



THE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION

Commuter Resources

**Vanpool Program
Operations Manual**

****Revised December 2018****

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I. Introduction

Welcome

Dear Vanpool:

The PART Vanpool Program values your contribution and we look forward to serving you. This manual is designed to provide you with information on the administrative and operational procedures of the vanpool program and to help you become a more effective participant in the process. We suggest this manual be kept in the van at all times, where it may be accessible to everyone.

A successful vanpool is made up of many elements and each vanpool is slightly different. The people in the vanpool are what make it work. The van, which is a major investment, should be driven and maintained properly so the vanpool can function smoothly. And finally, the PART staff can help your vanpool operate efficiently. Through constant communication, the PART staff can answer any questions or take care of any problems you might have.

For any questions regarding the information contained in this manual, call PART at (336) 883-7278.

Information can also be found on our website at www.partnc.org.

Sincerely,

PART Commuter Resources Staff

Our Mission

To enhance the quality of all forms of transportation for each of our citizens through efficient use and protection of our natural, economic and human resources.

Our Objective

Improving transportation through regional cooperation.

Program Description/Organization

The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) was formed by the four largest cities, in the territorial jurisdiction, to help address the current and future demands for regional transportation options.

The PART Commuter Resources Vanpool Program strives to promote energy conservation, reduce congestion, improve air quality, reduce vehicle miles, decrease highway accidents, save commuting costs for program participants, and conserve natural resources. Accommodating travel demand through ridesharing, rather than single-occupant vehicles, can result in benefits for employers, individual travelers and the citizens of the Piedmont as a whole.

The Piedmont Triad region has a long-standing history of regional ridesharing and vanpool operations, exemplifying strong public and governmental support for the program. Because transportation issues are a concern to citizens in our state, this program is beneficial to providing a vast array of solutions to transportation-related issues.

The PART Commuter Resources Vanpool Program is designed to increase the use of alternative transportation in this region by providing individuals and employers with everything they need to start a vanpool.

II. Contact Information

During regular office hours, call the following number:

Piedmont Transit Resource Center - (336) 883-7278

In the event you experience an accident or emergency after regular office hours 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., that requires assistance from PART staff members, please remember to call the following:

Sabrina Glenn	(336) 291-4321 (o)
Dir. of Commuter Resources	(336) 554-2381 (c)
	sabrinag@partnc.org

We look forward to working with you!

III. Vanpool Operations

Getting Started

Listed below are the requirements for starting a vanpool:

- (1) Identify an individual in the group to be the lessee. This person is responsible for signing the PART Vanpool Lease Agreement.
- (2) Identify a primary driver and at least one backup driver. Primary drivers and backup drivers must be at least 25 years old and have a valid Class C driver's license. The drivers must have no more than three points on their driving record and no previous D.W.I. (Driving While Impaired) convictions. All individuals registered as drivers for the vanpool must complete the PART Driver Application, a copy of their NC Driver's License, and subsequent Driver Agreement.
- (3) Determine the meeting location(s), route, and pickup points to determine the daily round trip mileage and monthly fare.
- (4) Provide a one-time security deposit for the van. This can be provided by check, credit card, or money order. The security deposit will be returned at the end of the vanpool lease assuming the van is in good condition and the van is in good standing.
- (5) The lessee should collect signed copies of the PART Vanpool Rider Agreement and the first month's payment from vanpool participants. This payment will need to be provided prior to receiving the vehicle. Monthly payments enable the participants to ride in the van for the calendar month. Each month, the lessee will provide payment on behalf of the vanpool group.

Vanpool routes are usually designed to go from the meeting/pickup point and to the worksite. In some cases, more than one pickup point may be necessary. Pickup points are usually located at shopping centers, churches, businesses or park and ride lots. Park & Ride Lots can be found by visiting the PART website at www.partnc.org.

Designing the most direct route to your worksite is important since vanpool fares are based on the total monthly miles the van travels. PART recommends vanpoolers establish the details on how their van will operate including the meeting location, how long the group will wait for a rider that is running behind, etc. to ensure an easy daily commute.

Each van has a maximum seating capacity for 7 or 15 people. Vans are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. If there are more people interested in vanpooling than there are seats available, their names are either placed on a waiting list or a new vanpool will be formed. In the event of a passenger decline, PART will provide assistance in recruiting new passengers by utilizing the waiting list and/or a free rideshare matching database through www.sharetheridenc. However, the vanpool will still be responsible for the total lease amount to keep the van in operation.

