

## **BVAMC Transit Benefit FAQ**

### **What is the intent of Fiscal Service and the BVAMC Transit Benefit Coordinator?**

It is the intent of Fiscal Service and the BVAMC Transit Benefit Coordinator to ensure that our facility is in compliance with all local and national laws, regulations, and policies. When the new handbook was released, Fiscal Service employees carefully reviewed the document and presented a statement of major changes to upper level management as well as labor partners prior to sending the guidance to all participants.

### **Who is the primary operator?**

The primary operator is the vanpool coordinator who takes responsibility for the vanpool, makes arrangements to have the vehicle serviced, and collects the monthly fares from the other participants in the group. Often, the vanpool coordinator is also the primary driver however, alternate/back-up drivers will also be approved to ensure there is always an authorized driver available. The primary operator also works with the local VPSI representative to arrange for maintenance and repair and must follow the terms and conditions of the Volunteer Driver Agreement.

### **How is the reimbursement rate calculated if it has to be prorated based on the actual days that the participant rides each month and who is responsible for calculating the reimbursement rate?**

The vanpool coordinator is responsible for calculating the requested reimbursement amount. This amount will be checked based on the logs provided by the vanpool coordinator using the formula below:

The lower of \$130 (which is the current max reimbursement amount) or the actual monthly expense multiplied by the % of time that the employee rode the van that month.

As an example, there are 21 working days in the month of February 2012 which equates to 42 trips. If Jane Doe rides the van for 37 of the 42 trips, her percentage is 88% (37 divided by 42). If she paid commute smart \$90 for the month, she would be repaid 88% of \$90. If she paid commute smart \$179 for the month, she would be paid 88% of \$130.

### **If we are not allowed to park in federally subsidized parking areas, where are we supposed to park?**

It is the responsibility of the participants to determine parking arrangements.

**I am the primary operator for my van. Is it expected that I pay monthly expenses without receiving reimbursement?**

It is the responsibility of the vanpool participants to determine the dollar amount that each participant should pay each month.

**What if I am on travel, will that count against me?**

The policy addresses AL, SL, and driving yourself to work. TV is excluded. However, you can only be reimbursed for the number of trips that you ride in the van each month.

**What if I ride one way?**

The reimbursement rate above is determined based on the number of trips and not per day; so, half days are taken into account when determining the reimbursement amount.

**What if my work schedule requires that I drive myself to work?**

The policy states that you cannot drive yourself to work more than three times per month.

**What if my work schedule requires that I drive myself to a work site other than my permanent duty station?**

The policy states that you cannot drive yourself to work more than three times per month. We interpret this sentence to mean that you cannot drive yourself to work at your permanent duty station more than three times per month.

**What if the vanpool coordinator is not a VA employee? Who is responsible for submitting the required forms to the BVAMC Transit Benefit Coordinator each month?**

The participants will determine who will be responsible for sending the monthly log and the required reimbursement forms to the BVAMC Transit Benefit Coordinator. In order to be reimbursed, these forms must be submitted before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month.