

VANPOOL

Welcome to the King County Metro Commuter Van Program (aka “Metro Vanpool”)!

We are so glad you’re here. Joining the King County Metro Commuter Van Program is a great choice. This guide is here to help you understand the program—and the community—you’re now a part of, as well as your responsibilities as a driver, bookkeeper, or other group participant.

We’re Here to Help!

King County Metro Mobility Services (the “Vanpool office”) is here to help. Call us with any questions at 206-625-4500. We’re available Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. You can also email us at vanpool@kingcounty.gov.

What Is Metro Vanpool?

For more than 45 years—starting with the 1979 oil crisis—the King County Metro Commuter Van Program has provided public rideshare services for commuters who live or work in King County. Vanpool gives you the convenience of a shared commute to work when other options may not be available, convenient, or affordable. It also reduces traffic congestion by thousands of vehicles every day, saves gas, and cuts greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Vanpool:** Groups of 5 or more commuters who pay a monthly fare to use a Metro vehicle to share the ride to work, rotating driving and record keeping responsibilities. **Vanpools travel from home to work and back.**
- **Vanshare:** Groups of 5 or more commuters who pay a monthly fare to use a Metro vehicle to share the ride and connect to/from transit. **Vanshare provides first/last mile connections between home or work (up to 10 miles) to transit services such as train, ferry or bus.**

While the Vanpool and Vanshare services are distinct, collectively they are referred to as “Metro Vanpool.” Unless noted otherwise, this guidance applies to both services.

Program Intent

Metro Vanpool is intended to help groups of commuters with similar commutes share a ride to work and back each day in the most direct way possible. Central pickup locations such as park-and-rides are encouraged over door-to-door pickups to save on vehicle miles and commute time. Riders may participate full time or part time, round trip or one way, so long as groups maintain minimum ridership requirements.

Metro Vanpool Benefits

Your monthly fare includes the vehicle, fuel card, maintenance, insurance, roadside assistance, and a guaranteed ride home program. Groups are eligible to use high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and

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ramps, bypass some tolls, access designated parking where applicable, and qualify for [special permits](#) on Washington State Ferries.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is for current and prospective Metro Vanpool customers.

Interested in Forming a New Group?

Read on to learn more about how Metro Vanpool works. Ready to roll? Visit our [Start a new Vanpool or Vanshare form](#).

Need a quick monthly fixed rate or individual fare estimate? Use our online [Fare Estimator](#).

While you are welcome to read this entire guide, you may want to jump to a certain topic to find guidance quickly. Use these links to access the info you need, or [contact us](#) if you can't find what you're looking for:

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We Are Here to Support You

Metro Mobility Services, referred to throughout this guide as the “Vanpool office,” has many resources in place to make sure you have what you need to succeed. While this guide covers the bulk of what you need to know, you can always contact us if you can’t find the info you need.

Contacting the Vanpool Office

Vanpool office staff may be reached by email at vanpool@kingcounty.gov or by phone at 206-625-4500. We are available to answer calls or respond to email Monday through Friday 8 am to 5 pm (excluding holidays). For emergency assistance outside of office hours, you may always call **206-625-4500** to connect with our on-call response staff.

More Emergency Info

See Planning for Emergencies and Seasonal Weather Conditions for more info.

Know Your Group Identification Number (GIN)

Every group is assigned a Group Identification Number (GIN); email vanpool@kingcounty.gov if you do not know yours. Have your GIN on hand when contacting the Vanpool office so we can serve you quickly. When leaving a voicemail or emailing us, please include your name, GIN, and a brief description of your reason for contacting us.

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Your Metro Vanpool Community

Vanpooling is a shared ride and public transportation. Success happens when all group participants understand the program, work together to share common responsibilities, and stay together as a group. Learn more about group setup, participant responsibilities, and dynamics in this section.

Best Practices for Group Operations

Everyone plays a part in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment. Toward that end, each group creates internal guidelines for their operations, including considerations such as the following:

- **Respect:** Encourage all participants to treat each other with respect, communicate openly, anticipate potential problems, and establish a process for resolving conflict.
- **Communication:** Create a group email or text, or use a messaging app, for quick and easy communication. This is helpful for sharing important info about program updates, breakdowns, emergencies, late arrivals, no-shows, and adverse weather events.
- **Sharing Driving:** Having more approved drivers increases reliability and flexibility to manage absences and scheduling conflicts. Beyond that, sharing driving duties prevents burnout.
- **Centralizing Parking:** Park the vehicle at a designated driver's home, ensuring multiple drivers have access for coverage during absences.
- **Route:** Groups decide where riders will be picked up based on park-and-ride lots or other locations central to riders' homes and the best route to work. Metro encourages 1 or 2 pickup locations to streamline the route and minimize travel time. Any proposed route must be reviewed and approved by Metro. Route changes may affect fares and should be discussed in the group before submittal to the Vanpool office for approval.
- **Schedule:** Establish a clear schedule with regular pickup and drop-off times.
- **Wait times:** Your group will need to establish how long your group will wait for riders who are late. Metro suggests a 2- to 4-minute wait time to maintain punctuality, respect everyone's time, and prevent delays. Encourage communication from riders who will be late.
- **Seating:** Decide on seating arrangements. First out sits closest to the door? Assigned seats? Or other arrangement? Rotating seating assignments could be a compromise, if needed.
- **Noise:** Discuss preferences around noise in the vehicle related to taking phone calls, using headphones, and conversation levels.
- **Radio:** Typically, the driver chooses what is played in the vehicle while driving. Having the radio turned off or rotating radio stations or other audio at a low level could be an option if there is disagreement.
- **Scents:** Consider a "no scents" agreement in the vehicle in case participants are sensitive or allergic to scents. Be aware and considerate that some participants may require personal products that are scented.

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- **Resolving Concerns:** Group participants need to be prepared to compromise if there is disagreement. If a compromise can't be reached among the group, contact the Vanpool office at 206-425-6500 for assistance.

In the rare occurrence that a group is not able to resolve an issue, the group must come to a general agreement. The goal is for group consensus but if that cannot happen, the Vanpool office may need to get involved to support a decision that's best for the group or the Vanpool program. While very rare, this may include disbanding the group.

For roles and responsibilities related to specific group participant roles, see [Group Roles and Responsibilities](#).

Participant Removal

Group participants must not be “voted out” or otherwise removed from a group. Contact the Vanpool office with any questions.

“Remember, this is your group. It’s up to everybody to pitch in and help out. Make it a community.”
– Metro Vanpool customer

Group Roles and Responsibilities

Each group needs at least 2 approved drivers, a maintenance contact, a public contact, and a bookkeeper. Other group participants are riders.

All Group Participants

Before riding, each group participant must complete and sign the [Metro Commuter Van Program Application & Agreement with Terms & Conditions](#), or “PA” for short. Other key responsibilities that apply to all group participants are discussed in this section. Additional details may be found in *Section A: All participants* of the [Program Application Terms and Conditions](#).

In some cases, youth riders may also be allowed. If you have a potential youth rider, contact the Vanpool office for more information and to see if they are eligible.

GROUP PARTICIPANTS MUST

- Be familiar and comply with Metro Vanpool policies and all applicable laws.
- Be on time at pickup points.
- Communicate with the group, including notifying the driver of changes in schedule, if out sick, on vacation, and so on.
- Keep the vehicle clean.
- Help driver navigate parking and backing up.

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- Pay all required fares (see Fare Payment).
- Notify the bookkeeper at least 15 days before leaving the group and pay your fare during the 15-day period. (Your fare may be prorated according to the appropriate daily fare schedule.)
- Take time to review program updates sent by the Vanpool office.
- Sign up for [Vanpool bulletin news](#).

GROUP PARTICIPANTS MAY ALSO

- Help recruit riders. You can use internal worksite communications to recruit riders or visit RideshareOnline.com to find additional matches. For additional recruiting assistance, contact vanpool@kingcounty.gov or call 206-625-4500.
- Hold group meetings as desired.

GROUP PARTICIPANTS **MUST NOT**

- Use a Metro vehicle for personal purposes; the vehicle is for commute trips only to and from work.
- Use a Metro vehicle to engage in any illegal, improper, or criminal activity or to violate any local, state, or federal statute.
- Drive a Metro vehicle if they have not been approved by Metro and completed the driver orientation.
- Add or remove accessories from a Metro vehicle, including seats, equipment, advertising, or promotional items (such as license plate frames, bumper stickers, or decals).

Code of Conduct

Vanpool is Metro public transit and participants should abide by Metro's [Code of Conduct](#) and common-sense guidelines to riding in public transit. Vanpool groups have autonomy to set other guidelines for themselves but must still follow the specific requirements of Metro Vanpool.

Handling Complaints

There may be times when the public or group participants voice complaints about an unsafe or questionable practice. Our office phone number is listed on the side of our vehicles, which makes it easy for public feedback to be reported.

While safety and improper parking are the most common complaints received by our office, complaints may also be about something occurring during the commute in the vehicle. All complaints are taken seriously and investigated by staff. More info about complaint types and how they are handled can be found [here](#).

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Fare Payment

Many group participants receive fare assistance from their employer. For your convenience, multiple fare payment options are available, including easy online payment. Fare payment options and details are described in this section:

- Employer-provided ORCA card (including U-Pass)
- Monthly Metro Vanpool passes
- Online credit card payment
- Vanpool voucher
- Personal check

Employer-Provided ORCA Cards or U-Pass

Many employers participate in King County Metro's ORCA Business Program to provide comprehensive, annual transit benefits for employees. This includes the University of Washington U-Pass program. Some programs provide Vanpool or Vanshare subsidies, ranging anywhere from \$20 per month to a 100% subsidy. Ask your employer what benefits are available to you. **Note:** To use the subsidy, you must submit a completed [ORCA Business Passport Use Form](#).

Monthly Metro Vanpool Passes

The only monthly transit pass accepted as payment toward a monthly Vanpool or Vanshare fare is the Monthly Metro Vanpool pass. These passes may be purchased [online](#) or at [ORCA retail outlets](#). The pass can also be used for rides on Metro buses.

