



## VANPOOL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. If I join the vanpool what is my commitment to the van?**

A. You only make a month-to-month commitment. You may leave the van at any time with 5 days written notice, allowing the group to recruit a new rider and keep fares stable.

### **Q. Do I get picked up at my front door?**

A. Not usually. The group determines its route and schedule and most groups choose convenient park and ride lots or other meeting points to keep mileage and commute times at a minimum. The route and schedule must be approved by Mason Transit and cannot be changed without our approval. The origin *or* destination of each vanpool's route must be in Mason County.

### **Q. What happens when I'm sick or on vacation?**

A. Your monthly fare reserves your seat whether you ride or not. Refunds are not permitted. You can arrange to sublet your seat to a temporary rider while you're away. Just be sure to let your volunteer bookkeeper know. This rider will also need to complete and submit a Vanpool Rider Agreement.

### **Q. How do we pay for gas?**

A. All MTA vanpool vans are issued a Voyager Fleet Card to be used by approved volunteer drivers for fueling the van.

### **Q. How are monthly fares determined?**

A. A group's monthly rate is based on the number of average daily roundtrip miles traveled and the type of van. Individual fares are determined by the number of riders in the group on the first of the month. The group rate is equally divided by the number of riders. Example: Group rate is \$500.00 and there are 10 riders each person's fare is \$50.00.

### **Q. What happens if the vanpool group gains or loses a rider?**

A. Individual passenger fares are adjusted each month to reflect the current ridership level.

### **Q. How do we find more riders?**

A. Mason Transit offers computerized ride matching services through the statewide RideshareOnline.com service to provide you with names of potential vanpoolers. Go online to register and find your own matches. You may be able to recruit new riders through your company

newsletter, posting signs around your worksite or using your worksite's Internet services – just be sure to gain approval first. Mason Transit can supply you with Riders Wanted posters.

**Q. What are the volunteer bookkeeper's responsibilities?**

A. Volunteer bookkeepers are responsible for collecting the appropriate fares from each rider on or before the first day of each month and for completing and submitting monthly reports. Reports and fares must be submitted to us or postmarked by the seventh of each month.

**Q. What about insurance coverage?**

A. Mason Transit is self-insured, providing coverage for the van and for all its authorized occupants. In addition, we purchase uninsured motorist coverage. Volunteer vanpool drivers should discuss their personal medical insurance needs with their insurance agent to insure adequate personal insurance should they be injured in an at-fault accident. As a public agency, we cannot obtain Personal Injury Protection (PIP) insurance. If the vanpool is involved in an accident in which our volunteer driver is not at fault, all claims will be directed to the other driver's insurance. Mason Transit will provide some assistance to you; we will not assume any liability or provide any coverage in these instances. Think of it as similar to renting a car or driving your own car.

**Q. Is smoking allowed in the vanpool vehicle?**

A. No. Mason Transit does not allow tobacco use in any of its vehicles.

**Q. Are there special criteria for volunteer driver selection?**

A. Absolutely! Your safety is our number one concern. To help ensure that we have the best volunteer drivers available, they must be at least 25 years old with five years of recent driving history, have a valid Washington State driver's license, a safe driving record, and proof of insurability. All potential volunteer drivers must also attend our Defensive Driving Class and orientation. Applying volunteer drivers will only be insured once all requirements are met.

**Q. What are the volunteer primary driver's basic responsibilities?**

A. The primary volunteer driver is responsible for picking up and delivering passengers, arranging for van maintenance, van cleaning, and fueling. On those days that the volunteer primary driver won't be driving, he/she is also responsible for ensuring that an approved backup volunteer driver is available.

**Q. What happens if the primary volunteer driver is sick or on vacation?**

A. Every vanpool is required to have at least one approved volunteer backup driver who can drive the van on those days that the volunteer primary driver isn't available. If for some reason, no approved driver is available, the vanpool group should follow its predetermined carpool plans.

**Q. What happens if the van needs servicing or breaks down?**

A. Call the Operations Coordinator or the Maintenance department and we will arrange for another van to be brought to you.