2012
Vanpool & ERH Survey

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March 2012
Your opinion matters!

TransOptions would like to know about your commute to work.

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. Providing your name, phone number, and email address will automatically enter you into a drawing to win a gas card worth $50.00

**Definitions you may find helpful:**

**Vanpool:** A group of five or more people in a leased van, riding to work together and sharing the costs.

**Ridesharing:** The act of carpooling or vanpooling.

**Emergency Ride Home (ERH):** A program offered by TransOptions to commuters who use rideshare on an average of 3 times per week, are pre-registered and need a ride home if there is an unexpected emergency, illness or overtime. Usage is limited to 2 times per year, per person.

**Preferred Parking:** Dedicated parking spaces that are close to the entrance of the building.

**Commuter Benefit:** A federal tax benefit which lowers the cost of commuting for public transportation and vanpools through employers' benefits packages. The federal tax benefit for these commuters currently offers $125 per month, per employee.

**Empty Seat Subsidy:** When a vanpool or coordinator has difficulty filling an empty seat, TransOptions offers temporary empty seat subsidies to qualified vanpools commuting into our service area. Registered vanpools are eligible to apply for a subsidy twice per calendar year.
The Questionnaire:

1. Name

2. Phone Number

3. Email Address

4. Company Name

5. How did you learn about TransOptions vanpool program?
   - TransOptions website
   - TransOptions staff
   - Brochure
   - Employer
   - Friend/Coworker
   - TransOptions website
   - Employee fair
   - Newspaper
   - Radio
   - NJ DOT website
   - Carpooling Makes Sense gas card program
   - Other (please specify)

6. How long have you been registered as a vanpooler with TransOptions?
   - Less than one year
   - 1 - 5 years
   - 6 - 10 years
   - 11 - 15 years
   - more than 15 years

7. Are you:
   - Primary driver
   - Back-up or alternate driver
   - Rider only

8. How many seats are in your van?
   - 7
   - 8
   - 12
   - 14
   - 15

9. How many riders are currently in your van?
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8
   - 9
   - 10
   - 11
   - 12
   - 13
   - 14
   - 15
   - 15+ (including part time people)
10. Would your vanpool benefit by adding more riders?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If so, how many?

11. How do you recruit more riders when needed?

12. Are you familiar with TransOptions Empty Seat Management Program?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

13. What is your primary relationship to your vanpool partner(s)? Check all that apply

☐ Non-coworker/friend  ☐ Relative

☐ Coworker  ☐ A commuter introduced from TransOptions ridematch search

☐ Spouse

14. Please rate the reasons you decided to try vanpooling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Save money</td>
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<td>Help the environment</td>
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<td>Reduce stress</td>
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<td>Help a coworker or family member</td>
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<td>Reduce wear and tear on your personal vehicle</td>
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<td>Qualify for incentives</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

15. What have you found are the benefits of vanpooling?
16. How did you commute to work before joining a vanpooled?

- Drove alone
- Carpoole
- Mass transit
- Bicycle
- Walked
- Not applicable

17. How easy was it to get your vanpool started?

- Very easy
- Somewhat easy
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult

18. What problems did you encounter when starting your vanpool?


19. In your opinion, what would have made starting a vanpool easier?


20. How do you get to the vanpool pick-up site?

- Get picked up at my home
- Drive alone
- Bicycle
- Walk
- Mass transit
- Dropped off

21. How many one-way miles does your vanpool travel each day?


22. What is your monthly cost to participate in the vanpool?

- Less than $50
- $51 - $100
- $101 - $150
- $151 - $200
- More than $201

23. Does your employer provide monetary support in addition to the New Jersey Transit Vanpool Sponsorship?

- Yes
- No
24. How much do they provide on a monthly basis per van and per rider?