Value Toward Monthly Fare

The value of a participant's ORCA Business Passport, U-Pass, or Monthly Metro Vanpool Pass may not always equal their monthly fare. If the monthly pass value is **less** than the monthly fare, the participant will need to pay the balance. They may write a check to the bookkeeper for the difference or pay their balance online.

If the monthly pass value is **greater** than the monthly fare, there will be no credits or refunds. The excess value cannot be applied toward group expenses, additional use or another participant's fare. The maximum value that can be claimed cannot exceed that particular rider's individual fare.

Nontransferable Nature

Employer-provided ORCA cards or other Vanpool benefits and the Monthly Metro Vanpool pass may be used to pay a monthly fare only and are not transferable to another person.

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Online Credit Card Payment

You can pay online through myORCA with your **Visa, Amex, Mastercard or Discover** card. You don't need to have an ORCA card to use this service to pay your Vanpool fare. Follow these steps:

1. Sign in to www.myORCA.com. (Note: you don't need to have an ORCA card to use this service to pay your Vanpool fare.) If you don't have an account yet, select the **Sign in/Sign up option** and choose **Sign up** in the bottom right corner. Follow the prompts to create a new account.
2. After logging in, choose **Pay for Vanpool** from the left-hand menu. Enter your fare amount, fare period, agency (King County Metro), Vanpool Group Identification Number (GIN), rider name, and any additional payment details if necessary. Choose **Add to Cart**.
3. Review your order in the shopping cart. New payment methods can be added and saved if desired. Accepted credit cards include Visa, Amex, Mastercard, and Discover. Choose **Place Order** when ready to finalize payment.
4. Your receipt will be saved in the Order History page, and a copy will be sent to the email address on file.

Note: ORCA e-Purse may not be used to pay Vanpool fares.

Vouchers

Some participants receive vouchers from their employer that may be applied directly toward monthly fares.

Note: Credit **will not** be given if the amount of the voucher exceeds the monthly fare.

Personal Checks

Participants may also provide their bookkeeper with a personal check.

Riders

Any group participant not driving a particular trip is a rider. Even if they aren't fulfilling a specific role such as public contact or bookkeeper, riders can help their group operate smoothly by cooperating with the driver and assisting in many situations, including those noted here.

RIDERS MAY

- Assist with inspecting and maintaining the vehicle.
- Assist with reporting any vehicle damage to the Vanpool office.
- Assist with handling emergencies and breakdowns.

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Drivers

All volunteer drivers, both primary and backup, have specific responsibilities and limitations, described in this section. Additional details may be found in *Section B: Drivers* of the [Program Application Terms and Conditions](#).

NOTE: A primary driver may not also be the bookkeeper.

DRIVERS MUST

Driver Eligibility & Requirements

- Complete an [application](#) and be approved by Metro to be authorized to drive a Metro-owned vehicle.
- Meet and maintain the established [driver selection criteria](#).

Daily Operations & Driving Responsibilities

- Complete a [pre-trip checklist](#) to check for damage, maintenance needs, and cleanliness.
- Drive vehicle safely to and from work, picking up and dropping off riders in accordance with the mutually established route and schedule.
- Coordinate to ensure easy vehicle key and fuel card exchange process for driver of the day.

Parking & Vehicle Storage

- Park the vehicle off street in a driveway, garage, or assigned parking space at their residence overnight. Other parking accommodations may be granted as an exception following review and approval by the Vanpool office.
- Follow all local parking requirements, laws, and signs. Drivers are responsible for paying any parking tickets or impound fees for parking violations while using a Metro vehicle, as well as any enforcement tickets, speeding, HOV lane violation, and other fines.

Fueling & Mileage Reporting

- Enter accurate odometer readings when fueling the vehicle.
- Communicate all miles traveled to the bookkeeper through month-end odometer readings, including any mileage traveled in loaner vehicles.

Alternate Transportation Planning

- Have a plan for alternate transportation when the vehicle is not available such as unexpected schedule changes, during vehicle maintenance, or severe weather.

Emergencies & Incident Reporting

- Handle [emergencies](#) and [breakdowns](#).
- Notify the Vanpool office of any moving violation, traffic citation or collision, even in their own vehicle.
- Report all vehicle incidents, damage, and issues immediately. Serious injuries, vehicle or property damage, or missing or stolen vehicles must be reported immediately to law

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enforcement and the Vanpool office. This includes collisions or damage in a personal vehicle. Please refer to the emergency procedures packet in the vehicle's glove box or [online](#).

How do I purchase fuel?

Each group is issued a credit card (Voyager fuel card) to pay for fuel and car washes. Refer to the Voyager fuel card instructions for use. Never leave the card in the vehicle. Do not use personal credit cards to purchase fuel unless in an emergency situation. Call 206-625-4500 for instructions if necessary.

DRIVERS MAY

- Make minimal stops during and along their regular approved commute route that are considered complementary to the commute if they do not exceed the group's approved round-trip miles.

DRIVERS MUST NOT

- Drive a Metro vehicle outside the state or more than 200 miles from Seattle.
- Use a Metro vehicle for hire (for example, Uber, Lyft, or taxi services).
- Use a Metro vehicle to transport any people or groups without express authorization from Metro. Groups include sports teams, school, youth, scouting, senior, or community groups.
- Use a Metro vehicle for business purposes such as using the vehicle during work hours to travel or transport coworkers to meetings or other functions.
- Use a Metro vehicle to tow or haul garbage, debris, excessive loads, heavy loads or items, trailers, recreational vehicles, lumber, mattresses, or animals.
- Transport anything other than the allowable passenger limit.
- Use a Metro vehicle for off-road, recreational travel, or ski trips. The vehicle **MUST NOT** go over mountain passes during snow, unless for an authorized commute route.
- Drive a Metro vehicle over bridges or roads that post a maximum capacity of 4 tons or less.

Can I use a Metro vehicle for a personal trip?

Vanpools may not be used for any personal use. Groups may round up to the nearest 5-mile increment for daily round-trip miles, which will provide mileage cushion for fueling and washing the vehicle, driver exchanges, detours, and other vehicle-related maintenance and upkeep. You may also use this cushion of miles for minimal stops during and along your regular approved commute route

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that are considered complementary to the commute if they do not exceed the group's approved round-trip miles. For more info, contact the Vanpool office.

Maintenance Contact

The maintenance contact is responsible for coordinating vehicle maintenance, exchanges, or returns. The maintenance contact may be the primary driver, the backup driver, or another group participant. Detailed responsibilities of the maintenance contact can be found in the [Vehicle Maintenance](#) section.

Public Contact

At least one person must serve as the public contact. The public contact is responsible for responding to inquiries from prospective riders through [RideshareOnline.com](https://rideshareonline.com) or other recruiting efforts. They can also proactively visit RideshareOnline.com to find matches. For recruiting assistance, contact vanpool@kingcounty.gov or call 206-625-4500. More info about recruiting and communicating with prospective riders can be found in Metro Vanpool and Vanshare Recruiting Tips and Tricks.

Bookkeepers

One person volunteers to serve as the group's bookkeeper but having additional approved bookkeepers as backup is recommended to assist with coverage. The bookkeeper supports the reporting operations for the group, including completing the monthly report on time, collecting expense receipts, and calculating/collecting fares from other group members. This section provides an overview of the key responsibilities of a bookkeeper, while further specifics, including how to complete the monthly reports, are provided in the [Bookkeeping Details](#) section.

NOTE: The bookkeeper may not also be the primary driver.

BOOKKEEPERS MUST

- Complete an [application](#) and be approved by Metro to serve as bookkeeper (note: all bookkeepers are approved on a 6-month probationary status).
- Agree to program terms and conditions.
- All Bookkeepers should complete the online [Bookkeeper Tutorial training module](#) (may be waived).
- Calculate and collect fares from participants by the 10th of the each month.
- Collect expense reimbursement forms and receipts monthly.
- Obtain vehicle odometer reading from the driver (including loaner vehicles and maintenance trips) monthly.
- Complete and submit the monthly report by the 10th of each month.

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All groups are assigned an Accounting Rideshare Services Representative (RSR) to assist with completing monthly reports and to answer accounting and policy questions. Your Accounting RSR will also review your monthly reports and contact you with follow-up questions. If you are unsure who your Accounting RSR is, call 206-625-4500 for assistance.

Driver Selection Criteria

Drivers (both primary and backup) must meet certain criteria to be eligible for these positions, as detailed in the following table:

1. Age: At least 21 years of age.
2. Employment: Employed by present employer for two years, or other indications of stable employment.
3. License and Experience: An ideal applicant will have a valid and unrestricted (corrective lenses acceptable) Washington State driver’s license and five (5) years of verifiable driving history. However, an otherwise well-qualified applicant with a minimum of three (3) years of verifiable driving history may be accepted in a probationary status until a full five (5) years of history is reached.
4. Medical Conditions: The highest health standards are required for vehicle drivers. Any condition that would impair a driver’s ability to operate the vehicle may result in not being accepted. (Poor eyesight that is correctable by lenses in acceptable.) If necessary, Metro may require a physical examination to make a determination.
5. Incidents: An ideal applicant will be collision-free for at least three (3) years. However, an otherwise well-qualified applicant may be considered if they have no more than one non-preventable collision within three years. In addition, the following will be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicants with a conviction involving a fatal collision (vehicular homicide, manslaughter, etc.), using a vehicle in the commission of a felony, and/or vehicular assault will not be accepted. ▪ Applicants with a conviction for negligent driving, reckless driving, hit and run, leaving an accident scene, or driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol within the last ten (10) years will be not accepted. ▪ Applicants with a license suspension or revocation within the last five (5) years will not be accepted.
6. Violations: An ideal applicant will have no moving violations for the past three (3) years (excluding parking citations). However, an otherwise well-qualified applicant may be considered if they have no more than one minor citation within three years. This will be verified with state records.

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7. **Alcohol and Drugs:** An applicant who reports any alcohol- or drug-related charge within the past 10 years will not be accepted.

8. **Off-Street Parking:** Applicants must be able to provide off-street parking at a private residence when the vehicle is not in use. A Metro approved parking exception must be obtained where off-street parking is not available.

9. **Certificate of Financial Responsibility (CFR):** An applicant who has had to file a CFR due to his or her personal driving record will not be accepted.

