



Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey

Results for Fiscal Year 2012

Draft Report

January 15, 2013

We'll get you home. Guaranteed.

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



TITLE: Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey Results for Fiscal Year 2012.

DATE: January 15, 2013

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AGENCY: The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) was established in 1957 by local jurisdictions to address regional concerns including growth, housing, environment, public health and safety, and transportation. The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) became associated with COG in 1966 and serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region. The TPB prepares plans and programs that the federal government must approve in order for federal-aid transportation funds to flow to the Washington region.

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation organizations coordinated by the TPB. Established in 1974, Commuter Connections offers free commuter services to help both businesses and their employees find the best available commuting options to improve traffic congestion and improve air quality through lower auto emissions. Primary services of Commuter Connections include ridematching for carpools and vanpools, administration of the Guaranteed Ride Home program, marketing of alternative commute options, and coordination of an employer outreach program including telework.

Funding for Commuter Connections is provided by:

District Department of Transportation
Maryland Department of Transportation
Virginia Department of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation

ABSTRACT:

This report presents the results of a survey of all Guaranteed Ride Home trip recipients during fiscal year 2012 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012). The survey was designed to gauge the level of satisfaction of commuters who utilized the GRH service.

The GRH program was started in 1997 to eliminate a key barrier to using alternative modes; commuter fear of being stranded at the workplace during an unexpected personal or family emergency or unscheduled overtime.

PUBLICATION:

The final report once adopted will be published on the Commuter Connections website at www.commuterconnections.org under the About Us, Publications section.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY.....	1
SURVEY DESIGN.....	2
RESPONSE RATES.....	3
FISCAL YEAR 2012 SURVEY RESULTS.....	5
WRITTEN RESPONSES.....	9
COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS FISCAL YEARS.....	14
RECAP SUMMARY.....	17
APPENDIX	18

Background

Guaranteed Ride Home Program Description

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) through its Commuter Connections program, under the auspices of its funders, has operated the Guaranteed Ride Home program (GRH) since January 1997. A “commuter insurance” program, GRH is designed to encourage ridesharing and transit usage by providing a way home for qualifying commuters in the case of an unexpected personal/family emergency or unscheduled overtime when their normal alternative commute mode is not available. Many area workers who consider switching commute modes from Single Occupancy Vehicles to carpools, vanpools, and transit are concerned about being stranded at work if they unexpectedly have to leave before or after standard work hours. GRH eliminates this concern, and encourages ridesharing, taking transit, bicycling and walking to work. Commuters who use these transportation modes twice a week are provided with four free GRH rides home per year. Alternative mode commute practices reduce the number of automobiles on the road and help the region toward air quality goals. The GRH program’s Participation Guidelines and survey samples used during FY 2012 are provided in the Appendix of this report.

Customer Satisfaction Survey and Methodology

The Customer Satisfaction Survey for GRH was conducted as an ongoing study each month throughout the fiscal year. All customers who obtained a free ride home through the program during FY12 were provided the opportunity to participate in the survey. Midway through FY09, Commuter Connections began to administer the GRH survey online. Online surveys were employed as they are more expeditious and efficient from an administrative standpoint and reduce printing and postage costs. Emails are sent on the day following the GRH trip, along with a link to the survey. Customers who have not provided Commuter Connections with an email address, roughly 17%, continue to receive the survey through the U.S. Postal Service. For each ride taken, those who had not supplied an email address were mailed a postage-paid response card survey along with a cover letter (*see* Appendix). The letter informed the GRH customer of the purpose and voluntary nature of the survey. The online survey email contains a similar message. Both the hard copy and online surveys allow respondents to rate the GRH service and provide comments and suggestions. Some respondents voluntarily provide their name, and with their consent, may be featured in news articles and/or the Commuter Connections web site as testimonials. See appendix for samples of the survey response card and online survey that were used. Note: some respondents did not answer all questions. As a result, response totals to some questions may not be equal to the total number of survey respondents.

Survey Design

The survey consisted of five multiple-choice questions, one fill in the blank and an area for comments. Four questions provided insight into customer opinions regarding various operational functions of GRH and asked the respondent to rate the different aspects of the service by circling one of four responses—“Poor,” “Fair,” “Good,” or “Excellent.” Another multiple choice question asked the reason for the trip, and a fill in the blank question asked the respondent to indicate their wait time. The comments area provided an open ended forum to offer specific or general feedback, whether positive or negative. For some multiple choice questions, a few respondents did not indicate a rating, or added a qualifier to the response, such as “very,” a plus or a minus symbol (+/-). These types of qualifiers were ignored when tabulating the survey results.

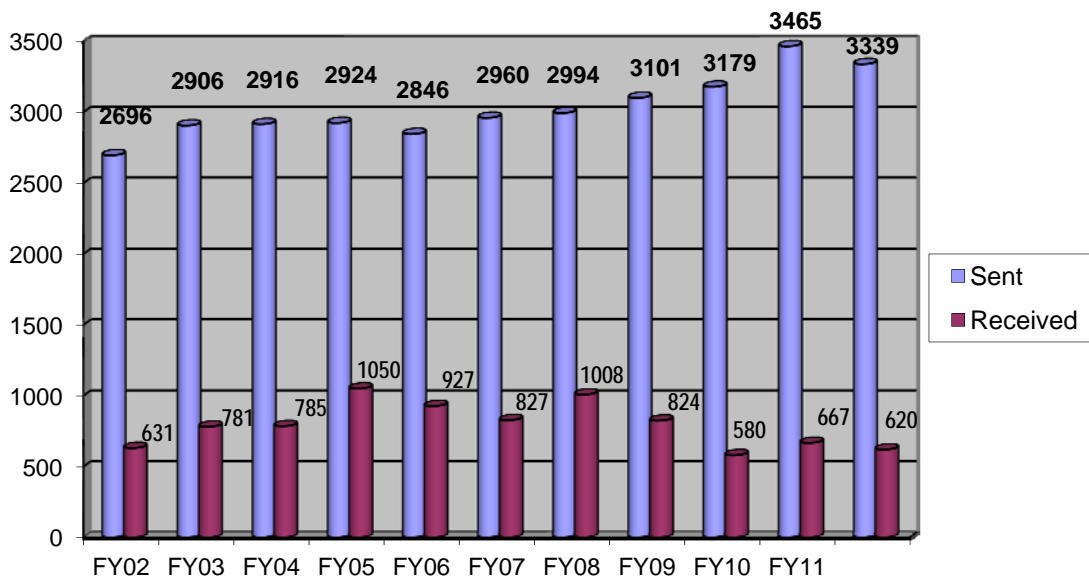
The performance areas of GRH were addressed by four multiple-choice questions pertaining to: reservations staff; transportation service; response time and overall service. “Reservations staff” refers to the operators who answered telephone calls from commuters requesting GRH service, verified the request in accordance with the official GRH participation guidelines, and arranged the ride for the commuter. These operators are employees of Diamond Transportation Services, Inc., which provided such services under a contractual arrangement with COG. “Transportation service” refers to the modes of transportation (e.g. taxi, rental car service) and the affiliated organizations (e.g. xyz cab company, Enterprise Rent-a-car) that provided the trips from the workplace to the final destination. The types of transportation modes used for the GRH trips were selected by Diamond Transportation based on the type and severity of the emergency, distance traveled, and customer preferences.

