



## Welcome!

We hope you find this monthly Montgomery County Commuter Services e-newsletter helpful and informative. Please email your comments and suggestions to: [mcdot.CommuterServices@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:mcdot.CommuterServices@montgomerycountymd.gov).

Visit us online at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute)

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### **FAST-GROWING MEDICAL TECH COMPANY, DrFirst, PUTS EMPLOYEE COMMUTING NEEDS FIRST!**

Founded in 2000 and headquartered in Rockville, DrFirst provides practical and powerful healthcare IT innovations. DrFirst assists medical practices, as well as hospitals and electronic health/medical record systems with real-time access to robust patient data. Most recently, DrFirst made Deloitte's Fast 500 list in 2014, which represents the fastest growing technology companies in North America. The company is meeting the growing needs of its expanding workforce by providing a variety of commuter benefits to help their employees in finding "better ways to work".



# DrFirst®

One way DrFirst is encouraging its employees to utilize public transportation is by its recent implementation of the SmartBenefits program that serves commuters in the metropolitan area. DrFirst is also keeping employees informed with the most up-to-date transportation routes and options by displaying local maps and bus routes on white boards in break areas on each floor of its Rockville offices. For employees who choose to bike to work, bike racks are available onsite. Additionally, DrFirst is in close proximity of Capital Bikeshare stations at Fallsgrove Shopping Center and Shady Grove Metro.

"With over 200 employees at our Rockville corporate headquarters, we want to expand on our benefits program by providing a smart and simple

Individuals interested in helping these areas improve transit and other alternative commute modes of travel are needed.

Friendship Heights

Silver Spring

Greater Shady Grove



solution to provide our employees with a stress-free and environmentally-friendly commute," says Heather Happe, the benefits administration and office manager at DrFirst. "We understand that employee happiness is directly correlated with work commute, and wanted to give our employees the freedom to choose the transit options that work best for them. We are thrilled to introduce these new transportation benefits in 2015 and beyond as we feel they will offer substantial savings to our employees."

Proactivity is key to keeping employees engaged in the transit program, and DrFirst will continue to meet consistently with outreach specialists from the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District to remain informed of relevant transportation updates within Montgomery County. Outreach specialists presented to DrFirst's newest employees at their open enrollment meeting in December 2014 and plan to return in the spring to discuss the area's upcoming commuter events as well as discuss Capital Bikeshare membership opportunities.

DrFirst is a perfect example of a growing company that places a special emphasis on making sure employees have options and benefits to help them in finding "Better Ways to Work," as the slogan goes. The company benefits from a healthier, happier, more productive workforce. The employees benefit from less stress and other health improvements, particularly when BikeShare and walking are incorporated into commuting. And the entire community reaps the benefits of less congestion and better air quality. Win-Win-Win. What's not to like?

If your company or organization would like more information on how to implement an employee transportation program, please email: [mcdot.CommuterServices@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:mcdot.CommuterServices@montgomerycountymd.gov) or call the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Commuter Services section at 240-773-2989

## **KIDS RIDE FREE!**

What's even better than helping cut congestion by riding the bus? How about Kids Ride Free?

The program provides free rides on Montgomery County Ride On buses and certain Metrobus routes within Montgomery County to kids **18 years and under** who are Montgomery County residents. The free rides are available weekdays between 2 and 8 p.m.

Students can use the Kids Ride Free program year round. Participants show their Youth Cruiser SmarTrip card when they get on the bus. But there are important changes with the New Year. Once new software is finished testing, students will be able to tap the card at all times. This will make it easier by using one method to board all buses. The new software counts the rider but doesn't remove stored value on the card during the Kids Ride Free hours of 2 to 8 p.m. weekdays.

Until December 31 students could still use their school photo identification cards but as of January 1 they need a Youth Cruiser SmarTrip card. So where do you get the new cards? Some schools, all Montgomery County libraries, TRiPS Stores and the Treasury Division office sell the cards for **\$2**. A parent or child must come in person with proof of residency and child's age to purchase a **Youth Cruiser SmarTrip® Card**. Proof of residency and child's age can be a passport, driver's license, any state issued ID, medical cards, and birth certificates.

Youth Cruiser passes allow those 18 and under to take Ride On at steeply discounted rates. (Youth Cruiser passes are not accepted on Metrobus.) The cost is **\$11 a month**, and is good for unlimited rides. During the **summer, a three-month pass costs only \$18**. The Summer Pass pays for itself in 10 rides, making it a great deal for kids and families.



Here's a list of schools that will be helping ease the change by offering SmarTrip cards for sale at the school:

HIGH SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS
Montgomery Blair High School	Argyle Middle School
Gaithersburg High School	Eastern Middle School
John F. Kennedy High School	Kingsview Middle School
Rockville High School	A. Mario Loiederman Middle School
Sherwood High School	Newport Mill Middle School
Takoma Academy	John Poole Middle School
The Siena School	Thomas W. Pyle Middle School
Walt Whitman High School	Silver Spring International
Winston Churchill High School	Tilden Middle School
	Julius West Middle School
	Westland Middle School
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	
Rock Creek Forest Elementary School	

Students must attend the school to purchase a card there. For more information you can visit our website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-transit/kidsridefree/index.html>  
 Montgomery County Treasury Division Location:  
 255 Rockville Pike, Suite L-15, Rockville

## **CAPITAL BIKESHARE CONTINUES TO GROW IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

The Capital Bikeshare program continues to gain popularity...and riders...throughout Montgomery County. Silver Spring is the new home to the 51st station in the program.

The station is located at Spring Street and Second Avenue. It's on the corner where new Fenwick Station apartment complex is located. The station is beautifully designed (see photo) and located immediately adjoining 2 bike trails: Metropolitan Branch Trail and Capital Crescent Trail. Silver Spring now has 16 stations.



More information about Bikeshare is available [online](#) as are [maps](#) of all the station locations.

Have questions about how to find the best route for your Bikeshare excursion? Not sure where the closest Bikeshare station is to your destination? There's an app for that! And it's recently been updated and improved.

You can use the [Spotcycle](#) app for iOS and Android phones to navigate your Bikeshare trips. The app now features:

- Reality+ lets you use your phone camera to see where nearby stations are on the map.
- Station clustering when using the map view
- Simplified navigation within the app
- Customizable colors for map features
- Bug fixes and other improvements

For more on this app and other tips to make Bikeshare a more efficient part of your commute go to <http://www.capitalbikeshare.com/how-it-works>

## **NO CHANGE IN COMMUTE TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR 2015**

The I.R.S. has decided to make no change in the monthly tax benefit limits for commuters.

The limit for transit and vanpool stays at \$130 a month while the tax benefit for qualified parking stays at \$250 a month (Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit, IRC Section 132(f))

This means driving and parking is subsidized almost twice as much as using transit and vanpooling.

The IRS bulletin is available at [Revenue Procedure 2014-61](#)



## **SEEKING ADVISORS FOR NEW TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**County Executive Isiah Leggett is looking for people to serve on the newly formed Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District Advisory Committee.** The Committee is a 14-member business and resident advisory group that will advise the County on transportation issues affecting the Shady Grove-Rockville area. For more information, call Jim Carlson at (240) 777-838 or send an email to [james.carlson@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:james.carlson@montgomerycountymd.gov).

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*Try it FREE today.*

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