

April 2021 Commuter Van Bulletin



Dear Commuter Van Participant,

Spring 2021 is finally here with students starting in-person school and more employees preparing to return to their worksites.

The Metro commuter van team is providing important reminders to those actively commuting (or expecting to start commuting back-to-work soon), and to those who expect to have their van remain parked and not in use.

Included in this bulletin:

- [Stay Healthy Reminders](#)
- [Group Updates](#)
- [Van Commute Flexibility](#)
- [Inspect Your Ride Before Returning-to-Work](#)
- [Road Safety Reminders; Distracted Driving Awareness](#)

STAY HEALTHY REMINDERS – As a reminder, all commute participants should:

- Follow statewide, county, and your employer's health and safety guidance.
- Do not commute when you are sick.
- Wear a mask; request others wear masks; wash your hands frequently; and use hand sanitizer when you cannot wash your hands.
- Use disinfectant wipes to wipe down all high-touch areas and hard surfaces before and after the commute including: door handles (in and out), steering wheel, armrests, seatbelts/seatbelt buckles, knobs (including climate control,

radio, glove box, etc.) and spray seats. Key fobs and fuel cards should also be wiped down with disinfectant.

GROUP UPDATES – Has your group’s participation changed? Please share any and all participant, ridership, schedule, or mileage changes with Metro. This ensures we have your van group’s most up-to-date and accurate information, contacts, and reporting details.

- **Routes/Schedules** – Email any changes to route, daily schedule, or hours to vanpool@kingcounty.gov with your group number and ‘Route Update’ as the subject.
- **Roles or Additional Considerations**— If you are low on riders or have lost drivers or your bookkeeper, email vanpool@kingcounty.gov with your group number and ‘Ridership help needed’ as the subject.

VAN COMMUTE FLEXIBILITY – As work schedules change and more employers offer a mix of telework and in-person schedules, Metro has several options for you and your group to keep vanpooling!

- **Part-Time Fares for Reduced Commute Days** – With more telecommuting options, participants may change a 5-day commuter van schedule to a 3 or 4-day work schedule. This allows you to keep sharing the ride, bypassing tolls, and using the HOV lanes and bypass ramps when you need to go to the office.
- **Oversubscribe Seats / Switch-Off Commute Days** – Consider recruiting additional riders who also share a similar commute—such as 8 people for a 7-passenger van— so participants may benefit from sharing the ride in a Metro commuter van on just the days they need. Split the group with half the commuters riding 2-3 days a week and the rest riding the other days.
- **Part-time/One-way** – Participate in a van that best meets your work schedule. Join a group two days a week, or just for the morning or afternoon commute as a part-time rider.
- **Downsize to a Minivan** – If your group ridership has dropped, consider trading your larger van for a 7-passenger minivan. Smaller vans still provide enough room for your group members to ride comfortably.
- **Ride in Multiple Vans** – Participating in two commuter vans might make for a more convenient commute choice. Join as a part-time rider each in two vans so that commute times and locations better meet your work schedule, help you get home earlier, or work longer when needed.
- **Van Commute + Active Commute** – Combine your vanpool commute with biking or other active commuting. For example, you could be a van driver or passenger for the morning commute, and then bicycle home or to the van pickup location in the afternoon. Any combination is a great way to add some

exercise to your day. Groups may request a bike rack for their commuter van if needed.

- **Know Someone Considering Vanpool? Ride Free with Ticket-2-Ride** — If a co-worker or neighbor is considering vanpooling but isn't sure if it will meet their commute needs, there is a hassle-and cost-free way for them to try out vanpooling. Our Ticket-2-Ride feature allows folks to ride free for three trips in a Metro commuter van with empty seats. This benefit allows commuters to test out how vanpooling may work for them. [Ticket-2-Ride Link](#)

INSPECT YOUR RIDE BEFORE RETURNING-TO-WORK –

- **Before returning to your commute, thoroughly inspect your vehicle:**
 - Check all fluids and for signs of fluid leakage.
 - Inspect tires for damage and proper inflation.
 - Clean all windows and wipe off wiper blades. Consider taking the van through the car wash before commuting. Remember, you can use your assigned fuel card to pay for a basic car wash up to twice per month.
 - Check your mirrors for damage while adjusting them as needed. ○ Ensure the van starts, and there are no warning lights displayed on the instrument panel.
 - Check the operation of all lights. Have a rider help you test your headlights, turn signals, brake lights, and reverse lights.
 - Finally, note any unusual van operation characteristics (noises, vibrations, odors, etc.)
- Please remember to perform your required daily and monthly vehicle inspections regularly to keep your group's van in the best shape for your commute. Report any damage to Metro immediately. This allows us to schedule a time to complete any required work.
- If you are not commuting regularly, please remember check on parked vehicles often. Start and run your van for at least 20 minutes once every other week. This activity will help to maintain the battery and charging system in your van so it will work when you need it.

ROAD SAFETY REMINDERS; DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS – April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month. In the spirit of supporting safety on the road, we are sharing these reminders. To avoid distractions as a vanpool driver, please remember these helpful tips:

- Please turn off your mobile phone or device or put it on silent before driving.
- Need to make or take a call? Pull over to a safe place out of traffic lanes and put the vehicle in "Park."
- Program any navigation or music choices before departing.

- Finally, please remember, electronic distractions are only one type of distraction. Drivers should also refrain from eating, drinking, reading, and doing other activities that may divert your attention.

Archived Bulletins - If you have missed any bulletins, we have archived them [here](#).

Thank you and Happy Vanpooling!

King County Metro Commuter Van Services

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Get the latest! Like us on [Facebook](#) to stay up to date on incentives, contests and everything else that's hip about Metro Vanpool.

Send us an [e-mail](#).

Or give us a call at 206-625-4500 during business hours (8-5, M-F).



Moving forward together

www.kingcounty.gov/metrovans