Due to budgetary reasons, during the final quarter of FY 2012, all commuters were asked to augment their GRH trip by using transit if available. For example, they may have been asked to take Metrorail to the end of the line and get a taxi from that point. This reduced the distance of the taxi ride and consequently, the cost of the taxi service.

Response Rates

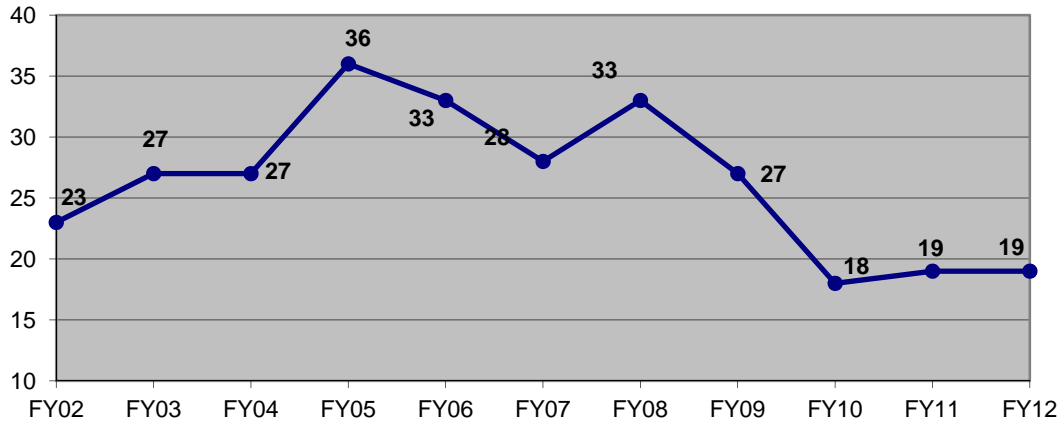
Number of Surveys Sent and Received Since Program Inception

Of the 3,339 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2012, 620 completed surveys were received. The number of surveys sent decreased by 126, or 3.6 percent from FY11, yet this was the second highest quantity of surveys ever distributed. The number of responses decreased by 47 surveys or 7 percent over the previous year.



Response Rates in Percentages - All Fiscal Years.

The response rate in FY12 was 19% and has generally remained steady for the three fiscal years. The precipitous nine point drop from FY09 to FY10 occurred when the survey changed to an online system. Online surveys are easier to ignore and may be tied up in spam/junk filters. Physical survey cards tend to have more impact. In many households, the volume of emails received has surpassed traditional postal delivery mail. Another plausible reason why there are significantly fewer online responses may be due to the fact that many GRH customers realize that online surveys no longer provide anonymity.



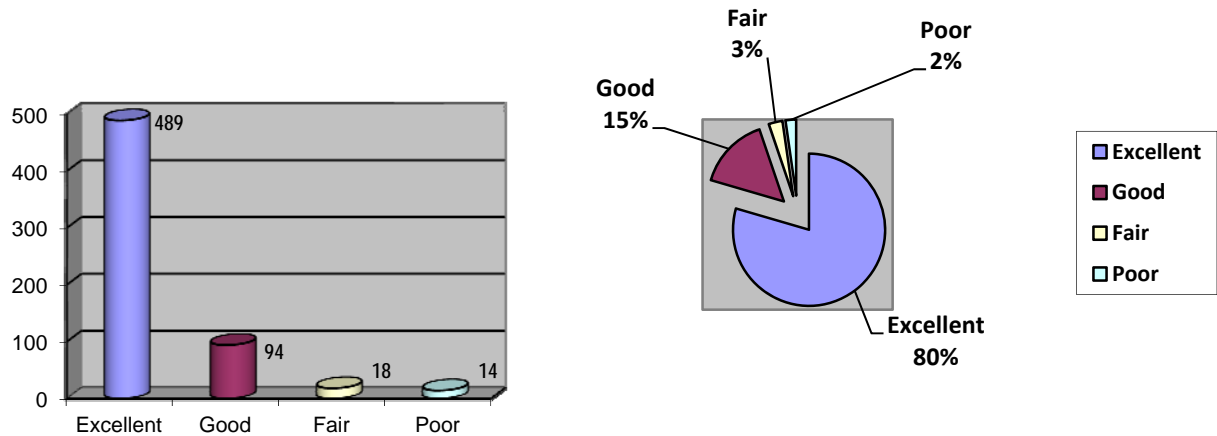
Fiscal Year 2012 Survey Results

This section indicates survey results received from 620 respondents for fiscal year 2012. Upcoming sections of this report will provide a comparison of results from the past ten fiscal years.