Combining vanpools is discussed when vanpools experience a severe decline in passengers. PART does everything possible to maintain the same low cost for the passengers, and if necessary, develop the most convenient route.

Vanpools can 'over-roster' in the event that riders may not be interested in riding in the vanpool everyday it's in operation. In these events, the vanpool lessee is responsible for coordinating who rides on what day and how fares will be collected.

Emergency Ride Home Program

From time to time a participant of the vanpool may be required to leave work early due to an emergency or illness. The participant should call PART staff and state the nature of the emergency or illness.

Under our Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program, one of the PART staff members will provide transportation by:

1. Authorizing a PART staff member to provide transportation
2. Contacting a taxi company to provide transportation

For full rules and regulations of the PART Emergency Ride Home Program, please visit www.partnc.org.

Restrictions

The driver shall operate the van in accordance with all applicable State laws, in a reasonable and safe manner, and shall not expose it or its passengers to unsafe conditions. The van shall only be driven on hard public streets and highways and other normal access roads and driveways. The driver shall ensure no decals, stickers, signage, etc. is adhered to the exterior or interior of the vehicle without prior approval from PART. The driver shall not pull trailers, attach carrying racks or trailer hitches. The driver shall not transport or operate the van after consuming alcohol, illegal drugs / substances, or medications which recommend refraining from driving after ingesting. Furthermore, the driver shall not take the van to any establishment whose business could negatively impact the image of PART (i.e. nightclubs, ABC stores, bars, sweepstakes facilities, etc.). While operating the van, the driver shall not use a cell phone, blue tooth device, text messaging device or any equipment that may distract the attention of the Driver. Smoking is prohibited by all van occupants. PART has the right to immediately terminate any vanpool in violation of these restrictions.

Termination of the Vanpool

The lessee may terminate the lease agreement at any time by giving a 30-day written notice. PART may terminate the lease agreement without cause, or for cause, including a failure to comply with any provision, at its discretion.

Vanpool Referral Payment

PART rewards active vanpool participants that refer potential drivers for newly created vanpools to the vanpool program. Once a referred PART driver has leased a van for six months, a referral payment will be sent to the person who referred the new vanpool to PART.

IV. Responsibilities/Incentives

Lease Agreement

The lease agreement between the van lessee and PART operates on a month-to-month basis. In certain situations, some businesses lease the van directly through their company. In these cases, the employer representatives and the qualified drivers sign the lease agreement.

Monthly Reports & Fares

The lessee is responsible for fully completing a monthly revenue and expense report. These reports are due the 1st of each month for the prior month. The lessee is also responsible for ensuring monthly fares are submitted by vanpool participants. The total vanpool fares are due the 1st of each month for the current month. Payments can be made by credit card, debit card, and check using PART's online payment system. Late reports and or monthly payments are subject to a 'Late Fee' which will be assessed to the monthly vanpool fare.

Driver Qualifications

Vanpool drivers must be at least 25 years old, have a valid Class C driver's license, no more than 3 points on their license, and no previous Driving While Impaired (DWI) convictions on their license. All drivers must submit a driver application and copy of their NC driver's license and be approved by the PART staff before operating a vehicle.

Backup Driver

Each vanpool should have at least one backup driver in order to lease a van. This assures passengers continuous, reliable transportation in the case of personal sickness, emergency or vacation of the primary driver.

The vanpool backup driver must meet the same requirements and qualifications as the primary driver. The backup driver assumes the responsibility of operating the vanpool, including the monthly reports, in the absence of the vanpool driver.

Driver & Rider Agreements

In order to avoid probable conflicts, PART has developed driver/rider and rider agreements, which should be read and signed by the participants before joining the vanpool. This agreement assures that all participants are aware of the vanpool rules, regulations and operating procedures.

PART encourages all vanpools to establish their own vanpool guidelines and set individual policies and procedures to help prevent disputes. Since the lessee is primarily responsible for the vanpool, all disputes should initially be directed to the him/her. If the dispute is not resolved, PART can/will provide recommendations for all involved parties.

Driver Daily Operations

The driver is expected to operate the van in a safe manner, arrange for a backup driver as needed and keep the van clean. The driver is responsible for ensuring that the van is in good working condition. We encourage drivers to do a visual inspection including checking the exterior of the vehicle, interior of the vehicle, and for any dashboard notification lights each time they plan to operate the van. If the driver has any questions about the condition of the van, they should contact PART staff immediately.

