



NEW PARKING MOU – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Commute Options and Parking Section (COPS) of the Employee Benefits Division has received a number of questions pertaining to the provisions of the new Parking MOU and its implementation. This sheet highlights the most frequently asked questions. If you have additional questions which are not addressed here, please call (213) 978-1655 and speak to one of the COPS staff.

1. Who developed the new Parking MOU?

In 1997, a Joint Labor-Management Committee on Commute Options and Parking (JLMCCOP) was approved by the City Council. The JLMCCOP is responsible for setting priorities related to employee commute options, parking spaces, fees, and other activities necessary to meet the regulations, deadlines, and other mandates of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The new fees were part of the City's mandate to reduce the number of employee daily commute trips into the Downtown, West Los Angeles, and Van Nuys Civic Centers. The JLMCCOP began discussions on the fee structure in 1998 – the process took approximately 18 months to complete. The benefits to all of us in reducing single person commutes are cleaner air, which we can all see has improved, and less traffic congestion.

2. How were the fee increases determined?

The City's Rideshare Trust Fund is self-funded – all parking fees go into the fund, and the monies collected subsidize the transit subsidy reimbursement and vanpool programs. In order to increase the public transit subsidy amount to \$50.00 per month, the parking fees had to be increased accordingly. The vanpool program, while it continues to be subsidized by the Rideshare Trust Fund, is also subject to increased fees. Various economic activities that occur may cause the fees to increase. Each time fee increases occur, the JLMCCOP will meet and notify employees of such increases.

3. Why are carpools being charged?

The JLMCCOP determined that while carpool members are doing their part in decreasing the number of vehicles traveling into the affected areas, everyone driving personal cars had to bear the burden when it came to the City's compliance with clean air regulations. This means that while fees are charged, they will remain very low for carpools.

4. Are the parking fees pre-tax?

The upside of the new parking fees is that the money paid by employees will be deducted from their paychecks on a pre-tax basis. This means that the decrease seen in the paycheck will be less than the full amount of the fee increase. Every employee will see the change in their take-home pay differently depending on their personal tax status.

5. Why are fees being charged at the West Los Angeles (WLA) and Van Nuys Civic Centers?

The City must comply with the SCAQMD rules and regulation by filing an annual trip reduction plan which covers City worksites of 250 or more employees. At those sites the City must implement procedures designed to reduce daily employee commutes and increase participation in alternate methods of commuting. In the past, SCAQMD regulations have been such that the WLA and Van Nuys areas have not been required to be as stringently monitored as the Downtown Civic Center. However, as WLA and Van Nuys have become more densely populated and travel into those locations has increased, the City's obligations to decrease single vehicle ridership have risen. Therefore, fees have been imposed to encourage drivers in these regulated locations to increase their participation in commute reduction activities, such as public transit, vanpools and carpools.

6. Is everyone being charges at all locations?

The MOU sets priorities for issuing permits, determines which locations will be included, and also requires that everyone, from the Mayor on down the line, must pay for the type of space or vehicle which they drive. Those who drive City-issued home-garaged vehicles will pay the highest parking fee determined at any given time, just as will Individual permit holders. Motorcycles, the smallest group of permit holders, pay a lower fee.

7. Can I get my permit back if I don't like public transit?

Every employee who gives up a permit to try public transit has 30 working days to decide if it is for them. After that, employees will be put on the Seniority Waiting List for a permit. However, don't forget that everyone who uses public transit also has three days every month where they can drive their own vehicle and park free in a City lot. Because the Rideshare Trust Fund depends on the parking fees to subsidize the Transit Reimbursement Program, we cannot hod spaces indefinitely. We must keep spaces filled even as we encourage you to take alternate methods.

8. How much is the subsidy?

The subsidy is a maximum of \$50.00 per month. If you purchase a \$42.00 bus pass, your pass will be fully reimbursed. If you spend \$120.00, you will receive the maximum of \$50.00. The COPS office has a listing of Cities in the Southern California area which offer additional subsidies to their residents, such as discounted transit passes. Please call the office for additional information.

9. Where do I get the Transit Reimbursement Form?

The forms are available at the Employee Benefits Division, Room 867, City Hall, or call and one will be sent to you. You may also print out a copy from Personnel Department website at <http://www.lacity.org/per/commuter.htm>. If you are using an old Transit Reimbursement Form, there is a new form which you should begin to use immediately. On the back of the form are the rules governing acceptable proofs of transit – everyone, even previous transit riders, should read these rules.

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