Reservation Staff

Number and Percentage of Responses Received

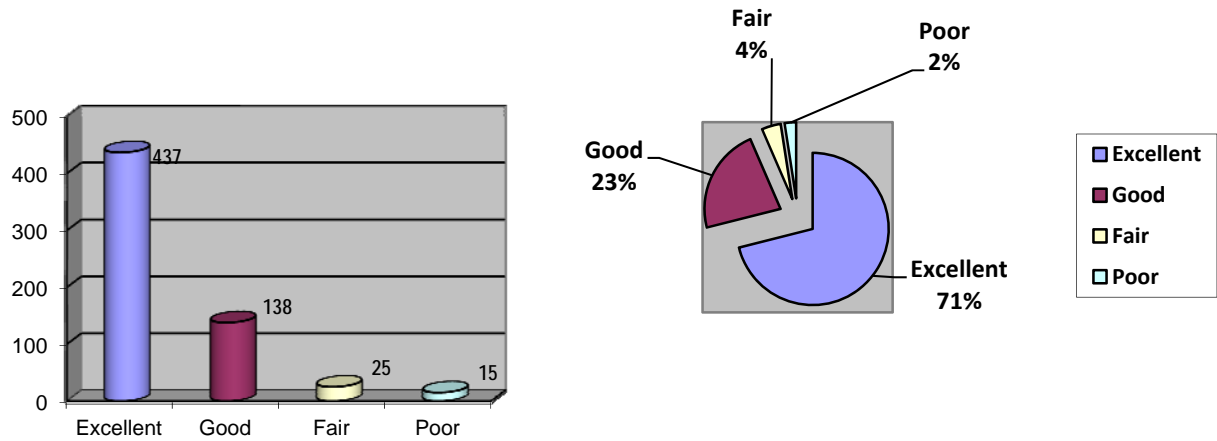
How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservation staff?



Transportation Service

Number and Percentage of Responses Received

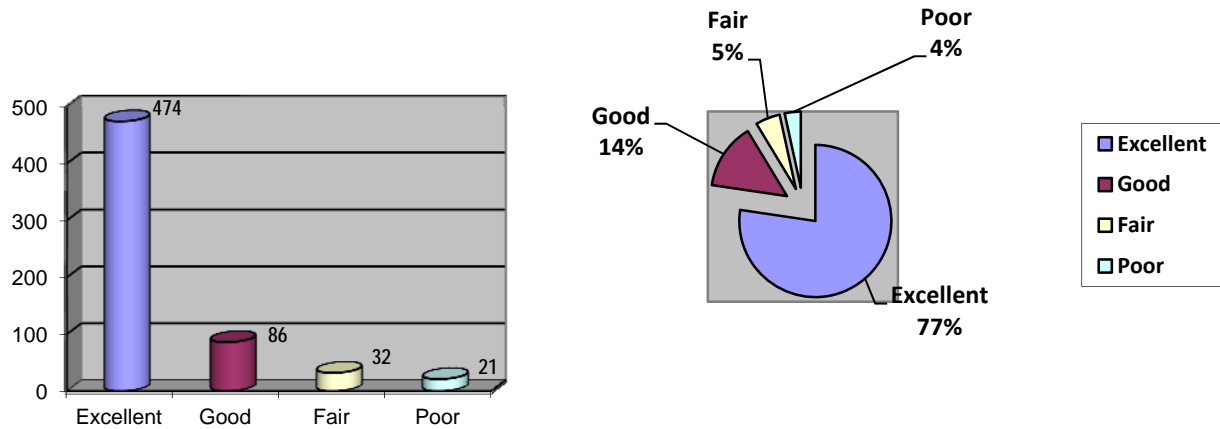
How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?



Response Time - Rating

Number and Percentage of Responses Received

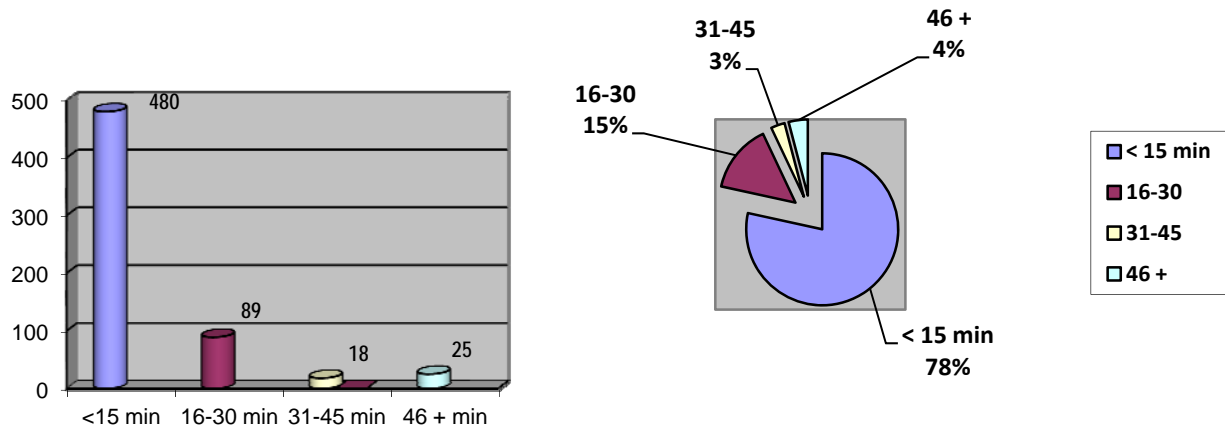
How would you rate our response time?



Response Time – Minutes

Numbers and Percentages of Responses Received

Approximately how many minutes did you wait until your ride?

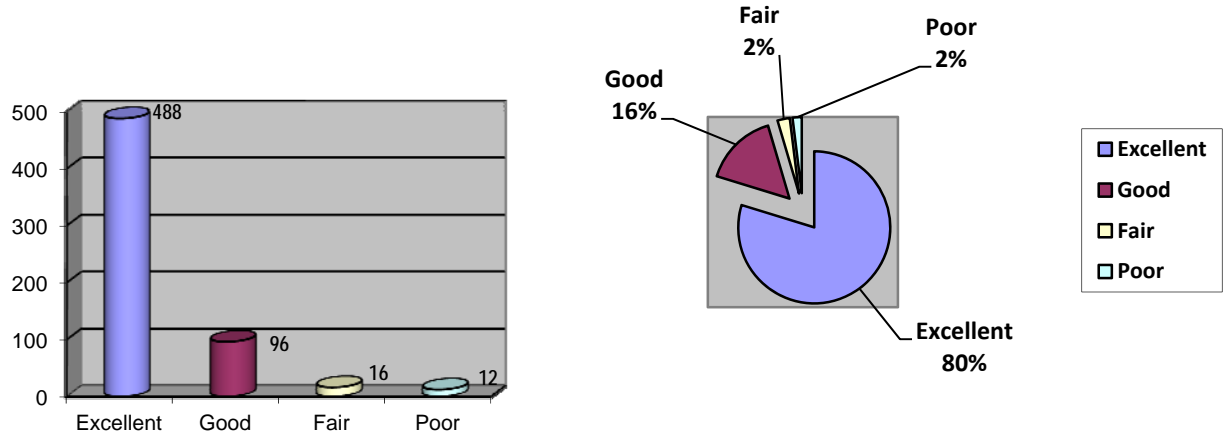


Average response wait in FY12 was 15 minutes. The percentage of customers with a wait time of 30 minutes or less was 93%.

