



COMMUTER BENEFITS PROGRAM



Beginning May 1, Santa Barbara County regular employees will be eligible to participate in a new Commuter Benefits Program that will save taxes on the cost of commuting by vanpool, transit bus or train between home and work. Your transit costs, up to the IRS limit of \$110 per month, will be exempt from federal, state and social security taxes. *In addition to the tax savings you'll receive, the County will contribute \$10 per month towards your account.* Sorry, the IRS pre-tax savings don't apply carpools.

Enroll by April 5th (9:00 p.m.) and start using your pass on May 1st. You'll need to enroll by this date in order to allow time for the passes or checks to be mailed out in time for you to use them on May 1. Enrollments received between April 6 and May 5 will be for the month of June. Once you enroll, you can opt for a recurring election with will remain in place until cancelled or changed by you.

What are some examples of eligible Commuter Benefit expenses?

- Any transit pass, such as Clean Air Express, Vista Coastal Express, Valley Express, MTD ten-ride passes or Amtrak passes that entitle you to transportation on mass transit to and from work, or
- Commuter Vanpool expenses.

How much can you contribute to your Commuter Benefit Account?

Up to \$110 in eligible expenses each month can be exempt from taxes including the \$10 County contribution. You can change your contribution to your transit account on a monthly basis.

What should my monthly election amount be if my monthly expenses are greater than the IRS limit?

You should elect the full amount of your transit pass or monthly vanpool expense. The amount that the IRS does not allow to be a pre-tax deduction will be deducted from your pay on an after-tax basis.

How do you start a transit account and begin making deductions to your account?

Enroll online at www.FlexDirect.adp.com If you already access ADP FlexDirect online, it's as simple as logging into your account and electing a transit pass under the Commuter Benefits tab. Click on "Transit Order" on the left hand sidebar.

If you do not have an ADP account already, you must create an online account. Social Security numbers are not used by Santa Barbara County in the ADP System. Whenever SSN is requested please use 'SBC00' or 'SBC0' combined with your employee ID to reach 9 digits (for instance: SBC001234'). This is a unique prefix assigned to the County of Santa Barbara. The prefix should always be followed by your employee ID to reach 9 digits. The characters after 'SBC' are zeros.

How does my transit provider or vanpool operator get paid for my pass or monthly cost?

ADP Benefit Services will pay your transit provider or vanpool leasing company directly for the following month. For bus passes, the transit authority will issue your pass and mail it to you.

- All transit options are listed under the metropolitan area "Santa Barbara," even those traveling between north county locations or from Ventura County.
- Vista Coastal Express is listed under Ventura County Transportation Authority. ADP has received approval for the ePurse option but has not been activated this option on their website as of this email.
- Valley Express is listed under MTD which covers both Santa Barbara and Santa Ynez Valley routes. For the Valley Express, there is still only 1 -10 ride option available but there is a monthly" regular pass option. This is still an issue and is being pursued.
- Vanpools are paid through the "Vanpool Ridecheck" option. ADP will make the check out to the Vanpool leasing company. It can be sent to the vanpool coordinator or to the leasing company. Vanpool coordinators should check with their leasing company to see if gas can be included in the Ridecheck amount.

For more information about commuter benefits, you can login to ADP FlexDirect at www.FlexDirect.adp.com. If you need assistance you can call **ADP Participant Services** at **(800) 654-6695** (8am - 8pm EST).

*Remember, to receive a pass for **May**, you must enroll with ADP Flexdirect by **April 5 (9:00 p.m)***