
WELCOME TO YAKIMA TRANSIT'S VANPOOL PROGRAM!

Yakima Transit provides vans for use by commuters like you, who live or work in the greater Yakima area and travel 20 or more miles commuting to and from work. Commuters receive comfortable, convenient travel in exchange for a monthly fare, which covers the cost of the van's operation. The vanpool driver/coordinator generally rides for free or a reduced cost, in exchange for the safe operation of the van and other responsibilities such as, collecting monthly fares from the passengers, fueling the van, scheduling maintenance, cleaning the van, and recruiting riders and drivers when necessary. The driver is a **volunteer**, not employed by Yakima Transit.

The Vanpool Handbook is designed to provide you with information and forms needed for a smooth vanpool operation. We have detailed the procedures and policies you will need to follow while facilitating as a vanpool driver or coordinator and as information for van riders to help them understand the program. These procedures and policies may be updated from time to time, as necessary. The Vanpool Handbook is designed so you can easily insert updates.

Vanpools are pools of resources. Passengers pay a monthly fare for the ride to work; Yakima Transit purchases the equipment and administers the program. Drivers generally do not pay, or if they do it is at a reduced rate; instead, they drive the van as their contribution to the vanpool's success.

Drivers and passengers make up the pool of resources. The driver's major benefits include, but are not limited to:

- The "free ride"
- Less miles on personal vehicle
- Maybe not having to own an extra car for commuting
- Personal satisfaction for doing the right thing

The passenger's major benefits include, but are not limited to:

- A very affordable, dependable ride
- A safe, relaxed, reliable commute
- Less wear and tear on personal car
- Potentially lower insurance rates on personal vehicle
- Maybe unnecessary to own extra commuter car
- Personal satisfaction for easing traffic congestion and air pollution

As a driver or passenger, it is expected that you will adhere to the Vanpool Participant Agreement and follow policy as it relates to this manual. WELCOME ABOARD!

Please take the time to carefully **read this manual** and **share it with your passengers** so you all know and understand all aspects of Yakima Transit's Vanpool Program and your responsibilities and opportunities as a driver, coordinator, or passenger.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

YAKIMA TRANSIT CONTACTS	5
VANPOOL DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS	6
AUTHORIZED DRIVERS.....	7
EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION	7
DRIVER WORKSHOP	7
VANPOOL DRIVER SELECTION CRITERIA	8
License and Experience	8
Suspension or Revocation of License	8
Violations	8
Physical Condition.....	8
Employment.....	8
BACK UP DRIVERS.....	9
YAKIMA TRANSIT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	9
REMOVAL OF A VANPOOL DRIVER	9
REMOVAL OF A VANPOOL GROUP/VANPOOL VEHICLE	10
REMOVAL OF AN INDIVIDUAL PASSENGER.....	10
INSURANCE.....	10
PERSONAL USE OF THE VAN	11
OFF-STREET PARKING	11
DEFENSIVE DRIVING.....	11
Pre-Trip Inspection	11
Proper Use of Seatbelts	12
Plan Ahead	12
Van vs. Cars	12
Accident Avoidance.....	13
Inclement Weather	14
The Driver	14
Passenger Rights and Responsibilities.....	15

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME 16

SEAT BELT POLICY 16

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY 16
Other Washington State Laws 17

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE..... 17

PASSENGER RECRUITING 18
Part-Time Passengers 18

OPERATIONAL RULES..... 18

NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS..... 19

ROUTE CHANGES..... 19

EMERGENCY BACK-UP SYSTEMS

Back-Up Vans 19
Back-Up Carpools 19

VANPOOL FARES – ACCOUNTING..... 20
Fixed Monthly Costs 20
Variable Monthly Costs 21
Individual Passenger Fare Reimbursement Procedure 21
Receipt of NSF Checks..... 22

MONTHLY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS 22
Report Submittal 23
Employer Subsidy or Full Fare Reimbursement..... 24

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE..... 24
At the Accident Scene 24
During and After the Accident 25
More safety advice 26

MAINTENANCE..... 27
Routine Maintenance and Repairs 27
Preventative Maintenance 28
Tires 29
Safety-Related Defects 29
Quick Fixes 29
Windshield Repairs..... 29
Transmissions..... 29

EMERGENCIES..... 30
Brakes Fail 30

Accelerator Sticks.....	30
Breakdowns.....	30
Preventable Road Calls	30
EMERGENCY PURCHASES	31
FUELING OPTIONS	31
REDUCING ROLLOVER RISK	32

ALL VANPOOL FORMS AVAILABLE ON-LINE @

WWW.YAKIMATRANSIT.ORG

YAKIMA TRANSIT CONTACTS

Yakima Transit Vanpool Program
2301 Fruitvale Blvd.
Yakima, WA 98902

Vanpool Administration 509-575-6134

FAX 509-576-6414

Routine Business Needs

General Information
Policy Questions
Maintenance

Monthly Reports
Scheduling Driver Workshops
Driver Applications/Paperwork

Passenger Assistance
Fares

Work

Pam Wilson
Karen Allen

509-575-6134
509-576-6423

E-mail

pam.wilson@yakimawa.gov
karen.allen@yakimawa.gov

Maintenance and Transit Dispatch

Transit Dispatch Office 509-575-6175 (After hours, unable to reach Pam or Karen reporting accidents)

Earl Simpson, Maintenance Supervisor 509-576-6429

YAKIMA TRANSIT VANPOOL PROGRAM

Yakima Transit Vanpool vehicles shall at all times be operated in a manner complimentary to the public nature of this program. The van shall be kept clean, driven in a safe manner at all times, and not operated while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. All members of the Vanpool group shall act in a courteous manner, and the unique character of this van's use shall be explained if questioned.

VANPOOL DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

A safe driver is the single most important ingredient in any vanpool program. In order for the Yakima Transit Vanpool Program to ensure safe, reliable transportation to the public, the transit agency has established specific criteria to qualify those persons who have volunteered to drive a public vanpool vehicle.

Yakima Transit will review your MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) Complete Drivers Abstract. This ensures that any driver we allow behind the wheel of a van has a safe, consistent driving background. Yakima Transit will re-check your MVR frequently. If there is any new information, it could affect eligibility. It is your responsibility to report any moving violations, accidents, or health changes that you incur while acting as a driver in the Yakima Transit Vanpool Program. This includes incidents that occur in your personal vehicle or any other driving infractions or problems.

