



NEW PARKING MOU - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Commute Options and Parking Section (COPS) of the Employee Benefits Office 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) 847-0404 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 was approved by the City Council. The JLMC 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 Southern California 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 LA, and Van Nuys Civic Centers. The JLMC began discussions on the new 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 for vanpool members by \$6.00 per month.

3. Why are carpools being charged?

The JLMC determined that while carpools members are doing their part in decreasing the number of vehicles traveling into the affected areas, everyone driving personal vehicles had to bear a greater burden when it came to the City's compliance with clean air regulations. After much discussion the Committee determined that a two-stage fee structure for carpools would be implemented and the fee would be divided equally among the members of the carpool. This means that while fees will be 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 the 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. For an employee currently paying \$13.75 per payday, the fee will go to \$22.00 per payday, or an \$8.25 increase. However, because the fee will now be deducted pre-tax, the decrease seen by the employee in their take-home amount will be less than \$8.25. 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 and Van Nuys Civic Centers?

The City must comply with the SCAQMD rules and regulations by filing a triennial 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 Civic Center. However, as those locations 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 charged 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 \$44.00, just as will Seniority permit holders. Motorcycles, the smallest group of permit holders, pay \$11.00. The only regular permit holders who do not pay for parking are those on official mileage status. This was true under the old MOU as well.

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 would 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 hold spaces indefinitely. We must keep the 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 is also putting together a listing of Cities in the Southern California area which offer additional subsidies to their residents, such as discounted transit passes. This information will be available in the next couple of months.

9. Where do I get the Transit Subsidy Reimbursement Form?

The forms are available at the Commute Options and Parking Office, Room 713, City Hall East, or call and one will be sent to you. They will also be distributed to work locations over the next few months. If you have been using an old Transit form, this is a new one 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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