

HANDOUTS

from previous meeting



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Commuter Connections Gives Green Light to Expansion of Cash Incentive Program to Move Commuters into Carpools

Participants Must Register by March 31

Washington, D.C.—Commuter Connections is expanding its pilot program which encourages commuters in the Washington D.C. region to form new carpools in exchange for cash payouts. Known locally as 'Pool Rewards, the initiative is another innovative way Commuter Connections is trying to promote carpooling to and from work instead of driving alone. Originally limited to three major highway bottlenecks, it will now be open to all newly formed registered carpools traveling anywhere within the region.

Commuters may qualify for a \$1 each way incentive for carpooling during the 'Pool Rewards pilot program. The offer is only being made for a limited time. Those interested must register to join or form a new carpool by March 31, 2010. In order to receive payment, participants are expected to regularly report travel time through an online system. Commuter Connections also helps area residents find potential ridesharing partners by providing registered commuters with free access to a list of other commuters who live and work near them, have similar work schedules, and are interested in carpooling.

Commuter Connections, a regional transportation network coordinated by the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), is conducting the pilot program as part of its ongoing efforts to improve traffic flow, decrease air pollution and promote long-term changes in commuting behavior. 'Pool Rewards is similar to Atlanta's highly successful Cash for Commuters effort. At the end of its first five years, the Atlanta program coaxed more than 29,000 drivers out of their cars and saved 32.8 million vehicle miles traveled, with 64 percent of its participants continuing to use commute alternatives at least once per week after the cash reward program ended.

“We are always looking for new ways to get people in the D.C. area to carpool,” said Commuter Connections Director Nicholas Ramfos. “Cash incentives have helped recruit new carpoolers in other areas, and we hope ‘Pool Rewards can replicate some of that success.”

Commuters who travel during peak commuting times can sign up for the ‘Pool Rewards program at www.commuterconnections.org. In addition, ridesharing commuters may also be eligible for other money-saving services such as the free regional Guaranteed Ride Home program that ensures a ride home when one of life’s unexpected emergencies arise. Some rules and limitations apply.

Commuter Connections is a program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Commuter Connections promotes ridesharing to work and other alternatives to drive alone commuting, and provides ridematching for carpools and vanpools and offers the free Guaranteed Ride Home program. Commuter Connections is funded by the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and U.S. Departments of Transportation. www.mwcog.org, www.commuterconnections.org.

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M E M O R A N D U M

To: Commuter Connections Ridematching Coordinators & Staff

From: Stephen Finafrock, Commuter Operations Specialist,
Commuter Connections

Date: 02/24/2010

Re: **COMMUTER DATA REVIEW AND CS LEVEL II REPORTS**

In our ongoing effort to increase the level of customer service Commuter Connections and its network members provide to our commuters, COG/TPB staff will implement a new suite of reports over the coming month. The format will be similar to the "End-User Report," the "Suspicious Appcode Report" and "Commuters Who Expire in _____." These reports are currently printed on green bar paper and sent to you in the mail.

The first report will be the "New Applicants Report." This report will examine commuters in the TDM System who still have a status of "New Registrant," and whose status may not have been correctly updated. The purpose of this report is to help local Rideshare Coordinators maintain the correct status of their commuters. Making sure your commuters have the correct status on their accounts provides them with optimum matching possibilities. When Rideshare Coordinators run ridematches, match results are limited to "Active Commuters." Commuters who are designated "New Registrants" are not matched until their status is "Active". COG will supply a list of commuters for each agency electronically until the paper version has been implemented. The second report to be implemented will be the "Under Review Report." This report will examine commuters in the TDM System who have a status of "Under Review." Rideshare Coordinators should use this status for commuters who are missing or have incorrect information.

Several important steps to remember when updating commuter records are:

1. Examine the commuter record for accuracy of information and to determine the best appcode to use for the record. This code must always begin with you agency's letter or number. Checking the commuter's program association and commuter preferences will also help with assigning this code.
2. If information in the commuter record is inaccurate, change the status of the record to "Under Review" and obtain/verify the information needed
3. Once information has been verified, set the commuter's status to "Active."

4. Send the commuter a matchlist if they have never had a match performed OR if they have not received a matchlist in the last 30 days.
5. Make the appropriate notes in the commuter's record so you are able to provide a consistent level of service and maintain record history.

The third report in this suite will be the "Aging Account Report" and will be run on a monthly basis. This report will help Rideshare Coordinators identify commuters in the TDM System who would be good candidates for follow up. These are commuters who have been in the system for a few months and may need fresh information or additional assistance. More instructions will follow with these reports once they have been implemented.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and suggested improvements. COG staff continues to look forward to improving and expanding the services we are able to provide to the commuters in our database. If you have questions or need further information, please call us at 202-962-3333 or email us at commutersupport@mwkog.org.

cc: N. Ramfos
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