- The use of a Yakima Transit vanpool vehicle is a privilege.
- Yakima Transit vans must be driven by authorized van drivers only.
- Yakima Transit reserves the right to revoke the use of a van.
- Report any moving violations, accidents, or health changes that may affect your driving record.

Prospective drivers are required to fill out and sign:

- A Vanpool Agreement
- Vanpool Operator Application
- Authorization for Drivers License Record Search
- Vanpool Driver Function List
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These forms can be found on-line or at the Vanpool office. Please mail, fax or deliver the forms promptly to expedite processing. All information will be kept confidential.

- Because the responsibilities of a vanpool driver include defensive driving, fare collection, and delivering a group of people to and from work on time, a number of important items must be reviewed. These include completed copies of all required paperwork and your MVR driving history.

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- Yakima Transit may contact the applicant's employer, insurance company, and/or physician to obtain information necessary for approval. This will be accomplished only with your consent.

AUTHORIZED DRIVERS

Yakima Transit vans must be driven by authorized Vanpool drivers only. Authorized drivers are those that have attended the mandatory Driver Workshop and met the selection criteria established by Yakima Transit. Any commuter group found operating a van by an unauthorized driver will lose their van. **Yakima Transit's vanpool insurance coverage will not be extended to any incident occurring while the van is operated by an unauthorized driver. The unauthorized driver would assume the liability for any incident.**

- Only authorized drivers are permitted to operate Yakima Transit vans.
- Authorized drivers must first complete a mandatory Driver Workshop and meet the selection criteria established by Yakima Transit.

EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION

In an emergency, a passenger may obtain temporary (**one return trip**) telephone authorization from Yakima Transit vanpool staff to act as the vanpool driver from the work site. This approval must be obtained prior to actually driving the van. An interview at the time of the request would include information on the following:

- Recap of the situation – Why is this necessary?
- Full name of the individual
- Washington State driver's license number
- Date of birth
- Completed MVR Release (if time and situation allows, available on-line at yakimatransit.org)
- Years of driving experience
- Past accidents or traffic violations

If temporary authorization is received, this emergency situation must be finalized with attendance at one of the next two scheduled Driver workshops.

DRIVER WORKSHOP

Yakima Transit requires that all drivers complete a vanpool Driver Workshop. This free orientation course is and typically three to four hours and is offered to you by the vanpool staff. Agenda items covered include defensive driving with hands on practice, maintenance, fueling, bookkeeping practices, passenger sensitivity, fare structures, and accident procedures. It is mandatory that all drivers attend the workshop. The course is designed to benefit you, so that you are comfortable doing business with Yakima Transit, safely and efficiently.

VANPOOL DRIVER SELECTION CRITERIA

A good driver is the single most important ingredient in any Vanpool program. In order for the Vanpool Program to assure safe, reliable transportation to the public, the Yakima Transit adheres to a standard of 'Best Practices' established with specific criteria to qualify those persons who have volunteered to drive a public Vanpool vehicle.

YT Vanpool Program Coordinators will review a record (abstract) of the applicant's COMPLETE personal and employment driving history. YT may contact the applicant's employer, insurance company, and/or Vanpool drivers must have a valid, unrestricted (prescription lenses acceptable), non-probationary driver's license and five years of verifiable licensed driving experience.

Selections of primary drivers, as well as back-up drivers, are dependent upon the criteria discussed in the following sections.

License and Experience

Vanpool drivers must possess a valid, unrestricted (prescription lenses acceptable), non-probationary Washington State Driver's License and a minimum of five years of verifiable licensed driving experience. Restrictions for glasses or contact lenses are acceptable. Other restrictions must be reviewed.

Suspension or Revocation of License

Report of a suspension or revocation within the past three to 10 years can cause a potential driver's application to be rejected. Report of a suspension or revocation within the last 10 years for negligent driving, reckless driving, hit and run, leaving an accident scene, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or deferred prosecution for those offenses will result in application rejection.

Violations

Other violations on the applicant's driving record can also result in application rejection or deferral. No felony convictions are allowed. Cell phone or texting violations, speeding (12+ mph), driving too fast for conditions, driving without a valid license, and others or combinations of other offenses could cause a driver to lose eligibility for at least three years and up to a 10 year period.

Physical Condition

The potential driver must be in good health. Any condition that may impair the driver's ability to operate the van will result in application rejection. Poor eyesight (correctable by lenses) is acceptable. Other restrictions must be reviewed. A potential driver may be required to have a physical examination, at the driver's expense, to determine good health.

Employment

As an indicator of a driver's reliability and availability, a potential driver must show stable employment. Work attendance record and amount of business travel or training may be considered.

Back-Up Drivers

Most vanpools divide driving responsibilities between two or more people. From the standpoint of driver fatigue, burnout, and attitude adjustment, this system is preferred. If you have been the sole driver of your vanpool for several months and are doing virtually all the driving, please discuss the idea of obtaining some help for yourself within your vanpool.

We recommend that at least two other back-up drivers be trained and ready to assist for a variety of reasons: business appointments, classes, vacation, sick time, or temporary work location re-assignments.

YAKIMA TRANSIT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Yakima Transit is the legal owner of the vanpool vehicle and, therefore, has specific rights and responsibilities to the Vanpool Program, which are discussed below. Please remember, the use of a Yakima Transit vanpool vehicle is a privilege, one that should be treated with respect.

Yakima Transit reserves the right to revoke the use of a van, as detailed in the following sections.

REMOVAL OF A VANPOOL DRIVER

- Operating the van in a manner inconsistent with the Vanpool Participant Agreement
- Unsafe driving (reckless, negligent, or illegal)
- Involvement in an "at-fault" accident
- Citation(s) for traffic violation(s)
- Complaints; based on frequency or severity. Complaints from a Police Official. (Yakima Transit reserves the right to hire a private/confidential 3rd party to investigate)
- Using the van for hire, hauling, towing, or other non-vanpool purposes
- Using the van to push or jump-start another vehicle
- Removal of seats
- Personal use of the van
- Operating the van on other than hard-surfaced streets or highways, or normal access roads or driveways, unless approved
- Operating the vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol, consumption of, allowing others to consume, or transporting drugs or alcoholic beverages in the van
- Unreported accident or incident in a vanpool vehicle
- Consistently late or unreliable service
- Failure to abide by Yakima Transit's no smoking policy
- Failure to accurately submit revenues (fares) in accordance with reporting requirements and comply with accounting deadlines
- Cell phone usage while driving

