
M UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
PARKING & TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

FLEET SERVICES



Welcome to the
Vanpool Program

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Welcome to the University of Michigan Vanpool Program

Dear Vanpool member:

Welcome to the University of Michigan vanpool program, brought to you by MichiVan. You have chosen a very convenient, economical way to commute to work while saving money and helping the environment.

This information packet is intended to provide you with reference material to answer any questions you might have about the program and to assist you in finding help if issues should arise in your vanpool.

The Parking & Transportation Services Department (PTS) subsidizes the vanpool program by funding approximately 75% of the cost of the vans, excluding fuel cost. This subsidy comes from revenue earned through parking permit sales. The vanpool program is just one of many ways that we encourage alternative forms of transportation at the University in order to relieve parking demand by reducing the number of vehicles that are brought to campus each day.

Other alternative programs that we operate or fund are the University bus system, the MRide program with AATA (also subsidized by parking revenues), Emergency Ride Home cab service and the Zipcar car-sharing program. We also assist in carpool matching, rent bike lockers and participate in making improvements for bicyclists on campus.

Thank you for joining the growing number of employees who are kicking the habit of driving alone!

Dave Miller

Executive Director, Parking & Transportation Services

What is a UM Vanpool?

A vanpool consists of at least six members who work similar work schedules and agree to ride together. The van is supplied by MichiVan through Fleet Services. Each vanpool is provided a reserved parking space in a faculty/staff lot or structure of the vanpool members' choice.

Benefits of Vanpooling

- No annual parking permit expense
- Sharing gas expenses
- Sharing your commute with others
- Eased frustration of driving through traffic
- Nominal monthly fee
- Designated parking space – no need to search for a parking space
- Lower maintenance cost on your personal vehicle
- Possible decrease in personal vehicle insurance cost
- Being dropped-off close to work

Communities We Currently Serve

Adrian	Jackson
Belleville	Linden
Blissfield	Monroe
Brighton	Northville
Canton	Novi
Chelsea	Pinckney
Clinton	Redford
Deerfield	Stockbridge
Detroit	Taylor
Dundee	Tecumseh
Farmington Hills	Temperance
Fenton	Toledo
Flint	Webberville
Grand Blanc	Westland
Hartland	Ypsilanti
Howell	

Eligibility

To receive the U-M subsidy riders must be full-time U-M paid employees (working at least 32 hours/week). Contract employees, students, and temporary staff are not eligible to receive the U-M vanpool subsidy but are welcome to join through Michivan's program. Eligibility must be verified by Fleet Services before any rider will be approved to participate in the vanpool program.

Ridership Requirements

All U-M subsidized vanpool members are required to ride in the van at least 80% of the time. All vanpool members are required to turn in their annual parking permit, payroll deduction and member contact information forms, and any fees before joining a vanpool.

Mandatory Vanpool Formation Meeting

Once a group has decided to form a vanpool and before they may obtain a van, all participants must attend a Vanpool Formation Meeting. At this meeting, the program rules and regulations will be explained. The vanpool members will discuss, and make decisions regarding how their vanpool will operate. Fuel expense sharing, pick-up & drop-off times and locations, are some of the items that need to be agreed upon before the vanpool starts operating.

Vanpool Participant Responsibilities

Conduct

We do not expect all participants to be great friends. However, all members should interact courteously and professionally with all other members of the vanpool. They must maintain good personal hygiene and be respectful of other riders' allergies or sensitivities to perfume/cologne. Please keep in mind that not everyone enjoys talking during their commute to and from work; some riders may want to keep to themselves. Behavior deemed intimidating or retaliatory is inappropriate and will result in removal from the vanpool program.

All members must adhere to all vanpool decisions regarding payment of fuel expenses, pick-up and drop-off times and locations, etc. Failure to do so will result in removal from the vanpool program.

Smoking is prohibited in vanpool vehicles.

Concerns/Conflicts

From time to time, conflicts may arise between riders of the van. Generally, these conflicts can be resolved if they are addressed within the van in a timely fashion. If the vanpool members cannot reach a resolution, Fleet Services is willing to assist by clarifying any of the rules & regulations of the vanpool program. Mediation Services is also an available resource, if necessary (see Appendix E for a memo from Mediation Services). This is available at no-charge to UM staff, and it is completely confidential. A professionally trained mediator can help two or more members of a vanpool talk through any disagreement safely and comfortably. Contact Mediation Services at (734) 615-4789.