Rideshare Services Representatives (RSRs)

Metro's Rideshare Services Representatives, also known as RSRs, are key members of the Vanpool community. These subject matter experts provide personalized support to each group in the following areas:

- **Formations:** When you form a new group, the Formations RSR will answer program questions you may have, keep you on track with completing any required steps, and make sure all necessary roles are filled. Before the vehicle may be picked up, they will approve the group route, review and confirm group details, and ensure assigned RSRs are finalized.
- **Maintenance:** Your Maintenance RSR will be assigned based on [which garage you use](#), and they will reach out to the group's driver or maintenance contact once the group is active. The Maintenance RSR will help you [schedule](#) required routine service and resolve vehicle issues.
- **Accounting:** The Accounting RSR will contact the bookkeeper once the group is active. This RSR provides essential bookkeeper support with monthly forms, accurate reporting, and fare payments.
- **Group:** Your Group RSR is available to aid drivers and group participants with all other support.

If you don't know who your RSR is, feel free to call the Vanpool office for help at 206-625-4500 or email vanpool@kingcounty.gov.

Ridership and Route Requirements

Metro Vanpool represents a significant investment of resources from King County Metro, local employers, and individual participants. To ensure a good return on this investment, Metro has ridership requirements and reviews group routes to ensure each group operates as efficiently as possible.

King County Metro Vanpool ridership requirements are based on the number of full-time riders in a group. Riders are considered "full time" if they ride on most days, for most of the commute, and pay a full-time fare.

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Riders are considered “part time” if they ride fewer than half the weekly trips or less than half the distance and pay the part-time fare. Two part-time riders may count toward the ridership requirements.

Ridership Requirements

Vehicle Size	Ridership Requirement
5-passenger vehicle	5
7-passenger vehicle	5
12-passenger vehicle	7
15-passenger vehicle	12

Regardless of vehicle size, each commute trip must include a minimum of three (3) participants. Beyond that, groups should aim to operate with full vehicles as often as possible. Groups that have a large number of hybrid workers or part-time riders may “oversubscribe” their group to include more potential riders than seats.

Building Strong Ridership

Maintaining the right number of riders, drivers, and bookkeepers is critical, as groups with unfilled roles or low ridership may be folded. Follow these tips to keep your group going strong:

- Ensure the group has enough drivers to provide consistent daily operation in the absence of the primary driver. While 2 drivers is the minimum, more is better. In some groups, everyone is a backup driver.
- If you regularly have empty seats in your vehicle, it is time to recruit more participants. In the short term, this can reduce fares for everyone. In the long term, it can support minimum ridership levels should you lose riders.
- Everyone should pitch in to find new riders when needed. Recruiting tips and tricks can be found [here](#).
- You can also designate a recruiting coordinator, usually the public contact to use RideshareOnline.com and/or work with Metro to build ridership.
- Many groups oversubscribe riders to support hybrid work and part-time participants. Larger vehicles may be available upon request.

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In the event your group drops below the minimum ridership requirements, the Vanpool office will be in touch to provide recruiting assistance as well as to provide guidance on how much time the group will have to recruit additional riders.

Trading for a Larger or Smaller Vehicle

If the number of participants in your group changes, you may want to trade to a larger or smaller vehicle. This may be an option; contact the Vanpool office for assistance. Vehicle assignments are based on a variety of factors such as commute length, ridership levels, and operating schedule.

What if I leave the program or change groups?

Rider: Notify bookkeeper at least 15 days before leaving the group and pay your fares during the 15-day period. (Your fare may be prorated according to appropriate daily fare schedule.)

Bookkeeper: Notify your group that they will need to identify a new bookkeeper. Notify Vanpool office.

Driver: Notify backup drivers, bookkeeper, and group as soon as possible. Notify Vanpool office.

Note: Any driver who leaves the program must contact the Vanpool office for approval before they may drive a Metro vehicle again. If you leave a group to join another, make sure you contact us to ensure driver approval remains active. Also notify Metro if you change your employer, worksite, name, address, or phone numbers.

Maintaining an Efficient Route

Program staff review proposed group routes and meeting locations to verify accurate round-trip miles and ensure efficient use of the vehicle by reviewing where riders live, work, and meet the vehicle. Groups may be required to revise inefficient routes. Contact us at 206-625-4500 or vanpool@kingcounty.gov if you ever need help.

Operating Your Metro Vehicle

This section is organized into the following 3 topics:

- [Safe operating habits](#)
- [Vehicle maintenance](#)
- [Incidents and emergencies](#)

This section is most pertinent to the program's volunteer drivers or maintenance contacts, but all group participants will benefit from being familiar with this info.

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Special Lanes of Travel

Vanpool groups may use transit lanes when the lane is specifically designated as a “High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)” lane, which allows vehicles with multiple passengers to use it during the designated hours. Keep these guidelines in mind:

- **Check signage:** Always check the signage on the road to confirm if the lane is a transit-only lane or an HOV lane, as rules can vary depending on location.
- **Vanpool eligibility:** To use the HOV lane, a vehicle needs to have the required number of passengers to qualify as a HOV—that could mean 3 or more people in certain areas.
- **Time restrictions:** Some HOV lanes may have special access requirements during specific peak commute hours.

Safe Driving Habits

Metro Vanpool has an impressive safety record because of the quality of our volunteer drivers. Driving your vehicle safely is an important responsibility, and adhering to the following safety guidelines will help you adjust to safely driving a Metro vehicle.

Safe operation of the vehicle is important to preventing injury and keeping costs and fares low for everyone.

Most collisions happen during the morning and evening commutes. The top causes are colliding with fixed objects (such as parking garages, trees, or poles), hitting parked cars, and rear-ending other vehicles. Slow down and give yourself extra time and space to respond to changing conditions during your commute. Follow the additional best practices in this section for safe driving.

Always Remember

As a driver, it is your responsibility to operate your vehicle as safely as possible for the welfare of you, your group, the community, and the Metro Vanpool program.

Be Alert, Stay in Control, and Anticipate Changes

Distracted driving is unlawful in Washington State. Avoid activities that can distract you and interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle such as cellphone use, eating, and drinking. If you ever feel distracted, upset, ill, or tired, ask your backup driver to take over.

Knowing what is going on around you and making sure other drivers are aware of you is an important part of defensive driving. Scan all mirrors on a regular basis to see what is happening to the sides and rear of your vehicle. This will help you anticipate and avoid dangerous situations.

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Use Spotters

Things are often closer than they appear. A spotter is a rider who is sitting in the front passenger seat or in a rear corner seat. They can help you see what is in your blind spots. Use spotters as necessary but especially to check your clearances when backing up and parking in confined areas or parking garages.

Following and Stopping Distance

- Establish and maintain a cushion of space around your vehicle so you will have room to avoid danger, if needed. Scan your mirrors and be alert to changing traffic conditions around you. Use a 3- to 4-second following distance and **do not** tailgate the vehicle in front of you. Increase this distance during adverse weather or on rough roads.
- If the vehicle behind is tailgating you, increase the room in front of your vehicle so you can brake smoothly and slowly.
- Be prepared to stop when approaching intersections where the light has been green for a while. Always look both ways before proceeding into the intersection.
- Watch for people walking and biking and allow at least the required 3 feet of space when passing.
- Be especially aware around schools, parks, playgrounds, youth, and children. Observe reduced speed requirements in school and construction zones.

Safe Lane Changes

Use your turn signal every time you make a lane change. Check your blind spots before changing lanes or merging.

Maneuvering and Vehicle Clearances

Larger vehicles handle differently than smaller ones. As collisions with fixed objects such as a tree or pole account for a large amount of body damage to vehicles, use extra caution when moving in traffic and parking areas. Remember these additional considerations:

- When cornering, reduce your speed and make a wider turn by starting the turn farther forward in the intersection.
- Full-size vehicles (12 to 15 passengers) require 7 feet, 3 inches of overhead clearance, and smaller vehicles (5 to 7 passengers) require 6 feet, 4 inches overhead clearance. If roadway or garage height clearances do not meet those requirements, **do not enter**. Avoid entrances with no posted height clearances.

Follow State Law—Click-It or Ticket!

Do not drive your vehicle until you and all riders have your seatbelts fastened.

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Parking the Vehicle

Pull completely out of traffic so you are not blocking any other vehicles, place the vehicle in park, and apply the parking brake. When parking at the end of your trip, ensure you are in an authorized parking location and remember the following tips:

- ✓ Always lock your vehicle.
- ✓ Close all windows.
- ✓ Turn off electrical accessories, especially reading lights.
- ✓ Remove all valuables.
- ✓ Never leave the fuel card or spare keys with the vehicle.

Program-Specific Parking Requirements

Vanpool Parking

Metro vehicles are required to be parked off street at a driver's home overnight to protect them from damage. Parking exceptions may be granted to drivers who do not have off-street parking.

Vanshare Parking

Metro vehicles must be parked in the designated origin associated with the group's approved route.

Adding a Bike Rack to the Vehicle

More and more commuters are combining bicycling and vanpooling. Metro has a supply of bike racks that may be provided, upon group request and availability. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the bike rack is properly installed and secured to the vehicle according to the manufacturer instructions. Contact us if you have a bike rack with any missing parts or to return the rack.

Bike Rack Requirements

When in use, it is the driver and bicycle owner's responsibility to ensure the bike is mounted and secured according to the manufacturer instructions.

- Only Metro-approved bike racks are allowed on program vehicles.
- Manufacturer instructions must be followed for installation of the bike rack with secure hitch pin (locking or non-locking).
- Only manufacturer straps (nylon or rubber) are to be used to secure bicycles to the bike rack.
- Bike racks must be removed before going through a car wash.
- Electric bicycles must not be placed on the provided rack.

Vehicle Maintenance

The Metro Vanpool fleet is a significant investment for our communities, so we strive to keep our fleet in great shape, and we need your help to do that.

VANPOOL

Please make sure you know your expectations and responsibilities for vehicle maintenance. Responsibilities in this section pertain to drivers or maintenance contacts, except where noted.