Overall Service

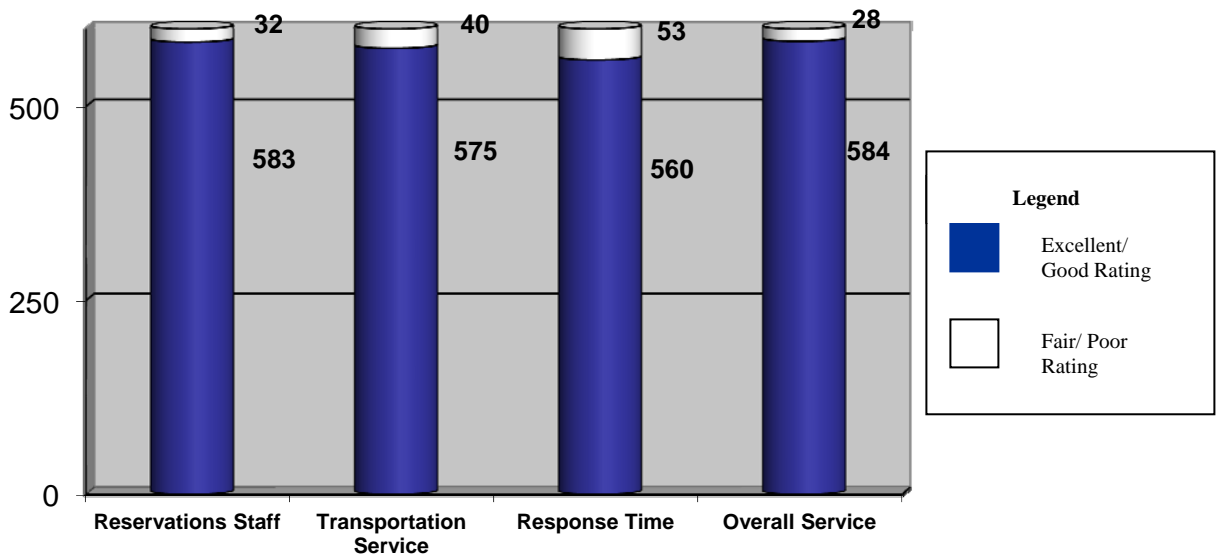
Numbers and Percentages of Responses Received

Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?



Excellent/Good vs. Fair/Poor: All Questions

Number of Responses Based on Combined Satisfaction Levels

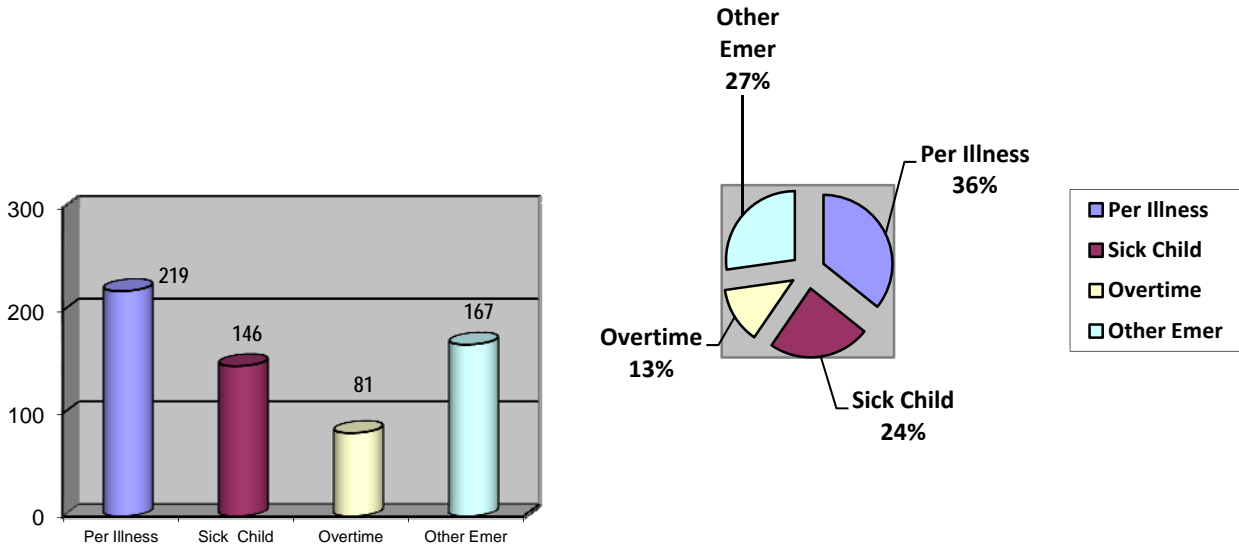


This chart emphasizes the overwhelming favorable ratings (excellent & good) compared to the less favorable ratings (fair & poor). For example, in the first column, 583 respondents gave the Reservations Staff category a favorable rating of either Excellent or Good, noted in the blue area. In contrast, only 32 respondents, shown on top in white, rated the reservations staff with a less favorable “Fair or Poor” response.

Reason for Trip

Numbers and Percentages of Responses Received

What was the reason for your GRH Trip?

