



Vanpool Coordinator Handbook

GetThereOregon.org/Vanpool

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Welcome

Welcome to Get There's Vanpool Coordinator Handbook. Whether you are a current coordinator or have interest in becoming one, this handbook provides you with helpful information and tips to get started, or keep a vanpool rolling smoothly on down the road.

With input from current long-term vanpool coordinators, you'll learn about the roles and responsibilities of vanpoolers, the key steps to starting a vanpool, what successful vanpools have in common, and keep your vanpool going the distance.



Who's Who in Vanpools

Here are the basic roles and responsibilities that every vanpool needs.

"Just because you are the coordinator with your name on the rental agreement, it doesn't mean you have to do it all. Delegate, delegate, delegate."

— Tip from a Coordinator

THE COORDINATORS

Coordinators are the critical link to get and keep vanpools moving. Their responsibilities can vary, but here is what all coordinators have in common:

- Signing a vehicle rental agreement* with an authorized vanpool provider.
- Reporting the vanpool's monthly ridership and fuel expenses. This is essential for the vanpool provider's billing processes and for vanpools to receive a subsidy. To collect ridership data, some vanpools simply pass a clipboard around to collect daily ridership. Some vanpool providers, like Commute with Enterprise, provide an app or other resources to assist with reporting.
- Establishing the payment process for riders.
- Keeping the vanpool's roster of riders updated.
- Ensuring the van is well maintained based on the vehicle rental schedule.
- Being the point of contact for potential new riders.

** Generally, van rental agreements are month to month and can be terminated with 30 days' notice.*

"We have a logbook in the glove compartment to check off the daily riders. It's very important to do this every day so when the time comes to report for the month, it's all there in one place."

— Tip from a Coordinator



Some coordinators take the lead on communications, including scheduling riders and drivers, collecting monthly payments, and developing rules and expectations. Other coordinators share these duties with fellow van riders.


“Have riders set up individual monthly direct pay accounts with the vanpool provider to avoid having to collect checks from everyone.”

— Tip from a Coordinator

THE RIDERS

A vanpool can be formed with as few as five or as many as 15 people, depending on the size of the vehicle. The more riders in the van, the lower the monthly rider fare, and the easier it is to establish multiple driver options.

Rider Requirements:

- Register in Get There Oregon, the statewide ride-matching and trip-planning tool.  [get there](#)
- Sign their vanpool's expectations and guidelines document, as determined by the coordinator and/or riders.
- Fill out monthly schedules for riding and driving (if applicable).
- Submit monthly payment on time, even if you take vacation or are sick, through the vanpool's agreed upon payment method.
- Provide 30 days' advance notice if leaving the vanpool.



THE DRIVERS

Drivers keep the wheels moving on their assigned days. They are fellow riders, not paid staff. It's best for vanpools to have as many drivers as possible to make sure someone is always available to drive the van. Vacations happen, as do colds and flu.

Driver Requirements:

- Be at least 25 years of age with a current Oregon driver's license and five years of driving history.
- Be pre-approved by the vanpool provider (e.g., Commute with Enterprise)
- Adhere to the agreed upon driving schedule.
- Obey the rules of the road.
- Fuel and wash the vehicle.
- Coordinate scheduled maintenance.

Setting Up a Successful Vanpool

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The first decision that must be made as a group involves the meeting location and where to store the van. Questions to consider include:

- Where will you meet before going to work and returning home?
- Does the driver take the van home or park it somewhere convenient such as a centrally located Park and Ride lot?
- Plan a trip at [GetThereOregon.org](https://www.getthereoregon.org) to discover Park & Ride locations.

If the van is damaged overnight, the vanpool provider may cover the costs of repair. Be sure to read over your van's rental agreement and policies.

COMMUNICATION

What is the best way to communicate with everyone in your vanpool? Is it by text, email, or phone?

“Have an active riders’ contact list (email, cell and work phone numbers) in the van at all times. Use group texts to alert people when someone is sick or unable to ride or drive. You don’t want to wait for someone who isn’t riding or worse, leave him or her behind.”

— Tip from a Coordinator

SCHEDULING

The daily schedule of departure is set based on travel time and work schedules, but you also need to know who is available to drive, and if any riders will be absent. You also need a backup driver(s) for vacations or illness.

