



VANPOOL PROGRAM GUIDE

*Join a Vanpool.
Save time, money and avoid the rush.*





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GETTING STARTED

Thank you for joining a METRO Vanpool! We're thrilled that you've chosen to share the ride by joining us on one of our vanpool routes! As esteemed members of our team, we warmly welcome you and your fellow commuters to our program. We're committed to providing a seamless transition into the METRO Vanpool experience.

In this manual, you will find all the essential information and contact details needed for your journey. We recommend keeping a copy in your van's glovebox for easy access. This manual is designed to guide all vanpool members toward a smooth and efficient commuting experience.

Please remember to add METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org to your accepted email list to ensure you receive important communications.

Your METRO Vanpool number is:

VOLUNTEER DRIVER AGREEMENT (VAN AGREEMENT)

The signed Volunteer Driver Agreement has been signed between METRO and your vanpool group. The Driver / Group Leader has been designated as the representative of the vanpool group and will be your vanpool's point of contact for METRO and / or the designated service provider.

Although the Driver has signed the driver agreement, it is the group that should guarantee the vehicle and its passengers' wellbeing.

All METRO Vanpool participants should review and familiarize themselves with the terms of the van agreement. Therein, the vanpooler will have details as to what has been agreed to such as:

- Vehicle responsibilities
- Driving conditions
- Driving distance limitations
- Requirements in case of an incident
- Payment obligations
- Unauthorized usage

The Volunteer Driver Agreement (Van Agreement) also presents the vanpool group with conditions that METRO agrees to and stipulates as a standard practice related to certain



circumstances such as vehicle termination, insurance coverage limitations and changes / cancellations to the signed agreement.

It must be noted that your van agreement is subject to change and / or termination under, but not limited to, the following conditions:

- Improper use and handling of the vehicle.
- Required switch of the vehicle due to manufacturer recalls, high mileage on the vehicle or other miscellaneous requests.

METRO reserves the right to request that your vanpool be retired once a certain mileage threshold has been reached. This threshold varies based on:

- Total miles on the vehicle
- Make & model
- Production year
- Vehicle overall condition

When deemed necessary, METRO will work with the vanpool group to properly manage any such switches, which will also require the signing of a new van agreement.

If further details or clarifications are required regarding your van agreement, please email your vanpool representative at METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org or call us at **713-224-RIDE (7433)**.

VANPOOL PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

All METRO Vanpool participants are required to sign a Vanpool Participant Agreement as a condition of participation. This agreement is between METRO and each individual rider and outlines the responsibilities, expectations, and financial obligations of every participant.

While the Driver / Group Leader serves as the primary point of contact with METRO, **each participant is personally responsible** for complying with the terms of the agreement and supporting the safe and reliable operation of the vanpool.

Participants should review and become familiar with the agreement, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- On-time arrival and communication with the Driver
- Standards of conduct toward fellow passengers
- Monthly cost-sharing for lease, fuel, tolls, and parking
- Approved payment methods and due dates



- Financial responsibility regardless of employer or public funding
- Late fees, returned payment charges, and possible service suspension
- 30-day notice requirement for withdrawal or route transfer
- Compliance with METRO and approved internal route rules
- Personal property responsibility
- Non-discrimination protections
- Indemnification responsibilities
- METRO's right to modify policies, fees, and mileage tiers
- Billing disputes and collection procedures

Monthly costs may change based on ridership, funding availability, and operating expenses.

Failure to follow the terms of the Participant Agreement, including payment requirements, may result in suspension of services, account termination, and collection actions as allowed by law.

The Participant Agreement is subject to change with proper written notice from METRO.

For questions regarding the Vanpool Participant Agreement, please email METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org or call **713-224-RIDE (7433)**.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

The Vanpool Vendor will provide insurance coverage for the Vanpool Vehicle in an amount equal to \$1,000,000.00 per incident for liability and property damage risks. Should the Vanpool Vendor fail to provide insurance coverage for the Vanpool Vehicle at any point, the METRO Vanpool Program will suspend the Vanpool immediately and so long as insurance coverage is lacking.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REMINDER

AN IMPORTANT BENEFIT

Each vanpool participant receives public support to lower vanpool costs. This amount equals approximately one-third of the average monthly cost. To ensure public support continues, we encourage groups to keep their vanpool routes at maximum ridership and allow access to eligible riders. Keeping vanpool routes at or near maximum ridership also produces the lowest monthly cost for each rider. Low ridership may result in the loss of public funds and potential termination of the Vanpool route.