REMOVAL OF A VANPOOL GROUP/VANPOOL VEHICLE

- Condone or encourage a driver to speed, hide the fact from YT staff
- Unauthorized drivers operating the van
- Unreported damage or abuse of the van
- Consistently low passengers or revenues, below required levels
- Consumption of or transportation of drugs or alcoholic beverages, or smoking cigarettes in the van

REMOVAL OF AN INDIVIDUAL PASSENGER

- Failure to pay monthly fees
- Not using seat belts
- Failure to abide by majority consensus, as established in the Vanpool Agreement
- Rude, abusive, or intimidating behavior, as determined by the majority
- Consumption of or transporting drugs or alcoholic beverages in the van
- Failure to abide by Yakima Transit's no smoking policy

INSURANCE

Yakima Transit provides appropriate insurance coverage for vanpools through the Washington State Transit Insurance Pool (WSTIP). The premiums for this coverage are paid through the monthly passenger fares. The insurance rates charged for vanpools are a reflection of market trends and the accident history of the transit program. Remember, **only drivers and back-up drivers authorized by Yakima Transit are allowed to drive vanpool vehicles.**

- **Intentional, malicious or illegal acts are excluded from insurance coverage, including driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.**
- **Any incident involving the van or a person must be reported immediately.**

Coverage Summary – Liability

The agency will pay all sums resulting from the use of a covered vehicle of the agency when the authorized user of the van is held legally liable for bodily injury or property damages caused in the accident. The limit per occurrence is \$12 million.

Passengers: Passengers are covered for bodily injuries that they may receive while occupying a covered van involved in an accident, which the agency's insurance would customarily respond under the terms and conditions of its ensuing agreement.

Drivers: The agency will provide coverage to all vanpool drivers who, while operating the vehicle within the terms and conditions of the Vanpool Agreement, suffer a bodily injury to a limit of \$35,000 per occurrence. This is known as Personal Injury Protection (PIP).

- This medical expense protection limit shall be secondary to any medical plan the vanpool driver may already have available at the time of the accident that resulted in bodily injury.
- If no other medical benefit source is available, this PIP shall be primary and will provide benefits up to the limits provided (\$35,000.00).

Operators and Passengers: Uninsured and Underinsured motorist coverage (UIM): The agency will provide UIM coverage to a limit of \$60,000 per occurrence.

Minor Incidents. Any incident involving the van or a person around the van (where Yakima Transit may have a liability issue) must be reported immediately to Yakima Transit. Always be sure to record and report the person's name, phone number, and address. This requirement includes such occurrences as a passenger injured upon entering or exiting the van, acts of vandalism, hitting an animal, or any other minor incidents taking place within a 20-foot radius of the van that pertain to the van or riders.

PERSONAL USE OF THE VAN

NO PERSONAL USE OF THE VAN IS PERMITTED AT ANY TIME. Vanpool is bound by this constraint by Transit policy and insurance liability. Family members cannot be on board for any reason, unless they are adult, paid participants in the Yakima Transit Vanpool Program. Children are **not** allowed in the van at **any** time.

OFF-STREET PARKING

Vans are to be parked off the street at an authorized drivers home, or other pre-approved place, to provide security and to reduce the risk of accidents and vandalism. Never park off street in places that public opinion might deem inappropriate or negative, such as at or even near a tavern or other similar establishment. Yakima Transit does not allow vans to be left overnight in Park and Ride lots or other parking lots for security reasons.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

The defensive driving formula:

<u>Awareness</u>	+	<u>Alertness</u>	+	<u>Caution</u>	+	<u>Consideration</u>	=	A SAFE DRIVER ATTITUDE
(Knowledge of traffic laws and limits)		(To traffic situations and how van is performing)		(Practice patience)		(Act as you would like others to act toward you)		

Pre-Trip Inspection

- Walk around the van – see any obstacles or vandalism?
- Check underneath for fluid drips and obvious mechanical defects.
- Check condition of tires' tread and proper air inflation psi.
FORD = 55 front / 80 rear CHEVY/GMC = 50 front / 80 rear
- Weekly – check fuel, oil and fluids (washer, transmission and brake).
- Clean windshield and all windows, tail and headlights if needed.
- When starting up, watch the van gauges. Have fuel? Alternator OK?
- Test if turn signals, lights and horn are working

Proper Use of Seat Belts

- Shoulder straps must be properly worn.
- Do not pull away until all passengers are seated and buckled in.
- Remove passengers for non-compliance of seat belt law.

Plan Ahead

- Know the hazards on your route.

Van vs. Cars

- Safe operation is a different challenge; abrupt maneuvers may create risk of rollovers.
- More blind spots.
- More height and clearance /weight /width considerations.
- Center of gravity is higher and shifted to the rear, increasing the propensity to roll.
- Meets more wind force resistance.
- Acceleration may feel slower in diesel vans.
- Stopping distance when fully loaded is longer; vans equipped with ABS.
- Turning radius is wider, may require a different sight line at corners.

Accident Avoidance

- Make sure the van windows are not blocked by decals or decorations. No hanging objects from the rearview mirror.
- Watch out for the other guy!
- Secure the van when boarding or off loading passengers – set your emergency brake and the transmission in park. Remember this safety feature: you cannot shift out of park again until your foot is on the brake pedal.
- It is a good idea to drive with your headlights on. At end of trip, turn them off.
- Drive with your hands at 3 and 9 on the steering wheel due to the air bag.
- No cellular phone use while you are driving.
- A moment's inattention or simple distraction can be a serious mistake.
- Keep scanning your mirrors.
- Follow the 4-second “cushion of safety” rule.
- Leave yourself an escape route.
- Respect intersections and right-of-way. Stoplights are never for sure – cover your brakes, watch out for stale green or yellow lights.
- Restrict the space between your vehicle and curb to less than the width of an auto when making a right turn.
- Watch for dangers and accident traps such as, animals, downed vehicles, brake lights or construction.
- Watch pedestrian crossings, loading zones, school bus stops, and railroad crossings.
- When turning right, look both left and right.
- When backing up ask for help and honk.
- When passing, ask yourself, “Is this necessary to make a safer situation?”
- When being passed, accept it and ease off to help the other driver around you.
- Use your turn signals and hazard flashers to let others know your intentions.
- **Be aware of speed limits and obey them.**

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- When merging, it helps to ask and use a spotter.
 - Look to the left and behind you before moving from a stop or loading zone.
 - Go to a traffic light for left turns and crossing heavy traffic lanes.
 - Look a block ahead, anticipate and drive according to several vehicle reactions not just the bumper immediately in front of you.
 - Set the parking brake and take your keys at the trip's end, then lock the doors.

