

Administrative Policy No. 06.25

Subject: Department of Social and Health Services Commute Trip Reduction Program

Information Contact: Facilities, Finance, and Analytics Administration

Authorizing Source: [RCW 51.08.013](#) “Acting in the course of employment”
[RCW 70A.15.4010-4100](#) Transportation demand management
[Governor’s Executive Order 16-07](#) Building a Modern Work Environment

Effective Date: August 2, 2023

Revised: New

Approved By: **Original Signed by Pearlette Ramos**
Senior Director, Office of Justice, and Civil Rights

Purpose

This policy establishes the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) commute trip reduction (CTR) program. DSHS supports the Washington Clean Air Act and the commute trip reduction program, without impairing services provided to the public.

Background

[Governor’s Executive Order 16-07](#) Building a Modern Work Environment establishes the following policy goals for the DSHS CTR program:

- Reduce fuel consumption, air pollution, and traffic congestion.
- Enhance employee morale, productivity, recruitment, and retention by providing transportation choices that support employees.
- Demonstrate leadership and serve as a model in managing demand on our transportation system for the private and public sectors.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS employees. Volunteers and contractors are excluded.

To the extent that this policy conflicts with any applicable [collective bargaining agreement](#) (CBA), the terms of the CBA prevail.

Additional Guidance

Administrative policy [18.87](#) modern and mobile workplace

[Collective bargaining agreements](#)

[State employees commute trip reduction program support website](#)

Policy Requirements

A. Commute options eligible for incentives and subsidies

Prior to the start of each new biennium the DSHS CFO will release a memo stating if funding will be available, or not, for the next two fiscal years. Subject to available funding, DSHS employees may be eligible for incentives and subsidies, only if they commute using the following means to their assigned workstation:

Commute options eligible for incentives:

1. Carpool
2. Bicycle
3. Walking

Commute options eligible for subsidies:

1. Vanpool
2. Riding public transit

B. Commute options not eligible for incentives or subsidies:

1. Driving alone in a vehicle or on a motorcycle.
2. Carpooling with children under sixteen when a vehicle trip is not eliminated.
3. Getting a ride from someone who then returns home.
4. Leaving work to pick up a coworker and returning to the worksite.
5. Using a compressed work schedule.
6. Teleworking.

C. Receiving CTR program incentives or subsidies

To receive incentives or subsidies through the CTR program DSHS employees must:

1. Register in [RideshareOnline.com](#) using the DSHS email address that associates the employee with the DSHS network.
2. Track the qualifying portion of their commute in [RideshareOnline.com](#) for every day
 - a. they commute to an official duty station or alternative duty station.
3. Fill out their calendars by the fifth day of the following month to be

- a. eligible for incentives or subsidies.
4. Employees are responsible for tracking their own commutes.

D. Taxable cash incentive program for carpoolers, bicyclists, and walkers

1. To be eligible for the taxable cash incentive, employees are required to carpool, bicycle, or walk as their commute mode. This program is different from the transit/vanpool subsidy program. The taxable cash incentive is added to the employee's paycheck each quarter.
2. Incentives are earned for each qualifying commute trip from home to work and from work to home.
3. Incentives will not be paid for mid-shift travel or business trips.
4. The employee is required to use the eligible commute option for at least 60 percent of the home-to-work commute distance to be eligible for the cash incentive.
5. The cash incentive is added to the second paycheck of the month (following the end of the quarter) issued on or near the 25th of the month. If an employee fails to complete [RideshareOnline.com](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/rideshare) monthly calendars on or before the fifth of each month following the qualifying commute trip(s), payment will not be issued.
6. Upon separation of employment from DSHS, employees must notify the payroll office to coordinate the final payment of incentives in the final paycheck.

E. Parking passes

DSHS does not subsidize parking passes as part of the CTR program.

F. Emergency ride home

In the event of an emergency arising during an employee's regularly scheduled work hours, the emergency ride home program is available to any DSHS employee who uses a CTR-eligible commute option on the day the service is requested. This program is also called Guaranteed Ride Home, State Agency Free Emergency (SAFE) Ride program, and Home Free Guarantee, depending on what region the duty station is located in.

1. Authorized emergency trips

- a. Personal or family-member illness.
- b. Vehicle not available for planned trip home (for example, carpool driver leaves work early due to an emergency, leaving riders without a way home).
- c. Working late unexpectedly at the directive of a supervisor (limit four trips per fiscal year).
- d. Other emergency situations occurring throughout the workday.

2. Unauthorized trips

- a. Prescheduled appointments of any kind.
- b. Prescheduled overtime.
- c. Business-related travel.
- d. Personal errands.
- e. Trips to the hospital in lieu of ambulance services.
- f. Acts of nature, terrorism, or inclement weather.

3. Origins and destinations of trips

- a. To be eligible for an emergency ride home, the employee's trip needs to originate at the assigned duty station and terminate at the employee's home or another authorized location (e.g., a park and ride lot or childcare provider).
- b. If the commute includes a ferry ride, the ride home is required to terminate at the terminal, prior to boarding the ferry.

4. Approved mileage

The first 65 miles of the emergency ride home are paid for by the CTR program. The rider is required to pay the difference if the ride exceeds 65 miles. Any gratuities paid to cab or other emergency ride home drivers are payable at the employee's discretion and are not reimbursable.

5. Ride limitations

The CTR program provides up to eight emergency rides home per employee each fiscal year. However, only four may be the result of unexpected overtime as requested that day by a supervisor.

6. Employee transport in a state vehicle

Employees may use state vehicles with the agreement of the approving authority or designee of the organization to which the vehicle is assigned. As per Office of Financial Management (OFM) and DSHS guidelines, state-owned vehicles may be used for emergency ride home programs under the following conditions:

- a. Participants may use a state-owned vehicle to drive themselves home, provided that a vehicle is available, and the employee is able to return the vehicle before the agency needs it. This option is useful for employees that are required to work late unexpectedly.
- b. Employees may drive a CTR participant home in a state vehicle. The employee driving the participant is not required to take leave to do so.
- c. Participants who drive themselves are required to be physically and emotionally able to drive and possess a valid Washington State Driver License.
- d. Participants who drive themselves may use the vehicle to get home and back only or with a preapproved interim stop. Family members or other non-state employees are not allowed in state vehicles.

G. ORCA pass

The ORCA pass is available to state employees whose official workstations are located in King, Snohomish, or Pierce County, through the State-Issued ORCA Transit Passport program. The ORCA pass allows employees to ride fare-free on Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, and Sound Transit. Participants are encouraged to use their ORCA pass for midday business trips and non-work-related trips, including evening and weekend trips.

Employees who use the State-Issued ORCA Transit Passport are eligible to receive incentives for walking, biking, and carpooling.

Employees stationed in ORCA service areas outside King County may request an ORCA card through the DSHS CTR program for commute trips only. This program is different from the State-Issued ORCA Transit Passport. Employees pay a copay and DSHS covers the remaining cost of the pass. Employees who have the DSHS-issued ORCA pass are not eligible for incentives for walking, biking, or carpooling.

Employees are required to return their DSHS-issued pass immediately upon separation from state service or upon transfer to another agency.

H. Carpool and vanpool services

DSHS employees may sign up for a carpool or vanpool service [here](#).

I. DSHS assumes no liability for participation

The agency assumes no liabilities for any accidents or incidents occurring while employees are participating in the CTR program or alternative-mode commute activities. Eligible commute option users are exempt from industrial insurance coverage or workers' compensation during the time that they spend in an alternative commute mode ([RCW 51.08.013](#)).