

# Pittsburgh Healthy School Bus Retrofit Fund

## Frequently Asked Questions

### General questions

- 1. Who is the Program and Fiscal administrator for this retrofit fund and how can they be contacted?*

The Clean Air Task Force is the Program and Fiscal administrator for this retrofit fund and can be contacted at [bsuter@catf.us](mailto:bsuter@catf.us) or (703) 342-6402.
- 2. Who is the Technical Administrator?*

M. J. Bradley & Associates, Inc. is the Technical Administrator and is responsible for processing reservations, providing confirmation of reservation acceptance, and receipt of periodic updates. They can be contacted at [pghfund@mjbradley.com](mailto:pghfund@mjbradley.com) or (603) 647-5746 x100
- 3. What is the rebate for?*

The rebate is for the purchase, installation, and warranty of both a diesel particulate filter (DPF) and a closed crankcase ventilation system (CCV) on the vehicle. Installation must include any ancillary equipment required by the verification such as backpressure monitors as well as all necessary brackets, nuts, bolts, pipe insulation (if necessary), etc..
- 4. What is the amount of the rebate?*

The rebate is currently set at \$7,150. This rebate value is expected to decline over the life of the program as the technologies achieve greater economies of scale.
- 5. If my vendor quotes me a price of more than \$7,150, can I use funding from another incentive program to offset the differential cost?*

No.
- 6. What is verification?*

Verification means that a vendor has gone through an engineering lab verification process that determines how effective and durable the technology is at reducing emissions and has received either EPA or CARB's approval that it performs adequately.
- 7. Who is CARB?*

CARB is the California Air Resources Board, also referred to as ARB.
- 8. What is a CARB EO#?*

Any part that is installed as an aftermarket part on a certified configuration must be evaluated by CARB to ensure that its use does not increase emissions. After CARB performs an engineering evaluation of the part, and it is shown to not increase vehicle emissions, it is granted an exemption to emission control system anti-tampering laws. This exemption is called an Executive Order (EO) and allows the modification to be installed on specific emission controlled vehicles.

## Rebate questions

9. *Who is eligible for the program?*

Owners of Type C and D full-size diesel school buses serving the Pittsburgh Public Schools system are eligible for this rebate program. To be eligible, the buses must remain in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system for a minimum of four years after DPF/CCV installation. Note that because Pittsburgh Public Schools also requires that buses transporting pupils cannot be over 12 years of age, participation under this program is limited to buses equipped with engines model year 2000 through 2006.

10. *What types of buses can I retrofit?*

All full size diesel engine school buses used for pupil transport, including Types C and D.

11. *What DPFs and CCVs are eligible for this rebate?*

Only EPA or CARB verified DPFs are eligible for rebate payment. Both EPA and CARB publish a listing of verified technologies on their respective websites. The EPA list is here: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/retrofit/verif-list.htm> and the CARB list is here: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/level3/level3.htm>. The Clean Air Task Force makes no representation or guarantee as to, and shall not be responsible for, the accuracy, completeness or pertinence of this information referenced above. Furthermore, the websites are not under the control of the Clean Air Task Force, and the Clean Air Task Force is not responsible for its content. The information referenced above is made available merely for the purpose of providing such information as is in the possession of the Clean Air Task Force, whether or not such information may be accurate, complete or pertinent, or of any value to interested parties.

12. *Can I get a rebate if just a DPF is installed?*

No. A CCV, a DPF and all ancillary equipment required by the verification must be installed. A CCV that completely closes the crankcase from the atmosphere and routes the crankcase vapor to the inlet of the engine is also **required**.

13. *What if I have already installed a DPF on my bus(es)?*

That bus is not eligible for a rebate under this program.

14. *Can anyone outside of the Pittsburgh Public Schools system apply?*

Only if they exclusively operate school buses in the Pittsburgh Public Schools system, otherwise No.

15. *How do I apply for a rebate?*

The rebate process requires that two (2) forms be submitted prior to payment of a rebate. By accepting the rebate, the bus owner/operator agrees to specific terms and conditions as well as to provide periodic updates to the Program Administrator, including an annual update, to verify operation within the four-year window.

16. *How do I get a reservation application form?*

You can download it here <http://www.dieselretrofitrebate.org> in PDF format. Current version rebate program forms are only available in PDF format via the World Wide Web and must be printed double-sided.

17. *Why is it called a reservation application – does this mean I might not get my rebate even if I fill out all the forms correctly?*

There is always the possibility that there will be more applicants than the available funding can provide rebates for. The rebate will be provided as long as the bus owner/operator receives confirmation that a reservation has been accepted from the program administrator AND the installation is performed within 120 days of the effective date of reservation indicated in the acceptance.

18. *Can I submit a single reservation application form for more than one bus?*

No. Even though some of the information will be repeated from form to form, in order to reserve a spot on the rebate list, each bus must have its own reservation application form.

19. *What do I have to do before I submit my reservation application form?*

There are several steps required before submitting a reservation application form:

Step 1: Determine which buses are eligible

Step 2: Determine which DPF vendor to use (you have the choice of which vendor)

Step 3: Make sure that exhaust temperature data logging is complete and adequate

Step 4: Confirm the verified DPF and CCV EO# information

Step 5: Both the bus owner/operator and DPF/CCV vendor must sign the application

Step 6: Have the form notarized (verifies both signatures and acceptance of terms)

20. *Why is exhaust temperature data logging important?*

Exhaust temperature is an important measure of whether a DPF will work and remain clean on a particular bus. Each verified DPF has a requirement for a minimum exhaust temperature/time duration combination that must be met in order to be considered viable. Without adequate temperature to regenerate (i.e. burn off the collected carbon) the device would plug and the engine would not be able to operate properly.

