

The employee will contact Human Resources and ask to enroll in Commuter Choice. Human Resources will provide the employee with the following forms:

- Commuter Choice Eligibility Requirements
- Commonwealth Commuter Choice Employee Enrollment Form
- Commonwealth Commuter Choice Employee Yearly Certification

The employee should complete the Commuter Choice Eligibility Requirement form first, and send the initialed and signed document to the Human Resource Benefits Administrator. Once the form is approved by Human Resources department, the document is sent to the Associate Vice President for Finance and Controller for approval. The completed Commuter Choice Eligibility Requirements form will serve as verification that the employee is qualified and eligible to participate in the *Commonwealth Commuter Choice Program*. The employee will be notified of their approval.

Once approved, the employee will be required to complete the Employee Enrollment and Yearly Certification forms. The Commonwealth Commuter Choice Employee Enrollment Form is the agreement between UMW and the employee that states the employee will use the benefits appropriately based upon the requirements set forth in the form. The Commonwealth Commuter Choice Employee Yearly Certification is completed by the employee annually (each January). The employee certifies that they will use the benefits appropriately based upon the requirements set forth in the Commonwealth Commuter Choice Employee Enrollment Form. The completed forms should be sent to the Associate Vice President for Finance & Controller for signature.

Once the Commuter Choice Eligibility Requirement form is signed by the Associate Vice President for Finance & Controller, the employee is notified and their information will be entered into the Commuter Direct site. The three forms will be kept in the employee's Commuter Choice file.

Enrolled Employees can receive benefits one of three ways:

- Funds directly deposited onto the employee's SmartTrip Card
- Funds directly deposited onto the employee's VRE Pass
- Combination of SmartTrip Card funds and VRE Pass funds

Employees will receive funds directly deposited onto their SmartTrip Card if the mode of public transportation accepts SmartTrip Cards. Employees will be able to load their monthly installment of benefits at the nearest SmartTrip kiosk after the first of each month. Employees are required to receive a printed receipt at the kiosk, and send the original receipt to the Assistant Controller – Compliance for audit purposes. Employees will have one month to download the benefit amount. If the employee has not downloaded the benefit within one month, the benefit amount will be refunded to the University. The University will not be responsible for reissuing any unclaimed benefits under any circumstances.

If the Employee can use the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) to commute to UMW, they can obtain a VRE Pass, and have funds deposited directly onto the pass. The VRE Pass is not administered or controlled by UMW. The Employee must contact Commuter Choice to set up the VRE Pass account. A personal Commuter Direct account will be created. The Employee will provide personal credit card details in order to set up this account; a UMW credit card cannot be used. The Employee's card will not be charged; however, the card details are needed to open the account. If the Employee does not wish to disclose personal credit card details, the account will not be created.

Employees can have their total benefit received solely on their SmartTrips Card or VRE Pass. Employees can also have their monthly allotted benefit split between their SmartTrips Card and VRE Pass.

An employee's SmartTrip Card cannot hold more than \$300. The employee may not be able to download the full benefit amount due to the balance already on the card. Employees will have one full month from when the benefit was issued to claim the remaining benefit. Any benefit amount not downloaded to the employee's SmartTrip card will be refunded to the University. The University is not responsible for reissuing any unclaimed or unused benefit amounts.

Creation and Approvals

This procedure is issued by the Finance Department and approved by the Associate Vice President for Finance and Controller, August 25, 2010.

Revision

0. Laura Tabler-Allison, Assistant Controller – Compliance, April 29, 2010
1. Laura Tabler-Allison, Assistant Controller – Compliance, March 7, 2011