



Rideshare Participant Handbook

Updated September 2026

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WELCOME

The Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Commuteride program supports green transportation by providing safe, reliable commuting options that help reduce costs, improve well-being, and lessen environmental impact.

While vanpooling is a core service, Commuteride also encourages other travel choices such as riding the bus, carpooling, biking, and walking.

The Commuteride Rideshare program offers a dependable option with measurable financial, health, and environmental benefits. Each year, the program eliminates millions of vehicle miles traveled, reduces wear on personal vehicles and public roadways, and prevents thousands of pounds of carbon emissions. On an average weekday, approximately 600-700 vehicles are removed from the road, and participants typically save more than \$2,000 annually compared to driving alone.

OUR TEAM

The Ada County Highway District Commuteride team provides support for vanpool participants, employers, and others exploring green transportation options.

To help us respond quickly, please contact the appropriate team below.

VANPOOL SUPPORT, BILLING & PAYMENTS

For questions about existing vanpools, fares, schedules, rider changes, or day-to-day operations.

- **Contact:** Senior Accounts Specialist or Rideshare Coordinator
- **Email:** commuteride@achdidaho.org
- **Phone:** 208-375-4661

NEW VANPOOL FORMATION & AVAILABILITY

For joining an existing vanpool, starting a new route, or exploring available commute options.

- **Contact:** Rideshare Formation Specialist
- **Email:** commuteride@achdidaho.org
- **Phone:** 208-387-6187

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE & EMERGENCIES

For vehicle maintenance, breakdowns, or urgent operational concerns.

- **Contact:** Operations Fleet Technician or Rideshare Coordinator
- **Phone:** 208-631-9852 or 208-871-7665

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS, MARKETING & OUTREACH

For employer commute programs, workplace outreach, presentations, events, campaigns, or promotional support.

- **Contact:** Marketing and Outreach Team
- **Email:** commutercrew@achdidaho.org
- **Phone:** 208-387-6163 or 208-387-6161

VANPOOL OVERVIEW

A vanpool is a shared commute option where a group of five or more individuals traveling a similar route ride together in a Commuteride provided vehicle.

Vanpools are typically driven by volunteer participants, and fares cover all major operating costs including the vehicle, fuel, maintenance, and insurance. Beyond transportation, vanpooling offers a more predictable and less stressful commute while helping participants save money and reduce environmental impact.

STANDARD VANPOOLS

Standard vanpools are formed by groups of commuters who share a common route and schedule. These vanpools are participant driven and provide a reliable, cost-effective commuting option for individuals traveling to similar destinations across the region.

Participants pay a monthly fare, which covers all major operating costs associated with the vanpool. Commuteride provides vehicles, driver training, rider support services, maintenance, insurance, fuel, and access to benefits such as the Emergency Ride Home+ program.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Standard vanpools offer participants:

- Reduced commuting costs compared to driving alone
- A more predictable and less stressful commute
- Access to shared travel time for rest or productivity
- Reduced wear on personal vehicles
- Environmental benefits through reduced vehicle miles traveled

OPERATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Standard vanpools operate under the following guidelines:

- A minimum of five participants (including the driver) is required to begin service
- Each vanpool must maintain sufficient ridership to remain viable
- Commuteride targets occupancy levels of 7 or more participants per route to support long-term sustainability and full cost recovery
- Each vanpool must have at least two approved volunteer drivers
- Drivers are responsible for day-to-day vehicle operation and coordination with riders
- Vehicles are staged at a designated park-and-ride location for daily pickup and drop-off. With approval drivers may park the vehicle at their residence

ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

Commuteride provides ongoing administrative and operational support, including:

- Rider onboarding and account management
- Driver training and certification
- Maintenance coordination and fuel support
- Customer service and route assistance

EMPLOYER SPONSORED VANPOOLS (ESV)

Employer Sponsored Vanpools (ESVs) are a partnership between Ada County Highway District Commuteride and participating employers to support reliable, cost-effective commuting options for their workforce. In this model, an employer subsidizes or fully covers the monthly fare for one or more vanpools serving their employees.

ESVs can be structured in several ways depending on employer goals and workforce needs, including:

- Full sponsorship of a vanpool route
- Partial subsidy of employee fares
- Pre-tax or payroll-deducted commuter benefits

This flexibility allows employers across industries including healthcare, manufacturing, education, and government to support commuting solutions that improve access to work while reducing parking demand and transportation barriers.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Employer-sponsored vanpools can:

- Improve employee recruitment and retention
- Reduce absenteeism and late arrivals
- Lower demand for on-site parking
- Support sustainability and air quality goals
- Provide a consistent, predictable commute option for employees

OPERATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

ESVs operate under the same general requirements as standard vanpools:

- Minimum ridership thresholds to begin and maintain service
- At least two approved volunteer drivers per vehicle
- Compliance with Commuteride policies, safety standards, and reporting requirements

BILLING & ADMINISTRATION

Billing for ESVs is coordinated directly with the employer and may include:

- Consolidated monthly invoicing
- Simplified participant enrollment
- Coordination with employer benefit programs

GETTING STARTED

Commuteride works directly with employers to assess demand, identify potential routes, and support implementation. This includes outreach, route formation assistance, and onboarding of participants and drivers.

