



[Vanpools – Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

What is a vanpool?

Vanpools are month-to-month "super carpools" requiring at least five riders (including driver) with a similar work destination, schedule and a designated pickup location. One person usually leases the vehicle and typically does the driving while the other passengers pay a monthly fare. The other passengers can also be approved to be back-up drivers.

What are the benefits of vanpooling?

Sharing the ride is easy, saves money and is a relaxing alternative to driving alone. You may also save time by traveling in a carpool lane. Vanpooling also saves wear and tear on your personal vehicle. The primary vanpool driver may also qualify to have personal use of the vehicle on weekends with a designated number of personal miles.

How much does it cost to vanpool?

Vanpool riders pay a monthly fare based on the size of the van (7-passenger SUV or minivan, up to 15-passenger van), commute distance, number of passengers, fuel, parking, etc. OCTA also offers qualified vanpools a monthly subsidy of up to \$400 toward the lease cost of vehicle.

Who provides the vanpool vehicle?

The vehicle must be leased through an approved vendor. Currently, [Enterprise Vanpool](#) is the approved leasing vendor. They provide the vehicle for lease on a month-to-month basis, maintenance, insurance, and roadside assistance. Private or employee owned/leased vehicles are not eligible for the program or any incentives.

How do I start a vanpool?

It's easy – follow these steps:

- 1) Find other riders at your worksite with similar schedules and that live near you – call the OC Rideshare office at 714/834-7600 and we can prepare a **RideGuide** for you to help locate riders.
- 2) Decide on your route and common pick up location for your riders – look for a [Park & Ride](#) lot on the go511.com website – these are centralized locations where riders can park their cars to meet the vanpool. Please check with any parking restrictions on your lease.
- 3) Contact Enterprise to let them know you are ready to start a new vanpool and they will provide you with pre-qualification forms for the vanpool driver to complete in advance.

How do I qualify for the OCTA monthly subsidy?

Vanpools with a work location in Orange County and can start with 70% occupancy (that means 5 persons in a 7-passenger vehicle), including an SUV or minivan, may qualify. Click on [OCTA Vanpool Qualifications](#) for more details about subsidy application and monthly reporting.



What if I just want to be a rider on an existing vanpool?

We can look to see if there is an open seat on one of our existing vanpools. Please complete the [OC Rideshare Sign-Up Form](#) and check “Vanpool Matching” and we’ll check our database to see if there is a County vanpool that matches your schedule. You can also check the [Seat Finder](#) option on the OCTA website.

Are there any other incentives available if I start a vanpool?

Yes! The County’s OC Rideshare program provides \$100 per month for the first six (6) months of vanpool ridership to the employee that leases the van. That’s \$600 in “Commuter Cash” that will appear on their payroll. Click on the [Start a New Vanpool Form](#) for more details.

Is there a tax benefit to pay for the monthly vanpool fare?

Yes, through the County’s OC Rideshare program, employees can purchase monthly vanpool vouchers through the payroll deduction process to pay their fare. The [Pre-Tax Payroll Deduction Program](#) reduces your taxable income. It’s an easy and convenient way to pay the monthly fare.

How do I get a ride home if I get sick at work or need to work overtime?

The County of Orange participates in the regional [Guaranteed Ride Home](#) (GRH) program, which offers a reimbursed ride to your home or vehicle, due to a valid emergency, up to two (2) times per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

Is there a minimum number of one-way or roundtrip miles?

There are no minimums but most vanpools are most cost effective when the one-way mileage from the home to work location is at least 15 miles (30 roundtrip).

What is a back-up driver?

A back-up driver is a passenger in the vanpool who has been approved by the leasing company (Enterprise) to share the driving. They must complete additional paperwork, provide insurance and driver’s license information, and be at least 25 years of age. A medical background check is also required only if the person will be driving a 10+ passenger vehicle.