



Charlotte Area Transit System Vanpool Driver's Manual



December 2012
Revision 1

Charlotte Area Transit System
City of Charlotte
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202

Document Distribution and Revision Policy

The Vanpool Driver's Manual is updated and issued as a stand-alone document.

CATS Vanpool Manager distributes the Vanpool Driver's Manual to vanpool leaders and commuters who may be interested in being a vanpool leader. The Vanpool Manager will provide any revisions of this manual to all vanpool leaders and request they discard old versions.

The [Vanpool Driver's Manual](http://charmeck.org) is available electronically at <http://charmeck.org> under Departments> Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)> Commuting> Vanpool> How to Start a Vanpool and internally on the City's intranet at CNet> Departments> Charlotte Area Transit System> CATS Manuals.

For additional copies, please contact CATS' Vanpool Manager or the CATS Quality Assurance Section (704) 336-2961.

Document Revision Record

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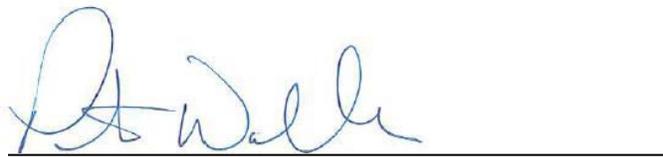
Approvals



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12/13/2012

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12/13/2012

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12/13/2012

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Summary of Changes
Revision 1, December 2012

Location	Change
Page 2	Item 3: Updated to reflect current address and added "Upon request, an email address can also be provided for sending in the log sheets electronically." Item 4: Clarified that City Finance bills vanpool leaders for the vanpool fares on a monthly basis. Also added last paragraph regarding the collections process for overdue vanpool accounts.

Introduction

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) Vanpool service has become the alternative of choice for many commuters in the Charlotte region. CATS Vanpool is for commuters who do not have an easy bus commute and have a sufficient number of people to share a ride with. Volunteering to be a vanpool driver or a fare-paying rider helps not only the commuting public, but the environment as well.

Let's look at some of the facts about vanpooling:

1. Vanpooling reduces air pollution by reducing gas consumption and exhaust emissions. Every vehicle left at home helps improve air quality. Did you know that 40-60% of pollutants are from transportation sources?
2. Vanpooling saves money! It can cut commuting costs by 50% or more. Just think about how much you pay in gasoline, wear and tear on your vehicle, insurance, and parking fees.
3. It helps businesses by decreasing absenteeism and by increasing productivity. Employees arrive on time and ready for a new day.

By now you may be asking, "How can I become involved in vanpooling?" The process is very simple. One of the first things you need to do is speak with co-workers, friends at church, and your neighbors to see if they would like to save on their commuting costs and participate in the program.

A commuter can start a vanpool with nine people if a 15 passenger van will be used for commuting. Commuters can start a vanpool with 4 people if a minivan will be used for commuting, with one of those individuals being the vanpool leader and primary driver. Vanpools can only be started if CATS has vans available. The vanpool leader is the critical link in forming the vanpool. He or she drives on a regular basis, collects fares, keeps records, helps recruit riders, keeps the van clean, and notifies the CATS Vanpool staff of any maintenance problems. In exchange for these services, the leader of a 15 passenger vanpool rides for free and is allowed to use the van for personal use, up to 50 miles per month. Vanpool leaders can have as many back-up drivers as they wish. Each potential vanpool leader and back-up driver must complete and sign a Vanpool Driver Application (form VPF04). CATS will process the application with the City's Finance Department, Risk Management Division. Once the application is approved, CATS can initiate a lease agreement between the driver and the CATS Vanpool Program. The lease agreement also identifies the responsibilities of the vanpool leader.

Vanpool Leader's Responsibilities

The vanpool leader's responsibilities are to:

1. Update the Driver Log Sheet (form VPF01) every day.
2. Update the Vanpool Monthly Rider Log (form VPF02) at least monthly to reflect changes in the vanpool passenger list.
3. Send log sheets on a monthly basis to:

Charlotte Area Transit System
Attn: CATS Vanpool Coordinator
901 N. Davidson St.
Charlotte, NC 28206

Or fax to: 704-353-0134

Upon request, an email address can also be provided for sending in the log sheets electronically. The log information may also be submitted online at: <http://vanpool.ridetransit.org/mnt/Login.asp>.