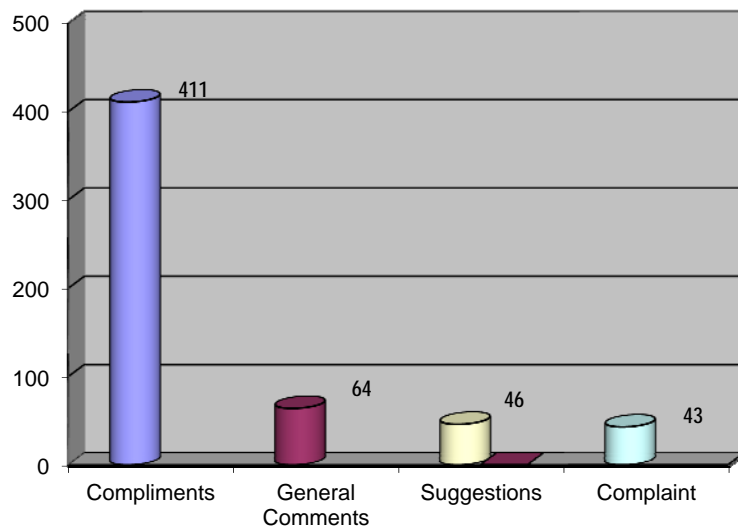


Written Responses

In addition to the multiple-choice questions, survey respondents were offered the option of providing written comments. All feedback is valuable for assessing customer attitudes regarding specific service areas, and helps to gauge the general pulse of the program. The total number of written responses equaled 430 out of 620 returned surveys, from more than two-thirds (69%) of survey participants.

The open-ended written responses included compliments, suggestions, complaints, and comments. Respondents were allowed to check all that applied, so a significant amount of feedback fell into more than one type of written response category, hence the below chart adds up to more than 430. A respondent may have given a compliment about a specific aspect of the experience coupled with a complaint about a completely separate aspect. For example, “*The taxi was quick to arrive but the driver was not hospitable*”. This example is both a compliment and complaint.

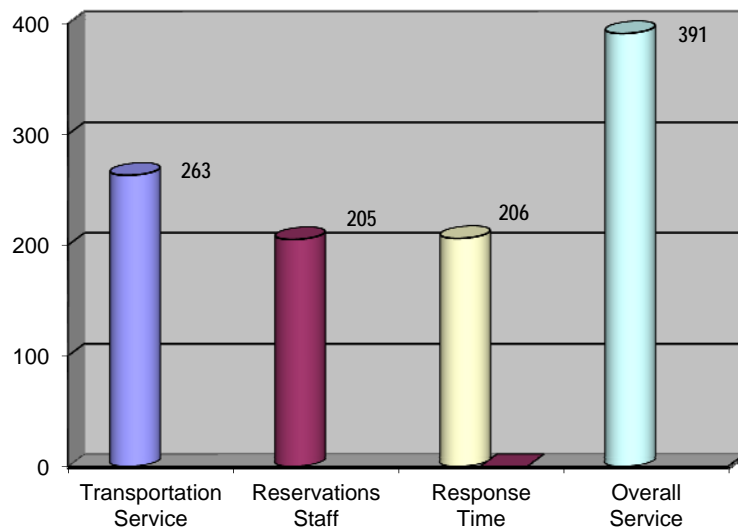
Types of Written Feedback



Compliments were given by 411 respondents out of 430 written comments, 96 percent. Compliments were as simple as “thank you”, or were lengthy and specific. General Comments were the second most common type of written feedback, followed by Suggestions and Complaints.

Again, respondents were allowed to check all that apply, and the vast majority of respondent feedback fell into more than one category, hence the below chart adds up to far more than 430. Respondents were extremely prone to comment about multiple aspects of the service provided. For example, “*The reservations staff and taxi driver were kind and helpful, and the driver was already waiting for me outside my office building, it’s a wonderful program!*” This type of written feedback touches on all four areas; reservations staff, transportation service, response time, and overall service.

Written Feedback Categories



Most respondents, 391 who provided written feedback did so by mentioning the service in an overall manner. This was reflective of 91% of the 430 written responses. The transportation service received the second greatest amount of written feedback at 263 (61% of 430). The reservations staff and response time received an equal level of comments (205/206, 48% of 430).

Compliments

With 411 compliments, positive feedback was overwhelmingly the most common type of written response. Compliments were given by 96% of the 430 who provided a written response, nearly 9.5 times the rate of complaints. Many were expressions of gratitude for the GRH service. Some commuters explicitly listed GRH as the main reason which allowed them to utilize an alternative commute mode. Many of the respondents provided personal stories about how GRH helped them during a crisis situation.

Respondents were allowed to check all that applied. The vast majority compliments were about the Overall Service followed by the Taxi/Rental Service. The breakdown of compliments by category are as follows: 355 were made about the Overall Service, 86 percent; 208 about the Taxi/Rental Service, 52 percent; 179 about Response Time, 44 percent; and 173 about the Reservations Staff, 42 percent. It should also be noted that compliments regarding the Taxi/Rental Service received almost exclusively pertained to taxi trips, as only a small percentage of the trips used the rental car service.

Samples of actual compliments from FY12:

- Fast, friendly and efficient service! Taxi Driver was respectful of my ill nature.
- GRH is the only reason I commute. Every time I am sick or have an emergency it responds as promised. Thank you
- I was amazed at how well this service worked! This was the first time I'd ever used GRH--and the cab arrived outside of my office building in 10 minutes.
- From the moment I called to the end of the ride, I had a very positive experience.
- I feel truly blessed with the service provided (which otherwise would have been a financial hardship).
- The GRH program is a great incentive for using mass transportation for commuting. Keep up the great work.
- Love, love, love your service. From the friendly responder who took the initial call to the pleasant cab, it was all good!
- I could not have asked for a faster, more considerate response. Thank you so much.
- Amazing! My dad was taken by ambulance. Thanks for everything. You take the worry out of my commute!
- Y'all really saved my butt (twice!). Thanks.
- This is an excellent service that provides "a peace of mind" if an unexpected emergency comes up.
- Best thing since sliced bread.
- I'm extremely pleased. Everyone was very helpful and prompt. Thanks for making this service free and so easily accessible.
- I am truly grateful, I arrived to work and soon became very ill. Thank you so much for the excellent service.
- This was my first use of this program and I had an excellent experience.
- I could not have asked for better ANGELS than your service!

Complaints

A total of 43 complaints were received about the GRH service; 10% out of the 430 written responses. Of respondents who cited a complaint, six also gave a compliment. Respondents were allowed to check all that applied. Most complaints were about the Taxi/Rental Service followed by the Reservations Staff. Complaints received under the Taxi/Rental Service category almost exclusively pertain to taxi trips, as a small percentage of trips used the rental car service. The breakdowns of complaints by category in descending order are as follows: 25 about the Taxi/Rental Service, 58 percent; 16 about the Reservations Staff, 37 percent; 14 about the Response Time, 33 percent; and 12 about the Overall Service, 28 percent.