- Should drivers have set days they are assigned to drive all the time, or will it vary by week?
- Does the same person drive both directions, or does the chipper morning person drive on the way to work while the night owl drives home?
- How long will the vanpool wait for a rider in the morning or evening before it leaves?

“Have two online calendars: one for riders and one for drivers. Agree to fill them in at the beginning of the month to avoid the scheduling frenzies and headaches.”

— Tip from a Coordinator

FARES AND PAYMENT

The fare per passenger is generally based on the cost of the vehicle rental, anticipated fuel costs and any parking expenses, less the subsidy, divided by the number of riders. Things to consider include:

- Will the vanpool's riders offer a varied fare structure or discount to people who take on duties such as driving or being the coordinator?
- Should the fare include a bit more for each seat to create a 'rainy day fund' to keep costs low in the event of fluctuating ridership or rising fuel prices?

If the fare is the same every month, consider having riders establish an automatic payment to reduce the likelihood of late payments. Some vanpool providers offer an online pay portal, or you can have riders pay the Coordinator directly. Some vanpools with varying seat prices have riders directly deposit monthly payments into a vanpool bank account set up by the Coordinator. Keep in mind that ridership can vary. Most vanpools accept part-time riders on a pro-rated basis or provide one-time rides to the occasional commuter for a nominal fee.

"Make sure your vanpool stays fiscally healthy and create a rainy day fund by agreeing on a slight increase (7-10%) to each seat's monthly cost. It's a good idea to have at least one month's rental fee in the bank to cover costs should ridership be low or the vanpool ceases."

— Tip from a Coordinator

MAINTAIN RIDERSHIP

If ridership is low, ask riders to help recruit new members. Contact your vanpool provider for help in finding possible riders. Ask the Human Resources Representative or Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) at your worksite for a list of co-workers who may live in your area, to post flyers at your worksite, and to advertise within your company.

AVAILABLE SUBSIDIES

Your vanpool provider will help you determine if there are subsidies available to help with your vanpool. For more information about public vanpool programs in Oregon go to GetThereOregon.org/Vanpool.

“We charge \$5 extra every month to cover us in lean summer months when students leave the van before they return in fall. If our fund gets too big, Enterprise sends us a check and our van decides how to use it.”

— Tip from a Coordinator

EXTRAS

Do you want extra items for your vanpool like Wi-Fi, satellite radio, or bike racks? These could be added with a small additional monthly cost, if any.



VANPOOLS IN ACTION

No two vanpools are alike. They can vary in a number of ways, including the coordinator's role, the level of responsibility for drivers and riders, whether discounts are offered for vanpool coordination and driving, how rosters are updated, payment collection, and overall vanpool road culture. Below are examples of how three current vanpools are operating, with roles/responsibilities shown in Table 1. You can choose, adapt, or create your own operational model that best works for your van.

Coordinator-led:

The vanpool coordinator takes full responsibility for the vanpool's functioning. This model could leave the vanpool operation vulnerable if the coordinator chooses to leave, as other riders wouldn't have the knowledge or experience to take up leadership.

Cooperative-based:

Allows for all riders to have ownership of the vanpool's functioning.

60/40 Coordinator Shared:

Allows for shared leadership of the vanpool's functioning.

Table 1: Sample Vanpool Operation Models

MODEL	ROLE	RENTAL HOLDER	PAYMENT COLLECTION	VAN ROSTER	VAN SCHEDULE	MAINTENANCE	DRIVE	DISCOUNT*	NOTES
Coordinator-led	Coordinator	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	Rides for free
	Riders							N	
	Riders/ Drivers						X	Y	\$15/month discount. Van has a different driver for each day with one back up driver.
Cooperative-based	Coordinator	X		X			X	Y	\$25/month discount for coordinator. If coordinator also drives, no fee for monthly seat. All riders pay a base \$25 membership fee.
	Riders		X		X	X		Y	\$15 off to riders who help clean and maintain van.
	Riders/ Drivers					X	X	Y	\$5 off every day you drive
60 / 40 Coordinator Shared	Coordinator	X		X			X	Y	\$10/month discount
	Rider		X		X	X		N	
	Riders/ Drivers						X	Y	\$2.50 off every day you drive

* Should your vanpool offer discounts for various duties, remaining riders will need to be charged more to meet the monthly operating expense



What are Best Practices in Vanpooling?