Maintenance Schedule

Your Maintenance Rideshare Services Representative (RSR) will schedule regular preventive maintenance with your group's maintenance contact every 6 months or 6,000 miles. Please respond quickly to scheduling requests and be on time for all service appointments. In between service appointments, drivers should alert their Maintenance RSR of any vehicle operation concerns, including defective equipment or new damage, as soon as possible. Your Maintenance RSR must authorize and schedule all vehicle service and repair visits.

Maintenance Garage

A Maintenance RSR will assign your group vehicle to a maintenance garage that has capacity to service your vehicle. Staff will do what they can to assign a garage that is convenient to the driver, but at times garage capacities vary, so locations may vary also. Please be patient with your Maintenance RSR and be responsive to communications while they coordinate the best available service and repair location and times. Most maintenance appointments happen just twice a year.

Loaner Vehicles

If your vehicle must remain in the garage for several days, a loaner vehicle may be assigned. As they are in constant rotation, loaner vehicles must be returned clean and with a fuel tank that is at least half full. Please follow the same inspection routine with the loaner vehicle that you would for your group's primary vehicle. Contact your Maintenance RSR if you have any concerns with your loaner vehicle.

Vehicle Drop-Off and Pickup

Please follow these steps for all service and repair appointments:

1. Take your vehicle to your assigned maintenance garage on the scheduled date and time.
2. Ensure the fuel tank is at least half full.
3. Empty your vehicle of personal belongings and any debris.
4. Record the miles you drive to and from the garage, as well as the odometer reading of your vehicle when you drop it off.
5. Check the loaner vehicle for body damage before leaving; report any damage to the garage and your Maintenance RSR.
6. Record the loaner vehicle's odometer reading before leaving the garage. Remember to include the loaner information on your Monthly Report.
7. If you need to refuel, use the fuel card assigned to the loaner.

VANPOOL

When your Maintenance RSR contacts you to return the loaner vehicle and pick up your primary vehicle, the process is similar:

1. Return the loaner vehicle promptly at the scheduled time and date so the next group can use it.
2. Make sure the fuel tank is half full, remembering to use the loaner fuel card.
3. Empty the loaner of personal belongings and any debris.
4. Park where directed by garage staff.
5. Record the loaner vehicle's ending odometer reading.
6. Check your primary vehicle for body damage before leaving; report any damage to the garage and your Maintenance RSR.
7. Before driving your primary vehicle, record the odometer reading to account for any miles driven during servicing.

Carpool Reimbursement

We will make every effort to assist a group with a loaner if their vehicle is unavailable because of a breakdown, collision, or service. If a loaner vehicle is not available, you may be authorized to carpool. In authorized situations, carpool reimbursement will be provided to drivers of carpool groups of 3 or more.

Reimbursement will not be provided for situations outside of Metro's control (such as driver unavailability, adverse weather, keys locked in the vehicle, or running out of fuel).

Similarly, drivers have no responsibility for finding alternative transportation for riders who cannot use the vehicle due to personal circumstances (for example, temporarily conflicting work schedules or medical appointments).

There may be occasions when the vehicle will not be available and we encourage you and your group to establish backup plans in advance. Use your group's communication protocols when plans change.

Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspections

Drivers should complete the following pre-trip inspection prior to operating the vehicle:

- Is there any vehicle damage?
- Are the lights and wipers working properly?
- Are there any vehicle dashboard warning lights illuminated?
- Do you notice any leaks coming from the vehicle?
- Do the tires look damaged or like they have low air pressure?

If any part of your inspection leads you to believe your vehicle is unsafe, do not operate it!

Contact your Maintenance Rideshare Service Representative (RSR) and be prepared to provide your name and Group Identification Number (GIN), contact info, and a brief description of the concern.

VANPOOL

Vehicle Upkeep

All group participants are responsible for keeping their vehicle clean. A vehicle returned in poor condition beyond normal wear and tear will be cleaned professionally at the group expense.

Each group participant should immediately clean up spills and remove garbage daily. Within your group, decide who will be responsible for the following upkeep tasks:

- Wash the vehicle twice a month (make sure to remove bike rack if attached and using car wash).
- Vacuum carpets and seats once a month.

Fueling

Whether electric or gas powered, keep your vehicle half full or more. The Voyager fuel card is intended to only be used for fueling and washing. (Hybrid or electric vehicles may have separate fuel cards or charging options, which will be provided).

If you need to purchase gas and the gas card is not working or not available, please purchase regular unleaded gas using a personal credit card or cash. You must complete an [Expense Reimbursement form](#) and submit with payment receipt to your Accounting RSR for reimbursement. Credit card statements are not accepted. Once submitted, the reimbursement request will be processed within 3-4 weeks.

If other issues such as worn wiper blades are noted during a vehicle inspection, contact your Maintenance RSR for pre-approval before making any purchases.

Voyager Fuel Card:

Your assigned fuel card should be used to purchase a basic car wash at a participating car wash, up to twice per month.

Incidents and Emergencies

It is important that you know how to handle incidents and emergency situations to protect lives and ensure that liability questions are handled properly. Please read over the following guidance, and know that additional resources can be found in the glove box of your vehicle.

Emergency Roadside Assistance

Your monthly fare includes emergency roadside assistance. In an emergency, you may call either your Maintenance RSR (Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm) or the Vanpool office at 206-625-4500 at any time to reach the on-call team member. Vanpool off-hours phones are for emergencies only.

VANPOOL

Note: Roadside assistance does not cover expenses related to negligence, such as running out of fuel or locking keys inside vehicles.

Emergency Ride Home / Courtesy Cab

To honor your commitment to participating in Vanpool, Metro commits to getting you home in an emergency on the days you use Vanpool to get to work. This covers unplanned circumstances such as:

- You become ill during the workday
- You need to attend to a household emergency
- Your child or a family member becomes ill during the day

Check with your company's Employee Transportation Coordinator or HR department to see if your employer provides a way to get you home for these types of circumstances. If they don't, or you have maxed out your employer's benefits, Metro guarantees you an emergency ride home through their Courtesy Cab program. To use this benefit, simply take a taxi, Uber, or Lyft home. Get a receipt for the ride and submit it to your Vanpool Accounting RSR; Metro will [reimburse](#) you for the ride. Tips are not eligible for reimbursement.

Collision and Emergency General Guidelines

In any incident or emergency, you and your passengers' safety come first. Do not exit the vehicle unless safe to do so. Call 911 if medical assistance is needed. Refer to the emergency procedures card in your vehicle's glove box for instructions on how to handle collisions or breakdowns. The information is also available online [here](#). **If the card is missing, call 911 first if necessary and then immediately call our office at 206-625-4500.**

- Any situation involving vehicle or property damage, mechanical failure of your vehicle, or serious injury, or the potential for medical assistance or liability claim must be reported immediately to the Vanpool office at 206-625-4500.

Insurance Info

King County Metro provides insurance coverage for Metro Vanpool. Refer to the emergency procedures card in the glove box for details.

Approved Drivers

Only approved drivers are permitted to operate a Metro vehicle and are covered by Metro's insurance. Our [driver selection criteria](#) and driver orientation ensure only preferred drivers are approved. Annual motor vehicle reviews are conducted for all drivers to ensure continuing approval. Drivers must report any moving traffic violation they receive, whether driving a Metro vehicle or another vehicle, to Metro within 2 business days. If you have questions about incident procedures, call your Maintenance RSR.

VANPOOL

Collisions

Do not admit fault! In the event of a collision or incident, remain calm and act promptly. Drive to a nearby safe location and following the collision procedures below. If necessary, ask another group participant to help. These collision procedures can also be found on the emergency procedures card located in your glove box.

How to handle a collision

1. **Protect the scene:**
 - Turn on hazard flashers
 - Move the vehicle out of traffic
 - Make sure riders are in a safe location
 - Set up warning triangles (kit in the van)
2. **CALL 911 to report the collision (regardless of severity)**
3. **Call King County Metro Transit at 206-625-4500 and report the collision immediately**
4. **Exchange information with the other driver(s)**
 - Obtain names, addresses and phone numbers
 - Driver license numbers
 - Vehicle license numbers
 - Insurance information: King County Office of Risk Management, 206-263-2250, kingcounty.gov/claims
5. **Ask all witnesses to complete Witness Courtesy Cards.** Copies of these cards are located in the collision procedures packet.
6. **Complete the Vanpool Incident Report within 48 hours.**

Breakdowns

A breakdown is any event that causes your vehicle to lose function, including flat tires, fluid leaks, dead batteries, stalled engines, or other mechanical issues. Adhering to Metro's inspection and maintenance guidelines, as well as following safe driving habits, greatly reduces the likelihood of a breakdown.

Metro's response will depend on the type of breakdown, location, and time. Your vehicle will be towed when necessary, and alternate transportation for you and your riders will be coordinated.

How to handle a breakdown

1. **Protect the scene** where your van is disabled
 - Turn on hazard flashers
 - Move the vehicle out of traffic
 - Make sure riders are in a safe location
 - Set up warning triangle (kit in the van)

VANPOOL

2. **Call a Metro team representative at 206-625-4500** and have the following information ready:

- Your high occupancy vehicle (HOV) number (for example, HOV 1234)
- Your exact location
- Your van's condition and/or suspected problem
- A phone number where you can be reached

If the call is made outside of normal business hours, Monday – Friday, 8 am to 5pm, your call will be routed to our after-hours call center. The call center will collect all necessary information and forward that information to our on-call representative. Our on-call representative will return your call as soon as possible.

If van requires towing:

Leave the van in a secured area, lock it, tell Metro and the towing company where you will leave the keys. Do not take the keys with you. Metro will have the van towed to the nearest dealership, assigned garage or Metro facility.

Vandalism, Break-Ins, or Theft

Other emergencies may occur from vandalism, theft, or attempted break-in. Never leave wallets, purses, briefcases, backpacks, shopping bags, electronics, or other valuables in the vehicle. They are an invitation to thieves. If your vehicle is stolen or damaged from theft or vandalism, follow these steps:

1. **Call your local law enforcement agency and file a report.** Retain the assigned case number for future reference.
2. **Report the incident to the Vanpool office immediately.** You will be asked for the case number, the county or city jurisdiction where your report was filed, and details of the incident.
3. **Assess the damage.** If the vehicle is drivable, you will be asked to take the vehicle to a body shop for a picture and estimate of damages or to document no damage.