Inclement Weather

- With snow and ice driving, you will go slower, so allow more time.
- Increase your following distance to have reaction time to stop.
- Turn into the skid – wheel the direction you want the front of van to go.
- Understand that visibility is reduced; please clear all your windows of frost.
- Black ice is common on bridges, in shady spots, at intersections and down hills.
- Do not use cruise control if you suspect icy conditions.
- Winterize the van: do you need an ice scraper, washer fluid, and better tires?

The Driver

- Self-report any health changes, use of prescription drugs, or medical issues.
- Self-report any accidents or ticket violations.
- Let someone else drive if you are tired, do not feel well or have had a bad day.
- Get help with conflict resolution so you can concentrate on the task of safe driving.

PASSENGER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with the cooperative nature of a vanpool, the passengers agree to assume certain personal responsibilities relative to their own commute trips. Each passenger **must** read and sign a Vanpool Agreement. Failure to do so will result in a denial of service. The agreement forms can be found online or at the vanpool office. When new passengers are added, drivers may fax the signature (last) page to Yakima Transit at 576-6414 and must then send original, signed agreements to Yakima Transit by mail.

The passenger agrees to:

- Pay to the driver his/her monthly passenger fee by the first of each month.
- Abide by all day-to-day rules of the van, as established by the majority vote of the vanpool members.
- Abide by all rules established by Yakima Transit in the Vanpool Handbook, and as defined in the Vanpool Participant Agreement.
- Notify the driver in advance of all anticipated non-use of the van due to such factors as vacations, business travel, overtime, etc., so that unnecessary stops or wait times are avoided.
- Notify the driver or the nearest fellow passenger of non-use of the van due to illness.
- Notify the driver 15 calendar days in advance of planned termination of program participation.
- Help maintain passenger occupancy at chosen capacity.
- Help keep the van clean and tidy.
- Find alternate transportation on the days when the van may not be available.
- Find alternate transportation when work or personal schedules do not allow participation in the vanpool.
- Abide by arbitration in disputes arising out of the day-to-day operational rules.
- Wear a seat belt at all times.
- Abide by the no drugs/alcohol/smoking policies in the van established by Yakima Transit.
- Do not abuse the Guaranteed Ride Home

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

We want you to share the ride to work, but that may mean you are stranded in an emergency. Now you can relax! Use Yakima Transit's Guaranteed Ride Home Program to get you home for any of the following reasons -

- Your child or other immediate family member is sick or injured
- A family crisis
- Unscheduled overtime, required by your supervisor, that is not covered by your employer's guaranteed ride home program
- When normal vanpool arrangement fails on the homebound trip.

Yakima Transit's Guaranteed Ride Home Program does not cover personal errands, pre-planned appointments; working late without a supervisor's authorization (your employer should cover your guaranteed ride home if it is scheduled overtime).

Hanford Guaranteed Ride Home trips are from the entrance gate closest to Yakima. Our Guaranteed Ride Home vendor has no security clearance, so service is limited in that area.

You must schedule your guaranteed ride between 6:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday. 509-575-6175 A maximum of three (3) rides are allowed per year.

SEAT BELT POLICY

Under Washington State Law RCW 46.61.688(3), it is mandatory that "all passengers in all vehicles wear a seat belt safety device, in a properly adjusted and securely fastened manner."

Yakima Transit Vanpool will not provide service to any individual who refuses to wear a seat belt.

The driver is legally responsible (and citable) for all passengers under age 16 to wear seat belts in any vehicle.

All adult passengers are personally responsible (and citable) to wear seat belts in any vehicle. Yakima Transit is responsible for supplying seat belt safety devices to all passengers.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

It is expressly forbidden by Washington State Law and Yakima Transit policy, to consume alcohol or to have open alcoholic beverages in a vehicle. In addition, it is against Yakima Transit Vanpool policy to drive a vanpool vehicle after consuming an alcoholic beverage; regardless of whether any legal limit of intoxication has been reached, transport passengers who are or have been consuming them or substances

containing alcohol, including any medication, food, candy, or any other substance that contains alcohol, or carry alcoholic beverages in a vanpool vehicle at any time.

Yakima Transit does not allow the driving of a vanpool vehicle under the influence of any illegal drugs. An illegal drug is any drug or substance identified in Schedule I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and is further defined by 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15. This includes, but is not limited to: marijuana, amphetamines, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), and cocaine, as well as any drug not approved for medical use by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration or the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Illegal use includes the use of any illegal drug, the misuse of legally prescribed drugs, or the use of illegally obtained prescription drugs at any time. Marijuana is considered a banned substance per the federal government.

This policy does not prohibit the appropriate use of legally prescribed drugs and non-prescription medications. However, it is the responsibility of the volunteer vanpool driver to inform his/her physician when being prescribed medication(s) that they are driving a vanpool vehicle and ask about driver impairment and possible side effects. The volunteer driver should only use medically authorized drugs or over the counter medications in a manner which will not impair their driving or elect not to drive when using prescribed drugs or over the counter impairing drugs. It is also the responsibility of the volunteer driver to remove themselves from service if they are not able to drive because of any adverse effects due to medications.

OTHER WASHINGTON STATE LAWS

It is further against Washington State law (RCW 9.91.025 *Unlawful Bus Conduct*) (Public Conveyance) and Yakima Transit policy to hinder, disturb, deface, litter, carry a lighted pipe, cigar, or cigarette, to engage in loud, raucous, unruly, harmful, or harassing behavior while on a Vanpool vehicle.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

On occasions, there may be conflicts that cannot be resolved within your vanpool groups. The Vanpool Program Administrator will resolve these conflicts. If a person directly involved with the conflict or action in question wishes to protest the decision of the Vanpool Program Administrator, such protest must be submitted in writing to the Transit Manager.

The Manager will review information from those parties concerned with the action, as well as the decision of the Vanpool Program Administrator. The Manager will then uphold, modify, or reverse the decision of the Vanpool Program Administrator. The Manager is the final source of appeal for definitive action. The same procedure is to be used with written appeals.

PASSENGER RECRUITING

The vanpool drivers should maintain passenger waiting lists. If you need passengers, we will try to help you locate and recruit them, but the most effective methods are to recruit at the job site or ask current passengers to help recruit. If possible, advertise in the company newsletter or website. It is in the passenger's best interest to assist in recruiting to keep their rates low and keep the van from being closed.