Parking Permits

Annual Permits

Registered vanpool members are not eligible for annual parking permits. Therefore, annual parking (Gold, Blue, Yellow or Orange) permits must be turned in at Parking Customer Services at 508 Thompson St. (or Fleet Services at 1213 Kipke Dr if other financial transactions do not need to take place), before a vanpool or individual rider starts.

Daily Permits

Each vanpool participant may purchase 52 daily parks during the permit year (July 1 – June 30), in the event that you need to drive your personal vehicle to campus. Due to this being a financial transaction, daily parking permits are available only at Parking Customer Services at 508 Thompson Street.

Discontinuing Ridership

A driver/rider may discontinue his/her ridership at any time. A 30-day notice must be submitted to PTS Fleet Services in order to terminate ridership.

30 Day Notice

A driver/rider must give thirty days notice before leaving the vanpool program. The notice must be in writing, and a Vanpool Deduction Form (on the “Form” section of the [PTS website](#) must be completed. The completed form must be faxed to the Fleet Services office as soon as possible. The driver/rider wishing to discontinue ridership should also inform the driver and other riders of the van of the rider’s intent to leave. The driver/rider is not required to ride for the final thirty days, but is responsible for the monthly fees (final month’s deduction and the share of the fuel expenses). The thirty days starts from the day that written notice is received by Fleet Services.

Leave of Absence

A driver or rider on medical leave or a leave of absence can hold a spot in the van for up to three months. During this three month period, the rider must continue payroll deduction and also continue contributing to fuel expenses. Once the three month period has expired, if the driver/rider has not come back from leave of absence, we will cancel the deduction and find another rider for the spot in the van. If the person would like to participate in the vanpool program when returning to work, it will be necessary to create another profile on [GreenRide](#) and we will do our best to find a spot in a van.

Termination

If a vanpool member’s employment is terminated from the University, he/she must immediately contact PTS Fleet Services and the vanpool primary driver.

Guaranteed Ride Home

Free taxi rides can be provided in emergency situations for vanpool participants to return to their vehicle or to any location (home, school, daycare provider, etc.). The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Use of the service is limited to six times per permit year (July 1 – June 30). To request a ride, contact the Department of Public Safety at (734) 763-1131.

Vehicle Weight Restrictions

The weight of the van is not to exceed the vehicle's Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW). This weight is located on the side pillar of the driver's door. If asked to add an additional rider and there is a question about the van exceeding gross vehicle weight, the vehicle must be weighed. This can be done at any truck stop, moving company, etc, with a certified scale. All members of the van need to be present and the van must have a full tank of fuel to obtain the true operating weight of the vehicle. The group may request an official signed or certified weigh slip with the address and phone number of the facility. The slip should be faxed to Fleet Services within a week. The original weigh slip is required to receive reimbursement from Fleet Services.

Pick-up/Drop-off Location(s) and Time(s)

During the mandatory vanpool formation meeting, the vanpool members must discuss and decide on the pick-up and drop-off locations and times. The program allows for multiple stops along the commute to pick-up vanpool members and to drop-off the members at their workplaces. Once the locations and time decisions are made, any changes to the agreed-upon plan must be approved by the entire vanpool.

The original decision, and any changes to the schedule, must be communicated to Fleet Services by the vanpool driver, in order to update the GreenRide website.

The only riders who may be picked-up or dropped-off are those registered members of the vanpool program. Other passengers are prohibited from riding in the vanpool.

Please record these decisions in Appendix A.

Monthly Expenses

Ridership Fee

There is a \$25/month fee to all U-M subsidized vanpool riders (excluding the driver). This is payroll-deducted (before taxes) each month (the 2nd paycheck of the month for bi-weekly employees). A payroll deduction form must be completed by each rider (including the driver for the AVI permit) before the vanpool or individual rider starts. (See Appendix C for Payroll Deduction Form).

Monthly Fuel Expenses

During the mandatory vanpool formation meeting, the pool members will discuss and decide how they will handle the sharing of fuel expenses. Once that decision is made, any changes to the agreed-upon process must be approved by the entire vanpool. The easiest way to avoid conflict and to assure equality is to divide the total fuel expense amount equally by the number of riders. If the van is used by drivers for personal use, the driver(s) must contribute toward the payment of the fuel expenses, as related to the amount of personal use. Please record these decisions in Appendix A.

Approved Drivers

Each vanpool has one primary driver and up to five alternate drivers. In order to qualify as a driver, the applicants must complete the Driver Application and Driver's Responsibility forms and be approved. **Only MichiVan can approve drivers**, and only those with prior approval from MichiVan are permitted to drive the van.