25. Did the recent reduction of the commuter benefit have an impact on your vanpool?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not applicable
   Please explain why

26. In an average month, how much do you estimate vanpooling saves you in gas and wear and tear on your car?

27. Overall, how would you rate TransOptions' vanpool program?
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

28. Would you recommend vanpooling to others?
   - Yes
   - No
   Why?

29. What suggestions would you make that might improve TransOptions' vanpool program?

30. Are you familiar with TransOptions' Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program?
   - Yes
   - No
31. How did you learn about TransOptions' ERH program?

☐ TransOptions website  ☐ Carpool partner
☐ TransOptions employee  ☐ Newspaper
☐ Brochure  ☐ Radio
☐ Employer  ☐ Non coworker/friend
☐ Employee fair  ☐ Coworker

32. Would you have vanpooled if there were no ERH program available?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

33. Have you had occasion to use the ERH program?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

34. What was the reason you used an ERH?

☐ Became ill at work  ☐ Unscheduled overtime
☐ Family emergency  ☐ Vanpool unable to drive me home
Other (please specify): ____________________________

35. How many times have you used an ERH?

☐ 1  ☐ 4
☐ 2  ☐ 5
☐ 3  ☐ More than 5

36. How would you rate the service from TransOptions' staff?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Fair
☐ Good  ☐ Poor

Please tell us why: ________________________________________

37. How would you rate the service you received from the car service?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Fair
☐ Good  ☐ Poor

Please tell us why: ________________________________________

38. Did the vehicle arrive within the time frame you were promised?

☐ Yes  ☐ No
39. Overall, how would you rate the ERH program?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

40. What suggestions would you like to make that might improve the ERH program?

41. Do you have any additional comments you would like to share about TransOptions, vanpooling or the ERH program?
The Results:

* It should be noted that on questions where respondents were permitted more than one answer, results will total more than 100%.

![Bar chart showing how respondents learned about TransOptions vanpool program.](chart.png)
How long have you been registered as a vanpooler with TransOptions?

Less than one year: 25.0% (30)
1 - 5 years: 62.5% (75)
6 - 10 years: 8.3% (10)
11 - 15 years: 2.5% (3)
more than 15 years: 1.7% (2)
Are you:

- Primary driver: 26.9% (32)
- Back-up or alternate driver: 58.8% (70)
- Rider only: 14.3% (17)
How many seats are in your van?

- 7 seats: 88.3% (108)
- 8 seats: 5.8% (7)
- 12 seats: 2.5% (3)
- 14 seats: 0.8% (1)
- 15 seats: 2.5% (3)
How many riders are currently in your van?

- 6 riders: 46.3% (56)
- 7 riders: 28.1% (34)
- 5 riders: 16.7% (19)
- 3 riders: 4.1% (5)
- 4 riders: 2.5% (3)
- 15+ (including part-time people): 1.7% (2)
- Others: 0.8% (1)

All Other Responses: 0.8% (1)
If so, how many?

- 25 respondents said 1 more would be sufficient
- 14 respondents said 2 more would be sufficient
- 1 respondent said 3 more would be sufficient
- 1 respondent said 7 more would be sufficient
- 1 respondent said 9 more would be sufficient

How do you recruit more riders when needed?

- 40 respondents rely on word of mouth
- 31 respondents use the company website
- 21 respondents use company-wide email
- 10 respondents use a company newsletter
- 8 respondents use a company bulletin board
- 3 respondents go to the company’s transportation office
- 3 respondents call TransOptions
- 1 respondent puts up posters
- 1 respondent phones around the company
Are you familiar with TransOptions Empty Seat Management Program?

Yes: 19.3% (23)
No: 80.7% (96)
What have you found are the benefits of vanpooling?

- Save money – 84 responses
- Less stress – 56 responses
- Less wear and tear on my vehicle – 49 responses
- Helps the environment – 18 responses
- Companionship – 10 responses
- Better adherence to schedules – 7 responses
- Sharing the driving – 7 responses
- Helping a co-worker – 4 responses
- Fewer cars on the road – 4 responses
- Sharing driving reduces chance of falling asleep at the wheel – 4 responses
  - Other responses:
  - Less parking spaces used at work
  - More rested and more efficient at work
  - Convenience

Comments worth noting:

“Much safer since I don’t have to drive both ways every day and deal with falling asleep at the wheel at night. We all share the driving so it’s much safer for us.”

