

Public Transportation Subsidies

HHS has proposed eliminating Article 53 from our NTEU contract. Article 53 guarantees the agency will provide bargaining unit employees a transit subsidy that does not exceed your actual transit costs up to the amount guaranteed by law.

What You Stand to Lose

The law authorizes federal agencies to pay transit subsidies to employees but does not require it. Transit subsidies are currently mandatory because NTEU negotiated the benefit in the contract.

Even if HHS says it will continue to offer the subsidy, nothing will compel it to do so. In addition, the agency could, without bargaining with the union, change the subsidy amounts or eliminate them at any time.

Under the agency's proposal, employees would also have no right to challenge any changes HHS made to transit subsidies, including any refusal to pay the full amount authorized by law or a failure to pay the full amount of transit costs incurred by individual employees. For example, NTEU would no longer be able to file national grievances against HHS for not reimbursing employees for the full amount authorized by law, as we did each year from 2012 to 2015, resulting in millions of dollars in retroactive transit subsidy payments to thousands of employees.

In short, if this article is removed from our contract, this benefit could be entirely eliminated at HHS' whim.

If you are not currently an NTEU member, contact your chapter president. It takes all of us together to keep what we have earned.