21. *How long must the DPF and CCV be on the school bus?*

There is a minimum four-year period that the equipment must remain on the school bus in order to keep the full amount of the rebate. During normal operation, the DPF and CCV are expected to last beyond the life of the vehicle.

22. *What if my bus becomes inoperable before the 4 year period is up?*

The Program Administrator may seek to recover a pro-rated portion of the rebate incentive funding from the School bus owner/operator if the school bus becomes inoperable before the 4 year period is up. Alternatively, the owner/operator may choose to transfer the CCV and DPF to another eligible bus using Form 3 (Device Transfer Request).

23. *How will I get my rebate payment?*

Before a rebate payment will be processed, Form 2 (Rebate Payment Request) must be completed and sent to the Program Administrator.

24. *How long will it take to get the rebate payment?*

The bus owner or retrofit vendor must submit a complete rebate payment request form within 120 days of the reservation. The Program Administrator will issue a rebate check normally within 30 days of submittal and acceptance of a complete and accurate payment form.

25. *How do I print and fill out the forms?*

Current version rebate program forms will only be made available in pdf format via the World Wide Web. These forms can then be printed or duplicated but must be double-sided such that the associated program terms and conditions or “fine print” is printed on the reverse side of all forms. Single sided forms without the “fine print” will not be accepted and no changes or amendments may be made to the “fine print” language.

26. *How long do I have to install the DPF and CCV?*

The DPF and CCV must be installed within 120 calendar days of the reservation date indicated in your reservation approval (the “reservation date”).

27. *What if the DPF or CCV are not installed, or are installed, but I do not submit a Form 2 postmarked before the 120 calendar day timeframe?*

After 120 calendar days the initial reservation date will expire and payment will **NOT** be made. The owner may resubmit a supplemental reservation application for that vehicle, but no sooner than 180 days after the original reservation date. The 120 calendar day clock then starts over and the rebate is reduced by \$500 from the current rebate value. Essentially if the DPF and CCV are installed within 120 days the full rebate (initially \$7,150) will be paid, beyond 120-days, the rebate is diminished by \$500, which currently would amount to \$6,650 but could be lower if the program administrator lowers the full rebate amount in the interim.

28. *Are there any special incentives?*

As an incentive, a fleet owner who retrofits fifty (50) or more eligible buses under this program may be eligible to receive a free cleaning station approved by the Program Administrator.

## **Technical questions**

29. *What is a DPF?*

A DPF (Diesel Particulate Filter) is a device designed to remove diesel particulate matter or soot from the exhaust gas of a diesel engine, most of which are rated at 85% efficiency, but often attaining efficiencies of over 90%. A diesel-powered vehicle with a filter installed will emit no visible smoke or soot from its exhaust pipe.

30. *What is a CCV?*

In many diesel engines, crankcase emissions, or "blow-by" are released directly from the engine through the "road draft tube" to the atmosphere. Closed Crankcase Ventilation (CCV) devices provide a cleaner environment by removing oil in blow-by gasses and directing the gasses to the engine intake where remaining contaminants are combusted in the engine and then filtered by the DPF.

31. *Does a CCV need to be replaced or cleaned?*

In general, there is a filter within a CCV that requires periodic replacement – the same as your air or fuel filter, although some technology components can be cleaned and re-used. Your vendor will provide more detail about the replacement or maintenance frequency.

32. *Does a DPF need to be replaced or cleaned?*

In normal operation, the DPF should not need to be replaced within the life of the vehicle (However, this cannot be guaranteed). Manufacturers recommend cleaning to remove ash buildup every 1-2 years. Typically DPF modules can be easily removed from the assembly with “v-band” clamps to facilitate cleaning. Your vendor will provide more information regarding the frequency of cleaning, and the operational and cost impacts. As an incentive, a fleet owner who retrofits fifty (50) or more eligible buses under this program may be eligible to receive a free cleaning station approved by the Program Administrator.

33. *How much does a DPF cleaning cost?*

The vendor will provide an estimate of the cost for cleaning. However, under this rebate program, the vendor is required to provide a voucher for a single DPF module cleaning at no charge to the bus owner.

34. *What type of fuel is needed to operate the DPF?*

Ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) is required for proper operation of most DPFs although some active DPFs can utilize fuel with higher sulfur content. ULSD is available at most retail fuel outlets.

35. *What is exhaust temperature data logging?*

Exhaust temperature data logging is an electronic record of the exhaust temperature of the bus in normal operation.

36. *How do I data log my exhaust temperature?*

Typically, the DPF/CCV vendor will perform the necessary exhaust temperature data logging. It is performed by inserting a temperature thermocouple into the exhaust pipe just before the existing muffler. The thermocouple is connected to an electronic data logger that will record the temperature over time.

37. *How long do I have to operate the exhaust temperature data logger?*

The vendor will operate or provide guidance on operating the data logger for a period of time necessary to assert that the data logging will support the requirements of the EPA and/or CARB verification. Typically only a few days of operation are necessary but note that ambient temperatures can impact the results and adjustments may need to be made to account for winter operation.

38. *My DPF/CCV vendor says I don't have to data log each bus, but just a typical bus in my fleet. Is this acceptable?*

Yes, as long as the vendor asserts that the data logging meets the requirements of the EPA and/or CARB verification.