



# **TRANSIT SUBSIDY BENEFITS**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)**

**Human Capital Directorate**

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**As of May 12, 2020**

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## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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Yes, transit benefits will continue to be made available as long as your enrollment status in the transit subsidy program is active. They will not be suspended due to lack of usage. Transit benefits are made available for home-to-work and work-to-home commuting only. Employees in telework status must ensure their use of the transit benefit and payment for transit passes is in accordance with the Library's policy for the transit benefit subsidy during this time.....	7
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## **COVID-19 Specific Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **Can I use my Transit Subsidy during COVID-19?**

Employees are not allowed to use their transit benefit while in a non-pay, leave, or telework status, as the transit benefit is intended for the sole purpose of commuting from home to work or from work to home. Employees who do use their transit benefit while in one of the categories above are subject to disciplinary action.

You may obtain a separate SmarTrip card to use when not commuting from home to work or from work to home to ensure the Federal transit benefit is not used improperly during a telework day. Safely store the SmarTrip card linked to your transit benefit to reduce the possibility of inadvertently that has their transit benefit so that they do not accidentally use it.

### **Should I cancel or suspend any portion of my Transit Subsidy during each month of the COVID-19 Pandemic?**

Employees who use the Metro rail and bus should take no action as their SmartBenefits will not be suspended or withdrawn. Transit benefits will continue to be made available as long as your enrollment status in the transit subsidy program is active. **The SmarTrip benefits will not be suspended due to lack of usage.**

Employees who use the Commuter Bus, MARC, VRE and Vanpool, should CANCEL or HALT their automatic payment until they return back to work. Employees that use Commuter Direct to receive their SmartBenefits should contact Commuter Direct (703) 228-7433 or [questions@CommuterDirect.com](mailto:questions@CommuterDirect.com) to ask for a credit to your SmarTrip card for SmartBenefits.

If you would like to receive a refund for your VRE train tickets, please return your ticket either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter saying why you are returning the pass. Please note that the tickets must be postmarked before the LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable). CommuterDirect.com P.O. Box 12176 Arlington, VA 22219 VRE return/refund policies Monthly Tickets are refundable with proof of purchase and under the following conditions:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 10th of effective month: Two Single-Ride full fares for the applicable zone pairing will be deducted from refund for each service day prior to the post mark on the returned ticket.
- Postmarked after the 10th of the effective month: 0% refund

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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- The \$114 Metrorail portion of a Transit Link card is nonrefundable after the first of the month.
- The \$114 portion of the Transit Link card is nonrefundable once it has been used in the Metro system.

If you would like to receive a refund for MARC a ticket or pass, please return the ticket using either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter of saying why you are returning the ticket. Please note that the tickets must be post marked before LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable). CommuterDirect.com P.O. Box 12176 Arlington, VA 22219 MARC return/refund policies Monthly tickets are refundable, based on the return postmark date, as follows:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 5th of effective month: 75% refund
- Postmarked 6th through 10th of effective month: 50% refund
- Postmarked after the 10th of effective month: 0% refund
- Transit Link Card (TLC) Tickets are refunded at 100% prior to the first of the month. After the 1st, NO CREDIT can be given for the Metrorail portion of the fare (\$114.00).
- One-Way tickets are non-refundable.
- Weekly tickets are refundable if the return postmark is dated no later than 11:59 p.m. the Friday prior to the effective week.

If you would like to receive a refund for a MTA Commuter Bus ticket or pass, please return the ticket using either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter of saying why you are returning the ticket. Please note that the tickets must be post marked before LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable). CommuterDirect.com P.O. Box 12176 Arlington, VA 22219

MTA Commuter Bus return/refund policies Monthly tickets are refundable, based on the return postmark date, as follows:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 5th of effective month: 75% refund
- Postmarked 6th through 10th of effective month: 50% refund
- Postmarked after the 10th of effective month: 0% refund
- Transit Link Card (TLC) Tickets are refunded at 100% prior to the first of the month. After the 1st, NO CREDIT can be given for the Metrorail portion of the fare (\$176.00).

Ten-Trip tickets

**May I use the transit benefits subsidy while in telework status?**

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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No. Employees may only use the transit benefit subsidy when commuting from home to work and work to home. For employees in a non-pay, leave, or telework status, use of transit benefit SmarTrip cards is prohibited and could result in disciplinary action. Please DO NOT use the Transit benefits for any other purpose than commuting from home to work and work to home.

