



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2003-32 B
November 13, 2003

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: ESP Transportation Services - TAFDC

Background

Field Operations Memo 2003-32 told TAO Staff about transportation services and eligibility for those services. The memo also provided TAO Staff information about TransAction Associates.

Field Operations Memo 2003-32 A told TAO Staff not to make referrals to TransAction Associates for transportation services.

Beginning Monday, November 17, 2003, AU Managers may start making referrals to TransAction Associates following the procedures outlined in this memo.

Obsolete Field Operations Memo 2003-32 and 2003-32 A

This Field Operations Memo obsoletes Field Operations Memo 2003-32 and 2003-32 A.

Who is Eligible For Transportation Services

The following recipients and former recipients are eligible for transportation services:

- recipients and former recipients with an approved Employment Development Plan (EDP) participating in an approved ESP education and training program; and
 - recipients and former recipients who are employed at least 30 hours per week.
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Maximum Amount and Period of Transportation Services

Recipients' or former recipients' transportation costs cannot exceed **\$60 monthly**.

For former recipients, who are employed and were closed due to earnings, eligibility for transportation services is limited to **60-days** beyond the TAFDC AU closing date.

For former recipients, who were in an ESP education and training program when they reached the end of the 24-month period, eligibility for transportation services is limited to **60-days** beyond the TAFDC AU closing date.

AU Manager and TransAction Associates' Responsibilities
Recipients In Approved ESP Education and Training

The AU Manager must ask the recipient how he or she will commute to the ESP component or work.

For current and former recipients participating in an approved ESP education and training program who commute by public transit, AU Managers are responsible for issuing transportation payments using the transportation window. See *A User's Guide*, Chapter XII-C for instructions on issuing transportation payments.

For current recipients participating in an approved ESP education and training program who plan to commute by means other than public transit, the AU Manager must refer him or her to TransAction Associates for an evaluation of the most affordable method of alternative transportation. The AU Manager must complete the Client Verification and Transportation Request (CVTR-1) form (Rev. 10/2003) paying special attention to filling out the location name and address of the education and training activity as completely as possible. This will assist TransAction Associates to determine the best form of transportation assistance.

The AU Manager must forward the completed CVTR form to the TransAction Associate liaison who will fax it to TransAction at 781-895-1122 to evaluate whether the recipient/former recipient can commute using public transit.

Note: The TransAction Associate liaison will be the main contact for TransAction Associates if questions arise.

TransAction Associates will determine the best transportation option for the recipients after receiving the completed faxed CVTR form. A confirmation of the service will be faxed to DTA. The recipient will receive a notice from TransAction Associates regarding the service provided and if appropriate, an activated gas card.

**AU Manager and
TransAction
Associates'
Responsibilities
(continued)**

Recipients In
Approved ESP
Education and
Training

- *If public transit is available and within one mile from the recipient's home, one mile from the recipient's education and training activity and the one-way trip takes less than one hour, TransAction Associates will:*
 - ♦ provide a listing of the Regional Transit Authority's route number, route schedule and nearest stops to the recipient's home and activity site either by phone, fax or mail; and
 - ♦ provide the same information to the AU Manager.
- *If the recipient has a working vehicle available to be used as transportation, a valid driver's license and public transit is **not** available to complete the trip, TransAction Associates will:*
 - ♦ determine the monthly value of the gas card based on daily roundtrip mileage, number of days per month the recipient will attend the program and a rate of \$0.15 per mile (not to exceed \$60 per month);
 - ♦ no more than 72 hours after the completed CVRT is faxed to TransAction Associates, send the activated gas card to the recipient's home address along with instructions for using the card; and
 - ♦ provide the same information to the AU Manager.

The recipient is limited to the monthly value of the card for the duration of the education and training activity. If the recipient purchases more fuel than the allotted monthly amount, the gas card will be turned off and the AU Manager will be notified. The gas card will be turned on once the recipient is eligible for the service again.

Example: Mary is authorized for a gas card for \$40 per month beginning in December. During the month of December, Mary purchases \$80 worth of gas. The AU Manager will be notified that the gas card will be turned off until February, when the recipient will again be eligible for the \$40 per month allotment.

In the example above, should Mary purchase \$60 worth of gas in December, she would only have a \$20 allotment for January.

**AU Manager and
TransAction
Associates'**

**Responsibilities
(continued)**

Recipients In
Approved ESP
Education and
Training

If Mary purchases only \$30 of gas in December, the \$10 **will not** be carried over to January.

Additionally, if the AU Manager determines that the recipient does not participate in the education and training activity, the AU Manager should notify the TransAction Associates liaison who will in turn notify TransAction Associates who will deactivate the gas card.

- *If the recipient does not have a working vehicle and public transit is **not** available to complete the trip, TransAction Associates will:*
 - ♦ help recipients form carpools using an online ride-matching system by entering information from the completed CVRT form;
 - ♦ if matches are found, TransAction Associates will coordinate communication between the recipient and other individual(s) to create the carpool;
 - ♦ if the carpool is formed, TransAction Associates will work with the recipient to provide the gas card for the duration of the activity; and
 - ♦ provide the same information to the AU Manager.

AU Managers are reminded that forming carpools can take an extended period of time and should advise the recipient appropriately.

If none of the transportation options (public transit, own vehicle or carpool) listed in this section are available, the recipient will be referred back to the AU Manager. The AU Manager must make this known to the TransAction Associates liaison. The TransAction Associates liaison must call the Policy Hotline for instructions regarding these situations.

For current and former recipients who are employed at least 30 hours per week, using the CTVR the AU Manager must refer him or her to TransAction Associates. TransAction Associates will:

Recipients
Employed At Least
30 Hours Per
Week

- provide a listing of the Regional Transit Authority's nearest ticket office, route number, route schedule and nearest stops to the recipient's home and activity site either by phone, fax or mail;
- provide the recipient with commuter checks valued at the amount necessary to use public transit for 60 days at a value not to exceed \$60 per month as well as instructions on how to use the commuter check within 24 hours of receiving the completed CTVR; and
- provide the same information to the AU Manager.

**AU Manager and
TransAction
Associates'
Responsibilities
(continued)**

Recipients
Employed At Least
30 Hours Per
Week

Former recipients who request the commuter check benefit any time during the 60-day period following the AU closing, will receive commuter checks equal to the value of taking public transit for the remainder of the 60-day period.

Former recipients who request the commuter check benefit just prior to or at the AU closing, will receive commuter checks equal to the value of taking public transit for the 60-day period.

Current recipients will receive the benefit for only 60 days.

AU Managers are reminded that commuter checks can only be used to buy transit passes, tickets or tokens. The commuter check will not exceed \$60 and is valid for *not more than 60 days*.

**TransAction
Associates'
Contacts**

If at any time the AU Manager has questions or concerns regarding services provided by TransAction Associates, he or she should direct the questions or concerns to the TransAction Associates liaison.

The TransAction Associates liaison will contact either Bobi Hoglund or Carlos Porter at 781-895-1100 or 781-895-1122 (fax) who will give their response to the TransAction Associate liaison.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.