Log sheets must be submitted by the 10th of each month. This is an important part of the vanpool program, as these logs are used to complete the yearly report for the Federal government's National Transit Database. Failure to submit this report with accurate mileage and passenger counts will result in termination of the lease. Submission of an incomplete and/or inaccurate report two times in a calendar year will be basis for the termination of the lease.

4. Collect fares from the members of the vanpool. Each vanpool is free to set up its own record-keeping; however, the vanpool leader is responsible for sending the monthly payments to CATS (c/o the City of Charlotte). City Finance sends bills to the vanpool leader on a monthly basis and the payments are due no later than the 10th of each month. They should be mailed to:

City of Charlotte
PO Box 31032
Charlotte, NC 28231-1032

If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, the vanpool leader will be sent a reminder letter stating that they have 30 days to make their account current. If payment is 60 days overdue, driving privileges will be suspended. CATS will terminate the contract agreement and retrieve the vehicle used for vanpool services.

Accounts that are 90 days overdue may be sent to a collections agency and to the North Carolina Local Government Debt Set-Off Clearinghouse, which may offset NC state tax refunds and lottery winnings in excess of \$600 to recover delinquent debts.

5. Ensure that the van is clean inside and outside. If problems occur with the van, contact a Vanpool Coordinator at 980-722-3396 or 980-722-3380.

Fueling

Fuel is available at any Fuelman station. Fuelman has 193 North Carolina sites and 96 South Carolina sites. Each vanpool leader is given a Fuelman site location guide when the van is assigned. Vanpool leaders will be issued one Fuelman card, which will remain in the van at all times. The vanpool leader will be given a personal identification number (PIN) to use with the card.

The driver, vehicle, date, location and odometer readings are identified on the Fuelman reports and forwarded to the vanpool manager. The Fuelman report will be reviewed by the manager to ensure that no unauthorized entries are made.

The vanpool driver may be charged for excessive private vehicle usage at the current IRS flat rate. The Vanpool Coordinator can provide the current rate (or see www.irs.gov). The driver should mail a separate check to cover this expense.

Vanpool Etiquette

Although too many rules can become burdensome and common sense is usually sufficient, the intent of setting up some practical ground rules is to avoid future misunderstandings and the difficulties which arise from them. The purpose of vanpooling is, after all, to achieve economy, safety, and convenience in commuting.

Helping everyone to feel welcome in the group and developing camaraderie is important to the success of any vanpool. Some groups have developed democratic approaches to each decision affecting the group, such as a route change to accommodate a prospective rider. Other vanpools have operated quite successfully where the vanpool leader makes essentially all of the decisions, bearing in mind that his/her "customers" have a choice of accepting those decisions or changing to another form of commuting. Whichever style the vanpool adopts, it should be consistent with the personalities in the group and should be done in consultation with riders.

Try to take advantage of the opportunities vanpooling presents to make commuting a pleasant experience. A chance to read, rest, converse and share with others are all possible within the vanpool. A few simple ground rules, agreed to before starting up, will avoid conflict down the road. At a brief vanpool formation meeting, preferably 2-3

weeks before the van is scheduled for on-the-road commuting, the group should establish initial ground rules such as:

- delineating regular routes and stops
- changes in the van route or times
- back-up carpool arrangements
- agreement on a radio policy (neutral background music works well)
- unscheduled stops
- wait times

Although the process may seem formal, setting expectations and establishing an atmosphere of informality and cooperation will help prevent conflicts and help quickly resolve issues that may develop. Occasionally, all riders will not agree on the final ground rules and a search for a new rider or two that will commit to the adopted set of rules may be required.

Most forming groups find it extremely advantageous to meet within a few days right after a vanpool starts. There are often adjustments to initial ground rules once everyone has had the experience of a few days of commuting together.