### **I use the Metro rail and bus to commute to work. If I am in a telework status, what should I do?**

Employees that use the Metro rail and bus should take no action as their SmartBenefits will not be suspended or withdrawn. **The SmarTrip benefits will not be suspended due to lack of usage.** Please DO NOT use the Transit benefits for any other purpose than commuting from home to work and work to home.

### **I use the Commuter Bus, MARC, VRE and Vanpool ticket and I normally buy monthly passes to commute to work. If I am in a telework status, what should I do?**

Employees that use the Commuter Bus, MARC, VRE and Vanpool, should CANCEL or HALT their automatic payment until they return back to work. Employees that use Commuter Direct to receive their SmartBenefits should contact Commuter Direct (703) 228-7433 or [questions@CommuterDirect.com](mailto:questions@CommuterDirect.com) to ask for a credit to your SmarTrip card for SmartBenefits.

Some direction from the Commuter Direct below:

#### **How can I get a refund for my VRE ticket?**

If you would like to receive a refund for your VRE train tickets, please return your ticket either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter saying why you are returning the pass. Please note that the tickets must be postmarked before the LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable).

CommuterDirect.com  
P.O. Box 12176  
Arlington, VA 22219

VRE return/refund policies

Monthly Tickets are refundable with proof of purchase and under the following conditions:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 10th of effective month: Two Single-Ride full fares for the applicable zone pairing will be deducted from refund for each service day prior to the post mark on the returned ticket.

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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- Postmarked after the 10th of the effective month: 0% refund
- The \$114 Metrorail portion of a Transit Link card is nonrefundable after the first of the month.
- The \$114 portion of the Transit Link card is nonrefundable once it has been used in the Metro system.

### How can I get a refund for my MARC ticket?

If you would like to receive a refund for MARC a ticket or pass, please return the ticket using either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter of saying why you are returning the ticket. Please note that the tickets must be post marked before LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable).

CommuterDirect.com  
P.O. Box 12176  
Arlington, VA 22219

MARC return/refund policies

Monthly tickets are refundable, based on the return postmark date, as follows:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 5th of effective month: 75% refund
- Postmarked 6th through 10th of effective month: 50% refund
- Postmarked after the 10th of effective month: 0% refund
- TLC Tickets are refunded at 100% prior to the first of the month. After the 1st, NO CREDIT can be given for the Metrorail portion of the fare (\$114.00).
- One-Way tickets are non-refundable.
- Weekly tickets are refundable if the return postmark is dated no later than 11:59 p.m. the Friday prior to the effective week.

### How can I get a refund for my MTA Commuter Bus ticket?

If you would like to receive a refund for a MTA Commuter Bus ticket or pass, please return the ticket using either priority or certified mail (for tracking purposes only) to the address below, with a letter of saying why you are returning the ticket. Please note that the tickets must be post marked before LAST DAY OF PREVIOUS MONTH for full refund (excluding shipping cost, if applicable).

CommuterDirect.com  
P.O. Box 12176  
Arlington, VA 22219

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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MTA Commuter Bus return/refund policies

Monthly tickets are refundable, based on the return postmark date, as follows:

- Postmarked prior to effective month: 100% refund
- Postmarked 1st through 5th of effective month: 75% refund
- Postmarked 6th through 10th of effective month: 50% refund
- Postmarked after the 10th of effective month: 0% refund
- TLC Tickets are refunded at 100% prior to the first of the month. After the 1st, NO CREDIT can be given for the Metrorail portion of the fare (\$176.00).
- Ten-Trip tickets are non-refundable.

### What adjustments are required to teleworking employee's transit subsidy benefits?

SmartBenefit users should have a separate SmarTrip card to use when not commuting from home to work and work to home to ensure that the Federal transit benefit is not used improperly during a telework day.

### What are some best practices for teleworking employees with their SmarTrip card?

Employees should safely store away their SmarTrip card that has their transit benefit so that they do not accidentally use it. The transit benefit can only be used for commuting from home to work and work to home.

### Will my transit benefits continue to be made available to me even if my agency is in a full-time telework status?

Yes, transit benefits will continue to be made available as long as your enrollment status in the transit subsidy program is active. **They will not be suspended due to lack of usage.** Transit benefits are made available for home-to-work and work-to-home commuting only. Employees in telework status must ensure their use of the transit benefit and payment for transit passes is in accordance with the Library's policy for the transit benefit subsidy during this time.

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### What transit benefit does the Library of Congress provide to employees?