The primary driver has extra monthly responsibilities. Therefore, the primary driver is exempt from paying the monthly vanpool fee and sharing in the fuel expenses, except for personal miles driven.

The primary driver is allowed two hundred (200) personal miles each month by MichiVan. He/she may choose to share those miles with other authorized drivers, but cannot exceed the monthly maximum. Alternative drivers using the van for personal use must report the mileage to the primary driver for disclosure on the monthly vanpool report. All personal miles must be recorded and are taxable, similar to earned income. Personal mileage is defined as anything outside of the van commute, having maintenance performed, and taking the van to the overnight parking location. More information about personal mileage can be found in the reporting section on page 9.

Moving/Parking Violations

If the van driver is ticketed for a moving or parking violation, it is the responsibility of the driver, at the time of the incident, to pay for the violation.

Becoming an Alternate Driver

Alternate drivers are responsible for all primary driver duties in the absence of the primary driver. Alternate drivers are responsible for fuel and the \$25 monthly fee at all times.

Primary Driver Responsibilities Overview

A more detailed explanation is in the Driver's Responsibility Form found in Appendix D.

Reporting

Monthly reports must be completed at the end of each month in the driver's [GreenRide](#) account by the next business day. e.g. May 2008 should be submitted June 2nd, July 2008 should be submitted August 1st.

The monthly report includes current passenger information to keep track of any driver/rider changes, the number of days each rider is participating in the program each month, personal miles for each participant and a fuel expense report.

These reports are completed by the primary driver, unless the primary driver is on vacation or medical leave when the reports are due. The reports then become the responsibility of the alternate driver. Drivers who are consistently late submitting reports may be removed as the primary driver.

The monthly report should be entered into [GreenRide](#) under the primary driver's account. Should the primary driver be on vacation or sick, the alternate driver must submit the report to Fleet Services.

Personal Mileage

Personal mileage is recorded on the current passenger section of the vanpool report. Personal mileage include the authorized driver using the van to go to class during business hours, meetings, using the van for lunch, going to a doctor's appointment, driving the van to work by him/herself, anything that does not deal with the vanpool operation, etc. but does not include taking the van to get fuel, maintenance performed, or picking up passengers along the commute (driving to and from designated storage area).

Personal mileage **must** be recorded for Federal tax purposes and for the University's compliance with government regulations.

Primary drivers are allowed two hundred (200) personal miles each month by MichiVan. They may choose to share those miles with other authorized drivers, but **should not exceed** the 200 miles. All personal miles must be recorded. Personal mileage is taxed as earned income, due to the program being subsidized by UM and considered a benefit by the IRS.

Fuel expenses incurred during personal use of the van are the responsibility of the authorized driver using the van for personal use.

The driver should use reasonable discretion when using the van for personal use. For example, the van should not be parked adjacent to bars or at other locations that might subject the vanpool program to criticism. Nor should it be seen speeding or violating other traffic laws.

Personal items not related to vanpool operation are to be removed from the van during vanpool operation.

If there are any questions regarding personal use of the van, the driver should contact Fleet Services for clarification.

Vehicle Maintenance

Primary drivers are responsible for keeping the vehicle maintained. The car wash at Fleet Services is available for use by the driver for cleaning the exterior of the van. A vacuum is also available in this area for maintaining the cleanliness of the interior of the van.

Primary drivers are also responsible for taking the vehicle in for scheduled oil changes and any other mechanical issues with the van. Coupon books for scheduled maintenance of the van are located in the glove box. For information on where maintenance can be performed, please contact MichiVan.

If you are given a loaner while your vanpool vehicle is being maintained, the AVI parking device must be transferred from your vanpool vehicle to the loaner vehicle. Otherwise, you will not be able to enter the parking structure. Please remember to remove your AVI parking device from the loaner and re-attach it to your vanpool vehicle when the vehicle is returned to you.

Other PTS Services to Vanpools

Riders Needed

To maintain vanpool eligibility, it is required that the van has a minimum of six (6) registered vanpool passengers each day. If ridership falls below the required minimum, the following options are available to locate additional riders:

- 1: Use the applications of the [GreenRide](#) website.
2. Contact Fleet Services for assistance.
3. Fleet Services can provide flyers for posting.
4. A “Riders Wanted” magnet can be placed on the van. (Contact Fleet Services)

Contact Information

Contact Fleet Services for:

Questions about personal use of the van, need for new or additional riders, personal issues, fuel contributions from other riders, questions about other riders, questions about inputting vanpool reports, questions about reserved parking spots, etc.



