

## Parking FAQ

Rev. July, 2018

The following is a list of commonly received questions regarding parking.

### Parking Permit Increase

#### **Q. Why do I have to pay to park?**

A. Parking Services is self-funded; it does not receive funding from the state or tuition. Revenue generated from permit sales and citations funds parking lot improvements and construction, campus safety, security, police services, lighting and surveillance cameras in the parking areas, circulator shuttle routes, and operations.

#### **Q. Why can't my parking permit be included as part of tuition?**

A. By law (see [Texas Education Code, Sec. 54.503\(b\)](#)), parking fees cannot be included as part of tuition.

#### **Q. Why do parking permit rates increase?**

A. Additional revenue is necessary to fund future parking improvements. This allows for investment in parking expansion, technology such as parking lot counters that will make finding parking easier for students and security enhancements such as installation of LED lighting in parking lots.

We are cognizant of price sensitivities regarding fees and compare UTRGV permit rates to other institutions before recommending permit rate changes. In FY 2017, the average cost for surface lot parking among 9 Texas public institutions was \$182 and UTRGV had the lowest parking permit rate at \$80 for Zone 2. This ranking has likely not changed as most institutions increase permit rates annually. UTRGV's Zone 1 permit rate of \$60 has not increased since UTRGV's inception.

#### **Q. What is the approval process for parking permit rate increases?**

A. Recommendations to increase parking permit rates are voted upon by the Parking and Traffic Advisory Committee ("PTAC"). PTAC membership consists of representation from Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Facilities Management, Police Services and Parking Services. The purpose of this Committee is to a) review parking and traffic regulations, b) develop recommendations for regulation revisions, as necessary, and c) to develop an efficient parking and traffic system as it relates to differential parking zones, parking fees, penalties for violations of regulations, arrangements for bicycles, motorcycles, and pedestrian traffic.

On January 19, 2017, PTAC voted in favor of increasing Zone 2 rate by \$20 of the next three years. Zone 2 rate increases from \$60 in FY 2016, \$80 in FY 2018, \$100 in FY 2019 and \$120 in FY 2020.

Additional rate increases have also been made for Zone 5 Administrator permits (increased from \$356 in FY 2016 to \$495 in FY 2018) and Zone 3 Employee permits (increased from \$156 in FY 2017 to \$200 in FY 2019).

There will be opportunities for community engagement before future permit rate increases are implemented.

**Q. What is the difference between Zone 1 and Zone 2 parking permits?**

A. Effective Fall 2018, all students will have the option to purchase Zone 1 or Zone 2 parking permits. This allows students to make their buying decision based on proximity and price. Semester permits are also available for students to purchase. Please see the [Parking Rate Card](#) for applicable rates.

At \$60 for a 12-month period (*averages to \$5 per month*), a Zone 1 parking permit is the most affordable option and allows students to park in remote parking lots. The Vaquero Express Circulator buses make regular and frequent trips in remote parking lots and provide students with FREE rides to designated drop-off locations on the campuses in Brownsville and Edinburg. Please refer to the [Transportation Guide](#) for route information. If you don't mind walking, Zone 1 parking is about a 10-minute walk to the campus core on the Edinburg campus.

At \$100 for a 12-month period (*averages to about \$8 per month*), Zone 2 allows students to park in parking lots that are closer in proximity to academic buildings. Zone 2 permit holders can also park in Zone 1 areas at any time.

After 5 pm, students with a Zone 1 or Zone 2 parking permit can park in Zones 1, 2 or 3 (employee parking).

**Q. I am an A&P staff member. Can I purchase a Zone 2 permit?**

A. A&P staff will be able to purchase only Zone 3 or Zone 5 (if applicable). All other staff can purchase a Zone 3 or Zone 2.

**Q. Are there enough parking spaces for those who purchase a parking permit?**

A. We are currently analyzing supply and demand for parking spaces in Brownsville and anticipate realignment of zone parking areas in the near future to meet demand.

The current parking industry standard ratio for permits to spaces is approximately 3:1. UTRGV's parking ratio is approximately 2:1.