VANPOOLING IS A PUBLIC PROGRAM

The METRO Vanpool program is a federally funded initiative that provides a vital transportation option for communities, ensuring that the services are open to the public and not restricted to any specific group or employer, allowing anyone who meets the general requirements to participate and benefit from the program.

VANPOOL SUPPORT

Please feel free to share this public transportation reminder with all vanpool participants, drivers, riders and employers. If you have any questions or need assistance searching for riders, send an email to METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org or contact us at **713-224-RIDE (7433)**. Together, we are helping reduce Houston-area congestion, improve air quality and conserve energy.

DRIVER CRITERIA

All van drivers must successfully complete an agency-approved online driver training program before operating a METRO-supported van and must complete refresher training at least once every 24 months.

- Must be at least 25 years old.
- Must have a valid Texas driver's license that is not expired, suspended, or revoked. If you are applying for a Texas driver's after relocating from another state, you must provide a valid Texas driver's license number within 30 days of submitting this application.
- Have a minimum of five (5) years of verifiable U.S. driving history.
- Will need the driver's license number including your previous state to verify (if needed for the 5 years U.S. driving history). We are unable to verify and do not accept out-of-country driver's license information.
- Have no more than one (1) moving violation within the past 12 months.
- Have not had more than two (2) moving violations or an at-fault accident in the past 36 months (or any combination thereof).
- Have no record of convictions for serious offenses, including but not limited to, driving under the influence or reckless operation.

****Serious offenses such as:**

- Violations for cell phone usage
- Excessive speed (20 mph or more over posted speed limit)



- Operating to endanger or reckless / careless driving
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Operating a motor vehicle with a suspended, expired or revoked license
- School bus stopping or passing violations
- Leaving the scene of an accident that involved personal injury or property
- Motor vehicle homicide

Submit a request to METROVanpoolFleet@RideMETRO.org, along with confirmation of your name as it appears on your driver's license. **DO NOT** send your driver's license number or picture of your driver's license via email.

Driver applications are emailed directly to the recipient requesting approval via **GetAccept** through our vendor Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC.

Applications are time-sensitive, so please apply as soon as possible.

VANPOOL ETIQUETTE

Create and agree upon your own "Rules of the Road" right from the start. METRO Vanpool has provided a few examples to help begin your Vanpool group.

1. Establish a clear chain of communication to ensure that schedule adjustments can be made quickly and easily. Every Vanpool group should have a coordinator who can maintain current contact information such as email addresses and phone numbers.
2. Decide on a regular route and pick-up time for each passenger, including how long the vanpool will wait for late arrivals.
3. Texas law requires the use of seat belts. Vanpoolers must always wear seat restraints when the vehicle is in operation.
4. Drivers must not use cellular phones or other hands-free devices while operating the vehicle.
5. When possible, back into parking spaces for easy departure.
6. Vanpoolers should pull out of a parking space or drive to a designated location to pick up riders. This will prevent van doors from bumping or scratching surrounding vehicles and ensure safer boarding.
7. Always allow extra time in adverse weather conditions.
8. It is best to address all issues promptly and effectively as they arise. If you believe that the differences within the group cannot be resolved, please reach out to METRO Vanpool Customer Service for assistance at METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org.



PASSENGER RULES

As a METRO Vanpool passenger, you have the following duties and responsibilities to both METRO Vanpool and your fellow passengers:

1. I will arrive at vanpool meeting locations on or before the agreed departure times.
2. I will keep my group updated regarding any changes in my ability to meet the vanpool group on time.
3. I will conduct myself in a manner considerate of my fellow vanpool members.
4. I will pay my share of all vanpools costs each month, on or before the due date.
5. I understand that my monthly share of costs may change subject to the amount of riders, fuel costs, tolls and / or other direct operating costs.
6. I understand that failure to pay my share in a complete and timely manner can result in suspension of Vanpool services, penalties and applicable collection steps.
7. I agree to provide our group with a 30-day notice should I withdraw from the vanpool route.
8. If I transfer to another vanpool route, I will observe the rules and financial responsibilities of that route.
9. I will abide by vanpool rules as determined by METRO Vanpool and by any group rules, as long as they are not in conflict with METRO Vanpool operating policies, which have been agreed upon by the majority of passengers and driver(s) of our vanpool.
10. I understand that I may communicate directly with METRO Vanpool regarding financial, customer service or other matters related to the proper operation of the vanpool route.
11. I understand that a portion of my monthly METRO Vanpool cost is paid with public funds and, in certain cases, by my employer. I recognize that if I fail to provide timely payments, accurate information or do not comply with rider requirements, I may become subject to public and / or employer penalties liable for the full cost of METRO Vanpool services consumed and terminated from access to the METRO Vanpool program.
12. I acknowledge that METRO Vanpool has the right to change policies, procedures and financial requirements for participation at any given time without notice.

