

## Starting a Vanpool

Put together a group of at least 5 people interested in forming a new vanpool to a worksite in Los Angeles County, and you may be eligible to receive a \$400 monthly lease subsidy with the Metro Vanpool Program. You can link to the below web pages on Metro.net for further information.

- [Building interest to start a vanpool serving my area](#)
- [Do I need to own a van to start a vanpool?](#)
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### Building interest to start a vanpool serving my area

If you don't already know of at least five people who share a similar commute to yours and are interested in vanpooling, go to our on-line matching service and register at [CommuteSmart.info](#) for a list of people who live and work near you and have a similar schedule. If there are 10 or more "matches," you may have a good pool of people to start a vanpool. Also, you may want to ask the Human Resources Representative or Employee Transportation Coordinator at your company for a zip code list of co-workers who may live in your area, or along your route to work. In addition, our partner vanpool leasing agencies can help you find riders.

### Do I need to own a van to start a vanpool?

No, in fact the Metro Vanpool Program only enrolls vanpool vehicles that are leased through Metro's [Partner Leasing Agencies](#). These agencies lease commuter vanpools on a month-to-month basis, and the lease includes insurance and maintenance. They also offer information and assistance for recruiting riders and policies.

### Steps to getting started

Determine a route, recruit riders, lease a van and set fares and policies, submit your Metro Vanpool Application, and – if you're going to serve as the driver – fulfill any legal requirements for driving a vanpool vehicle. Your vanpool lease agency is an invaluable ally in each of the steps to get started.

### If I start a vanpool, do I have to be the driver?

For a vanpool to run efficiently, vanpool members must be willing to take on certain roles. These roles include volunteer participants (all persons, including leaseholder or driver and alternate driver, who coordinate and/or operate a Metro Vanpool Program vehicle) and riders. Drivers often act as vanpool coordinators.

You and your vanpool group will need to determine the best set-up for your vanpool. Some groups may have one primary driver and one or more alternate drivers, while other

groups rotate driving and other responsibilities among their vanpool members. *Note: the Metro Vanpool Program applicant must be the vanpool leaseholder.*

### **Benefits to driving the van**

Since every vanpool group sets its own rules and policies, the benefits of driving will vary based on how you choose to organize your vanpool. In exchange for driving and handling routine maintenance (fueling, cleaning, etc.), it is customary for drivers to ride at a discount or free and have use of the van on evenings and weekends where the vanpool lease agreement permits. Some vanpools may split the driving duties between several people, giving each of them a discount. Or, your vanpool may prefer to run more like a “co-op” with everyone taking a turn at driving, collecting fares, handling maintenance responsibilities, etc.

### **Establishing vanpool fares**

Fares should reflect an equal division of the real costs of leasing the van, less the Metro Vanpool Program subsidy. Maintenance fees (gas, parking, tolls, vehicle cleaning, etc.) may be set slightly higher. That way, the fluctuations in gas prices won't impact fees—you'll have a “reserve” in the bank. However, don't set the fees too high; the affordable cost of vanpooling is one of the most appealing incentives to attract new riders.