Personal Use of the Van

PART allows personal miles free of charge. This mileage can be used entirely by one driver or the mileage may be split with all the drivers. Personal mile allotments will be specified in the lease agreement. Additional fees may apply for mileage used above the lease agreement and assessed to the monthly fare.

V. Parking

When parking vans at employment sites, all drivers should follow their individual employer's guidelines. Many employers provide preferential parking for vanpools and in some cases have reserved spaces for PART vans.

Parking for PART vans should be limited to a secure pre-approved location. The van should also be parked in a paved lot or driveway to avoid damage. If parking in a parking deck or garage, make sure there is adequate clearance before entering.

Vanpools can be parked at any of PART's designated Park & Ride locations. For a list of locations, visit www.partnc.org.

VI. Risk Management/Insurance

Accidents

In the event you are involved in an accident immediately contact the police department or highway patrol. Once the appropriate authorities are contacted, the PART Vanpool Coordinator should be contacted. If the Vanpool Coordinator is not available, contact the Dir. of Commuter Resources or the Piedmont Traid Resource Center and a representative will find the appropriate PART staff to speak with. The driver is responsible for reporting any accident, no matter how minor. Failure to report an accident could result in termination of the lease agreement with PART.

PART provides liability coverage for bodily injury or property damage resulting from an accident. PART will not provide liability coverage for any non-accidental criminal act performed while using the van. The driver or backup driver will be responsible for the first \$100.00 deductible for any damages from accidents involving PART vans. This fee is due within 30 days of the date the accident occurred.

Procedures to Follow in the Event of an Accident

Collisions and accidents range from minor fender benders (without vehicle damage) to major and multiple vehicle collisions and possible injuries. It is important that you know how to handle emergencies to protect lives and to ensure that questions of liability are handled properly. If an accident occurs, it is important for you to do the following:

- If you or any of your passengers are injured, dial 911 for medical assistance
- Protect the accident scene
 - Turn on hazard flashers
 - Move the van out of traffic if directed by a police officer
 - Make sure passengers are in a safe location
- Notify the local, county or state police
 - If police are on the scene, obtain the officer's name, badge number, and phone number
- Call your PART representative at the emergency numbers listed in your manual
- Make no statement to anyone except:
 - A police officer on the scene
 - PART representative
- You are insured through PART. The name of the PART Vanpool program insurance carrier is on the insurance card, which should always be kept in your glove compartment. Call the insurance company at the number provided to begin your incident report.
- Fill out the PART Accident Report Form, found in the back of this manual and return it to your PART representative.

VII. Revenues

Vanpool Fares & Reports

Vanpool fares are based on fixed, operational and depreciation expenses associated with the van's total monthly mileage. These expenses include fixed costs (insurance, contingency), operational costs (maintenance repair, gasoline, oil, tires and parts), and depreciation costs (monthly vehicle depreciation). Vanpool fares are determined at the initiation of the lease agreement. However, fares may change due to decreased or increased monthly mileage. If the mileage changes, the lessee is responsible for notifying PART and a lease amendment will be provided.

The monthly fares are payable to PART on or before the 1st of each month. Payments are made one month in advance and are good until the last day of the month. The lessee is responsible for ensuring monthly fares from participants are submitted using the PART online payment system. Late payments will be assessed a 'Late Fee'.

It is the lessee's responsibility to keep a monthly revenue and expense report. These reports are turned in on the 1st of each month for the prior month. We recommend emailing the report to vanpool@partnc.org. Reports that are received late or not completely filled out will be assessed a 'Late Fee'.

Vanpool Deposit Requirements

All vanpool lessees or employer sponsors are required to submit a van security deposit to PART before a van can be leased. The deposit should be for the amount specified in the lease agreement and in the form of a check, credit card, debit card, or money order.

Upon the termination of the vanpool lease agreement, the lessee can request a security deposit refund. The van will be inspected to determine if there is any unreported damage to the van. Upon the completion of the inspection and a check for any other outstanding expenses, the security deposit may be refunded to the lessee. It is the lessee's responsibility to reimburse employer sponsors and/or vanpool riders as appropriate.

Prorations: New Vanpools, Vacations, Holidays, Breakdowns, Company Closings

New vanpools put into operation during the middle of a payment period are eligible to have their fares prorated for the first month of operation. The fare will be based on the actual number of days the van will be in operation for that month.

Holidays are not prorated for vanpools. The van lease is based on a twenty-one day month in which holidays are averaged into the monthly fare.