VANPOOL TIPS

1. Agree on issues such as temperature, eating or drinking in the vehicle and radio use.
2. Be aware of personal hygiene and avoid using strong scents to which others may be allergic.



3. If you decide vanpooling isn't for you, give your vanpool Coordinator 30-day notice allowing time to recruit another rider.
4. Always keep your vehicle clean and in safe condition.
5. Always maintain enough fuel to make one round-trip before leaving each morning. This will keep your vanpool on schedule.
6. Refrain from smoking until you are out and away from the vehicle. This includes vapes and all vape products.
7. Please respect the preferences of fellow vanpool participants, especially those who value quiet time and may not wish to engage in continuous conversation. Riders may use headphones during the commute at a respectful volume.
8. Know where your pick-up location is and always meet your vanpool group on time, if possible.
9. Many groups assign seats based on an agreed format (seniority, pick up / drop off origin, etc.). While this is not required, other groups choose to rotate seats regularly. Know what your group prefers and stick to the plan.
10. Rally together by filling every open vanpool seat! We can reduce the cost of your vanpool lease by filling each additional seat.
11. By joining forces, METRO Vanpool can reduce the stress of driving alone, lower emissions from single occupancy vehicles (SOV's), save valuable time and put more money in your pocket simply by sharing the ride.

REPORTING

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Now that your route is on the road and you are part of a METRO Vanpool, it is important to keep in touch with us regarding any changes that may take place with your drivers, pick up or drop off location, the route you take to work or the people in your van. This information is key to fulfilling our insurance obligations and protecting you and your riders.

1. If you need to notify us about a change in your starting or ending location or the route you take to work, send an email to METROVanpoolICS@RideMETRO.org, including your Primary Driver or Group Leader's name and your METRO Vanpool route (or V) number listed in the welcome section of this manual. We will be able to make the change and let you know if there is any additional information needed or if your monthly mileage allowance should change.
2. Before you change your primary driver or add an alternate driver, a driver application must be completed, and the rider is approved to drive. To request a driver application



or a driver change, please email METROVanpoolFleet@RideMETRO.org (Refer to pages 6-7 for METRO Vanpool Driver Criteria).

MONTHLY RIDERSHIP REPORTS

METRO Vanpool is a regional vanpool program supported by public dollars. The federal funds used to support this program help reduce the cost of vanpooling for all customers. The availability of this financial benefit is linked to each vanpool group submitting a monthly ridership report.

Your group will be required to submit a monthly ridership report online to StarApp.RideMETRO.org. This is usually done by the vanpool group leader or reporter. METRO Vanpool Customer Service can grant access to the ridership logs to the group leader and the assigned reporter. Please make sure you notify METRO Vanpool if this point of contact changes at any time. These logs will record the monthly odometer reading as well as each commuter's ridership data for that calendar month.

Ridership logs must be submitted via **RidePro** by **the first business day of each month**. If you miss the deadline or need assistance, please contact METRO Vanpool Customer Service at **713-224-7433**. A representative will assist you to walk you through the process and ensure access. Additional instructions are included with this manual.

ADDING OR REMOVING A RIDER AND / OR PART-TIME RIDER

ADDING A RIDER

Riders may request to join a specific route by calling **713-224-RIDE (7433)** or by **accessing the service online and following the steps outlined below:**

1. Visit StarApp.RideMETRO.org to register online.
2. Use the left-hand navigation button to click *"Request to Join a Vanpool."*
3. Using the search box in the middle of the page, search for and select the desired route (ex. V1234).
4. The driver / contact for the route will receive an automated email from METRO Vanpool.
5. The driver will respond, confirming the new commuter and their start date.



REMOVING A RIDER

Send an email to METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org with the route number (ex: V1965), name of the rider(s) to remove and when they will stop riding. METRO Vanpool requires a 30-day notice prior to rider removal.

PART-TIME RIDER STATUS

A part-time rider completes fewer than 12 round trips per month. A group has the option to accept or reject part-time riders. The recommended day rate for part-time riders is the monthly cost per-rider divided by 22.