You may request "Passengers Wanted" signs from the vanpool office or download them from the Yakima Transit website. These signs can be posted in the van windows or at other conspicuous places (bulletin boards, etc.).

When new passengers join your vanpool, obtain a Vanpool Agreement and fax or mail it to the vanpool office as soon as possible. Remember, as a public program, we are concerned about the potential for discrimination. We realize that the major factor in your selection of new passengers is trip compatibility. However, please be careful not to make a decision that could be construed as showing favoritism or prejudice when you select new passengers.

Part-Time Passengers

Definition of a part-time passenger is a commuter who only works a part-time (or shortened) workweek. Example: Monday-Wednesday-Friday shifts. A part-time passenger would not need daily travel arrangements. Whether or not you choose to carry part-time passengers is a group decision. If your van is not full, part-time passengers are a good idea because they reduce the fare all passengers must pay. However, you should only take a part-time passenger with the understanding that if a full-time passenger comes along, the part-time passenger may lose his/her seat if the part-time passenger decides not to pay the full fare after given first choice.

You should charge part-time passengers a prorated fare derived from the Yakima Transit Vanpool Fare table. Part-time passengers are subject to the same rules as other vanpool passengers. Completion of the Yakima Transit Vanpool Agreement is required, and part-time passengers must pay their fares in advance.

OPERATIONAL RULES

A vanpool is a cooperative endeavor. Everyone in the vanpool group should decide daily operational rules. Whenever possible, it is advised to make and agree upon operating rules by majority vote. Try to keep the rules flexible, to best meet the needs of the vanpool. Subjects may include:

- Radio – Sample rule: The radio may be played softly on the station agreed upon by the group.
- No Smoking – Yakima Transit's policy does not allow smoking in any van.

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- Wait time at pick-up points – Sample rule: The vanpool will wait a maximum of 3 minutes at any pick-up point.
 - Seating arrangements – Sample rule: Back-up driver, who takes the van to the farthest work site, sits in the navigator seat. Other seats are "open choice" in the manner that will best facilitate loading and unloading.
 - Passenger capacity – Sample rule: The van will run with 10 passengers instead of 12. The monthly fare and level of comfort will both be higher as a result.
 - Van temperature – Sample rule: The interior temperature will be kept at a level of comfort appreciated by the majority, unless it interferes directly with the driver's alertness or comfort.

NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS

If a very serious weather emergency arises, Yakima Transit reserves the right to request that the van not be operated until the emergency passes.

ROUTE CHANGES

Every time you lose or gain a passenger in your commuter group, the route can "twitch" in terms of schedule and service potential. To make sure we can send potential passengers to you in a qualified manner, notify Vanpool staff of any route changes.

BACK-UP VANS

Yakima Transit has several "spare" vans that support the overall system in case of breakdown or during maintenance. If your van fails, chances are that there is a van at the main office that you can use. If the breakdown occurs during the commute or during the workday, Yakima Transit Vanpool staff can most likely have a van delivered to your job site. Call your vanpool service representative as early as possible to avoid delays.

BACK-UP CARPOOLS

In the event your van fails you in the morning before your commute trip, carpools can be easily arranged for emergency use. Usually, at least three carpools will be necessary to handle an emergency when the van will not start in the morning.

Have a plan in place, of who will drive from certain points in the route. Have a list of home and work telephone numbers of all the passengers so contact can be made quickly and

- Yakima Transit's insurance does not extend to personal vehicles.
- If you choose to drive yourself and others when your primary vanpool ride has failed, you do so at your own financial risk.

smoothly. It works best to share responsibility among the volunteer back-up drivers of calling the passengers. This information should be decided upon before an emergency occurs. We promote this plan because it is a workable alternative.

Yakima Transit's insurance does not extend to personal vehicles.

VANPOOL FARES – ACCOUNTING

The Vanpool Program operates as a business, but with a non-profit philosophy. This means that it is the goal of the program to "break even." The costs charged to the passenger do not include staff telephones, desks, postage or marketing types of expenses. Yakima Transit Vanpool fares do cover the operating and administrative costs (i.e., fixed costs for insurance, depreciation and variable costs for fuel, oil, repairs, tires, etc.) of each vanpool vehicle. Fares are calculated to break even in a 15-passenger van for a reasonable rate. It is very important that each van generate the revenue necessary to sustain the program.

EXAMPLE: If your van is supposed to generate \$699.00 per month, and you have twelve people splitting the cost, the monthly rate is \$58.25. (\$699.00 divided by 12)

If you lose one passenger (down to eleven in this example) or the group elects to have fewer passengers for more comfort, the cost of doing business remains the same. The individual rates would increase due to fewer people generating the \$699.00. You must adjust the rate to \$63.55. (\$699.00 divided by 11)

When you recruit additional passengers, you may decrease the monthly rate again. This is the primary reason it is in the passenger's best interest to assist in recruiting efforts.

If a vanpool is losing money and there is not a significant change or a reasonable effort to cover the losses, the vanpool service staff must consider closing the van and reassigning the vehicle to another group of commuters. Yakima Transit is not in the business of closing vans, but will do so if in the best interest of the program and Yakima Transit.

Vanpool fares only reflect fixed costs and variable costs. Different sized vehicles take into account costs generated by the size of the vehicle and the maximum number of people in the van when determining the costs.

Fixed Monthly Costs

Fixed costs are comprised of two elements, amortization replacement of the vehicle once it's life cycle has been reached and insurance. These costs are established periodically and should not change throughout the year, but may change year-to-year.

Replacement is based on recovering 80 percent of the cost of the vehicle over an 84-month period (seven years). Twenty percent of the vehicle cost is anticipated for recovery at the point of surplus.

Yakima Transit earns adjustments or credits for frequency and severity of accidents. Insurance rates can and usually do change up or down on an annual basis.

Variable Monthly Costs

The number of miles the van runs each month determines variable costs. Variable costs are comprised of fuel, oil, maintenance (repairs and service), tires, and contingency funds (license checks, glass, vandalism, small parts, etc.).

Each passenger's monthly fare equals the total of the fixed and variable costs together, divided by the total number of paying passengers in the van.