Self-Insurance

Metro's self-insurance coverage does not extend to the loss of a group participant's personal property while it is in the vehicle. All personal property in a Metro vehicle is there at the risk of the participant.

Adverse Driving Conditions

While rare, adverse driving conditions—including winter weather, flooding, wildfires, or earthquakes—do arise. If you ever feel it is unsafe to drive the vehicle for any reason, do not do so.

Weather patterns in the Puget Sound are generally predictable. Winter here usually means roadways are wet and slick when it rains, snows, or freezes. Being prepared for these conditions is the first step toward a safe winter commute. For additional info, please see **Planning for Emergencies and Seasonal Weather Conditions**.

Metro Vanpool and Vanshare Recruiting Tips and Tricks

Recruiting new riders, drivers, and bookkeepers is an important responsibility of all Vanpool and Vanshare group participants. This page provides tips and tricks for finding new participants, including drivers and bookkeepers, as well as keeping a wait list of potential future participants.

Rider Recruiting

When your group needs new riders, you have multiple options:

- **Use your network.** Most Metro Vanpool participants find their group through someone they know. The easiest and best way to recruit riders is for group participants to talk about their group with friends and coworkers.
- **Make recruiting fun.** Have a contest for whoever brings in new riders. Give winners rewards such as a preferred seat in the vehicle, choice over what to listen to, or even free coffee and doughnuts.
- **Check with your employer.** Many employers have a commute team or employee transportation coordinator who may be able to connect you with coworkers interested in joining a Vanpool or Vanshare group.
- **Visit [RideshareOnline.com](https://rideshareonline.com).** RideshareOnline.com is a great, free resource for finding potential riders. Every Metro Vanpool and Vanshare group is listed in RideshareOnline's Ridematch tool.
- **Request Metro support.** You can always contact Metro for support by email or phone at vanpool@kingcounty.gov or 206-625-4500.
- **Offer potential riders a [Test Ride in your vanpool](#).** They may try out your vanpool for up to three FREE riders before committing to join the group.
- **Post a [Riders Wanted Sign](#).** Create a sign with your van details to post at work, in your neighborhood or community center.

Driver and Bookkeeper Recruiting

Asking existing participants if they will be a driver or bookkeeper is the easiest way to fill these group roles. Encourage group participants who are interested in becoming a driver or bookkeeper to submit a new [program application \(PA\)](#) with the appropriate driver or bookkeeper section also filled out. All applicants must meet volunteer driver and bookkeeper selection criteria to fill either of those positions.

Keeping a Wait List

Your group's public contact should quickly respond to requests to join the group, including requests forwarded by Metro. Even if your group is full, keep a wait list of interested participants. When names are received from Metro, or through other means, the public contact should record the name, phone number, and date of contact. [RideshareOnline.com](https://rideshareonline.com) has a wait list feature that can help. Keeping track of preferences such as "only rides Monday, Wednesday, Friday" or what their pickup or drop-off location is also helpful. When you have a vacancy in your group, the first person on your list should be contacted. You should

operate on this first-come, first-served basis while ensuring that there is compatibility with your existing route and travel times.

Anti-discrimination

Because Metro Vanpool is public transportation, there can be no discrimination in choosing who may or may not ride. Please take care not to make a decision that could be construed as showing favoritism or prejudice in your selection of new riders.

Bookkeeping Details

This section provides all you need to know to complete your monthly bookkeeping responsibilities, from initial setup tasks to monthly reporting responsibilities. Remember that your Accounting Rideshare Service Representative (RSR) is available to answer questions. Please reach out to them or call 206-625-4500 if you can't find the information you need here.

Completing the Monthly Report

The monthly report is where the vehicle mileage, ridership, and fare information are documented before being sent to your Accounting RSR each month. You will need a template of the [monthly report \(Excel\)](#).

Here are a few basics to keep in mind when completing the monthly report:

- The reports are referred to by the month they are due
- Only the group's approved bookkeeper may complete the monthly report.
- Reports are **due before the 10th** of the month
- Late reports may incur a \$25 late fee
- You can email your Accounting RSR for an extension if needed
- Each monthly report will include the days traveled and mileage for the previous month but the revenue and ridership for the current month

Reporting Cycles

The reporting cycle sometimes causes confusion for bookkeepers. Generally speaking, every monthly report is based on a 2-month period. Mileage and expenses are reported for the previous month while ridership and revenue are reported for the current month. Reporting on actual miles traveled ensures that groups are accurately charged. Requiring riders to pay for the current month of travel protects bookkeepers from having to collect fares by tracking down riders who may have left during the month.

Postmark Date	Reporting Cycle	Mileage & Expenses	Revenue & Ridership
Jan 10th	Dec/Jan	December	January
Feb 10th	Jan/Feb	January	February
Mar 10th	Feb/Mar	February	March
Apr 10th	Mar/Apr	March	April
May 10th	Apr/May	April	May
Jun 10th	May/June	May	June
Jul 10th	June/July	June	July
Aug 10th	July/Aug	July	August
Sep 10th	Aug/Sep	August	September
Oct 10th	Sep/Oct	September	October
Nov 10th	Oct/Nov	October	November
Dec 10th	Nov/Dec	November	December

Before You Begin

Before starting to fill-out the monthly report, make sure you have the following information:

- What month you are reporting revenue for (the current month)
- Group Identification Number (GIN), also referred to as “Group ID” in the monthly report template
- Your group’s vehicle’s size and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) number, also referred to as “van number” in the monthly report template
- Approved round-trip miles (RTM), which you can find in your bookkeeper welcome email
- Previous month’s actual RTM, including itemized miles if loaner vehicles were used
- Previous month’s work schedule/days traveled
- Any changes to the ridership roster
- Payments for all riders (ORCA cards, online payments, checks, Metro Vanpool passes, vouchers, money orders)

Monthly Report: Step by Step

Overview

The monthly report has 7 sections that need to be completed. We’ll cover each of these sections in these step-by-step instructions.

Before completing the report, please read each section carefully. It’s important that you complete all sections in order from 1 through 6, as information from earlier sections will be used to auto populate later ones.

[Section 7](#) provides information about where to send the monthly report, along with payment information.



Remember that the [monthly report video](#) also walks through how to complete the report.

The Monthly Report tab includes many color coded boxes:

- **Blue boxes**
Where you will enter data or select from among available pre-set options. If there are pre-set options to choose from, clicking on the blue box will show a grey arrow to the right of the box. Click that arrow to reveal the pre-set options and choose the appropriate option.
- **Gray boxes**
These will be filled in automatically when you open the report or as you complete various sections of the report.
- **Boxes with red triangles**
The triangles are visible in the upper right corners. Hovering your cursor over these red triangles will reveal an explanation of the box's function or provide guidance for what information to enter.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
Enter last month's RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

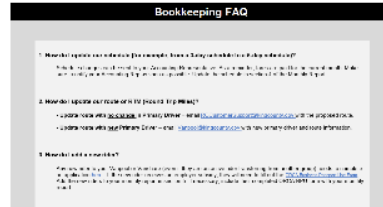
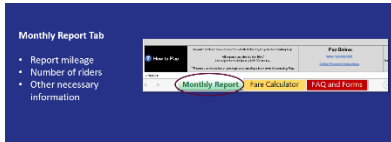
Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

The monthly report template includes 3 tabs, which can be found in the lower left corner:

- **Monthly Report (green)**
The main page containing the 7 reporting sections: month, trip information, mileage, rate, rider roster, and fare payments.
- **Fare Calculator (yellow)**
Calculates individual fare based on the number of riders and group fixed rate.

- **FAQs and Forms (red)**

Provides answers to common questions that may come up as you are completing the monthly report, as well as links to related bookkeeping forms. If you have questions not covered by the FAQ, please reach out to your Accounting RSR. If you have questions not covered by the FAQ, please reach out to your Accounting RSR.



Section 1: Revenue Month

The first section of the monthly report is for the **Revenue Month**. In the first blue box, choose **<select>** and **Select Revenue Month** from the drop-down menu by choosing the current month.

1 Revenue Month
Select current revenue month and enter your group ID, van number, and bookkeeper name.

Select Revenue Month	August 2023
Group ID:	
Van Number:	
Bookkeeper Name:	
Due Date:	August 10th, 2023

Next, enter the **Group ID** (GIN) in the second blue box. The Group ID will be assigned to you and can be found in your bookkeeper welcome email.

1 Revenue Month
Select current revenue month and enter your group ID, van number, and bookkeeper name.

Select Revenue Month	August 2023
Group ID:	
Van Number:	
Bookkeeper Name:	
Due Date:	August 10th, 2023

Then add your **Van Number** (HOV number) in the third blue box. The van number is the six-digit number found on the front or back of your vehicle.

1 Revenue Month
Select current revenue month and enter your group ID, van number, and bookkeeper name.

Select Revenue Month	August 2023
Group ID:	
Van Number:	
Bookkeeper Name:	
Due Date:	August 10th, 2023

Finally, add your full name in the fourth blue box.

1 Revenue Month
 Select current revenue month and enter your group ID, van number, and bookkeeper name.

Select Revenue Month:	August 2023
Group ID:	
Van Number:	
Bookkeeper Name:	
Due Date:	August 10th, 2023

Note: Monthly reports are due by the 10th of the month. If you need additional time to complete your monthly report, be sure to email your Accounting RSR about the delay as soon as possible. Otherwise, you may be charged a \$25 late fee.

Section 2: Trip Information

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
 Enter last month's RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

In this section, you will enter your vehicle's trip information for the previous month, including RTM and total days traveled. Days traveled should not exceed your work schedule's monthly total of days. More information on this can be found in your bookkeeper's welcome email.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
 Enter last month's RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

In the first blue box, choose **<select>** and from the drop-down menu, choose your group's approved daily RTM. Your group's RTM is the number of miles traveled on a typical commuting day and then rounded up to the next 5-mile increment.