734-764-3427

or email



bpawlows@umich.edu

or mail



Fleet Services
1213 Kipke Dr
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2002

or fax



734-763-1470

Contact MichiVan for:

Mechanical issues with the van, driver approval



1-800-VAN RIDE

Contact DPS for:

To arrange an emergency ride home (there is an emergency and you must get home, to your car, or to the hospital) or vehicle parked in your reserved vanpool space



734-763-1131

Contact PTS Parking Customer Services for:

General questions about parking, parking locations on campus



734-764-8291

Appendix B – Member Contact Information Form

For Office Use Only

Vanpool: _____
Effective Date: _____

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN Parking & Transportation Services Vanpool Program

MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Employee ID # _____ E-mail: _____

UM Department _____

Work Phone _____ Fax: _____

I certify that I am a full-time, regular employee of the University of Michigan. I am joining the Vanpool Program as a (please check one):

Primary Driver _____ Back-up Driver _____ Rider _____

I have read and understand the *General Rules and Regulations* and the *Driver Rules and Regulations* and will abide by these Vanpool Program guidelines.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C – Vanpool Deduction Form

University of Michigan

Vanpool Participation Deduction Authorization Form

Please use this form to authorize or cancel deductions for participation in the U of M vanpool program. Print all information on the form. Return the completed and signed form to Parking and Transportation Services. Fax form to 763-1470.

1. Faculty or Staff Member Information

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)	UMID
Email Address	Daytime Phone Number

2. Vanpool Information

Driver's Name	Vanpool #
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3. Select one of the following options:

Authorize deduction
I acknowledge that this deduction is for my participation in the vanpool program at the U of M. My participation in this program is completely voluntary.

Cancel deduction
I wish to cancel my existing deduction and participation in the vanpool program at the U of M. My last day in the vanpool will be: ____/____/____
mm dd yyyy

Cancel deduction
I will become the Primary driver of the vanpool on ____/____/____

4. Authorization for deduction

I authorize the vanpool monthly fee to be paid by pre-tax payroll deduction, once each month from payment of my wages. I understand and agree that should my payroll deductions be interrupted during any month, the monthly deduction may be altered to ensure collection of the entire remaining balance due within the payroll deduction schedule. I understand that deductions will continue each month, until my employment with the University is terminated or I supply written notification to Parking and Transportation Services. I understand and agree that I am required to give 30 days written notice and I am financially responsible for the vanpool monthly fee until the end of those 30 days.

Signature of Faculty or Staff Member

Date Signed

5. Authorization for cancellation I wish to cancel the monthly payroll deduction and my participation in the vanpool program. I understand that I am required to give 30 days notice to Parking and Transportation of my intent to leave the program. I understand that I am financially responsible for the vanpool monthly fee until the end of those 30 days.

Signature of Faculty or Staff Member

Date Signed

Appendix D – Driver’s Responsibility Form

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Parking & Transportation Services
Vanpool Program Driver Rules, Regulations and Responsibilities
September 2007