Accidents

If a van is involved in an accident, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Call the Police Department at 911, no matter how minor the accident or what the location.
2. Notify the Vanpool Coordinator at 980-722-3396 or 980-722-3380 anytime (24 hours a day/ 7 days a week). The Vanpool Coordinator will come to the site, if needed.
3. The driver should ask the police officer for a report number and get the names, addresses and phone numbers of people involved, including any witnesses. Drivers and riders should not make any statements about the accident to anyone except the police.
4. The driver must complete the Risk Management division's Vehicle Accident Reporting form within one business day. The form will be provided by the Vanpool Coordinator.

It is extremely important that all vanpool drivers and back-up drivers operate the van in a safe and courteous manner. Serious driving infractions may result in immediate loss of privileges. Any accident involving a vanpool driver that is ruled the fault of the driver and preventable will result in the following action:

1. First Occurrence – driver pays \$250 deductible on insurance and is counseled by the Vanpool Coordinator.
2. Second Occurrence within Three Years – driver pays \$250 deductible and is required to complete a certified defensive driving course.
3. Third Occurrence within Three Years – driver pays \$250 deductible and loses van driving privileges. If the driver is the vanpool leader, the van is returned to CATS and a new primary driver is found for the vanpool. (The original driver may still ride; just not drive.)

Cell Phone Usage

Individuals driving vanpool vehicles under a lease agreement may not use a cell phone while operating the vehicle. A vanpool driver found to be using a cell phone two times in a three year period will no longer be allowed to operate a vanpool vehicle.

Maintenance

The vanpool leader will be responsible for day to day maintenance. Regular checks should be made on:

- Oil levels
- Tires (for problems such as low pressure, damage, uneven wear, etc.)
- Fuel
- Keeping the van clean and with an overall good appearance

Maintenance will be performed by the City of Charlotte's Equipment Management Division. When the van is due for preventive maintenance (PM), the Vanpool Coordinator will contact the vanpool leader to arrange for a suitable time and location to pick up the van.

If the van breaks down, contact a Vanpool Coordinator at 980-722-3396 or at 980-722-3380.

For regular PM service, please tell the Vanpool Coordinator about any problems with the van. This information will be passed along to Fleet Management. Van service may require three to four days, depending on the amount of service needed. A loaner vehicle will be provided whenever the van will be in the shop overnight. The Vanpool Coordinator will contact the vanpool leader when service is completed.

Important Numbers

Vanpool Coordinators	704-336-3892 704-336-4696 980-722-3396 (c) 980-722-3380 (c)
Vanpool Office Assistant	704-432-1281
Equipment Services (Night Breakdown)	704-336-2722
Risk Management	704-336-3301
CATS Customer Service	704-336-RIDE(7433)

DRIVER LOG SHEET

To be used for entering Vanpool operations data into the National Transit Database

VAN#: _____

Calendar Month: _____ 20____

Starting Location: _____

Data Coordinator: _____

DATE	BEGINNING OF DAY ODOMETER READING	END OF DAY ODOMETER READING	LOANER VAN		TOTAL MILES	REVENUE MILES	PERSONAL MILES	MAINT. MILES	DAILY TRAVEL TIME [min] [ROUNDTrip]	PASSENGERS					PASSENGER MILES
			BEGINNING OF DAY ODOMETER READING	END OF DAY ODOMETER READING						[#]	[#]	[#]	[#]	[#]	
										BOARDING AT START	BOARDING AT MILE	BOARDING AT MILE	BOARDING AT MILE	BOARDING IN EVENING	
1					0	0									0
2					0	0									0
3					0	0									0
4					0	0									0
5					0	0									0
6					0	0									0
7					0	0									0
8					0	0									0
9					0	0									0
10					0	0									0
11					0	0									0
12					0	0									0
13					0	0									0
14					0	0									0
15					0	0									0
16					0	0									0
17					0	0									0
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19					0	0									0
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21					0	0									0
22					0	0									0
23					0	0									0
24					0	0									0
25					0	0									0
26					0	0									0
27					0	0									0
28					0	0									0
29					0	0									0
30					0	0									0
31					0	0									0
TOTALS					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TOTAL DAYS

0

0

UNLINKED PASSENGERS

CHECKED BY: _____

VANPOOL MONTHLY RIDER LOG

TEB: _____

Month: _____

Primary Driver: _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

Home Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Employer _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____