Another common type of complaint related to the need for the reservations staff to ask probing questions, which is done in order to verify whether the request fully meets the GRH trip approval requirements. Most commuters understand this as one of the necessary steps of the program, while some are defensive and put off by this process. Without these safeguards, some commuters might abuse the program rules and take advantage of the free service. GRH can only be used for unexpected emergencies such as a personal illness, a sick child or other personal or family emergency situations. To keep costs down, the reservation staff may also encourage commuters to use a rental car instead of a significantly more expensive taxi fare. They may also ask the commuter to supplement the trip with Metrorail for part of the distance.

Complaints about the taxi service included some confusion about where to pick up the taxis as well as problems with identifying which taxi was part of the GRH program. Additional issues included the attitudes of some drivers, cab cleanliness, and the lack of knowledge the cab drivers had of the GRH program. Unfortunately, some taxi drivers do not possess good customer service skills and some taxi companies do a poor job of communicating the GRH program protocol to their drivers. Although problems and issues are discussed between the GRH contractor and the taxi companies, the filtering down of information to the drivers can be less than ideal. Ultimately, the taxi companies are responsible for the training of taxi drivers and Commuter Connections has little direct control over this aspect of the service. Customers are welcome to specify the taxi company and/or driver by name when completing the survey but rarely do so. They may also lodge a complaint directly to the taxi company. When known by Commuter Connections, this feedback is communicated to the appropriate cab company through the managing contractor.

Sample of actual complaints from FY12:

- Driver detoured through Chinatown to pick his brother up from the bus. Added about 15 minutes to travel time.
- Taxi was dirty and smelled.
- Enterprise Car Rental wasn't prepared to deliver on this emergency, I had to wait for a car to be washed. Several days later they called on the whereabouts of the car I returned.
- I think there could be some improvement in the response time.
- The evening receptionist told me I would be receiving a call within 15 minutes from cab company. That call never came. After 25 minutes of waiting I called back.
- It was unclear as to whether or not to tip the driver.
- It took an extra 30 minutes as I was asleep in the back and did not realize that we were going in the wrong direction.
- The taxi drove like a bat out of hell, honking

Comments and Suggestions

Comments and/or suggestions were received by 110 respondents, representing 26 percent of all written responses.

Sample of actual comments from FY12:

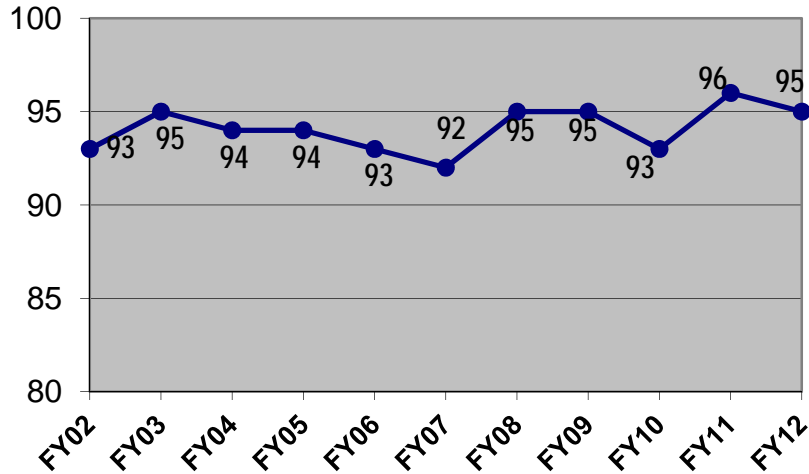
- GRH should allow the individual to contact the car service if it is after 10pm.
- Would be useful if GRH staff provided some guidance -- how long the wait would be, what taxi company, etc.
- More advertisement need to be made about this program.
- Ask the cab company to send a driver who knows how to get to a location or who at least has a working GPS.
- "Requests to use the GRH program because of unscheduled overtime must be made before the commuter's registered work end time" should be made more prominent and not be buried in the middle of a page of dense text.

Comparison to Previous Fiscal Years

Reservations Staff

Percentage of Responses with Favorable Ratings (Excellent and Good)

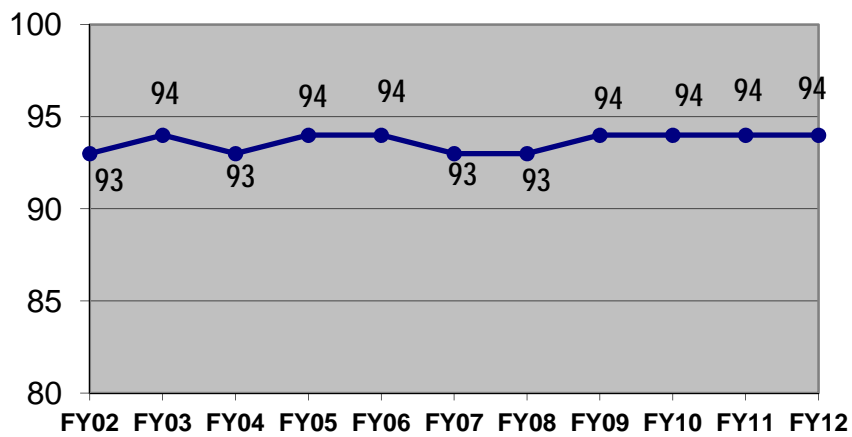
How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservations staff?



Transportation Service

Percentage of Responses with Favorable Ratings (Excellent and Good)

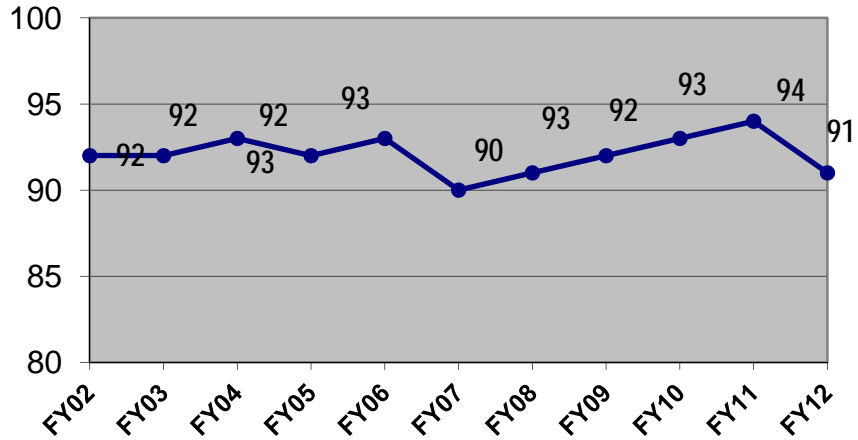
How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?



