

Commuter benefits – Frequently asked questions



Answers to commonly asked questions

Commuter benefits provide tax savings for your work transportation costs like subway fares, train tickets, shared rides and, in some cases, parking. By paying for your commute with pre-tax dollars, you reduce your taxable income.

As a result of saving your hard-earned cash to pay for this daily cost, you save more on Social Security, FICA and income tax.

Result: You've lowered your taxable income, and you have more money in your wallet — just for going to work. If you're looking to cash in on savings for your commute, we've collected some of our most common questions and answers to help get you on your way.

How much can I save?

In 2023, the IRS lets you set aside \$300 dollars pre-tax each month for transit expenses. Assuming a tax rate of 30%, the average commuter saves \$90 dollars per month in taxes. If that's your standard monthly spend, that adds up FAST to \$1,080 or more each year.* That's a huge savings for doing something you were going to do anyway. If your plan also covers parking, you can set aside an additional \$300 per month, pre-tax, for eligible parking costs.

What do Commuter benefits cover?

They cover a variety of eligible transportation expenses to travel to work, including trains, buses, subways, ferries, vanpools and ride shares through Lyft Shared, UberPool and Via. Additionally, be sure to check your plan, because some also include work-related parking costs. Non-eligible costs include tolls, expenses for dependents, and private Uber, Lyft Shared and Via rides.

If my plan covers parking, how does that work?

The benefit covers parking at or near your work, as well as parking at a location where you're connecting to another form of transportation. You can set aside an additional \$300 in pre-tax contributions per month on parking expenses, which is a completely separate amount from the \$300 for transportation expenses. (Added bonus — this potentially offers twice the amount of yearly savings, putting you up to \$2,160.) Check with your employer to see if your Commuter benefits cover parking costs.

Can I order the exact pass that I already use?

Yes. We offer more than 100,000 different types of commuter- and parking-related offerings to support transit and parking authorities around the country and, most likely, we have what you're already using.

How do I start?

You can do it all, quickly and easily, from your online commuter dashboard. Simply sign in to your online account, click on the Commuter tab and click the button to manage your commuter benefits. Here, you can place orders for commuter products, view any credit amounts, load funds onto a transit card, manage all transactions, access account notifications and set up recurring orders.

Do I have to decide during my enrollment period if I want this benefit?

A big advantage of this benefit is flexibility. You can jump into the Commuter benefits program any time of year, and the earlier you do it, the better. There's no requirement to sign up during enrollment, and you can contribute as much as you want up to the IRS limit. So start now.

How can I make changes to my orders?

You can do it all online. After you place your order, you can make changes or cancel it, up until your order deadline.



How do I know my deadlines for ordering?

Order deadlines are prominently displayed on the home page of the Commuter portal. As always, if you have any questions, Optum Financial representatives are available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Do I have to remember to place an order each month?

No. If you want, you can set your order up to automatically process each month. We'll send you an email each month to remind you of your order and prompt you to make changes if necessary.

Is there a way to use a prepaid card?

Yes. We offer a prepaid card that makes it incredibly easy. Use it at ticket kiosks, when ordering on your phone and when making purchases directly from a transit or parking provider. Already have an HSA, FSA or HRA payment card? Our stacked card technology allows you to use the same card for transit or parking purchases.



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