General Responsibilities

- A. Maintain a valid operator’s license as required by state law.
- B. **Pick up and deliver only persons who are registered members of the vanpool program.** Passengers who are not vanpool members are not permitted to ride while the vanpool is in operation.
- C. It is the driver’s responsibility to maintain an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Such things as unwelcome touching, gross obscenity, sexual gestures, sexually explicit remarks, jokes, etc., or comments that intentionally insult individuals or groups on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, height or weight are inappropriate and would be subject to review by the Office of Institutional Equity (763-0235). Retaliation against individuals who bring complaints under these policies is also prohibited.
- D. Wait at each pick-up location for not less than three minutes past the scheduled time point for a passenger.
- E. Provide a monthly accounting of vanpool mileage, fuel usage, and expenses to **ALL vanpool members.**
- F. Provide a safe and dependable service to vanpool passengers. The van should not be driven in any matter that would expose the vehicle or passengers to unsafe conditions.
- G. Maintain a courteous and professional manner toward vanpool members. Behavior deemed threatening, intimidating, retaliatory, or vindictive is inappropriate and will result in removal from the vanpool program.
- H. The choice of radio station is at the discretion of whoever is driving the van and should be operated at a reasonable volume.
- I. The driver or back-up drivers may not request or accept any monies from members of the vanpool other than the cost of fuel for vanpool operation.
- J. The driver of the van should be aware of perceptions of others in the university community and in the public while operating the vanpool. For example, vans observed speeding or committing other traffic violations reflect poorly on the vanpool program.
- K. Under no circumstances should the van be driven after the consumption of alcohol and/or drugs, nor may illegal substances be transported. Smoking is prohibited in vanpool vehicles.
- L. Traffic or parking violations involving the van are the responsibility of the driver at the time of incident.
- M. The driver or back-up drivers may terminate their responsibilities upon thirty (30) days notice.
- N. Fleet Services shall replace the driver or back-up driver upon:
 - Termination of employment with the university.
 - Loss of your driver’s license.
 - Failure to abide by these rules and regulations or for any conduct or concern deemed inappropriate by Fleet Services.
- O. Your parking permit must be displayed whenever your MichiVan vehicle is parked in your designated parking place. The permit is to be placed on the driver’s side, lower left corner of the windshield. Vehicles parked without the permit displayed appropriately are subject to citations. If service needs require you to obtain a loaner vehicle from MichiVan, the driver is responsible for transferring the permit to and from the loaner vehicle. You are not authorized to park in your designated parking place without your permit.
Lost permits must be reported to Parking Services. The cost of replacing the permit is the sole responsibility of the driver. Stolen permits must be reported to the Department of Public Safety. A complaint number is required to obtain a replacement. If a permit that was reported lost or stolen is found, it must immediately be returned to Parking Services.

Your parking permit is to be used exclusively for your MichiVan vehicle and may not be given or sold to others. Anyone found to have been using, or to have participated in or facilitated fraudulent use of the permit will be removed from the vanpool program and will be prohibited from obtaining any parking permit for a period of up to two years from the date the offense is verified. This penalty will be imposed in addition to any criminal charges or disciplinary actions from any other university department, school, or college.

Fees associated with the fraudulent use of the permit will be charged, when applicable, and must be paid in full before parking privileges will be restored (after the penalty period).

The permit remains the property of Fleet Services and must be surrendered upon request

Primary Driver

A. Monthly Reporting

- a. Monthly vanpool report (Passenger Information and Fuel Expense) **must be completed at the end of each month and turned into Fleet Service by the next business day.**
 - i. For instance: July 2007 monthly vanpool report should be turned in by August 1st. November 2007 monthly vanpool report should be turned in by December 3rd.
 - ii. **If a driver is consistently turning in their reports late, we reserve the right to remove them as the primary driver and find a replacement.**
- b. The monthly report should be entered into [GreenRide](#) under the primary driver's account. Should the primary driver be on vacation or sick, the alternate driver must submit the report to Fleet Services (via the old printed form by fax or email).
- c. In the instance that the monthly report is not filled out according to the guidelines below, the report will be returned to the driver and need to be resubmitted immediately.

B. Completing the Monthly Reporting

- a. Passenger Information Section
 - i. **All fields must have values** including: names, ID numbers, days rode/vacation days/did not ride days (driver and all passengers).
 - ii. Make sure the report month is changed if you are using the previous month's report as a template to complete the current monthly report.
 - iii. Vanpool number should be the number that is located on the back of the van
 - iv. Personal mileage (refer to letter D for explanation) must be recorded **even if the mileage is zero.**
 - v. **Vac/sick column is for days when the driver/riders are excused from work. Medical leave is also counted in this column.**
 - vi. **Did not ride column is for days when the driver/riders drove into campus with their personal vehicle and did not utilize the vanpool.**
 - vii. **Medical leave should also be noted in the notes section.** Driver/riders are given three months on medical leave before we will terminate their spot and fill it with someone else. During the three month period, driver/riders must continue the \$25 deduction and pay their share of fuel to hold their spot.
- b. Fuel Expense Section
 - i. Should include dates, gallons, and cost for each time fuel was bought for the month.
 - ii. **Receipts for the fuel expenses do not need to be included with the report to Fleet Services, but should be kept in case a rider questions fuel expenses.** **Note:** Fleet Services recommends that all expenses regarding the vanpool operation be kept somewhere in the event that riders question expenses – you have documentation of the charges.
 - iii. Drivers are also responsible for collecting fuel money from the riders. The breakdown of how the fuel expenses are calculated are discussed at the mandatory vanpool formation meeting and any changes to the originally agreed upon format must be approved by the entire van. Although, it has been our experience that the easiest way to avoid conflict and ensure equality is to take

the total dollar amount spent for fuel and divide that total by the number of riders.