A rider can switch from part-time to full-time status if space is available. To make this change, send an email to METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org with the name of the rider and the requested change. Full-time vanpoolers must ride at least 24 one-way or 12 round trips monthly.

REGISTRATION RENEWAL

Please arrange for the annual vehicle inspection by calling the vendor 30 days before your registration expires. The renewal sticker will be mailed to the group a few weeks after the inspection. The State of Texas will **NOT** issue a new registration for the vanpool vehicle until it has successfully passed the annual inspection process.

TOLL TAG REQUIREMENTS FOR VANPOOL VEHICLES

If you use toll roads, please confirm that you have a valid toll tag.

- If you have been assigned a **permanent replacement van**, remove the toll tag from your old vehicle and order a replacement tag for your new vehicle.
- If you are using a **temporary service loaner van**, you must temporarily add that vehicle to your toll road account.

Your toll tag **must be properly registered** to match the correct vehicle type and license plate number on file with the toll road authority. If you remove a tag from one vehicle and place it on another without updating the registration, toll violations may occur.

Please note: If your toll tag is **not registered, improperly transferred, or damaged**, your vanpool group will be responsible for **all toll violations and related charges**. These charges will be added to your van group's invoice and will be your responsibility to pay.



Toll violations are paid by the vendor and include an **additional \$7.00 administrative fee per violation**. Because the vendor pays the toll directly, the toll authority will not show the violation on your account.

To obtain a new toll tag, please contact the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA or TxTag) and use your Vanpool Fuel MasterCard as the payment method.

Billing Address:

1900 Main St.
Houston, TX 77002

If you have any questions, please contact **METRO Vanpool Billing** at 713-615-6413 or METROVanpoolBilling@RideMETRO.org.

Please share this information with all members of your vanpool.

MAINTENANCE

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of your vanpool vehicle is extremely important for the comfort and safety of your commute. The good news is that maintenance is included in the METRO Vanpool vehicle lease agreement through Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC.

Contact Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC when scheduled maintenance is needed for your van. Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC may also reach out to you when scheduled maintenance is due. While some vehicles have indicators for oil changes, generally scheduled maintenance is required every 7,500 miles.

For **unscheduled maintenance issues** (e.g. heater not working, air conditioning failure, broken equipment, etc.) that cannot be addressed during schedule maintenance, please contact Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC to arrange for service. A loaner vehicle may be provided if the repair takes an extended period.

Keeping the vehicle clean is also very important and should be performed at least once per month. Tire pressure should also be checked periodically.



GLASS REPAIR

Call Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC at the first sight of glass damage on your vanpool vehicle. A Model 1 representative will arrange for the glass to be repaired or replaced. Most can be done on-site at your employer++.

++Some employers do not allow onsite repair.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Maintenance / Repairs

During Business Hours:

Haley Stratton

317-650-8985

HStratton@model1.com

After Hours:

rental@model1.com (preferred)

888-633-8380

When contacting Model 1, please have the following information ready to properly identify that your vehicle is part of the METRO Vanpool program:

1. Your name
2. Your company name
3. Your METRO Vanpool group number
4. The Model 1 Vehicle ID number

EMERGENCIES

ACCIDENTS OR INCIDENTS

Report all accidents, incidents, vehicle damage or theft to the vendor within **24 hours**. An accident occurs when your vanpool vehicle hits someone or something or someone or something hits you. An incident is defined as occurring if a part is stolen from the van, an act of vandalism takes place or when an act of nature damages the van. If you are involved in an accident, regardless of injuries, please contact your local law enforcement. If you are involved in an accident with injuries, **please contact 911**. Always cooperate with law enforcement and do not leave the scene until you have been officially released. When you contact Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC, a tow will be arranged for your vehicle if it cannot be driven, and transportation can be arranged for your group to continue to your destination.



VEHICLE BREAKDOWNS

If the vanpool vehicle breaks down, please contact Model 1 Rental and Leasing, LLC. A tow will be arranged, as well as alternate transportation for the vanpool group if needed. You may be issued a loaner vehicle at that time.

ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Should you have an emergency outside normal business hours (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.), please call 1-888-633-8380 for Roadside Assistance and follow the prompts. You will need the following information when calling:

1. Vanpool ID Number
2. Current Vehicle Location
3. License Plate Number / VIN
4. Total Number of Passengers in the Vehicle
5. Your Destination

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Primary Roadside Assistance Contact: 1-888-633-8380 (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

Please leave a voicemail if you are trying to contact after 8 p.m.