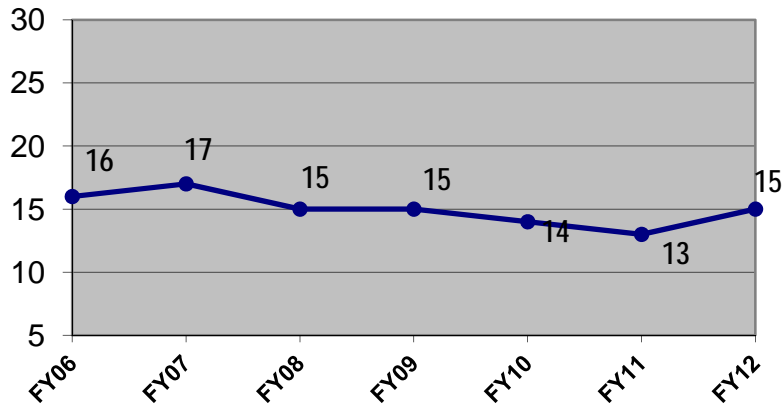
Response Time

Percentage of Responses with Favorable Ratings (Excellent and Good)

How would you rate our response time?



Average Response Time – Minutes

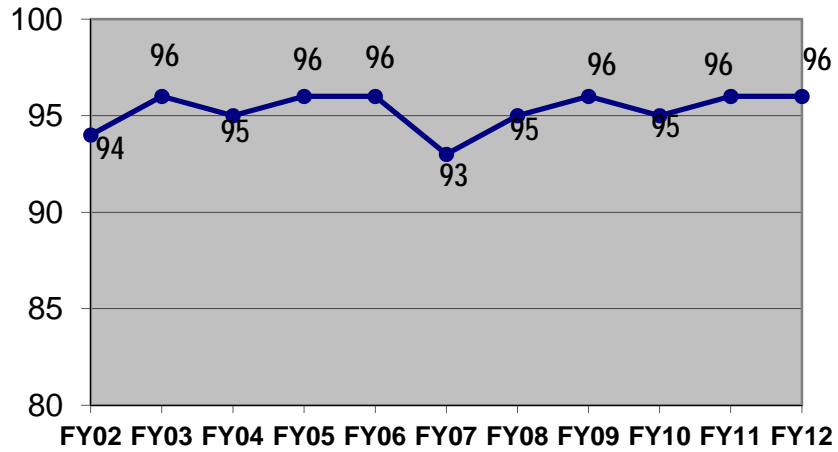


FY06 was the first year Average Response Time was added to the survey.

Overall Service

Percentage of Responses with Favorable Ratings (Excellent and Good)

Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?



Recap Summary

Of the 3,339 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2012, 620 or 19 percent of surveys were completed. The vast majority, 96% of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written responses were entered on more than two-thirds (69%) of the returned surveys, the overwhelming majority of which (96%) contained compliments. Compliments outweighed criticism 9.5 to 1. For every category, good or above ratings were given by 90% or more of the respondents. Average response wait was 15 minutes and 93% waited 30 minutes or less.

Appendix

Sample Cover Letter Sent with Survey Card



Dear Commuter:

Thank you for using the Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program in September. As a standard practice, we send out survey cards to all of our customers, in order to determine their level of satisfaction with this free service. Your feedback will help us gauge the program's continued value and also help improve and better serve commuters in the Washington metropolitan area.

Please take just a moment to complete the enclosed survey card and simply drop it in the mail within 10 days, no postage necessary!

Please note, your answers to the survey should only reflect your September 2008 GRH trip. If you have again used the GRH service after September 30, 2008, you will receive a separate survey card for that trip.

For the latest Guaranteed Ride Home participation guidelines, or if you would like information about other Commuter Connections services, please visit our web site at www.commuterconnections.org, or call us at 1-800-745-7433.

Thank you for using an alternative method of transportation to get to work and for supporting the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Your efforts help to reduce traffic congestion and improve the air we breathe.

Please be sure to tell your co-workers and neighbors to sign up for the free Guaranteed Ride Home program at www.commuterconnections.org.

Happy Commuting!

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS

We'll get you home. Guaranteed.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, 777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, N.E. SUITE 300, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002-4239

THE COMMUTER INFORMATION SOURCE FOR MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

www.commuterconnections.org



1-800-745-7433

Sample Survey Response Card



Thank you for using Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH).
We'd like to know how you feel about our program.

Please take a moment to complete this card and drop it in the mail. Your response is greatly appreciated.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
1. How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservations staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. What was the reason for your GRH trip? <input type="checkbox"/> Sick Child <input type="checkbox"/> Overtime <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Other Emergency 7. Your name: (optional) _____ 8. Comments: _____ _____ _____
2. How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. How would you rate our response time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Approximately how many minutes did you wait until receiving your ride? _____ minutes					

1-800-745-RIDE • www.commuterconnections.org **We'll get you home. Guaranteed.**

Sample Online Survey

Commuter Connections GRH Satisfaction Survey

We'd like to know how you feel about our program. Please take a moment to complete this survey. Your response is greatly appreciated.

How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservation staff?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

How would you rate our response time?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

Overall how would you rate our GRH service?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent





Approximately how many minutes did you wait until receiving your ride?

What was the reason for your GRH trip?

- Sick Child
- Personal Illness
- Unscheduled Overtime
- Other Emergency

Please Provide us with any comments about your GRH experience.

