

Vanpool FAQs

SANDAG Vanpool Program

Q: What is a vanpool?

A: A vanpool brings five or more people together to share the costs of commuting in a van or SUV. It's like a carpool, only bigger! The vehicle is leased and paid for by the participants, with the primary driver being the leaseholder. Typically, the lease is month to month, unless you want it for longer at a reduced rate.

Q: Who owns the vehicle?

A: Most vehicles are leased by individual commuters. Vehicles are leased through SANDAG vanpool vendors Commute with Enterprise, AVR, and Green Commuter. They have competitive pricing that includes a complete service package, vehicle registration, insurance, and maintenance.

Q: Who does the driving?

A: It depends on how your vanpool is set up. In some vehicles, everyone takes turns driving. Typically, two or three participants volunteer to share the driving or step in when needed.

Q: Can I use the vehicle for personal trips?

A: Yes. The vanpool vendors allow extra miles each year in addition to the allotted miles per vehicle. Please contact them directly for more details.

Q: How much does it cost?

A: Participants share the cost of the vehicle lease and gas. The SANDAG Vanpool Program provides a subsidy of up to \$400 per month to offset the lease cost. Employees may be eligible for additional incentives from their employer. Members of the military and federal employees can also receive up to \$265 per person per month for vanpool costs! The average person will spend less than \$100 per month to get to work in a vanpool.

Q: Am I eligible for the SANDAG Vanpool Program subsidy? Is there any paperwork required?

A: SANDAG provides a subsidy of up to \$400 per month for vanpools that meet a minimum occupancy, have an origin or destination within San Diego County, and fill out and sign the vanpool application. Vanpools that do not have both an origin and a destination in San Diego County must travel at least 20 miles one-way within San Diego County to qualify. Vanpool participants are required to participate in program surveys.

Q: How long does it take to start a vanpool?

A: The application process takes between 24–48 hours.

Q: Is a special driver's license required?

A: No, drivers and back-up drivers only need a regular Class C driver's license. Drivers applying for vehicles carrying more than 10 passengers are required to have a DMV medical evaluation.

Q: What do I need to start a vanpool?

A: You or another individual needs to volunteer to be the driver and to sign the vanpool lease agreement. The following are also required:

- DMV driving record check (required for primary and all alternate drivers)
- DMV Medical Evaluation (only required for primary and alternate drivers in vehicles with more than 10 passengers)
- Find other people to join you who share a similar commute pattern and working hours. The number of fellow participants you need to find depends on the size of the vehicle you want to lease. Vanpools may be formed with a minimum of five people
- Agree with other riders on fixed arrival and departure times from a centrally located meeting place

Q: Who is responsible for maintaining and servicing the vehicle?

A: The vanpool vendor pays for maintenance and service about every 6,000 miles. In the unlikely event that the van breaks down, the vanpool vendor offers free 24-hour roadside assistance that will bring a replacement van to you so you can quickly resume your commute.

Q: What about insurance?

A: The vanpool vendors offer \$1,000,000 liability insurance included in the monthly lease. Please contact them directly for more details.

Q: Are vanpool vehicles ADA compliant?

A: ADA-compliant vehicles are available upon request; the vanpool vendors and can provide more information. You also can email vanpool@sandag.org with questions.

Q: How do I find other riders?

A: The iCommute team has a database of interested participants and can help match your vanpool with commuters who fit your schedule and route. Vanpool participants are encouraged to talk with their vanpool vendor, HR department, coworkers, or other people in their building to find a potential match.

Q: Will I be picked up at my home?

A: Each vanpool will agree on a meeting place and schedule. Vanpools typically meet at a central location that suits everyone, such as a Park & Ride lot.

Contact us

Call 511 and say "iCommute," or email vanpool@sandag.org

For more information, feel free to contact our staff directly:

SANDAG Vanpool Program

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