Support Email (for follow-up): customercare@model1.com

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME

All registered METRO Vanpool vanpoolers are eligible for the Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program. This service is available for midday emergencies or instances where the commuter may have to work overtime. Each METRO Vanpool participant is eligible for three (3) ERH rides per calendar year. An emergency is defined as an unscheduled event such as an illness, your vanpool suddenly not being available or family illness / emergency.

Contact METRO Vanpool Customer Service at **713-224-7433** between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to schedule your emergency ride. The transportation service will usually arrive within 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the availability in your area. METRO Vanpool will cover the commuter's transportation fare, except for toll and tip. Tipping is at the discretion of the rider and is not reimbursable.



Should an emergency arise outside the hours of METRO Vanpool Customer Service, keep the receipt for the eligible ride and METRO will reimburse the fare. Email the receipt to METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BILL

BILLING BASICS

METRO Vanpool monthly costs are pre-billed. For example, during the month of April, a bill will be emailed to the group's primary contact for the month of May.

The bill will include:

- A charge for the lease
- A list of riders
- A fuel card estimate including: tolls, parking and fuel (reconciled from two months past)
- Employer incentive credits / payroll deductions or any other credits that METRO has issued
- A link for credit card payment

The primary contact should forward the bill to all members of the group. It is very important that billing is transparent for all members. The online account is set up as one account per vehicle with three email addresses associated with receiving invoices and payment notifications.

ALL PAST DUE BALANCES MUST BE PAID IN FULL BEFORE MOVING TO ANOTHER VAN.

PRE-BILLING

Billing is initially based on information submitted with the group's formation paperwork. The first two invoices will reflect these estimates. The third invoice will also include a reconciliation of actual expenses from the first invoice.

If actual costs exceed the estimate, an additional charge will be included on the next bill. If the actual costs are less than the estimate, a credit will be issued. From the third month on, each invoice will include the estimate for the coming month and reconciliation (charge or credit) for two months prior and / if any toll violations are noted from the vendor.



CHANGES TO ROSTER / RIDER LIST

Changes to the vanpool's roster / list of riders should be made by the fifth of the month to show up on next month's bill. Primary drivers should send an email to METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org inbox when making these changes.

NOTE: When making roster changes, remember vanpool is a month-to-month commitment and riders should provide a 30-day notice to their group prior to leaving their route. Riders are responsible for their bills up to 30 days after they give notice to leave the route. For riders transferring vans, the balance on the old van must be current to join a new van.

DIVIDING THE BILL

Most METRO Vanpool groups divide the bill in one of the following ways:

- Shared-cost model: Riders share the responsibility of driving and splitting the bill evenly.
- Driver-discount model: One or two people drive most of the time and the group agrees to pay for all or part of the driver(s) costs.
- Part-time riders should pay a daily rate calculated by dividing the monthly per-rider cost by 22.

MAKING PAYMENTS

Vanpool payments can be made to the driver or directly to METRO. Direct payments to METRO Vanpool can be made in several ways: employer transportation benefit, pre-tax deduction, by check or online via credit card. METRO Vanpool does not accept cash. If challenges arise in collecting money from your group, please contact **METRO Vanpool Billing** at METROVanpoolBilling@RideMETRO.org or 713-615-6413.

FUEL CARD

Each van is issued a METRO Vanpool fuel card. The fuel card can only be used to fill up the vanpool vehicle, tollway charges and car washes. Cards should be used outside at fuel pumps, not inside stores. Cards may not work at grocery store fuel stations or at stations that have had significant fraudulent activity. Cards may be used for small purchases at Auto Zone for items such as emergency wiper blade replacements or



window washing fluid. If you have any problems with your fuel card, please contact **METRO Vanpool Billing at 713-615-6413.**

CONTACT US

The METRO Vanpool team can assist you with many of your vanpool requests:

- Roster changes: additions, deletions or status changes
- Filling empty seats for low ridership
- Assistance with submission of monthly Ridership logs
- Submission of maintenance requests
- Delivery of your vehicle
- Van agreement-related issues, including changing the size of your van or terminating your van agreement for any reason
- Driver application approvals or Group Leader / Coordinator switches
- Issuance of the vanpool fuel card
- Billing and invoicing questions

METRO Vanpool Customer Service is available to assist you Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

METRO Vanpool

METROVanpoolCS@RideMETRO.org

713-224-RIDE (7433)



RideMETRO.org/Vanpool
713-224-RIDE (7433)