

**Bannock Transportation Planning Organization
RideLink
VanPool Program**

Policies and Procedures Handbook



BANNOCK

Transportation Planning

O R G A N I Z A T I O N

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Program Overview

RideLink is a program of the Bannock Transportation Planning Organization (BTPO). RideLink serves commuters within the S.E. Idaho region. The purpose of RideLink is to reduce vehicle miles traveled by encouraging car pools and van pools. This manual covers the van pool operation, responsibility of participants, and general information. BTPO identification will be used when financial or legal aspects of the van pool program are discussed. RideLink will be used when program information is discussed.

RideLink Contact Information

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General

Insurance

BTPO carries primary liability insurance coverage for the driver and co-driver of the vehicle. The rider's own personal auto policy and or employment medical coverage may also apply in some cases if injuries occur while riding in the van.

Maintenance/Cleaning

Regular maintenance such as oil changes, tire rotation, new tires, etc. will be the responsibility of BTPO. In the event the van is not available due to service time, a backup plan would need to be made. Cleaning of the vehicle is the responsibility of the Driver/Riders of the van pool.

Holidays

On holidays when only part of the van group is working, a rider with a valid Idaho operator's license may drive. The group should have at least 4 (driver + 3). Otherwise, it is suggested the group take a private car. The **driver** should notify the van pool the week prior to the legal holiday.

Grievance/Complaints

Despite the efforts of the driver and the BTPO office, there may be times when people are dissatisfied and voice complaints. The complaint may be internal – about a particular rider, operational rule, a driver's driving ability. It may also be from the general public – about an unsafe practice that was witnessed. Although complaints are generally viewed as negative, they can be an excellent way to offer new ideas, bring about improvements in operating your van pool, or to identify an area that needs assistance. Complaints may be directed to the BTPO office or to the driver. We have listed some guidelines for you to consider when a complaint has been voiced to you.

- 1) Depersonalize the situation.
- 2) Take any complaint seriously. Try to empathize with the individual voicing the complaint. Although it may seem trivial to you, it could possibly become a bigger issue if not taken seriously and handled quickly.
- 3) Share information and/or alternatives with the individual or group. Try to suggest potential solutions or changes that can be made.

- 4) Determine whether it is a problem that can be handled at a group meeting by majority vote or whether a one-on-one conversation is needed.
- 5) Discuss solutions and decide upon them by majority vote.
- 6) Agree on a solution. Make sure everyone involved is notified of the solution. Do not assume that everyone knows!
- 7) Set a time frame for improvement and check back to see if the situation is cleared up.
- 8) Contact BTPO for intervention if a problem cannot be handled within the group or if you need assistance at any point.

Emergency Ride Home Policy

RideLink provides a guaranteed ride home program for car pools and van pools. This program is for legitimate emergencies which require the passenger or van pool driver to return home or to the emergency site. The program pays for a taxi ride from your work site to the emergency. Van pool riders are eligible to use the program three times annually. ***This is not an automatic program.*** A participant needs to be signed up for the Guaranteed Ride Home Program with the RideLink office.

Termination/Consolidation of Routes

In the event that ridership falls to a point where it is no longer cost effective to operate, the group will be given a 30-day written notice that the route will be terminated on the 31st day after the notice is given, unless an earlier termination date can be accommodated with the group.

Fares

Each rider makes a commitment to the van pool when he or she signs the rider agreement. To ensure the van pool operates smoothly and efficiently, all riders commit to the following:

Riders must pay the monthly fare in advance; no later than the 15th of every month. Checks will be mailed to the BTPO office or given to the driver to be mailed as a group.

Riders must pay the full monthly fare. The monthly fare paid entitles them to a reserved seat in the van for the entire month. ***No prorated fares for days missed or vacations.***

New or terminating riders pay an appropriate prorated daily fare based on the number of days they are riding in the van.

Riders must give a 14 day termination notice from the van pool and are responsible for paying their fare during the 14-day period. Fare refunds will be considered in case of layoff, abrupt termination of employment or abrupt work time changes.

Seat Sharing

A monthly rider that does not use his/her seat every day may choose to share the seat with another person. This can only be done on a regular basis. (For example, a rider may ride on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and may share the seat Tuesday and Thursday on a regular basis.)

This arrangement must have the written approval of both the driver and the BTPO RideLink office. Passengers involved in the sharing arrangement must agree on how to split the fare and which passenger will be responsible for paying the fare.

Vacations

Riders paying on a monthly basis wishing to take vacation from the van pool group can do so in two ways:

Monthly rider can pay for the entire monthly fare to reserve the seat until his/her return. The seat may be sublet during the rider's absence with approval from the driver and the RideLink office.

Rider can pay for rides at the monthly fare until the last day ridden and quit the van pool for that month. This option can only be used once per calendar year.

Other

- 1) Transporting groups, such as church groups, scout troops, athletic teams, etc; is prohibited.
- 2) Do not load the van beyond the manufacturer's stated passenger capacity.
- 3) Do not transport any property deemed hazardous by reasons of being flammable, explosive, fissionable, corrosive or contraband material.

Emergency Plan

The driver must determine appropriate action if the van cannot run.

Alternative Transportation Provisions:

There may be occasions when the van will not be available. We encourage your group to establish backup plans to avoid frustration at the last minute. One of the first steps in making alternative arrangements involves communicating easily with your van pool group. A pre-arranged telephone tree for notifying each rider is vital when a change in commuting plans has been made.