Vanshare Mileage Limit

Vanshare groups are limited to a daily 20-mile round trip.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
Enter **last month's** RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

The next box asks for **Days Traveled**, which includes all days your vehicle was used for commuting purposes during the month. Choose **<select>** and enter the number of days traveled.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
Enter **last month's** RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

The gray boxes for **Total Allowed Miles** and **Total Miles Traveled** will auto populate.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
Enter **last month's** RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

If your regular vehicle was taken in for maintenance, enter the number of miles to and from the maintenance garage in the blue box next to **Maintenance Shuttle**. If the vehicle was not taken in for service, this box will stay at 0.

August 2024 Trip Information and Mileage

2 Trip Information
Enter **last month's** RTM, days traveled and any itemized miles.

August 2024	
RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Days Traveled	<select>
Total Allowed Miles	0
Total Miles Traveled	0

Itemized Miles	
Maintenance Shuttle	
Other	
Unused/Excess Miles	0

Miles driven over the allowed limit are charged at 60 cents per mile.

The blue box next to **Other** is used for other approved miles related to vehicle logistics, like trips to and from the vehicle distribution center. Briefly describe these miles in the **Comment Box** in [Section 3](#). In the **Unused/Excess Miles** field, a negative number means the vehicle drove within the allowed limit with no

4 Fixed Rate for August
 Select the RTM, schedule, and van size for the current month to get your group's Fixed Rate. Notify your Accounting Rep of any updates.

RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Work Schedule	<select>
Van Size	<select>
Fixed Rate	\$0

Section 4: Fixed Rate for [Month]

4 Fixed Rate for August
 Select the RTM, schedule, and van size for the current month to get your group's Fixed Rate. Notify your Accounting Rep of any updates.

RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Work Schedule	<select>
Van Size	<select>
Fixed Rate	\$0

Enter your RTM, work schedule, and van size from the drop-down menus by choosing **<select>** in each field.

Note: If your group has changed anything, such as your route or schedule, please contact your Accounting RSR and update accordingly.

4 Fixed Rate for August
 Select the RTM, schedule, and van size for the current month to get your group's Fixed Rate. Notify your Accounting Rep of any updates.

RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Work Schedule	<select>
Van Size	Fold Less than 20 or Vanshare
Fixed Rate	20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60

6 Revenue for Aug
 Enter the fixed rate and any adjustments.

Fixed Rate:	55
Vanpool Pass:	60
Vouchers:	\$ -
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -

For **RTM (Round-Trip Miles)**, choose the number that matches your approved daily RTM.

If you find that your actual RTM is significantly above or below the established RTM, you may need to review the group's RTM to consider changes. Contact ROCustomerSupport@kingcounty.gov with the proposed route.

4 Fixed Rate for August
 Select the RTM, schedule, and van size for the current month to get your group's Fixed Rate. Notify your Accounting Rep of any updates.

RTM (Round Trip Miles)	<select>
Work Schedule	<select>
Van Size	<select>
Fixed Rate	3-Day 4-Day 5-Day 6-Day 7-Day

6 Revenue for Aug
 Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or

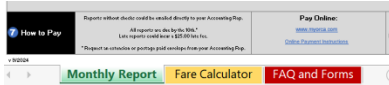
In the box next to **Work Schedule**, choose the weekly schedule for your group (for example, 5-day a week, 4-day a week, etc.).

Fare		Payment Type			
Monthly Fare	ORCA Passport UPASS	Monthly Vanpool Fare	Voucher	Online Payment	Personal Check

This part of the **Rider Roster** shows each rider's monthly fare and payment method.

Fare		Payment Type			
Monthly Fare	ORCA Passport UPASS	Monthly Vanpool Fare	Voucher	Online Payment	Personal Check

Under **Monthly Fare**, enter each rider's total monthly fare, which you can figure out using the Fare Calculator. Please note that riders can use multiple payment methods for their monthly fares.



Fare Calculator

To find the **Fare Calculator**, go to the middle tab on the lower left portion of the monthly report.

Fare Calculator

Enter the number of full-time and part-time riders, and the vanpool's fixed rate to calculate rider fares.

Number of Full-Time riders	0
Number of Part-Time riders	0
Vanpool Fixed Rate	\$ -

Full-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -
Part-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -

Enter these fare amounts on your report, in section 5 (Rider Roster) under Monthly Fare (column O).

You may need to adjust a rider's fare by a few cents in order to balance.

To use the **Fare Calculator**, add the number of full-time riders to the first blue box and the number of part-time riders to the second blue box.

Fare Calculator

Enter the number of full-time and part-time riders, and the vanpool's fixed rate to calculate rider fares.

Number of Full-Time riders	0
Number of Part-Time riders	0
Vanpool Fixed Rate	\$ -

Full-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -
Part-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -

Enter these fare amounts on your report, in section 5 (Rider Roster) under Monthly Fare (column O).

You may need to adjust a rider's fare by a few cents in order to balance.

In the third blue box, insert the Vanpool fixed rate fare. Remember that this fixed rate fare is found in [Section 4](#).

Fare Calculator

Enter the number of full-time and part-time riders, and the vanpool's fixed rate to calculate rider fares.

Number of Full-Time riders	0
Number of Part-Time riders	0
Vanpool Fixed Rate	\$ -

Full-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -
Part-Time Rider Fare:	\$ -

Enter these fare amounts on your report, in section 5 (Rider Roster) under Monthly Fare (column O).

You may need to adjust a rider's fare by a few cents in order to balance.

Using the number of full-time riders and part-time riders, along with the Vanpool fixed rate, the Fare Calculator will provide you with the appropriate fare totals to include in [Section 5](#). (Note: you may need to adjust a rider's fare by a few cents in order to balance.)

Fare	Payment Type				
	ORCA Passport/UPASS	Monthly Vanpool Pass	Voucher	Online Payment	Personal Check
Monthly Fare					

If the rider is paying with a subsidized ORCA Passport/U-Pass, enter the dollar amount in the space provided.

Fare	Payment Type				
	ORCA Passport/UPASS	Monthly Vanpool Pass	Voucher	Online Payment	Personal Check
Monthly Fare					

If a rider is using a Monthly Vanpool Pass, please note that the amount of the Monthly Vanpool Pass cannot exceed \$99 toward the rider's monthly fare. When the value of the pass is less than the fare, the participant writes a check to the bookkeeper for the difference or pays their balance online. The bookkeeper completes the row for the ride and records the additional payment information. When the value is greater than the monthly fare, the value up to the amount of the monthly fare may be used.

Fare	Payment Type				
	ORCA Passport/UPASS	Monthly Vanpool Pass	Voucher	Online Payment	Personal Check
Monthly Fare					

If a monthly fare is paid by voucher, online, or by personal check, enter that information here. Online payments that are processed through myORCA.com do not need an ORCA card number.

Rider Count	Dollar	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.50	\$4.00

At the bottom of the Rider Roster, next to **Rider Count**, you'll see the number of riders in your Vanpool group for the month, along with subtotals and totals for the fare payments received.

The total at the bottom of [Section 5](#) under **Monthly Fare** should match the Vanpool group's fixed rate, and the fixed rate number should match the **Payment Total**.

Using the Vanpool Program Fare Schedules

You can also use the [Vanpool Program Fare Schedules](#) to find the monthly fares for individual participants.

More Riders, Lower Fare

Adding more riders lowers everyone's monthly fare.

Part-Time Riders

There are two types of part-time riders:

1. Some group participants may ride on a regular schedule, but commute with the group for less than 50% of trips (due to part-time work status, hybrid work schedule, or 1-way participation). These are **regular part-time riders**, and their fares can easily be calculated using the Fare Calculator, as described previously.
2. Some riders may ride only occasionally (approximately 1 time per week) or on an irregular schedule. These riders are considered **occasional riders**. If your group has occasional riders, follow the instructions below for occasional riders to calculate their fares.

Error! Reference source not found.Regular part-time rider fares are calculated, paid, and reported along with full-time riders. Occasional part-time rider fares can be calculated, paid, and reported the **following** month. In other words, a rider who rode 3 days in March would be reported and paid for on the April monthly report.

If you have **occasional riders** in your group paying their fare from the previous month, alongside other riders paying their fare for the upcoming month, you will need to **adjust the monthly fixed rate** fare for the rest of the group accordingly.

1. Calculate the daily fares for each of the occasional riders from the previous month using the daily fares from the appropriate [Fare Schedules](#).
2. Total all the daily fares for the occasional riders.
3. Subtract the total occasional part-time fares collected for the previous month from the group's fixed rate for the upcoming month.
4. Use the Fare Calculator tab to calculate the individual fares for the rest of the riders.

Part-Time Rider Assistance

If you have part-time riders, contact your Accounting RSR if you need assistance with fare calculations or reporting.

Waiving Driver Fares

Some groups offer to cover the monthly fare of their primary driver as a courtesy. In these cases, the remaining fixed fare is split among the other participants. If your group chooses this option, please let your Accounting RSR know.

Section 6: Revenue for [Month]

6 Revenue for August
Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or adjustments. Office Use

Fixed Rate:	\$ -	
Vanpool Pass:	\$ -	
Vouchers:	\$ -	
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -	
+ Late Fee:		
- Bank Charge:		
+/- Monthly Report Adjustment:		
ORCA or UPASS:	\$ -	
Online Payment:	\$ -	
Personal Check:	\$ -	
Other:		
Balance Due:	\$ -	

Amounts shown are estimated until payments are received. Any balance due can be paid online or via check. Voucher overages are written-off and cannot be credited.

The fixed rate from [Section 4](#) should have auto populated here in the box next to **Fixed Rate**, as should the amounts for **Vanpool Pass**, **Vouchers**, and **Excess Mile Charges**.

6 Revenue for August
Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or adjustments. Office Use

Fixed Rate:	\$ -	
Vanpool Pass:	\$ -	
Vouchers:	\$ -	
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -	
+ Late Fee:		
- Bank Charge:		
+/- Monthly Report Adjustment:		
ORCA or UPASS:	\$ -	
Online Payment:	\$ -	
Personal Check:	\$ -	
Other:		
Balance Due:	\$ -	

Amounts shown are estimated until payments are received. Any balance due can be paid online or via check. Voucher overages are written-off and cannot be credited.

If you're submitting your monthly report after the 10th of the month and you have not notified your Accounting RSR about the delay, add your \$25 late fee in the space provided here.