The Library of Congress offers a tax-free employer subsidy to employees who use public transportation to commute to and from their workplace.

### Are all Library of Congress employees eligible for the transit subsidy?

Employees of the Library of Congress in the Washington, DC area are eligible for the transit subsidy provided both of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The employee uses public mass transit to commute to and from work. Public mass transit means Metrorail, MARC, VRE, Metrobus, county and commuter buses, and/or a MetroPool qualified van pool.
- (2) The employee is not in the workplace parking permit program with the Library of Congress, any other federal agency, or the District of Columbia. The only exceptions to this condition are for (a) non-owner/operator members of MetroPool qualified van pools, and (b) employees who are temporarily disabled and have Library of Congress parking privileges for 90 or fewer days.
- (3) Employees who drive to/from work or use carpools or non-MetroPool-qualified van pools are not eligible.

### What is the amount of the monthly transit subsidy at the Library of Congress?

The current transit subsidy is capped at \$270 per month. Eligible employees will receive a transit subsidy equal to their actual public mass transit expense, not to exceed the cap. An employee's parking expense, even at a Metro parking lot, does not count as a public mass transit expense.

### Are transit subsidy benefits taxable? Do employees need to report transit subsidy benefits on their tax returns?

No. Under the Internal Revenue Code, these transit subsidy benefits are non-taxable and do not need to be reported.

### If an employee does not use the entire amount of the transit subsidy may the employee allow someone else to use the benefit?

No, benefits received by the employee from the Library of Congress must not be utilized by anyone other than the employee.

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### What are the procedures for an employee to apply for transit subsidy benefits?

All employees must request transit subsidy benefits through the Transit Subsidy system at: <https://sbmprod.loc.gov/tmtrack/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp>. The steps below must be completed before submitting the request.

- STEP 1** If you do not have a SmarTrip® card, you can purchase one [online](#), by mail, at select CVS/pharmacy and Giant Food stores in the region that display the SmarTrip® sign, at Metro Sales Offices, from SmarTrip® dispensers at Metrorail stations, or from regional transit stores. Click [here](#) for a list of sales locations.
- STEP 2** *REQUIRED* - Once purchased, [create a WMATA account](#) to register your card. More information about how to register can be found [here](#) at WMATA. Be sure to scan the back of your SmarTrip® card to attach to the request when you are ready to submit.
- STEP 3** If you use Commuter Direct or Arlington Commuter Stores for MARC, VRE, MTA Commuter (bus tickets), or Van Pool, you must establish a SmartBenefits® Passenger Allocation Account. Once you set up your allocation, you do not need to access it again unless you want to make changes, but please remember to keep your account User ID and Password in a safe place where you can access them if needed. Log onto the [SmartBenefits® Passenger Allocation web site](#) to register your SmarTrip® card. Allocation help can be found [here](#).
- STEP 4** If you take VRE, MARC, or Commuter Bus, you need to [create a CommuterDirect account](#) and then use the following links to calculate your monthly transit benefit. Be sure to save your trip planner to attach to the request when you are ready to submit.
- [VRE](#)
  - [MARC](#)
  - [Commuter Bus](#)
- STEP 5** If you take a Vanpool, please call your local area Vanpool service using the following link to obtain the steps for registering for transportation service. The Vanpool company will provide you with a receipt/confirmation through email that you will need to attach to the transit subsidy request.
- [Vanpool](#)

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### **I am a new applicant, when will I receive transit benefits?**

New applicants are eligible to receive the transit subsidy beginning the month he/she is enrolled in the program. Below are the conditions:

If the kick-off date for benefits to begin is for the upcoming month (processed between the 1st and 15th of the month):

Applicant: Jane Doe  
Processed: May 5th  
Kick-Off Date: June 1st  
\*\*Transit Benefits will auto-load on June 1st

If the kick-off date for benefits to begin is in a month and a half (processed between the 16th and last day of the month), the applicant will also receive their total monthly cost in benefits for the following month:

Applicant: Jane Doe  
Processed: May 16th  
Kick-Off Date: July 1st  
\*\*Transit Benefits will auto-load on July 1st

### **I am an LOC employee who was previously enrolled in the Transit Program and I want to rejoin. When will I receive transit benefits?**

Applicants who are being reinstated in the program must wait until their system generated kick off date for benefits to become effective. If an application is turned in after the 13th of the month there will be up to a 47 day waiting period.