Formulas

- For a **5 x 8's work week**, monthly miles computed by multiplying daily route miles by number of commuting days per month (average 21 days).
- For an **8 x 9's work week**, monthly miles computed by multiplying daily route miles by **number of commuting days** per month (average 19 days).
- For a **4 x 10's work week**, monthly miles are computed by: multiplying daily route miles by **number of commuting days** per month (average 17 days).
- For a **12-hour rotating shift**, monthly miles are computed by: multiplying daily route miles traveled by **number of commuting days** per month (average 15 days).

FARE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

The reimbursement policy concerning any individual who terminates membership from any vanpool route is as follows:

- With a 15-day termination notice, any unused portion of that monthly fare will be reimbursed entirely.
- With a 7-day termination notice, any unused portion of that monthly fare will be reimbursed at 50 percent of the unused portion.
- On any vanpool vacancy to occur with less than a 7-day notice, there will be no reimbursement whatsoever, unless a job transfer or medical emergency occurs.

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- When a passenger terminates from the program with no notice, we are deprived of the opportunity to fill that vacancy and, in essence, every other commuter in that van subsidizes that vacancy because costs remain the same.

The driver's input will be part of the decision-making process regarding reimbursement requests. If there is no "free will" exercised (such as lay-offs or some medical emergencies), Yakima Transit will reimburse any unused portion.

RECEIPT OF NSF CHECKS

The following is proposed for the handling of NSF checks received by Yakima Transit for passengers in the vanpool vehicles.

- When a check is received back from the bank for a vanpool passenger, a notice will be given to the vanpool staff from accounting to contact the passenger.
- If the vanpool service staff has not been able to resolve the NSF check within 5 days of receipt notification, the City of Yakima will assume the responsibility for collecting the funds, assess a collection fee, and may involve a collection agency in addition.
- If a passenger issues two NSF checks during a one-year period, the passenger will be required to pay with a cashier's check, money order, or cash, prior to participating in the Vanpool Program for the next month.
- If an NSF check is not cleared, the collection agency will attach a fee.

- Fares must be paid by passengers in the form of check or money order by the 1st of each month.
- All fares must be submitted by each Bookkeeper to Yakima Transit by the 10th of each month.

MONTHLY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

As an agent of Yakima Transit, each vanpool's bookkeeper (usually the primary driver/coordinator) is responsible for collecting the monthly fares from all members of the group at the beginning of the month. We recommend that the fares be paid in the form of check or money order and be turned into the driver **by the 1st** of each month. **All fares must be submitted to Yakima Transit by the 10th** of the month. Payments may be mailed to Yakima Transit (mailing labels are available) or may be dropped off at the Vanpool Office.

MONTHLY REPORTING

The Vanpool Monthly Report includes the following components:

- Daily Mileage Log- This includes daily odometer readings, total miles traveled, commute and non-commute miles, a record of fuel and oil purchased and a listing of how many passengers rode in the van in each direction of the commute. We need to know how much fuel you are buying, so list the gallons and tenths of gallons in the Fuel/Oil column.

Miles Traveled- The mileage a vanpool travels is divided into two categories: commute and non-commute. The van's monthly rates are determined by the commute miles only.

Commute Miles – Commute miles are those traveled from home to work and back.

Non-Commute Miles- Non-commute miles are those traveled for fueling, cleaning, or servicing the van. They also include all the miles that are traveled to do other vanpool business needed to maintain the vehicle.

Rider Count- Note how many passengers rode the van each direction every commute trip. This is required for Federal reports for Transit funding.
- Tire Tread Depth Report- Note the date the tires were checked and measure tread at the outside, center, and inside of each tire, including the spare. This section also includes a Route Stop Points area. Vanpool needs to know where the vans pick up and drop off passengers and where it is parked for the evening.
- The Passenger Report- This is a record that includes all passenger names, start and termination dates, and the amount paid by each passenger. Please fill in all columns completely and accurately each month, including listing the start and end date of each rider. You only need to mark the start/date one time for each rider.
- Monthly Vehicle Inspection Report- Check this report carefully each month for your van to notify us that things are going well with the van and especially if they aren't correct. Minor defects and body damage should be listed in this section. Other van issues not noted by a check line should be noted on the Comments lines.

REPORT SUBMITTAL

The following report elements are due to Yakima Transit **by the 10th** of the month:

- Monthly fares collected from passengers for the current month *.

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- New Vanpool Agreements.

EMPLOYER SUBSIDY OR FULL FARE REIMBURSEMENT

Some groups are fortunate enough to have their employer paying fully for their shared ride or a partial subsidy. Yakima Transit is prepared to give receipts to groups or individuals if payment documentation is required. YT staff will not write receipts if the van groups' total fare has not been met.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

AT THE ACCIDENT SCENE

1. Protect the scene. Turn on the hazard flashers and have a back-up driver put out the red triangles from the kit at the rear of the van. Use extreme caution and safety when placing the triangles. (See discussion and directions on pages 42 and 43, figures 2, 3, 4.) Use your horn at short intervals if visibility is poor.
2. Determine if any injuries have been sustained. Exercise cautious judgment if you must move passengers to safety. Identify geographical location of accident so that help can be dispatched. Collect your thoughts, be calm, know what you want to say before you place any call.
3. Secure medical assistance for any injured persons and traffic support by dialing emergency phone numbers **911** or at Hanford Area, 509-373-0911.
4. **Immediately report to Yakima Transit that an accident has occurred. Call 509-575-6175.**
5. Do not move the vehicle or pick up vehicle parts that may be lying on the ground unless absolutely necessary to avoid another collision. Both actions could certainly destroy evidence.
6. Exchange Information. **Do not admit fault.**
 - A. Within 24 hours of the occurrence, the driver involved in the accident must prepare and submit an Event Report to Yakima Transit detailing what happened. This form is found in the Accident Packet in your vehicle glove box.
 - B. All witnesses, including all of the van passengers, must be asked to fill out a Witness Courtesy Card. These cards are found in the Accident Packet.

Make sure that any injuries are listed on the individual's completed Courtesy Card.