“Vanpooling is SO convenient. It is one of the best things that I got involved in when I got hired. I appreciate it so much and I am so fortunate that I am able to participate in such a worthwhile program.”
How did you commute to work before joining a vanpooled?

- Drove alone: 70.2% (36)
- Carpoled: 23.1% (28)
- Mass transit: 1.7% (2)
- Bicycle: 
- Walked: 0.8% (1)
- Not applicable: 4.1% (5)
How easy was it to get your vanpool started?

- Very easy: 32.5% (38 responses)
- Somewhat easy: 50.4% (59 responses)
- Somewhat difficult: 16.2% (19 responses)
- Very difficult: 0.9% (1 response)

What problems did you encounter when starting your vanpool?

- None – 38 responses
- Finding riders – 25 responses
- Paperwork – 11 responses
- Personality issues – 8 responses
- Coordinating schedules – 6 responses
- Finding qualified drivers – 5 responses
- Coordinating meeting times, meeting places – 4 responses
- Problems with subsidies – 3 responses

In your opinion, what would have made starting a vanpool easier?

- Nothing – 28 responses
- Improved methods of finding riders – 10 responses
- Have all forms submitted online – 8 responses
- More guidance at the beginning, such as a ‘how-to’ manual – 7 responses
- Improved access at job site to find potential riders – 7 responses
- Less paperwork – 6 responses
- Subsidies, reduced rates – 6 responses
- Help with getting started from existing vanpools – 2 responses
How many one-way miles does your vanpool travel each day?

- 0 – 25 miles: 10 responses
- 26 – 50 miles: 65 responses
- 51 – 75 miles: 37 responses
- 76 – 100 miles: 7 responses
- More than 100 miles: 5 responses
What is your monthly cost to participate in the vanpool?

- Less than $50: 35.0% (42)
- $51 - $100: 31.7% (38)
- $101 - $150: 17.5% (21)
- $151 - $200: 9.2% (11)
- More than $201: 5.7% (8)
How much do they provide on a monthly basis per van and per rider?

- $75 – 1 response
- $100 – 3 responses
- $110 – 1 response
- $120 – 12 responses
- $125 – 32 responses
- $130 – 1 response
- $135 – 2 responses
- $150 – 3 responses
- $175 – 3 responses
- $300 – 1 response
- $325 – 2 responses
- $375 – 1 response
- $580 – 1 response
In an average month, how much do you estimate vanpooling saves you in gas and wear and tear on your car?

- $0 - $100: 15 responses
- $101 - $200: 27 responses
- $201 - $300: 27 responses
- $301 - $400: 11 responses
- $401 - $500: 10 responses
- $501 - $600: 4 responses
- $601 - $700: 2 responses
- More than $700: 6 responses

Overall, how would you rate TransOptions' vanpool program?

- Excellent: 57.3% (70 responses)
- Good: 36.4% (44 responses)
- Fair: 5.8% (7 responses)
- Poor: 0%
Why?

- Save money: 52 responses
- Helps the environment: 18 responses
- Less stress: 18 responses
- Less wear and tear on my car: 12 responses
- Less cars on the road, reducing congestion: 11 responses
- Companionship: 3 responses
- Saves time: 3 responses

Comments:
- “Makes us less dependent on oil.”
- “It is so much easier to commute, feel refreshed going to & from work.”
- “It makes sense.”
- “Great program with great rewards.”
- “It rocks!”
What suggestions would you make that might improve TransOptions' vanpool program?