C. Personal Mileage

- a. Personal mileage includes if an authorized driver uses the van to go to a class during business hours, uses the van for lunch, goes to a doctor's appointment, driving the van to work by yourself, etc. but does not include taking the van to get fuel, maintenance performed, or picking up passengers along the commute (driving to and from designated storage area).
- b. **Personal mileage must** be recorded for federal tax purposes and for us to comply with government regulations.
- c. Primary drivers are allowed **two hundred (200) personal miles** each month by MichiVan. They may choose to share those miles with other authorized drivers, but **should not exceed** the 200 miles. All personal miles must be recorded and are taxable. This is a once a year tax on income done after September and before November. Personal mileage is taxed as earned income, due to the program being subsidized by UM and considered a benefit by the IRS. Vans are never claimed as personal property on your personal taxes.
- d. Fuel costs incurred during personal use of the van are the responsibility of the authorized driver.
- e. The driver should use reasonable discretion when using the van for personal use. For example, the van should not be parked adjacent to bars or at other locations that might subject the vanpool program to criticism. Nor should it be seen speeding or violating other traffic laws.
- f. Personal items not related to vanpool operation are to be removed from the van during vanpool operation.

D. Ridership Levels

- a. We require that vanpools maintain a minimum of six (6) people per van.
- b. If a rider decides to no longer participate in the program, they are required to give a thirty (30) day notice to the driver and Fleet Services.
- c. Use the applications of the [GreenRide](#) website for additional riders. Or contact Fleet Services for assistance.
- d. If the van is not filled within the next sixty (60) days, the van will be disbanded.

Back-up Driver

A. Driving Responsibilities

- a. Back-up drivers drive the van when the primary driver is not in attendance.
- b. MichiVan allows up to five (5) riders to be back-up drivers for each vanpool.

B. Vanpool Reports

- a. If the primary driver is not in attendance (extended leave – medical, etc) when the vanpool reports are due, the back-up driver is responsible for completing the report and forwarding it onto Fleet Services (according to the guidelines under Primary Driver – Vanpool Reports).

C. Personal Mileage

- a. If a back- up driver uses the van for personal use (according to the guidelines under Primary Driver – Personal Mileage) it must be recorded in the vanpool reports.

Driver Changes

A. Notification

- a. If any driver changes are going to be taking place (i.e. back-up driver becoming primary driver, rider becoming back-up driver, etc.) both people need to contact Brian (bpawlows@umich.edu) at least one (1) week in advance to process all necessary paperwork.

I, _____, have read and understand the responsibilities I have as a driver (back-up driver) for the UM vanpool program. I will uphold to these standards of being a driver (back-up driver).

X _____ Date _____

Appendix E – Memo From Mediation Services

Dear Vanpool Driver/Rider:

Congratulations on your choice to save gas, save money, and reduce pollution! Vanpool participants deserve recognition for their choice, and for their ability to be thoughtful, patient and flexible with each other's daily life needs. Vanpools are a big part of making "work-life balance" a reality at UM.

Most of our vanpools operate successfully, fair weather or foul, for years, because of the high degree of interpersonal efforts of the members. Now and then, however, we may hear that there is some friction within a van group.

PTS Fleet Services partners with UM's Mediation Services for Faculty and Staff as a way to assist you, if you feel there is some tension on your van. Mediation Services is free to UM employees, and is completely confidential. A professionally trained mediator can be available to help two or more members of a vanpool talk through any disagreement safely and comfortably.

If you contact Mediation Services at 615-4789, a mediator will get back in touch with you by phone or email (your preference), learn what the concern is, and contact the others who need to be involved in finding a solution. You'll be asked to find a mutually convenient time to meet with the mediator, and can work through whatever the disagreement is to find a comfortable way to go forward.

Let's be clear. Mediators do not "judge" between parties, or make decisions for you. They won't ask anyone to leave the vanpool. Instead, their goal is to assist you and your co-riders to find a solution or reach a common ground that works for everyone.

So, don't let unnecessary tension disturb your commute! Contact Mediation Services early, if people are feeling uncomfortable. You'll find it's easier to work through irritation with a neutral mediator than on your own. You'll also find that the longer you wait and the more upset you and your co-riders become, the harder it will be to resolve the problems. You could even find your vanpool disbanded. Don't let that happen. Let Mediation Services help.

Sally Johnson, Mediator

Renee Jordan, Manager Fleet Services

Brian Pawlowski, Alternative Transportation Coordinator

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