- C. The driver must also fill out a Yakima Transit Vanpool Body Damage Report. This form is also found in the Accident Packet.
 - D. All completed paperwork should be delivered to Yakima Transit immediately. Make sure you stock a new Accident Packet in your van in case there is need again in the future.
- 7 If any Law Enforcement Officers are at the scene they will fill out a State Report. **We will need a copy. This is mandatory.**
- 8 If only minor property damage is involved or the accident is on private property, no Law Enforcement Officer will respond. Please remember that even if both vehicles can be driven the **vanpool staff must be notified about the accident** and discuss what to do next. Exchange names, addresses, insurance companies, driver's license numbers, and vehicle license plate numbers with the other driver.
- 9 **Rule:** If the accident involves \$500 or more in damage, or there is an injury or death, notification must be made to:
- A. Local city police if the accident occurred in city limits.
 - B. The Hanford Patrol if the accident occurred on the Hanford Reservation.
 - C. The Sheriff's Department if the accident occurred in the county.
 - D. The Washington or Oregon State Patrol if the accident occurred on a state highway or outside the city limits.
 - E. Other Federal authority at secured areas. (Army Depot, etc.)

DURING AND AFTER THE ACCIDENT

1. Drivers should refrain from discussing an accident, either at the scene of the accident or at a later time, except with the police or a Yakima Transit representative, insurance adjuster, or the Yakima Transit attorney. All other parties not listed above should be referred to Yakima Transit.

Never admit responsibility or assume liability for the accident except to the parties listed above.
2. When collecting the Witness Courtesy Cards remain professional, but never coach a person on what to write. Remember that a witness could be the deciding factor to an accident. Their support in a case could be very crucial. Here are some tips:

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- Advise that it is your duty to secure the names of all persons who are nearby.
 - Do not pass up a person who says, "I did not see the accident." Adapt your personality to a friendly, persuasive style to get the information needed.
 - Make sure you can read the writing when you pick up the card, then thank them for their help.
3. Your van will be replaced with a spare, until we can have a complete safety check, get estimates of damages and order parts for repairs as necessary.

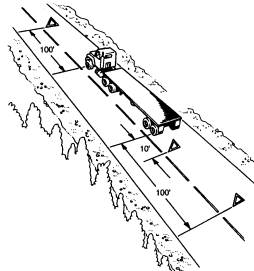
MORE SAFETY ADVICE

Take all precautions necessary to protect the scene of the accident from further collisions. The State of Washington Department of Licensing *Commercial Driver's Guide* recommends the following actions:

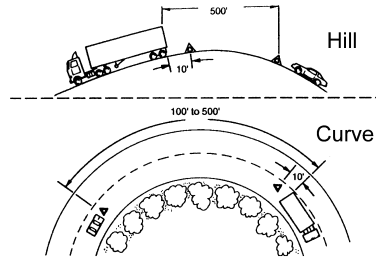
A. Be visible. When your vehicle is disabled at the side of the road be sure to turn on the 4-way emergency flashers. This is important at night. Do not trust the taillights to give warning. Drivers have crashed into the rear of a parked vehicle because they thought it was moving normally.

If you must stop on a road or the shoulder of a road, you should also put out your reflective triangles within ten minutes. When putting out the triangles, hold them between yourself and the oncoming traffic for your own safety (so other drivers can see you). Place your devices at the following locations:

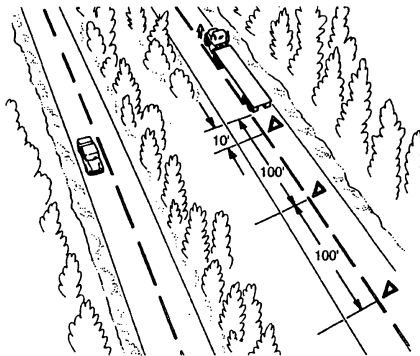
- On the traffic side of the vehicle, within ten feet of the front or rear corners, to mark the location of the vehicle.
- 100 feet behind and ahead of the vehicle on the shoulder or in the lane you are stopped in.



-
- Back beyond any hill, curve, or other obstruction that prevents other drivers from seeing the vehicle within 500 feet.



- If you must stop on or by a one-way or divided highway, place warning devices 10 feet, 100 feet, and 200 feet toward the approaching traffic.



- B. **Use your horn when needed.** Your horn can let others know you're there; it can help to avoid another accident if visibility is poor.

MAINTENANCE

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the van is properly maintained. As a quality control measure, a "service due" sticker should be installed in the upper left-hand corner of the windshield to help you remind us when service should be performed. Minor defects and body damage should be listed in the Vanpool Monthly Report.

Routine Maintenance and Repairs

Vanpool vehicles are on a preventive maintenance program, which requires that they be taken in for maintenance: **every 5,000 miles or 120 days, whichever occurs first.** Some vans will accrue the mileage within 60 days; some will go the full 120 days and still not be at 5,000 miles. These are the **maximum standards.** Drivers are asked to

assist the vanpool staff by being proactive in the delivery and scheduling of their vans for service.

If a van requires repair or develops mechanical problems between service dates, the driver should call the vanpool staff immediately. Staff will then schedule service as needed. Most likely, you will be assigned a spare vehicle. Loaner vans are located at the North end of the maintenance shop.

Know your vehicle so you can alert us to possible mechanical problems.

Read the van's owner manual.

Learn the characteristics of your van so you can feel, hear, see, or smell when something is wrong.

Know where all emergency exits are, how to open any hidden latches, and the location of the red triangle kit, fire extinguisher, spare tire, and jack.

Know how to use the fire extinguisher, triangles and how to change a tire.

Preventive Maintenance

There are some simple techniques that will ensure safe, reliable performance of your van. They are habits that, if performed daily, will keep you on top of possible maintenance problems that could arise.

- **Check your vans oil each time you fuel the vehicle.**
- As you approach your van or leave your van, be aware of any fluid leaks. Check the ground under the engine for any drips that are fresh. Try to identify the color or placement. Notify the vanpool staff for if you spot any fluid leaks.
- Pre-trip your van. Walk around your vehicle and check for body damage, low or flat tires, mirror adjustment, the proper operation of all lights, and any obstacles that may be in the driving path.
- Watch your gauges. The dash has indicators to alert you to potential problems.
- Listen to your van. Sound O.K?
- **Do not run your van out of fuel.** A good safety net is to refill at the one-quarter mark on a single tank, if you are traveling a long route. Switch tanks at one-quarter full if you have a front and rear tank system. **PLAN AHEAD.**

Tires

If you have a question about the condition of your tires, please note it in the Comments section of the Vanpool Monthly Report **or call the vanpool office**. Items to be concerned about are uneven tire wear, tread depth, cupping, vibrations, and air pressure. (Tire pressure ranges are listed on a plate mounted in the driver's doorjamb.) Tires are to be replaced at 6/32nd of an inch for safety.

Safety-Related Defects

Any safety-related defect dictates that the van is removed from service immediately! **The driver must communicate** what they perceive to be safety-related. Any defect not considered "unsafe" would be attended to at the next service interval.

