



King County

Metro Transit Division

Rideshare Operations
YES-TR-0700
400 Yesler Way
Seattle, WA 98104-2683

King County Metro Vanpool Fare Increase Questions and Answers for Vanpoolers

When will fares increase?

New fares take effect on October 1, 2008. For vanpools, this means bookkeepers start collecting the new fares for the month of October.

Why are my fares going up?

Since the last fare increase, gasoline costs have increased substantially, more than a \$1.00 per gallon. Capital costs have increased as we've purchased more vans to support program growth. Inflation and updates to our cost model has resulted in increased administrative costs. Maintenance expenses have increased as a result of inflation and program growth. The cost of insurance has also increased since the last fare increase.

When was the last Vanpool fare increase?

The last Vanpool fare increase was in 2007 when fares increased an average of 6%.

How much are the fares going up?

Vanpool fares will increase an average of 15%. Fares for some van sizes and trip lengths will be more than 15% while some will be less than 15%.

Will there be more fare increases in the future?

Additional fare increases are likely and may occur every two years. Each year the amount of service, the quantity and cost of vans needed, operating costs, and administrative costs are analyzed to determine if rider fares are sufficient to cover program costs and meet the fare recovery requirement.

What does my fare cover?

The fare increase is necessary to cover program costs and comply with King County Ordinance. The Ordinance requires the Vanpool Program to recover 100% of its operating and capital costs and 25% of its administrative costs. More specifically, your vanpool fare covers the cost of the vehicle, fuel, maintenance, insurance, emergency assistance, and support staff.

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How will the fare increase affect my bus pass that I use to help pay my fare?

A monthly Metro-Vanpool Transit Pass and the Ship-to-Shore Puget Pass will continue to be accepted at their current value towards a Metro Vanpool fare. The cost of the Metro-Vanpool Transit Pass is linked with Metro bus fares. When Metro bus fares increase, the cost of the Metro-Vanpool Transit Pass increases.

How will the fare increase affect my employer-provided subsidy or pass?

The Vanpool Program will continue to accept subsidized vanpool fares through established FlexPass contracts with employers. Commuter Bonus Vouchers are accepted at their face value.

How does the cost of vanpooling compare to driving alone?

The Automobile Association of America estimates the average cost to operate a vehicle is 17.9 cents per mile (including only gas, maintenance, tires). A 50-mile round-trip commute would cost you \$187.95 a month to drive alone while the same trip in a Metro Vanpool with 6 paying participants will cost you \$118.33. That's a savings of almost \$70 per month and doesn't include any employer-provided subsidies you may receive.

How do I find out what my new vanpool fare will be?

Talk to your bookkeeper. Your bookkeeper received a 2008 fare schedule. Find your van size, round-trip mileage and number of paying participants in your group to determine your individual fare.

What can we do as a vanpool group to minimize the impact of this fare increase?

Unless your vanpool is a 15-passenger van with 15 participants, you can reduce your fare by helping your vanpool add more riders. Visit RideshareOnline.com for a list of commuters looking to join a vanpool. Start a waiting list of riders to add to your vanpool. Your group can trade up to a larger size van and or merge with another vanpool at your worksite. The larger the van and the more paying participants it has, the lower the fare for everyone in the group.

Who do I call if I still have questions?

Call your vanpool group's Accounting Rideshare Services Representative. Please call 206-625-4500 or 1-800-427-8249 to be directed to the appropriate representative.