**Q. Are there plans to add more parking?**

A. In Fall 2017, Parking lot B4 added 295 Zone 1 parking spaces in Brownsville. This parking lot is located across from Casa Bella student housing, on the corner of FJRM Avenue and Tyler Street.

We are in the process of adding 240 Zone 2 parking spaces in Edinburg. The new parking area will be located between Van Week and Schunior, on the north side of the College of Education. Target date for completion is Fall 2018.

We are also in the planning stages of developing additional parking expansion options on the Edinburg campus and zone realignment on the Brownsville campus to better meet demand.

**Q. Why hasn't UTRGV built parking garages?**

A. UTRGV assesses supply and demand for parking on a continual basis. While it may become a necessity in the future, there are currently plenty of underutilized parking lots (Zone 1 specifically). Cost for construction of a parking garage, at minimum, would cost in the neighborhood of \$20,000 per space. (For purpose of comparison, a surface lot costs an estimated \$3,000 per space.) Funding such a structure would cause permit prices to increase substantially (remember, we would not receive state or tuition funding to pay for the garage) and would not result in the same quantity of spaces that could be

achieved with surface parking. Many Texas public universities with parking garages sell parking permits in the range of \$400-\$600.

**Q. How will the extra funds from parking rate increases benefit students?**

A. With the projected increase in revenue, we are planning for investment in parking improvements such as:

- Parking expansion and improvements
  - Brownsville – add 295 spaces; Status: Construction Complete; Lot B4
  - Edinburg – add 240 spaces; Status: Construction In Progress (Plans for additional parking is being developed)
  - Maintenance to existing parking lots and restriping of parking spaces; Status: Ongoing
- LED Lighting – Status: Brownsville 57% of target complete; Edinburg 58 % of target complete.
- Technology
  - Parking Lot Counters (with hardware) – Status: Planning
  - Surveillance Cameras (upgrade and replace existing) – Status: Planning
  - Mobile Applications
    - Transportation (Circulator Route); Status: Complete; download DoubleMap app instructions [here](#)
    - Parking Mobile Pay app; Status: Planning
    - Parking Lot Counter Pilot Program – Status: In Progress; estimate available by late Fall 2018
  - Visitor Parking – Luke Pay Station; Status: In Progress; estimate completion by early Fall 2018

**Q. During peak times, where can I find open parking spaces?**

A. Zone 1 often has the most open parking spaces, particularly during peak periods of the day. Peak periods are generally between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday. The Vaquero Express Circulator buses make regular and frequent trips to the remote parking lots and provide students with FREE rides to designated drop-off locations on the campuses in Brownsville and Edinburg. Students can download the DoubleMap mobile application to see when the next bus will arrive. Click [here](#) for more information on the DoubleMap app.

Students with a UTRGV parking permit can also park in any Texas Southmost College (TSC) student parking space on the Brownsville campus.

**Q. Where can I purchase my parking permit?**

A. The UTRGV Parking Portal is available for students to purchase their permits or pay for citations online. To access the UTRGV Parking Portal, click [here](#).

Parking permits can also be purchased in person at the following Parking & Transportation Office locations:

2395 W. University Blvd	or	EASFC Building
Room 1.101A		Room 135
Brownsville		Edinburg

Effective Fall 2018, student parking permit purchases will be posted to your student account (along with tuition and fees). This allows for students to buy now and pay later. They can either offset the cost with financial aid or pay online in ASSIST.

**Q. I heard that employees can purchase their permit as a pre-tax benefit. What does this mean?**

A. This pre-tax benefit is available only through payroll deduction for qualified parking permits, as defined by the IRS and established by UTRGV. Appropriate deductions will be made before federal, state, Social Security, and Medicare taxes are calculated. As a result, your taxable income is reduced, as well as the taxable income reflected on your annual W-2 statement. An employee's gross pay will not change, but the amount of pay subject to tax withholdings will be reduced. The effect is that employees will have an increase in their net pay because less tax will be withheld from their pay.

## General Information

**Q: Where can I Find the Rules and Regulations?**

A. Parking rules and regulations can be found right on our website at [www.utrgv.edu/parking](http://www.utrgv.edu/parking).

