

Commuter Bus Riders Transition to Electronic SmartBenefits®



Timeline

1 st -15 th	Must be registered with employer to accept benefits.
1 st -20 th	Must allocate benefits to transit provider on SmartBenefits® website.
1 st -25 th	To purchase tickets with benefits, must use MTA website (www.mta.maryland.gov) for next month's passes or 10 trip tickets.
20 th – 30 th	MTA processes and mails orders.
November 30 th	Any unused paper vouchers may be used to purchase tickets through the mail until November 30, 2011.

Recently, WMATA has given notice that SmartBenefit® paper vouchers will no longer be issued to employer's after June 15, 2011. Employers have begun to give notice to their employees that they will need to get their benefits electronically. MTA Commuter Bus fare products are currently not offered through any points of sale that allow for electronic benefits. To assist customers with this issue, MTA's website capability is being upgraded to accept SmartBenefits®.

Below is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to address questions commuters have concerning these issues and the continued use of transit benefits.

1. **How do I establish an electronic account to receive my SmartBenefits®?** There are two steps:
 - You must have a registered SmarTrip® card. Once you have a registered card, work with your benefits coordinator at your company or agency to set up a SmartBenefits® electronic account. Your employer must enroll you in their SmartBenefits® program no later than the 15th of the month.
 - From the time your employer enrolls you in the program to the 20th of every month, is your time frame to allocate your SmartBenefits® to MTA Commuter Bus. See 'How to Use Your Electronic Transit SmartBenefits®'.
2. **How can I use my electronic SmartBenefits® account to purchase MTA Commuter Bus fare products?** Once you have set up your SmartBenefits® account to allocate your benefit to the MTA; you must go to MTA's web site – www.mta.maryland.gov monthly to purchase your Commuter Bus tickets electronically. On the 'Check Out' page you will input your SmartBenefits® allocation.

3. **When do I allocate my SmartBenefits®?** You will allocate your upcoming months SmartBenefits® from your enrollment date with employer to the 20th of the month prior to the month you wish to begin. Once your account is set up and transit provider designated, the SmartBenefit® allocation will occur automatically each month. **However, you must go to the MTA website to order your tickets monthly.**
4. **Where can I purchase 10 trip tickets to use on the buses when I no longer can get the paper SmartBenefits® Vouchers?** Tickets can be purchased on the MTA's website.
5. **When will the MTA not accept paper vouchers as fare payment?** As of June 15, 2011, paper SmartBenefit® vouchers will no longer be issued; however, riders may continue to pay using the vouchers they already have. Paper vouchers will not be accepted for fare payment as of December 1, 2011. Any unused paper vouchers may be used to purchase tickets through the mail until November 30, 2011.
6. **What happens if I allocate more of my SmartBenefit® than the cost of the fare product I am purchasing?** You will not receive "change" or maintain a balance with MTA if you allocate more benefit than is needed to pay for your fare. You will be able to allocate the exact amount of your fare. SmartBenefit® funds may not be used for postage fees.
7. **What if my SmartBenefit® allocation is not enough to cover the cost of my fare product?** When purchasing a fare product from MTA you must enter a credit card number to pay for any difference in the price of your fare product over the SmartBenefit® allocation.
8. **What if my monthly allocation of SmartBenefit® goes to MTA but I forget to purchase my fare product by the cut-off date of purchase that month – what happens to my Smart Benefit® allocation?** If the allocation comes to MTA but the rider forgets to purchase their fare product by the 20th of the month, that month's allocation is forfeited and no ticket or refunds will be given.
9. **Will Commuter Bus operators such as Dillon, Eyre, Keller and Martz continue to sell 10 trip tickets?** Yes, Commuter Bus operators will continue to sell fare media on the bus.
10. **Will Commuter Bus operators such as Dillon, Eyre, Keller and Martz accept SmarTrip® cards?** No, the Commuter Bus contractors will not be accepting payments using SmarTrip® cards.
11. **Are the fares going to change?** No, ticket and pass prices are not changing at this time.
12. **Can I still pay cash to ride the Commuter Bus?** Yes, you can still use cash to purchase one-way trips or purchase 10-trip tickets paid to the drivers.
13. **Will the MTA continue to sell 10 trip tickets, Monthly Passes, and Transit Link Cards through the mail and Internet?** The MTA Internet and Ticket by Mail program will continue to sell Commuter Bus fare media.

14. **If I use Metrorail or Metrobus and MTA Commuter Bus, can I allot some benefits towards a SmarTrip® card and the rest to my personal account for Commuter Bus purchases?** Yes, your benefits can be divided to suit your needs but only on a SmarTrip® card. The CharmCard® may not be used to split your benefits.
15. **Will MTA sell discounted senior/disabled tickets/passes?** Yes, all products currently sold through the MTA Internet and Mail Program and on the buses will continue to be sold.
16. **Will I be charged postage if I purchase my Commuter Bus fare via the MTA Ticket by Mail program?** No. Standard United State Postal Service (USPS) postage is included when purchasing fare products via the MTA Ticket by Mail program. Additional costs apply if you choose to have your tickets sent via certified mail or FedEx. Mailing costs are not covered by your SmartBenefits®.