Many vanpool models can and do work but here are what long-term, successful, and “hassle free” vanpools have in common:

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

It is essential to start off with an agreed upon list of your vanpool’s rules and expectations with signatures from all riders.

Your vanpool provider can assist with creating a list of rules and expectations for your van.

Once created, make sure all riders sign it.

Some common rules and expectations include:

- **Use agreed upon communications channels.** Be clear on how the riders will communicate with one another. Group texts work well for many vanpools.
- **Be on time.** Set a time frame of how long the van will wait for a rider.



- **Pay on time.** Be clear about when payment is due, how much it is, when and what notification will happen (e.g. email), and how to pay (individual Enterprise accounts, direct pay to the Coordinator, or by check).
- **Try to keep schedule changes to a minimum.** Use online calendars and email or print at the beginning of the month and share them with everyone. It's important to make sure you know who is driving and riding each day.

Who's Here to Help?

You have support that's ready and eager to help you. Visit ***GetThereOregon.org/Vanpool*** for a list of public vanpool programs that will have additional information on cost benefits your vanpool may be eligible for.

If you are not satisfied with the service you get from your vanpool provider, please contact us at ***info@getthereoregon.org*** to see if we can help.



GET THERE OREGON



Get There Oregon is an online ride-matching and trip-planning tool. Get There provides a way for potential riders to communicate directly with the vanpool coordinators, and encourages ridesharing through local reward programs.

COMMUTE WITH ENTERPRISE



Commute with Enterprise is the primary vanpool provider in Oregon. They can help with rider recruitment, offer information on available vanpool subsidies and requirements, and provide resources and services to start and continue a vanpool. Vans that are rented through Enterprise come with fuel cards, cost-free maintenance plans, roadside assistance, and online trip reporting, billing, and full coverage insurance. A variety of vans are available to accommodate seven to fifteen passengers including sport utility vehicles, mini vans and passenger vans.

As a full-service transportation agency, C-TRAN provides vans for use by commuters who travel to, from or through the C-TRAN service area in Clark County, Washington. Commuters receive comfortable, convenient travel in exchange for a monthly fare, which covers the cost of the van's operation. Learn more at c-tran.com//vanpool.

Additional Available Vanpool Support

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME (ERH) PROGRAM

Emergencies can happen. Emergency Ride Home (ERH) is available in many parts of Oregon. Check with your vanpool provider for information about programs in your region. In addition to the ERH program which may be available through your vanpool provider, you may qualify for a back up ERH when you regularly log your commute trips in Get There Oregon.

Qualifying emergencies include:

- Personal or family illness or emergency
- Vanpool ride home is suddenly unavailable due to driver illness or emergency
- Unscheduled overtime

Non-qualifying emergencies:

- Planned overtime, personal errands, or scheduled appointments
- Business related travel
- Regional disasters, such as earthquake or flood ¹
- Inclement weather

¹ In the event of a natural disaster, contact your local Enterprise office for potential ERH options.

COMMUTE WITH ENTERPRISE EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM

- Contact Commute with Enterprise at 800-VAN-4-WORK or call a local Enterprise office for their ERH options and opportunities.
- Enterprise will provide a 24-hour rental car free of charge or will reimburse for a one-way taxi, Uber or Lyft ride with a provided receipt.
- Up to three qualifying emergency rental cars or rides per year.
- See the Commute with Enterprise website or materials in the van's glove box for additional details.



FLEXIBLE COMMUTER BENEFITS

Check with your employer to see if they can help pay your vanpool costs or provide pre-tax benefits.

Section 132F of the Federal tax code enables employers to provide pre-tax payment options for transit and parking, which can apply to vanpools in two ways:

Direct subsidies: Employers can receive a tax deduction for the first \$280 they contribute each month to your vanpool fare.

Pre-tax benefits: Employees could withhold up to \$280 of pre-tax income from monthly pay towards the cost of vanpooling.

Key Contacts

To set up or join a vanpool, inquire about vanpool subsidies and requirements, or recruit riders, contact:



Commute with Enterprise

commutewithenterprise.com

gp46@commutewithenterprise.com

800-VAN-4-WORK

For technical questions about Get There or to inquire about local incentive programs, contact:



Get There Oregon

GetThereOregon.org

info@getthereoregon.org



GetThereOregon.org



971-202-9758



info@GetThereOregon.org

 **get there**