- Increase funding: 10 responses
- More online options, e.g. registration, add riders, submit reports: 9 responses
- Lower lease rates: 8 responses
- Other responses included:
  - Lobby Congress for more funding
  - Timely payments from sponsors to vanpool providers
  - Better advertising of the Vanpool and ERH programs
  - More Vanpool companies from which to choose
  - Bus pool
  - Offer Carpooling [Note: TransOptions has a very large carpool database. Applications are available on our website.]
- Additional comments:
  - Let those within six months of their 25th birthday drive
  - Link the benefit to changes in gas prices
  - Make a no-smoking policy in all vans
  - Letting vanpools use local commuter parking lots throughout the state (yes the ones that are managed by townships) as a meeting point. This would reduce the distance people drive to meet up with the van.
  - Keep up the good job.
  - Please keep the program and don't cancel it.
Are you familiar with TransOptions' Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program?

- Yes: 68.3% (92)
- No: 31.7% (38)
How did you learn about TransOptions’ ERH program?

- TransOptions website: 15.7% (13)
- TransOptions employee: 25.3% (21)
- Brochure: 10.6% (9)
- Employer: 22.9% (19)
- Employee fair: 3.6% (3)
- Carpool partner: 27.7% (23)
- Newspaper:
- Radio:
- Non coworker/friend: 1.2% (1)
- Coworker: 25.3% (21)
Would you have vanpooled if there were no ERH program available?

- Yes: 85.4% (70)
- No: 14.5% (12)
Have you had occasion to use the ERH program?

Yes: 19.3% (16)

No: 80.7% (57)
What was the reason you used an ERH?

- Became ill at work: 21.4% (3)
- Family emergency: 57.1% (8)
- Unscheduled overtime: 20.6% (4)
- Vanpool unable to drive me home: 14.3% (2)
How many times have you used an ERH?

- 1: 73.3% (11)
- 2: 26.7% (4)
- More than 5:
Please tell us why?

- They are courteous and helpful
- I got to my destination in no time.
- They are very friendly and helpful.
- Timely service.
- Danielle has always responded to any of my questions right or directed me to the right person
- Voucher arrived promptly and was on my way home within 25 minutes of placed call.
How would you rate the service you received from the car service?

- Excellent: 33.3% (5)
- Good: 46.7% (7)
- Fair: 6.7% (1)
- Poor: 13.3% (2)
Did the vehicle arrive within the time frame you were promised?

- Yes: 60.0% (5)
- No: 40.0% (6)
What suggestions would you like to make that might improve the ERH program?

- Better communication with limo services.
- Need to be more responsive because we will use ERH program only when we have no other way to get home.
- TransOptions' staff should arrange the car service providers promptly and seriously, because cases are mostly in emergency or urgent situation.
- Ask the Congress to fully support this program, a lot of veterans need and use this service. Save energy for our children.
- Increase the number of ERH from 2 per year to 4 per year.
- Increase to about 3 per year instead of 2 rides
- Have better estimates of time of arrival.
Do you have any additional comments you would like to share about TransOptions, vanpooling or the ERH program?

- Overnight parking is a logistical problem because of schedule changes among riders. We meet at a GSP commuter lot. It would be a significant reduction in wasted time and miles if we could leave the van parked overnight at the commuter lot.
- Very happy with the service, and would highly recommend to any of my co-workers.
- Even though I have not used the ERH it is still comforting to know it is there.
- Very Happy with the program not too thrilled with Archibald vanpool company response time for repairs or getting back information on a new rider availability to join the vanpool.
- No smoking in vans it creates a health problem and trouble between members.
- I wish we could have a kind of screening systems in selecting vanpool members.
- Keep up the excellent work.
- Shorter Survey
- My one request is to have carpool as an option when promoting pooling. I think that will be great. You should try a pilot program and see how it goes. [Note: TransOptions does have a Carpooling program with a large database. The application is available on our website.]
- ERH program helps if you have a family with kids. They get sick unexpectedly and ERH really helps when you are on a van pool schedule.
- The whole vanpooling program is great!
- Thank you very much for this wonderful program and privilege, I am truly grateful for it.
- How much lead time do you require for notification on the ERH program? [Note: As soon as you know you need an ERH we arrange for it as quickly as possible.]
- Restore the full amount of vouchers!!
- Still a good program however we need to lobby congress!
- Thank goodness for TransOptions and Vanpooling. I could not do my commute alone.