



United States Department of Education  
Office of Inspector General  
Investigation Services



December 16, 2009

*MEMORANDUM*

TO: JoAnn Ryan  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Office of Management

FROM: William D. Hamel /s/  
Assistant Inspector General for Investigations  
Office of Inspector General

SUBJECT: Investigative Program Advisory Report (IPAR)  
Control No. L42J0001

A. ED PROGRAM: U.S. Department of Education Transit Benefits Program and Parking Program.

According to ED Directive, OM:2-102, Transit Benefits Program (TBP), ED employees may not receive transit benefits if they are also receiving any other form of commuter benefit such as reduced rate parking in any Federal building. An ED/OIG Operations Internal Audit Team review of the TBP revealed that an ED official's name appeared on the Department of Transportation list of ED TBP participants and during the same time period was also listed as an ED Headquarters parking permit holder. Further investigation revealed that there was no evidence to substantiate that the ED official was receiving reduced rate parking while receiving transit benefits. However, this employee did obtain one-day parking permits on an occasional basis. The ED Directive for Parking Management, OM:4-101, stands silent regarding the issuance of one-day permits to employees who are not monthly parking permit holders. OM:4-101, Attachment A, #7 mentions only that one-day permits will be issued when a monthly permit holder has forgotten his or her parking permit and it limits those one-day permits to twice a month within a calendar month.

B. PROGRAM DEFICIENCIES

Our investigation revealed that ED employees who are not monthly parking permit holders may request one-day parking permits by sending an email to ED Parking at least 24 hours in advance. Employees are not required to provide a reason why they are

requesting a one-day parking permit. Requests for these one-day parking permits are very rarely denied. When they are denied, it is generally due to space constraints. There is currently no policy in place that limits the number of one-day parking permits that may be obtained by employees who are not monthly parking permit holders. According to the parking program coordinator, prior to October 2008, there was no official log to record the issuance of one-day parking permits, but the email requests were retained by the parking program coordinator. Since that time, the parking program coordinator now maintains a log of all one-day permits requested and issued.

### C. RECOMMENDATION

Our office has been advised that the Management Services Division is in the process of creating new directives and procedures for the parking program. We were informed that these new directives and procedures will establish guidelines that all employees will be required to meet in order to receive a one-day parking permit, and will limit the total number of one-day parking permits that each employee may receive to one per week.

We recommend that the Management Services Division:

1. Establish guidelines for requesting one-day parking permits based on a specific need for those employees who are not monthly parking permit holders;
2. Create a tracking system, which will document all one-day parking permits issued, and will indicate the reason the permit was requested;
3. Establish a limit on the number of one-day parking permits that may be requested by employees who are not monthly parking permit holders;
4. In establishing the limit on the number of one-day parking permits that may be issued to employees who are not monthly parking permit holders, consider reducing the TBP benefits to employees who obtain one-day permits.

On September 9, 2009, a draft IPAR was submitted to the Department. On November 27, 2009, the Department submitted a response in which they concurred with our recommendations for improvements (see attachment).

Notice: Investigative program advisory reports issued by the Office of Inspector General will be made available to members of the press and general public to the extent information contained in the report is not subject to exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552). It will be posted to the OIG Internet/Intranet website after a response has been received from the Department or the 90 day response period has expired.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT

MEMORANDUM

NOV 27 2009

TO: William D. Hamel  
Assistant Inspector General for Investigations  
Office of Inspector General

FROM: JoAnn Ryan /s/  
Delegated Authority to Perform Functions and Duties  
Of the Assistant Secretary for Management

SUBJECT: Investigative Program Advisory Report  
Control No. L42J0001

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the IG's Investigative Program Advisory Report related to the Department's Transit Benefits Program and the Parking Program. The report, which focused on one-day parking for employees not holding a parking permit, rendered four recommendations for improvements. I believe the attached documents will provide evidence that OM has responded to those recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact Wanda Davis, Director, Management Services. She can be reached on 202-401-5931.