Do you consider your comments to be a: (check all that apply)

- Compliment

- Suggestion

- Complaint

- General Comment


Do your comments refer to: (check all that apply)

- Taxi or Rental Car Service
- Overall Service
- Reservation Staff
- Response Time

Response Data by Year, Question and Rating - Percentage of responses

Survey Questions	Responses	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06
How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservations staff?	Excellent	76%	78%	78%	78%	78%
	Good	17%	17%	16%	16%	15%
	Fair	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%
	Poor	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?	Excellent	69%	70%	70%	73%	76%
	Good	24%	24%	23%	21%	18%
	Fair	4%	4%	6%	4%	4%
	Poor	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
How would you rate our response time?	Excellent	73%	74%	75%	75%	77%
	Good	19%	18%	18%	17%	16%
	Fair	3%	4%	5%	5%	4%
	Poor	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?	Excellent	78%	79%	78%	78%	78%
	Good	16%	17%	17%	18%	18%
	Fair	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%
	Poor	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Survey Questions	Responses	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservations staff?	Excellent	76%	78%	80%	81%	84%	80%
	Good	16%	17%	15%	12%	12%	15%
	Fair	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%
	Poor	4%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%
How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?	Excellent	68%	71%	74%	72%	75%	71%
	Good	25%	22%	20%	21%	20%	23%
	Fair	5%	5%	3%	4%	3%	4%
	Poor	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
How would you rate our response time?	Excellent	74%	74%	78%	76%	82%	77%
	Good	17%	17%	14%	16%	12%	14%
	Fair	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
	Poor	5%	5%	4%	4%	2%	4%
Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?	Excellent	75%	77%	79%	81%	84%	80%
	Good	18%	18%	17%	14%	12%	16%
	Fair	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%
	Poor	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%

In some cases, rounding may cause categories to not add up to 100%.

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Guidelines are subject to change without notice.

Call 1-800-745-7433 or visit www.commuterconnections.org for current Participation Guidelines.

1. Commuters must be officially registered with Commuter Connections before using the Guaranteed Ride Home service. Commuters must provide the supervisor name and phone number and at least two (2) phone numbers (home/cell and work) in order to register for GRH service. Registered commuters are those who have received an official registration letter and GRH ID card from Commuter Connections. Commuters who have not been officially registered may use the GRH service one time, providing they meet all other eligibility criteria. This is referred to as a “one-time exception.” Any commuter granted a one-time exception must officially register *before* additional GRH trips are granted. Registered and one-time exception commuters must be carpooling, vanpooling, taking transit, bicycling, or walking to their site of employment at least two (2) days per week **and** on the day they use the GRH service. GRH is only available to people commuting to and from work.
2. **Commuters must call Commuter Connections and receive authorization from Commuter Connections prior to using the GRH service.** Commuter Connections will issue an authorization number(s) to the commuter to approve a GRH trip. **Commuters will not be reimbursed for trips not authorized by Commuter Connections.** After approval, Commuter Connections will make the GRH trip arrangements for the commuter and, if necessary, provide instructions on how and where the GRH transportation provider will pick up the commuter. Commuter Connections is equipped to provide wheelchair accessible transportation as part of the GRH service as needed.
3. Registered commuters may use the GRH program up to four (4) times annually from their official registration date. Commuters who received a one-time exception then officially register with Commuter Connections may use the GRH service three (3) more times within 12 months from the date of their one-time exception GRH trip. The GRH trip credits are non-transferable.
4. Commuters must re-register annually to maintain their GRH registration. Commuters must contact Commuter Connections to re-register and update their registration information.
5. The GRH program may only be used in cases of unexpected personal or family emergency, unexpected illness, or unscheduled overtime. **Cases in which the GRH program cannot be used include, but are not limited to the following: previously scheduled medical appointments, trips to the hospital or emergency room for a commuter that needs medical attention, personal errands, transit service disruptions and/or delays, business related travel, working late without a supervisor’s request, weather emergencies, any type of building closings or evacuations, and natural disasters.**
6. Requests to use the GRH program because of unscheduled overtime must be made *before* the commuter’s registered work end time, **and** a supervisor’s verification will be required at the time of the request.
7. GRH service is available between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except designated program holidays and any planned and/or unplanned Federal Government office closings. **GRH TRIPS MUST BE TAKEN BEFORE 10:00 P.M to ensure that the commuter has received their ride. Designated program Holidays include: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.**

8. To be eligible, a commuter must be physically working in the following areas in Washington, D.C. or Baltimore, MD. The area includes the District of Columbia, the Maryland counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's; the City of Baltimore, and the Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William; and the City of Alexandria as well as all cities within the aforementioned counties.
9. Eligible commuters can live anywhere inside **the areas listed in Guideline #8** or in any of the following areas: Allegany, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot or Washington counties in Maryland; and Caroline, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Frederick, King George, Lancaster, Madison, Northumberland, Orange, Page, Rappahannock, Richmond, Shenandoah, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Warren, or Westmoreland counties, the City of Fredericksburg, or the City of Winchester in Virginia; and Berkeley, Hampshire, or Jefferson County in West Virginia; and Adams, Franklin, or York counties in Pennsylvania. Any residence outside of the above-mentioned areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
10. All GRH trips must originate from the commuter's work location. Depending on the nature of the emergency, and home and work locations, a commuter using the GRH service may be required to use a taxi, car rental, transit, or any combination of these services to reach their destination point. **Commuter Connections will determine the type of service used and will issue a valid GRH authorization number at that time.**
11. Commuter Connections will pay for one vendor service and/or one transit service per request. If the GRH trip uses a taxi, Commuter Connections will pay for all charges, excluding gratuity, to the destination. **The commuter is responsible only for tipping the taxi driver.** Cancellation on the part of the commuter of a GRH trip may count as one of the four annual trips.

If a transit option is used for part of the GRH trip, the commuter will be mailed a transit reimbursement voucher. The transit reimbursement voucher must be submitted back to Commuter Connections within thirty days of transit use in order for payment to be made. Please allow 45 days for reimbursement. A commuter's supervisor must sign the transit voucher for any trip granted because of unscheduled overtime in order for the reimbursement to be issued.

If the GRH trip is made by rental car, the commuter is responsible for signing a standard rental agreement, showing a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, providing a credit card number for collateral, returning the rental car within a 24-hour period, and the following charges: gasoline refueling charges, taxes, purchase of insurance (if necessary), and additional rental charges if auto is not returned within a 24-hour period (unless Commuter Connections has given prior approval for additional rental time). The commuter will be responsible for any loss or damage to the rental car.

12. GRH is a free service provided by Commuter Connections at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). COG will use its best efforts to provide the Guaranteed Ride Home in accordance with the guidelines shown above. By requesting assistance from the Guaranteed Ride Home program, the participant in the program explicitly acknowledges that COG assumes no liability for the timeliness of the GRH participating vendor(s) or any accidents that may occur on the conveyance.

07/16/10