6 Revenue for August
Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or adjustments. Office Use

Fixed Rate:	\$ -	
Vanpool Pass:	\$ -	
Vouchers:	\$ -	
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -	
+ Late Fee:		
- Bank Charge:		
+/- Monthly Report Adjustment:		
ORCA or UPASS:	\$ -	
Online Payment:	\$ -	
Personal Check:	\$ -	
Other:		
Balance Due:	\$ -	

Amounts shown are estimated until payments are received. Any balance due can be paid online or via check. Voucher overages are written-off and cannot be credited.

The **+/- Monthly Report Adjustment** box is where you will report any balances owed or credited.

6 Revenue for August
Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or adjustments. Office Use

Fixed Rate:	\$ -	
Vanpool Pass:	\$ -	
Vouchers:	\$ -	
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -	
+ Late Fee:		
- Bank Charge:		
+/- Monthly Report Adjustment:		
ORCA or UPASS:	\$ -	
Online Payment:	\$ -	
Personal Check:	\$ -	
Other:		
Balance Due:	\$ -	

Amounts shown are estimated until payments are received. Any balance due can be paid online or via check. Voucher overages are written-off and cannot be credited.

The gray boxes in this section next to **ORCA or U-Pass, Online Payment, and Personal Check** will auto populate.

6 Revenue for August
 Enter the fixed rate and any late fees, bank charges or adjustments. Office Use

Fixed Rate:	\$ -
Vanpool Pass:	\$ -
Vouchers:	\$ -
+ Excess Mile Charges:	\$ -
+ Late Fee:	
- Bank Charge:	
+/- Monthly Report Adjustment:	
ORCA or UPASS:	\$ -
Online Payment:	\$ -
Personal Check:	\$ -
Other:	
Balance Due:	\$ -

Amounts shown are estimated until payments are received. Any balance due can be paid online or via check. Voucher overages are written-off and cannot be credited.

The **Other** box is for fares paid by money order.

In the gray box next to **Balance Due**, you will see the amount you need to send to your Accounting RSR.

Section 7: How to Pay



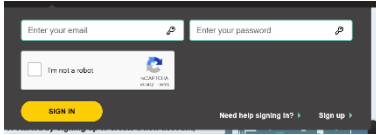
This section provides information for 2 different ways you can pay the Vanpool group’s monthly fares and submit the completed monthly report:

1. You may pay the fares online at myORCA.com and email the monthly reports directly to your Accounting RSR.
2. You may pay the monthly fare with a check, mailing the check and the monthly report to the address provided in the lower right-hand corner of the Monthly Report tab.

Do You Need a myORCA.com Account?

[MyORCA.com](http://myORCA.com) is an online payment portal that both individual riders and group bookkeepers may use to pay their fares. Individuals can use myORCA.com to purchase Monthly Metro Vanpool Pass or pay their Vanpool fare online via credit card (no ORCA card needed).

Some groups may decide to have the bookkeeper use myORCA.com to process a group payment and then have group members reimburse the bookkeeper. If this applies to your group, you can set up a new account by going to myORCA.com and selecting **Sign in/Sign up**.



When this screen pops up, select **sign up** in the lower right side of the pop-up.

Let's get started!

Sign up to manage your ORCA cards on your account.

Asterisk (*) indicates required fields.

FIRST NAME*
Enter your first name

LAST NAME*
Enter your last name

EMAIL ADDRESS*
This will be your user name
Enter your email address

PASSWORD*
Minimum of 8 characters, including at least one of each: number, upper case, lower case, and special character.
Create your password

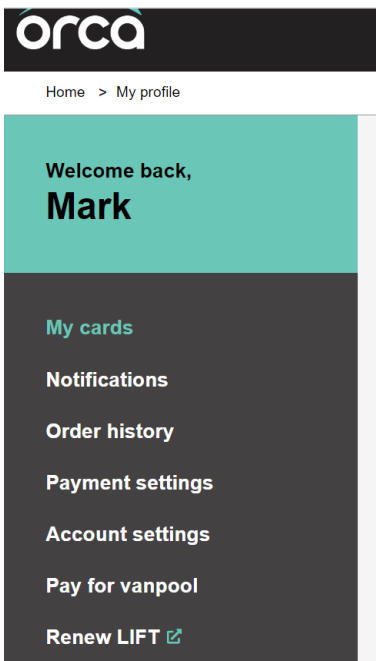
CONFIRM PASSWORD*
Confirm your password

Are you 13 years of age or older?

NEXT

This screen will then pop up. Just enter your information where requested. That's all there is to creating an account on myORCA.com.

Submitting Monthly Fare Payment at myORCA.com



After you have created and signed into your myORCA.com account, you will be redirected to the **My ORCA Cards** page. In the lower left corner, you will see the option, **Pay for Vanpool**. Select that option, and you will be taken to the **Pay Vanpool Fare** page.

Pay vanpool fare

You can pay all or part of your monthly vanpool fare for the current month or the next month. You can make multiple payments as needed. You will need:

- Name of the transit agency that manages your vanpool
- Vanpool group ID provided by the operating agency

Vanpool information

FARE AMOUNT: [0.00]

FARE PERIOD: Select fare period

VANPOOL TRANSIT AGENCY: Select a transit agency

VANPOOL GROUP ID: Enter vanpool group ID

What is my vanpool group ID?

FIRST NAME: Mark

LAST NAME: This

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DETAILS: Optional: Names of users being paid for excess mileage fees, late fees, and other costs.

On this page, start by entering the payment amount in the **Fare Amount** box.

Pay vanpool fare

You can pay all or part of your monthly vanpool fare for the current month or the next month. You can make multiple payments as needed. You will need:

- Name of the transit agency that manages your vanpool
- Vanpool group ID provided by the operating agency

Vanpool information

FARE AMOUNT: [0.00]

FARE PERIOD: Select fare period

VANPOOL TRANSIT AGENCY: Select a transit agency

VANPOOL GROUP ID: Enter vanpool group ID

What is my vanpool group ID?

FIRST NAME: Mark

LAST NAME: This

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DETAILS: Optional: Names of users being paid for excess mileage fees, late fees, and other costs.

Using the drop-down menu in the **Fare Period** box, choose the month you are paying for. At this time, ORCA does not allow you to select the previous month. You can add a comment in the **Additional Payment Details** field if paying for a previous month.

Pay vanpool fare

You can pay all or part of your monthly vanpool fare for the current month or the next month. You can make multiple payments as needed. You will need:

- Name of the transit agency that manages your vanpool
- Vanpool group ID provided by the operating agency

Vanpool information

FARE AMOUNT: [0.00]

FARE PERIOD: Select fare period

VANPOOL TRANSIT AGENCY: Select a transit agency

VANPOOL GROUP ID: Enter vanpool group ID

What is my vanpool group ID?

FIRST NAME: Mark

LAST NAME: This

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DETAILS: Optional: Names of users being paid for excess mileage fees, late fees, and other costs.

In the **Vanpool Transit Agency** box, use the drop-down menu and choose **King County Metro**.

Pay vanpool fare

You can pay all or part of your monthly vanpool fare for the current month or the next month. You can make multiple payments as needed. You will need:

- Name of the benefit agency that manages your vanpool
- Vanpool group ID provided by the vanpooling agency

Vanpool information

FARE AMOUNT: \$ 0.00

FARE PERIOD:

VANPOOL TRAVELER SUBSIDY:

VANPOOL GROUP ID:

What is my vanpool group ID?

FIRST NAME:

LAST NAME:

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DETAILS

Optional: Payment of fares being paid for outside (bridge fees, toll fees, and other costs).

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Add your Vanpool Group ID (GIN) where indicated. Please note that this is your Group ID, not your van number (HOV number). The Group ID will be in your welcome email.

Vanpool information

FARE AMOUNT:

FARE PERIOD:

VANPOOL TRAVELER SUBSIDY:

VANPOOL GROUP ID:

What is my vanpool group ID?

FIRST NAME:

LAST NAME:

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DETAILS

Optional: Payment of fares being paid for outside (bridge fees, toll fees, and other costs).

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Finally, add your first and last name and then select **Add to Cart** in the lower right corner of the page.

Shopping cart

Your order

Metro Vanpool Fare (May 2022)	PRICE: \$75.00
vanpool_group_id	
TOTAL: \$75.00	

Add payment method and checkout

Pay with a debit or credit card.

Requires 21+ and ID/SSN required fields.

Payment method:

New payment method:

ORCA account:

Place Order

Your **Shopping Cart** will appear. If your payment method and amount is correct, select **Place Order** in the lower right corner.

ORCA

Your ORCA Order

Hi Jobie,

Thank you for your ORCA order on May 11, 2022. Below is a summary of your order #03JHMT2.

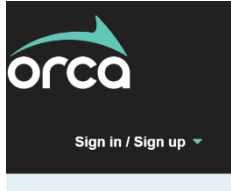
Products	Quantity	Price
Metro Vanpool Fare	1	\$75.00
Subtotal		\$75.00
Tax		\$0.00
Total Sale		\$75.00

Please contact customer service at 888-888-8722 / TTY: 711 or visit www.mvorca.com if you require further assistance.

© 2020 ORCA™
401 S Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104

You will then receive a receipt for the fare payment. A copy of the receipt will also be saved to your **Order History** page and sent to your email address on file.

Please submit the receipt along with your monthly report.



Monthly Report Adjustments

Your Accounting RSR will review your reports and payments each month. That review may require that an adjustment be made. If so, your Accounting RSR will send out a Monthly Report Adjustment letter that will detail the reporting issue and request you either make a payment or take a credit when completing the next monthly report.

Thank You!

Thank you for being a key part of the Vanpool community as a bookkeeper. Remember, you're a vital part of keeping our wheels turning smoothly. Should any questions arise, don't hesitate to reach out to your friendly Accounting RSR—they're here to help you navigate with confidence.

Error! Reference source not found.

Planning for Emergencies and Seasonal Weather Conditions

Each Vanpool and Vanshare group should have a plan for emergencies, seasonal weather effects, and alternate commute modes when needed. This includes having a communication plan for how the group will handle these situations (such as staying home or finding a different commute option). Read on for suggestions to help your group prepare for the unexpected.