### **I want to change my mode of transportation to MARC/VRE/MTA, Vanpool or Metro Access. When is the best time for me to submit my application?**

The best time to submit your online application is between the 1st and 13th of the month prior to the month you want to begin. Employees are required to take independent action to initiate and administer payments to the appropriate entity. The Library is not responsible for an employee's failure to activate or monitor such independent accounts.

### **What is the penalty for abuse such as employees falsifying their certifications or misusing their transit subsidy? For example, selling a SmarTrip card or train or bus ticket purchased with the federal transit subsidy.**

Such abuse of transit subsidies violates the Library's conduct regulation and subjects the employee to discipline up to and including removal. Cases of suspected abuse will be referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. The Library has the right to audit the Transit Subsidy Program at any time. Employee Services and Integrated Support Services compare transit subsidy and parking permit lists to identify employees who are inappropriately receiving both.

### **How do employees receive a transit benefit?**

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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The Library participates in the SmartBenefits program, which is a web-based program that allows employers to assign the dollar value of employees' monthly commuting benefit directly to their SmarTrip cards. Employees enrolled in the Transit Subsidy Program receive transit benefits through a process called "auto-load". At the start of each month, once you tap a SmarTrip target or walk through any Metrorail fare gate, your monthly benefits will automatically load to your card and activate immediately.

### What is a SmarTrip card?

SmarTrip is a permanent, rechargeable fare card. It's plastic - like a credit card - and is embedded with a special computer chip that keeps track of the value of the card. SmarTrip cards are recharged at Metro stations and can hold up to \$300 in value. The employee must buy the SmarTrip card, which costs \$10. SmarTrip cards can be registered so that if the card is lost, Metro will replace the card for a \$5 fee and issue a new card with the value on the card at the time Metro was notified that it was lost. If you need to replace a lost card, it will be necessary to fill out a new application form. For more information on buying and using SmarTrip cards, go to Metro's web site: <https://smartrip.wmata.com/Storefront>

### Do SmarTrip cards expire?

SmarTrip cards do not expire.

### What do I need to do if my SmarTrip card is lost, stolen, or broken and I need to replace it?

If your SmarTrip card needs to be replaced, then you will need to purchase a new card and register the card online at <https://smartrip.wmata.com/Storefront>. You must then inform Metro SmarTrip Customer Service (888-762-7874) that you have a new card and request to have any personal stored value transferred to your new replacement card.

In order to have your federal transit benefits transferred to your new replacement card, you must complete and submit a new Transit-Fare Subsidy Application, Form 1711, indicating your new SmarTrip card number. Employees should give their application to their service unit liaison or the HCD Customer Services Center (LM-107) for processing.

What is the wait time for my federal transit benefits to be transferred to my new card? Can I be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred during this waiting period? Once card registration is complete and the online modification request made at <https://sbmprod.loc.gov/tmtrack/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp> has been received by HCD, it takes 3 to 5 calendar days for benefits to load to the new card. The Library of Congress is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cards; the Library of Congress will not reimburse any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the employee during this waiting period.

### I am separating from the Library of Congress. Will I owe money?

No, you will be removed from the program by submitting an online withdrawal request in the Human Capital Services Portal (HCSP) at URL: <https://sbmprod.loc.gov/tmtrack/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp>. Your remaining benefits will be removed on the day of your separation. Suspended benefits will automatically be credited back to the Library of Congress at the end of the month.

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### What happens if I don't use all of my monthly transit benefits?

Unused monthly benefits will automatically be credited back to the Library of Congress at the end of the month. There is no rolling over of benefits.

### Can employees add money to a SmarTrip card?

Yes. For example, an employee may wish to add money to cover the cost of parking at Metro-operated facilities. When used as a Metrorail pass, money may be added to a SmarTrip card. When adding personal funds to your SmarTrip card the funds will go directly to your "personal purse" on your SmarTrip card and will never expire.

### What can I do if I need to reset my subsidy allocation on the WMATA(Metro) website but forgot my password?

Call 202-962-1326, option 1, to request a password reset.

### Do senior citizens receive a discounted fare and if so how does this process work?

Senior Reduced Fare Program:

The Senior SmarTrip card allows for persons age 65 and over to receive a discounted fare on many means of travel.