Attachments

400 MARYLAND AVE. S.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20202-4500  
www.ed.gov

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OM/FMS/MSD Response

OIG RECOMMENDATION	MSD RESPONSE
<p>1. Establish guidelines for requesting one day parking permits based on a specific need for those employees who are not monthly parking permit holders</p>	<p>The updated DRAFT ACS Parking Directive is being circulated through FMS prior to submission to the EXO for processing through the ACS Clearance Process by 11/30/09 which outlines the guidelines for requesting daily parking permits. Please see specific language below from the DRAFT Directive.</p> <p>V. Definitions  H. <u>Daily Permits</u>--Issued to an ED employee when a parking recipient forgets their permit or for special requests for daily parking, at least 24 hours in advance. Limited to 1 day per week. One permit per week per employee nte 4 permits per month. A business justification is required and an employee cannot park on two consecutive days, i.e. Friday, Monday.</p>
<p>2. Create a tracking system, which will document all one-day parking permits issued and will indicate the reason the permit was requested</p>	<p>Effective October 1, 2008, MSD implemented a tracking system via MS Excel spreadsheet of daily permits which is posted on the K Drive. Effective October 1, 2009, MSD updated the tracking sheet to include a business justification.</p>
<p>3. Establish a limit on the number of one day parking permits that may be requested by employees who are not monthly parking permit holders.</p>	<p>The updated DRAFT ACS Parking Directive is being circulated through FMS prior to submission to the EXO for processing through the ACS Clearance Process by 11/30/09 which outlines the guidelines for requesting daily parking permits. Please see specific language below from the DRAFT Directive.</p> <p>V. Definitions  H. <u>Daily Permits</u>--Issued to an ED employee when a parking recipient</p>

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OM/FMS/MSD Response

OIG RECOMMENDATION	MSD RESPONSE
	<p>forgets their permit or for special requests for daily parking, at least 24 hours in advance. Limited to 1 day per week. One permit per week per employee nte 4 permits per month. A business justification is required and an employee cannot park on two consecutive days, i.e. Friday, Monday.</p>
<p>4. In establishing the limit on the number of one-day parking permits that may be issued to employees who are not monthly parking permit holders, consider the impact on the Transit Benefits Program (TBP) who obtain one-day permits</p>	<p>As part of the annual Transit Recertification Integrity Awareness Training, employees recertify that they reduce their monthly benefits at the quarterly distributions and monthly downloads. By signing the certificate and providing the certificate to the EXO for approval prior to processing of the application employees acknowledge that they adhere to the information in the integrity awareness training. Please see specific scenario outlined in the Integrity Awareness Training and Knowledge Checks to ensure employees clearly understand the scenario:</p> <p><b>Scenario 2</b></p> <p><b>I drive to work on occasion. Do I need to adjust my benefit?</b></p> <p><i>When the amount of your transit benefit exceeds the amount you need you must adjust your benefit.</i></p> <p>Example #1: You have certified that your estimated commuting cost is \$4.00 per day, or \$80.00 per month. On two days during the month you request and receive temporary parking, reducing your cost by \$8.00. At the next transit benefit distribution you must request \$72.00,</p>

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OM/FMS/MSD Response

OIG RECOMMENDATION	MSD RESPONSE
	<p>reducing the amount of media left over.</p> <p><b>Example #2:</b> You have certified that your estimated commuting cost is \$8.00 per day, or \$160.00 per month. You receive a transit benefit of \$115.00 per month. On two days during the month you request and receive temporary parking, reducing your transit cost by \$16.00. At the next transit benefit distribution you do not need to reduce your transit benefit as your actual commuting cost still exceeds the amount of transit benefit you receive.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Check</b></p> <p>Vikkey is going on vacation for two weeks in August. Her transit benefit is \$100 per month. The correct amount of benefit to claim the month when she returns from vacation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. \$100</li><li>B. \$50</li><li>C. \$0</li></ul> <p><b>The Answer</b></p> <p>The correct answer is B.</p> <p>Since Vikkey is not eligible to receive transit benefits while on leave, she must receive ½ of her \$100 benefit or \$50.</p>