<p>Learn about Vanpool-specific driving tips and info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seasonal Driving Safety Tips• Winter• Spring• Summer• Fall• Emergency Preparedness• Severe Weather and Floods• Earthquake• Wildfires	<p>Check out these other resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• King County Metro’s emergency preparedness• King County Metro’s winter guide• King County Metro’s disaster and emergency prep resources• National Weather Service Forecast Office – Seattle/Tacoma <p>Sign up for emergency alert services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ALERT King County• King County flood alerts• King County road alerts• King County Metro transit alerts• AlertSeattle• Washington State Department of Transportation alerts
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Seasonal Driving Safety Tips

Operating a vehicle in different seasons can be difficult, especially when conditions can change so quickly and unexpectedly. But whether you’re contending with snow, ice, rain, hail, the sun, or heavy vehicle or pedestrian traffic, there are ways to drive safely. Follow these helpful driving tips for every season!

Get Stuck? We’re Here for You.

If your vehicle becomes stalled or stuck, call us immediately at 206-625-4500.

Report all vehicle damage to program staff within 2 business days ([Vanpool Incident Report](#)).

Winter

Northwest winters typically mean roadways are wet and slick when it rains, snows, or freezes. Drivers, be ready for winter weather road conditions for a safer commute! Remember, if you feel the weather has made it too hazardous to drive, use your group's alternate plan for traveling to work. Don't have a plan? Make and discuss an alternate commute plan with your group before the weather gets icy.

Don't operate your vehicle in unsafe or unfamiliar conditions—if you don't have to drive in icy or snowy conditions, don't. Keep in mind that weather can change in a flash—so please monitor weather early and often, especially before those icy mornings or during the day before that long drive home.

Before heading out in winter weather, be sure to:

- Dress properly.
- Thoroughly remove snow, ice, or frost from all windows and mirrors.
- Using a soft brush or broom, remove loose snow from the hood and roof.
- Make sure your tire chains or tire socks are in the vehicle.
- Carry sand or kitty litter for traction, a snow shovel, gloves, and a flashlight.

Metro-Provided Equipment

Metro issues chains, tire socks, and other accessories as part of the vehicle checkout process. Groups are responsible for signing out these Metro assets during checkout and keeping frequent inventory of them. Groups will need to supply their own winter preparedness kits with needed items such as snow shovel, gloves, flashlight, and kitty litter for traction.

If you are commuting during times of adverse weather, please remember to:

- Look and steer in the direction you want to go.
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly.
- Increase your following distance to 8 to 10 seconds.
- If possible, do not stop when going uphill.
- Keep your fuel tank at least half full.
- If stranded, do not try to push your vehicle.
- Signal distress using hazard lights, Metro-provided warning triangles, or a brightly colored cloth tied to the antenna or in a rolled-up window.

Tire Chains / Socks

The first snowfall every winter often sends drivers scrambling to put on their chains only to find they have broken links or no chains at all. Check your chains/socks for damage and for proper size to fit your vehicle before you need to use them.

Remember: Chains should be installed on the drive axle tires only. So, rear wheels for rear-wheel drive vehicles and front wheels for front-wheel drive vehicles. If you have questions about installation, please contact your Maintenance RSR.

Spring

Spring driving can present unique challenges, including fluctuating weather conditions and increased activity on the roads. Keep these safety tips in mind:

- Heavy rain can result in standing water on the roadways and cause oil in the pavement to rise to the surface, both of which result in less vehicle traction.
- Springtime often means increased activity—watch out for people walking and biking, as well as animals.
- With longer daylight hours, there might be glare from the sun during sunrise and sunset. Use sunglasses and keep your windshield clean to reduce glare.

Summer

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, summer and fall are the most dangerous times of the year for drivers, with July and August being the deadliest. More drivers are out on the road during that time, which increases the likelihood of collisions.

- Summer can bring more distractions than usual, so watch out for drivers who aren't watching out for you. If you see a distracted driver, avoid being near them on the road.
- Watch for distracted people—especially youth who may be off on summer break—walking, running, and bicycling on roads in and around your neighborhood or worksite.
- The summer season and some holidays are associated with an increase in drinking and driving, so be aware and be extra careful. Ask a rider to report impaired drivers by calling 911.
- Be aware of sun glare—this can be most dangerous during the early morning and late evening.
- Increasing your following distance can avoid potential hazards.

Fall

Fall presents many different challenges for drivers in the Puget Sound region. An increase in precipitation and falling leaves make for slippery roads. The changing weather brings more animals on the roadways. Shorter days mean more darkness for your commute. Finally, students are returning to school, making for busier roadways, with school buses and more pedestrian traffic. So, please take your time and be aware of your surroundings.

These fall driving tips can make for a safer commute:

- Stay within the speed limit; slow down when conditions or visibility are poor.
- Keep a safe distance between you and the car in front of you to allow time to react.
- Avoid sudden braking and acceleration on wet streets.
- Skip the high beams and stick with low, which are better in fog and won't cause glare.
- Clear windshields of dirt and debris inside.
- Thoroughly clear windshield, windows, and mirrors of condensation, frost, or ice (inside and outside).
- Check your windshield wipers for proper operation often.

- Leave extra time in the morning to make sure you completely defrost windows before you get on the road.
- Watch for deer and other wildlife in the early morning and evening hours.
- Be aware fluctuating temperatures can lead to low tire pressure alerts.

Emergency Preparedness

Natural hazards can potentially affect your commute. Planning for such events will allow you to mitigate the risks. For our region, the most common threats include but are not limited to the following:

- Severe weather and floods
- Earthquake
- Wildfires

Follow these best practices to be prepared for any emergency:

- Keep your group’s mobile contacts updated for efficient group notifications.
- Subscribe to and pay attention to severe weather warnings and alerts [link to alerts on page 45].
- Create an [emergency disaster plan](#) with your group—including an alternate commute plan in the event your group can’t maneuver safely to or from work.
- If your vehicle becomes stalled or stuck, call us immediately at 206-625-4500.

Severe Weather and Floods

Know if you live or work in an area prone to floods and be prepared when water levels rise by visiting King County’s [Flood Warning System](#).

- Monitor weather reports to assess flood activity and determine if your vehicle needs to be moved to a safe alternate location or if the group should make other travel plans.
- Do not operate the vehicle in standing water and around barricaded road signs.
- Skidding or hydroplaning indicates your speed is too fast for the road conditions. Slow down.
- Be cautious of debris on the roadway; do not drive past downed power lines or trees.
- Slow down and stay a safe distance away from other vehicles as strong gusts may blow others into adjacent lanes.
- Consider alternate plans for your commute if winds and rainfall are severe enough to prevent safe driving.

Earthquakes

The Pacific Northwest is prone to earthquakes. Staying prepared for earthquakes and resulting safety and commuting effects is good practice.

It may not be safe or practical to continue driving your vehicle. As always, your best course of action is to ensure your safety and that of your fellow riders.

During an earthquake:

- If you are driving—stay calm and pull over in a safe spot to wait out the shaking.
- Avoid pulling over or parking next to potentially vulnerable structures, buildings, or facilities.
- Remain alert for [tsunami warnings](#).

After an earthquake: Be prepared for altered road and driving conditions. For example, watch out for damaged infrastructure such as roadways and bridges, downed power lines, and traffic signals out. When signals are out, treat all stops as 4-way stops.

Wildfires

Wildfires are increasingly common in our area, and smoke from nearby fires can affect visibility and air quality. Follow these guidelines when nearby wildfires may affect your commute:

- Be cautious: Visibility can quickly deteriorate in thick smoke.
- Drive slowly and steadily: Keep your vents closed and headlights on.
- Pay attention to road closures and debris on the roadway.
- Learn more about [wildfire smoke preparedness](#).

Complaints Received by Metro

All complaints received by Metro are treated seriously and investigated thoroughly. In general, there are 6 common types of complaints that we receive:

1. **Safety** —The most common complaint is aggressive driving such as tailgating and cutting-off others when merging or switching lanes. Remember, the highly visible logo and phone number invite public comment. Riders who feel unsafe may also call.
2. **Group** —Unresolved group conflict may be reported by any participant of the group. Remember to create and use operating guidelines and communicate early and often to avoid conflict.
3. **Maintenance** —As a driver, you are encouraged to stay in contact with Metro regarding your experiences with maintenance garages. Any criticism or commendation you provide helps in garage evaluations.
4. **Parking** —Always park your vehicle in its authorized location. Park legally and courteously. The driver must park the vehicle off the street in their driveway, garage, or assigned parking space. The group may also coordinate with the Vanpool office on alternative parking solutions.
5. **Program** —Complaints about program, procedures, or staff members should be directed to our office for awareness and further investigation.
6. **Unauthorized use** - Reports of fewer than three people commuting, personal use, business use, or any other trips outside of commuting to and from work will be reviewed to determine the mileage used for that trip. All unauthorized mileage is charged at \$0.60 per mile and will be recorded in the driver's account.

Complaint Handling Procedures

1. **File a complaint** – To start the process, you can [submit a complaint report](#) online, call 206-625-4500 or email vanpool@kingcounty.gov. A staff member will take a complaint report filed by a group participant or the general public. Although the person who files will be asked to supply their pertinent info, it will remain confidential and not be released. Every attempt is made to handle complaints quickly and efficiently. Safety-related complaints will be given priority and be resolved as soon as possible.
2. **Review** - A staff member will review the complaint. The participant named in the complaint will be contacted to share their account of the specific circumstance.
 - **Safety precautions** - In cases of safety-related complaints against drivers, they may be asked to step down temporarily while the investigation is being conducted. Another authorized driver must operate the vehicle during this period so the group can continue commuting.
 - **Rider poll** - If necessary, the investigator will conduct a rider poll of each group participant. They will ask each rider the same questions and document their responses. The investigator will inform the driver that there is a rider poll; however, any info provided by the riders will remain confidential.

Evaluation and resolution - Metro Vanpool staff will discuss and decide alternatives. If necessary, staff may take follow-up action at this time and issue a verbal or written warning. They may assign probation or a suspension of privileges, or in extreme cases, a person may be removed from the group. Complaints against drivers will be documented and retained in their program file. Metro may withdraw driver approval if complaints reflect a pattern of serious or repeated concerns.