**Q: At what time can I park in Zone 3/Reserved spaces?**

A: "Reserved" spaces, also known as "Zone 3" can be used by Zone 1 and Zone 2 permit holders on Monday through Friday after 5 PM, on Saturdays and Sundays, and on holidays unless otherwise marked. Note that a parking permit is required at all times when parked on campus.

**Q. Can I park in a visitor space if I'm a student?**

A. No, these spaces are solely for visitors and neither a Zone 1 or Zone 2 permit will allow you to park in visitor spaces. Visitor spaces are for the use of official guests to the University, someone that is not affiliated as a student or employee.

**Q. Where are the zones?**

A. A map of zones and their locations can be found on the parking website at [www.utrgv.edu/parking](http://www.utrgv.edu/parking).

**Q. I drive a convertible. What do I do?**

A. As a general rule, you shouldn't leave your convertible with the top down in any parking lot. However, if this is what you want to do, we can assign you a nonremovable sticker.

**Q. Do I have to buy a permit if I'm parking after 5:00 pm or on the weekends?**

A. Any vehicle parked on University property must display a permit regardless of the time.

**Q. If I forget to transfer my permit from one car to another, can I still park on campus?**

A. Yes, for those times when you forget your permit you may obtain a temporary permit by coming to the Parking and Transportation office. You may also get a temporary permit online at [www.utrgv.edu/myparking](http://www.utrgv.edu/myparking). Refer to the Parking Rules and Regulations for more information about limitations.

**Q. What happens if my permit is lost/stolen?**

A. You should immediately report the permit as lost/stolen and call the Parking and Transportation office. In some cases you may be asked to come into the office.

**Q. Can I loan or sell my permit to someone else?**

A. No – the permit is assigned to the individual who purchased it. If a fellow student or staff member requires a permit, encourage them to purchase one.

**Q. If I live on campus dorm or Bronc Village do I need to purchase a permit?**

A. Yes, you do.

**Q. How do I upgrade/downgrade my permit?**

A. Eligible permit changes (for example, going from a Zone 1 to a Zone 2) can be handled at our offices. You must bring the current permit and pay any difference in the fee.

**Q. What should I do if I haven't received my permit yet?**

A. When you ordered your permit you should have received a confirmation email. Check that email to see if the permit was erroneously sent to a different location than you intended. Thereafter, you must report the permit as lost/stolen and come to our office for issuance of another permit.

**Q. What should I do if I am having problems with ordering a permit online?**

A. If you are having problems ordering your permit online, you can always come by our office or contact our staff for assistance at [parking@utrgv.edu](mailto:parking@utrgv.edu) or 956-665-2738 in Edinburg or 956-882-7051 in Brownsville.

**Q. Can I get a refund for my permit?**

A. You can obtain a refund on a pro-rated basis depending on how long you've had the permit. More details can be found in the Parking Rules and Regulations at [www.utrgv.edu/parking](http://www.utrgv.edu/parking). Refunds are not issued for student permits after the 12th class day in which the permit was purchased. Employee permit refunds are determined by the number of weeks/months it was used at the time that it is returned.

**Q. When is the deadline for refunds?**

A. Student permit refunds are issued only up to the census date (12th class day) of the semester that the permit was purchased. Employee permit refunds are issued upon exiting the University. No refunds are issued after the Spring semester.

**Q. How can I qualify for a disabled permit?**

A. You don't need a specific permit marked "disabled" to park in disabled spaces. Simply use your government-issued placard or plate; you must also have a UTRGV parking permit.

## Citations and Appeals

**Q. What will happen if I do not pay my campus parking citations?**

A. Those with outstanding citations are subject to having a hold placed on their records and transcripts and their vehicles wheel-locked or towed. In addition, they will be ineligible to purchase a new permit.

**Q. Who may appeal a ticket and how many days do I have to appeal it?**

A. Anyone may appeal a ticket they feel was wrongly issued by visiting the following website: [www.utrgv.edu/myparking](http://www.utrgv.edu/myparking). It may take several weeks to receive a judgment depending on the volume. During the time your appeal is being considered you will not be charged any late fees.