



Dear Vanpool Driver:

Thank you for participating in the San Diego Regional Vanpool Program. We're delighted that you have taken the initiative and done your part to relieve traffic congestion and air pollution in the San Diego region.

Over the last year, we've encountered a few questions that we felt were valuable to address and answer for every vanpool program member. The questions and answers are:

Q1. I received a vanpool program survey. Do I have to fill it out and return it? What happens if I don't fill it out and return it?

A1. It's very important that you complete the forms any time you receive a piece of correspondence from the iCommute vanpool coordinator or a SANDAG representative. We receive federal funding to cover the vanpool subsidies and along with that funding comes reporting responsibilities. If we don't report, we don't receive the money. Therefore, if you don't fill out the survey, you won't receive your subsidy payment. The subsidy is not retroactive so if you fail to respond to the survey as requested, the subsidy will be withheld the following month and every month thereafter until the survey is completed. Both you and your passengers will have missed out on hundreds of dollars in subsidy monies!

We want all of the San Diego vanpools to take advantage of the subsidy so, please, fill out your surveys or other correspondence in the time requested and mail it back as soon as possible. If you have questions on the completion of any form, please call iCommute by dialing 511 and saying 'iCommute' to speak with the vanpool coordinator.

Q2. I have some seats available in my van. The van is 80% filled. Our vanpool doesn't want to accept any other passengers; do we have to?

A2. As long as your van is 80% filled, you don't have to accept any other passengers. Be aware that your passengers could pay less if the van was filled 100% so always make sure there is a consensus among the group before making the decision not to accept new riders. Also, if you start advertising in any way for new riders then you can't discriminate who gets accepted into the van.

Q3. We have a seat available in our van and we want to fill it. We don't want to make any additional stops and are waiting until someone from our immediate worksite wants to ride. Do we have to accept new riders from other locations on our route?

A3. As long as your van is 80% filled, you don't have to accept any new passengers. However, if you are advertising in any way for new riders then you can't discriminate who gets accepted into the van. If a new passenger is easily picked up or dropped off on your normal route, you must give them the opportunity to join the van.

Q4. What do I do if my van has seats available and need passengers?

A4. You can contact our office by dialing 511 and saying 'iCommute' to speak to the vanpool coordinator to get your vanpool added to the list of vanpools with vacancies on our website at <http://www.icommutesd.com/Vanpool.aspx>.

The iCommute system also maintains a database of commuters interested in sharing rides to work. If your van has seats available your information will be shown to iCommute members who are looking for vanpools.

Q5. I want to join a van that comes to my area but have been told I must qualify as a driver to join the vanpool. I just want to be a passenger. Do I have to qualify as a driver?

A5. No, you don't have to qualify as a driver. One of the advantages to belonging to a vanpool is that you don't have to be a driver; you can simply be a passenger and enjoy a relaxed ride. In order for the vanpool to continue to receive the subsidy, they cannot discriminate against those who either are unwilling or unable to drive.

Q6. Our company pays for the cost of the vanpool but also receives the Vanpool Program subsidy. It's been our policy to only accept employees as riders. Can we continue this policy?

A6. No, you can't continue that policy. If you are accepting the Vanpool Program subsidy, that subsidy comes from federally allocated funds which dictate that anyone wanting to join a vanpool can do so. You can't discriminate if the potential rider can easily be dropped off on your normal route.

Hopefully, this letter answers some questions you may have had or may have in the future. Please feel free to call us if you have policy issues. We truly want the vanpool program to continue to be a huge success!