If the vanpool does not operate due to a mechanical breakdown, a proration may be considered under certain circumstances. If the number of days exceeds three consecutive days and no other PART transportation is made available for the passengers, then the fares will be prorated for that month to the actual number of days operated.

Vans Commuting More Than Five Days a Week

Fare calculations are based on an average 21-day month and a five-day workweek. Although most of the vans are leased for a five-day workweek, there are times and unusual circumstances in which the employees must report to work more than five days per week. When this situation occurs, the monthly fares will be adjusted according to the total miles traveled for that month. The PART staff will adjust the fare and inform the lessee of the total amount due.

Seat Subsidy

Seat subsidies are at the discretion of PART Management.

Commuter Tax Benefit Program

The Commuter Tax Benefit program allows employers three ways to reduce the cost of commuting via public transportation (bus, train, ferry or registered vanpool) or qualified parking for employees. Companies can offer employees:

- a tax-free employer-paid subsidy

- a pre-tax employee-paid payroll deduction, or
- a combination of the above (shared employee- employer-paid)

Tax-exempt and pre-tax limits are set by the IRS and may change annually.

When the employee pays part or all of the cost of public transportation via a pre-tax payroll deduction, the employee can set aside pre-tax income (up to the maximum limit set by the IRS but not to exceed their monthly transportation costs). The employee saves federal withholding and FICA payroll taxes on the amount deducted. The employer saves paying FICA on the amount deducted. Employees may also share the cost with employers using after tax income. Pre-tax payroll deductions are referenced in the Internal Revenue Code, Section 132(F), as amended by TEA-21, Title IX, Section 910.

**This information is subject to change. For the most current commuter benefit information, contact your PART representative.*

Fuel Purchases

PART provides each vanpool with a Fleet Fuel Card. This card can be utilized at authorized retailers.

Please remember the following when using a fuel card:

- A. Use only regular unleaded fuel (87 Octane)
- B. Use only self-service gas pumps (No full service will be accepted)
- C. Do not share or write down driver pin.
- D. Fuel cards are to be used only for PART vanpool.

Drivers are also eligible to fuel the van at the Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA) garage located at 1060 North Trade Street in Winston-Salem from 6:00 a.m. until midnight, Monday through Friday and from 6:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Van drivers and backup drivers should always follow the procedure listed below when fueling.

Fueling Requirements at WSTA Gasoline Pumps:

- (1) Pull up to the Gas Island and turn the engine off. No smoking is allowed around the pump.
- (2) Enter odometer mileage reading on blue keypad, press enter.
- (3) Enter in your personal ID number, press enter.
- (4) Select pump No. 1 – Vanpool.

VII. Maintenance

Preventive Maintenance Program

PART has a Preventive Maintenance (PM) program that is required by the federal government. This program is strictly followed to ensure the extended life of the vehicles, make sure vehicles

are safe to operate, and ensure PART is able to continue receiving federal funding to support the vanpool program. Maintenance inspections are based on the guidelines outlined in PART's Vanpool Maintenance Plan; and should be maintained every 6,000 miles.

When service work is needed for the vans, drivers and/or the lessee should contact the PART staff to authorize the service. They will authorize maintenance on your vehicle and help identify where the vehicle should be taken. Once the maintenance is completed, you will be able to use the Fleet Fuel Card to make payment. Be sure to send a copy of maintenance receipts via fax or email to PART. Original receipts can also be sent via US postal mail.

Significant Maintenance

In some cases, a van may need more significant maintenance or service completed. In the event that this occurs, the driver/lessee should contact PART staff to notify them of the issue. PART staff will determine when the service will take place and address the needs of the group accordingly. In the event that a backup van is needed, PART staff will make arrangements to switch the van while your primary van is being serviced.

**Note: The lessee is responsible for tracking mileage for backup vans and reporting this information on the monthly expense and mileage form.*

Van Appearance and Cleanliness

The lessee and driver(s) are responsible for keeping the van clean, both inside and out. This improves safety through increased visibility from the van and of the van's lights and signals. A clean van also represents the pride the driver takes in the van and symbolizes a positive image for both the vanpool and the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation.

The riders are also expected to help maintain the cleanliness and appearance of the vanpool. Personal articles may be kept in the area of the riders' seats at the discretion of the vanpool group.

The vanpool group is responsible for all costs associated with keeping the van clean.

VAN Forms and Reports

For copies of all forms related to PART's vanpool program, please visit www.partnc.org. This includes Lease/Driver/Rider Agreements, Motor Vehicle Report Authorization Form, Expense/Mileage Report, Accident/Incident Form, etc.