Quick Fixes

Need your windshield washer reservoir topped off? A new set of wiper blades? Or need a couple quarts of oil, just in case? For any van supply needs, just stop in at the Vanpool office. The supply cabinet is stocked with many items needed for van operations.

Windshield Repairs

Please report star rock chips and short cracks to the Vanpool staff right away. Windshields are usually repairable if the damage is filled soon. Windshields must be replaced if cracks run through the driver's line of vision.

Transmissions

Automatic Transmission: Your automatic transmission is electronically controlled. The transmission operation is controlled by the power train control module (PCM). The PCM will automatically adjust transmission operation to make up for varying conditions (hot, cold, rpm, throttle position, etc.) for the best performance and fuel economy.

To help in troubleshooting, the PCM continually performs self-tests on the electronic control system and if any faults are detected, will store them in memory. The transmission control indicator light (TCIL) will flash repeatedly if a malfunction has been detected. In some cases, the PCM will "order" the transmission to revert to the "manual" automatic mode of operation, and the transmission will feel "hard" and sometimes "clunky" between shifting gears. You will also see the "overdrive indicator button" light up and flash. It is not harmful for the transmission to operate in this mode, for short periods of time, but the vehicle should be checked as soon as possible by Yakima Transit's mechanics. (There may be times when the engine is shut down, the PCM will reset itself and clear the "memory codes." This is normal but may be an indication to have the transmission checked at the maintenance shop.)

EMERGENCIES

Brakes Fail

If your brakes fail, pump the pedal several times to build up pressure. If that fails, coast in gear and use the emergency or parking brake. If you need to slow faster, shift to a lower forward gear. Unless a brake line has been cut, you will still have brakes, so use your pedal too. You will find the brakes harder to press, but still effective. Get the vehicle off the road and park it in the nearest safe location.

Accelerator Sticks

If your accelerator sticks, shift to neutral, pull over to the shoulder of the road, and stop. You may try to lift the pedal with the toe of your shoe, but never take your eyes off the road while the vehicle is in motion. Remember, if you turn off the engine, it will affect the power braking and will most likely lock up the steering wheel. Do not turn the engine off.

BREAKDOWNS

If your van should fail you en route, we will rescue you. It is acceptable to leave the van and ride with other Yakima vanpools that may stop to assist you, provided that you follow these safety precautions:

- As much as possible, pull the van off the road, out of traffic.
- Turn on the hazard flashers.
- Set up red warning triangles, if necessary, to alert other commuters.
- Report the exact location to your vanpool service representative.

- Stay with your van until help arrives. Leave keys if you must go.

Preventable Road Calls

Valuable time and money are lost when a mechanic is called for maintenance assistance, and a vanpool group could be put at risk, or at least inconvenienced, in heavy traffic areas. Drivers should be alert to the following preventable breakdowns:

- Interior or exterior lights left on resulting in a dead battery.
- Keys locked inside the van. Hide-a-key boxes are available and back-up drivers should carry their own set. Watch those electric door locks!
- The van was not plugged in during cold weather and will not start. This is a particular risk over long weekends.
- Wrong type of fuel for your van. You will not get far putting unleaded fuel in a diesel van.

EMERGENCY PURCHASES

Most emergency situations can be handled by calling the number on the side of your van (575-6175). This number rings into Yakima Transit during transit's business hours, which includes Saturdays and Sundays.

If you find yourself in a rare emergency situation, you are authorized to purchase up to \$50 in emergency parts or fuel.

CAUTION: As a publicly owned agency, Yakima Transit cannot make any cash reimbursements without a signed, legible receipt. **Be sure to get a receipt!** You must bring the receipt to the vanpool office to get reimbursed from Vanpool. **Do not deduct what is owed you for a purchase from your next payment.** They are very different budgeted accounts.

FUELING OPTIONS

The first option is to fuel at Yakima Transit. With our tax advantages and combined ability to purchase in bulk quantities, **we are paying about 70 percent of the average retail price for diesel fuel and gasoline.** This is a savings we can pass on to the Vanpool Program by asking you to fill up at the Public Works facility. Fueling at Public Works is only available for vans parking at the facility overnight and in emergency situations. Only City of Yakima staff are allowed to do fueling at Public Works. Vanpool drivers are not allowed to fuel their vehicles

When inside the gates at Yakima Transit, be sure to obey the 15 MPH speed limit and flow of traffic.

Wondrack Fuel Card

The most common option is for vanpool drivers to purchase fuel at specific service stations/fueling locations. Make sure you have received an active fuel card from the Vanpool staff to make purchases at those stations and know your **PIN** number.

Without the above information, Yakima Transit will not authorize payment.

Remember: When you take responsibility of a fuel card, you need to treat it with respect and care. If it is damaged or lost, please notify the Vanpool Department at once. Do not leave the card out in plain sight. Also, never leave it in the sun or near electronics that can de-magnetize the card.

Primary drivers and back-up drivers should discuss and agree upon their van's fueling plan, where and how often. All drivers should know their PIN number.

Alert!

15-passenger van drivers

15-passenger vans handle differently from other vehicles such as passenger cars. They do not respond as well to abrupt turns and require additional braking distance.

REDUCE YOUR CHANCE OF ROLLOVER

✓ Check your vehicle loading

- Heavily loaded 15-passenger vans – those with 10 or more passengers or with loads placed on the roofs – have an increased chance of rollover.
- If possible, have passengers and cargo forward of the rear axle and avoid placing any loads on the roof.

✓ Check your tires

- Excessively worn or improperly inflated tires can lead to a loss-of-control situation and a rollover.
- At least once a month, check that the van's tires are properly inflated and the tread is not worn down.

✓ Check your safety belts

- 80% of people killed in rollover crashes in 15-passenger vans were not wearing their safety belts.
- Require all occupants to use their safety belts or appropriate child restraints.

✓ Check your road conditions

- Most rollovers occur at high speeds as a result of sudden steering maneuvers.
- Use caution on interstates and rural roads to avoid running off the road.
- If your van's wheels should drop off the roadway, gradually slow down and steer back onto the roadway when it is safe to do so.

✓ Check yourself, the driver

- U.S. DOT recommends 15-passenger vans be driven by trained and experienced drivers.
- Ensure you are well rested and alert.
- Maintain a safe speed for weather and road conditions.



www.safercar.gov
888-327-4236
TDD 800-424-9153

