

Shared Transportation Options

- ❖ **Vanpools** are large carpool comprised usually of 5 to 14 people who share rides to work. Employees with long commutes (generally 15 miles or more) can lower their transportation costs substantially by joining a vanpool.

- ❖ **RTC VANPOOL:** The RTC VANPOOL program is offered through a partnership between the RTC and Commute with Enterprise. Commute with Enterprise provides the vehicles and pays for their insurance and maintenance. Vanpool participants share the costs of gas and the van lease.
 - To lower participants' costs, the RTC contributes a subsidy of \$400 per month to vanpools groups in the program that travel up to 3,000 miles per month. Almost all vanpools traveling to the TRI Center will fall in that mileage group. (Vanpool groups traveling longer distances each month would receive higher subsidies.)
 - To be eligible for the RTC subsidy, the majority of participants in a vanpool must either live or work in Washoe County and submit accurate monthly ridership data, such as which days the vanpool operated, who rode, etc. Commute with Enterprise provides online forms that make it easy to report the data. It's required because the RTC has to report all transit data to the Federal Transit Administration.
 - RTC subsidy payments are deposited directly into the vanpool coordinator's account after the ridership reports are reviewed. This is in the participants' best interest because if the check was sent instead directly to the coordinator, it would be considered taxable income.

- ❖ **RTC TRIP MATCH:** the RTC SMART TRIPS program includes a free web-based trip matching program, [RTC TRIP MATCH](#), to make it easier to locate rideshare partners (along with bus, bike and walking buddies).

- ❖ **Guaranteed Ride Home Program:** Vanpool groups can sign up for the free [Guaranteed Ride Home program](#) on the RTC TRIP MATCH website. Then if something unexpected occurs on a day they've carpooled or vanpooled to work and the normal rideshare plan won't work for their trip home, they can be reimbursed 100% for a taxi ride up to four miles a way.

- ❖ **RTC SMART TRIPS Bus Pass Subsidy Program:** the RTC will match employer contributions toward the purchase of 31-day transit passes (or RTC INTERCITY 10-RIDE passes) by their employees in 5% increments up to 20% and requires a regular employer purchase of ten or more passes.

How to Incentivize Employees

There are three major ways in which employers can monetarily incentivize employees for utilizing transit (buses and vanpools):

1. Under IRS guidelines, employees' transit expenses up to \$280 in 2021 can be taken out of their paychecks prior to taxes. This lowers the employees' federal income tax and FICA taxes, and thus the net cost of the pass. The employer also saves on whatever FICA taxes they were paying on that portion. Transportation fringe benefit also known as Commuter Benefits are much easier to implement than health care benefits. For example, there are no written plan or reporting requirements, the enrollment period is determined by the employer (and can be on-going), and there is no "use it or lose it" provision.
2. Employers can offer a transit subsidy such as through the Bus Pass Subsidy Program or as a contribution to employee vanpool expenses.
3. Employers can offer both a subsidy and pre-taxing.

For more information contact:

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Explore your transportation options.*