



Connecting people and places in Central Indiana.

Vanpool Program Frequently Asked Questions

1) Who can participate in the Vanpool Program?

The vanpool program is run by Commuter Connect, a program of Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA). Commuter Connect operates under a federal grant to improve air quality in Central Indiana. Anyone who commutes within, into or out of one of the counties covered by Commuter Connect's grant is eligible to participate in the Commuter Connect Vanpool Program. Commuter Connect counties include Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan, and Shelby.

2) What is a Vanpool?

Vanpools are made up of 5 to 15 people who travel to work together in a 7 to 15 passenger van. Everyone in the vanpool is a volunteer, including the drivers, who are co-workers. All passengers meet at a Park and Ride location, where they leave their vehicles during the work day. All passengers split the costs evenly of the monthly van fee and fuel.

3) How do I make a seat reservation?

Contact Heather White at Commuter Connect at HWhite@cirta.us, or 317-327-7433, or toll free at 855-292-7433 to reserve your seat. You must also register with Commuter Connect at www.commuterconnect.us. Follow the link that says "Sign Up" Indicate that you want to join a vanpool. Feel free to email or call Heather White at Commuter Connect, if you have any questions regarding your registration, or vanpooling in general.

4) Who drives the vanpools?

The vanpool is driven by one of the passengers who volunteers to be the Primary Driver, or others who volunteer to be Alternative Drivers. All Drivers must be at least 25 years old and have a good driving record. One of the great benefits of being a driver, other than getting the best seat in the house, is that Drivers get to use the van for personal use evenings and weekends (some restrictions apply). Drivers can take the van home if they choose, or leave it at the Park and Ride.

5) Where are Park and Ride (pick-up) locations?

Park and Ride locations vary by vanpool, and are generally in the parking lots of big box stores. The Park and Ride location for new vanpools is determined by consensus of the passengers who form new vanpools.

6) What will the schedule for the vanpool be?

Vanpool schedules vary by vanpool. Schedules for new vanpools are determined by consensus of the passengers who form those vanpools.

7) What is pick-up and drop-off route for vanpools?

Again, vanpool routes vary by vanpool. Routes for new vanpools are determined by consensus of the passengers who form those vanpools.

8) What are the payment options?

All vanpool passengers split the costs of the monthly van fee and fuel evenly. They pay their share one



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month in advance to the driver or vanpool organizer to reserve their seat in the van for the following month. There also may be an option to pay their fee on-line. Fees may vary from month to month depending on the number of passengers in the vanpool, and as gas prices fluctuate. Passengers should check with their employer to determine if their employer provides a subsidy to defray vanpooling costs. For those passengers whose employer does not provide a subsidy in excess of \$50.00, **Commuter Connect provides a subsidy to help defray vanpool costs.** Subsidies provided by Commuter Connect are \$50 per eligible passenger per month, up to \$450 per month for 12 passenger vans and up to \$550 per month for 15 passenger vans. Vanpool fees after the Commuter Connect subsidy, including fuel, generally average \$100/month or less.

- 9) **What if my schedule changes and I can no longer ride with the Vanpool?**
Passengers are only required to provide a 30 day notice to leave a vanpool, which also includes approved drivers. There is no long term commitment required!
- 10) **What if I have an emergency and have to leave work before the Vanpool departure time?**
Commuter Connect recognizes that life happens. We are pleased to be able to provide a FREE emergency ride home, up to 50 miles, should an emergency cause you to have to leave work before your vanpool departs, or if you have to stay at work for an unforeseen work assignment. This great benefit is available to people who share a ride to work on an average of 3 days per week, and is available up to 5 times a year. (This benefit is also available to people who carpool from, to or within, one of Commuter Connect's counties. Carpools must also register with Commuter Connect, www.commuterconnect.us, in order to be eligible for the emergency ride home benefit).
- 11) **When will the next Vanpool begin operating?**
As soon as enough people sign up! Contact Heather Whire immediately to reserve your seat in the next Vanpool from your area. Heather can be reached at HWhite@cirta.us, or 317.327.7433, or toll free at 855.292.7433.