#### **Purchasing your Senior SmarTrip card:**

In order to purchase this card, seniors will need to show a valid government issued photo ID with proof of age or a Medicare card with photo ID. To purchase this \$5.00 card one must go to a Metro sales offices or a commuter store. Upon purchasing the senior card you will need to register this card by going to <http://wmata.com/fares/smartrip/>, the card does not become active until this is completed. Once you have purchased and registered this card you will need to submit a transit subsidy request at <https://sbmprod.loc.gov/tmtrack/tmtrack.dll?shell=srp>, indicating your new card number and new fare cost with the proof of cost attached. Any personal stored value remaining on your old card can be transferred to your new senior card by either mailing your old card back to Metro or calling Metro.

#### **Metro Transit:**

Employees age 65 and over are eligible for a reduced fare, one half of the regular price, while using Local Bus, Light Rail and Metro Subway and approximately one half of the regular fare of MARC Train services. The reduced fare will link automatically to your senior SmarTrip card.

#### **MTA Commuter and Local Bus Discount Fares:**

Discounted fares vary by route. Please see <http://mta.maryland.gov/commuter-bus>

#### **MARC/VRE Train Discount Fares:**

Once you have purchased your Senior SmarTrip card you must update your Commuter Direct accounts to your new senior serial card number located on the back of the SmarTrip card. The 50% reduced fare on monthly passes will automatically be linked to your senior serial number, once a valid government issued photo ID is provided to Commuter Direct. You can call Commuter Direct at (703) 228-7433 for more information on this process.

#### **Metro Sales Offices and Commuter Stores:**

## Transit Subsidy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

<https://smartrip.wmata.com/storefront>

### Who is my “Service Unit” (SU) liaison?

#### Transit Subsidy Service Unit Liaisons

Office	Liaison	Room	Phone Ext.	Email
Office of the Librarian (LIBN)	Nicole Harris	LM-608	7-1593	<a href="mailto:niha@loc.gov">niha@loc.gov</a>
Congressional Research Service (CRS)	Cynthia Jackson Durrrah/ Megan Rivet	LM-209	7-7524/ 7-8385	<a href="mailto:ciacksondurrrah@crs.loc.gov">ciacksondurrrah@crs.loc.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:mrivet@crs.loc.gov">mrivet@crs.loc.gov</a>
US Copyright Office (USCO)	Myra Laird / Rashelle Butts	LM-458/ LM-433	7-8523/ 7-5941	<a href="mailto:mlaird@loc.gov">mlaird@loc.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:rbut@loc.gov">rbut@loc.gov</a>
Library Collections and Services Group (LCSG)	Barbara Moore	LM-639	7-9834	<a href="mailto:bmoo@loc.gov">bmoo@loc.gov</a>
	Barbara Hennix / Gerald Wilson	LM-555/ LM-639	7-7651/ 7-9407	<a href="mailto:bhen@loc.gov">bhen@loc.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:gewi@loc.gov">gewi@loc.gov</a>
Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)	Johnny Davis	LM-G51	7-0492	<a href="mailto:jodavis@loc.gov">jodavis@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO)	Chang Xiang	LM-643	7-1923	<a href="mailto:cxia@loc.gov">cxia@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Financial Services Directorate (FSD)	Dalerie Wright	LM-613	7-2767	<a href="mailto:dwri@loc.gov">dwri@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Human Capital Directorate (HCD)	Lauren Proctor	LM-626	7-5974	<a href="mailto:lpro@loc.gov">lpro@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Integrated Support Services Directorate (ISS)	Monica Pleasant/ Shalita Jones	LM-327	7-1868/ 7-5925	<a href="mailto:mple@loc.gov">mple@loc.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:sbur@loc.gov">sbur@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Security & Emergency Preparedness Directorate (SEPD)	Paula Mills	LM-G03	7-6583	<a href="mailto:pmills@loc.gov">pmills@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Library Enterprises Directorate (LE)	Valerie Miles-Washington / Joyce Turner	LA-5281 / LA-217	7-8927 / 7-2601	<a href="mailto:vami@loc.gov">vami@loc.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:itur@loc.gov">itur@loc.gov</a>
Chief Operating Officer (COO) & Contracts and Grants Directorate (CGD)	Maria Moore	LA-322	7-9865	<a href="mailto:marmore@loc.gov">marmore@loc.gov</a>
Office of Inspector General (OIG)	Sarah Sullivan	LM-630	7-1996	<a href="mailto:ssul@loc.gov">ssul@loc.gov</a>

#### Helpful Links:

##### MARC Train:

<http://mta.maryland.gov/marc-train> VRE

<http://www.vre.org/>

##### MTA Commuter Bus and Local Bus:

<http://mta.maryland.gov/>