For more information, visit: <https://www.commuteride.com/sponsor-vanpool>

VANPOOL OPERATING RULES

Vanpool groups are encouraged to establish operating guidelines that support safe, reliable, and cooperative daily operations. Group-established practices may not conflict with policies set by ACHD Commuteride.

Common topics for group coordination include:

- **Route & Stops:** Designated pick-up/drop-off locations and whether additional stops may be added to support ridership growth
- **Tardiness:** Communication expectations for delays and agreed-upon wait times (a 3-minute departure guideline is recommended)
- **Seating:** Loading/unloading efficiency (e.g., first-out seating); no assigned seats unless agreed upon by the group
- **Noise:** Preferences for quiet commutes, shared audio, or use of headphones
- **Fragrances:** Consideration of sensitivities or allergies (e.g., limiting scented products)
- **Spotting:** Rider assistance for drivers, especially for blind spots and backing maneuvers

ROUTE FORMATION & MINIMUM RIDERSHIP

Vanpools are typically formed with a minimum of five (5) paying participants and are expected to grow toward a target of seven (7) or more participants to support long-term sustainability and cost recovery.

During formation, Commuteride will evaluate demand, route characteristics, and participant availability to determine whether a proposed route meets program requirements.

SPECIALIZED ROUTE CONSIDERATIONS

In limited cases, Commuteride may approve formation of a route below the standard minimum when serving unique or hard-to-match commuting patterns. These may include reverse commutes, off-peak schedules, rural connections, or other non-traditional travel needs.

For these approved routes:

- Routes formed with a minimum of four (4) paying participants
- The route must demonstrate a clear and ongoing transportation need
- Participants and drivers are expected to actively support recruitment efforts

Routes approved under this exception are considered provisional and will be monitored for growth toward standard occupancy levels. Continued operation is subject to performance, ridership trends, and overall program alignment.

SUSTAINING & GROWING RIDERSHIP

Sustaining and growing ridership is a **shared responsibility** among participants and is essential to maintaining reliable vanpool service. Riders are encouraged to actively promote their vanpool by identifying and referring to coworkers, neighbors, or others with similar commute patterns.

Commuteride supports these efforts through a **rider recruitment incentive program**. A \$50 incentive is available for each new rider who is successfully referred and remains active in any vanpool for at least 90 days

- Recruitment claims must be submitted within 90 days of new rider's start date
- Incentives are issued following verification of eligibility and participation

Participants and drivers are expected to support ongoing recruitment efforts, particularly when routes are below target occupancy levels. Commuteride staff will assist with outreach, rider matching, and marketing support as needed.

The form can be found here: <https://hdlf.achdidaho.org/forms/CMRRecruitment>
Once completed send the form to commuteride@achdidaho.org

WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL ROUTE

Successful vanpools are built on communication, reliability, flexibility, and shared responsibility among all participants. A strong group environment helps ensure the vanpool remains safe, efficient, and sustainable over time.

Participants contribute to a successful vanpool by:

- Arriving at designated pickup locations on time
- Communicating schedule changes, absences, or delays promptly
- Treating fellow participants with respect and consideration
- Helping maintain a clean and comfortable vehicle environment
- Supporting safe driving practices and overall route safety
- Assisting with rider recruitment and route growth when possible
- Remaining flexible and cooperative as route needs evolve

Vanpooling is a shared transportation program, and long-term success depends on active participation and cooperation from the entire group.

Open communication and mutual respect help create a positive commuting experience for everyone involved.

Commuteride staff are available to assist with conflict resolution, rider recruitment, operational concerns, and route support as needed

REPORTING

The Ada County Highway District Commuteride relies on accurate and timely reporting to support program operations, financial sustainability, and compliance with federal requirements.

Vanpool fares are structured to recover 100% of operating costs and a portion of administrative costs. In addition, as a recipient of federal funding for vehicle purchases, Commuteride is required to submit monthly and annual ridership data to the National Transit Database (NTD).

Due to these requirements, all drivers and participants must comply with established reporting policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook.

REPORTER ROLE

A Reporter is a designated vanpool participant who is authorized to complete and submit monthly mileage and ridership reports on behalf of the group. This role provides administrative support and ensures reporting requirements are met in a timely and accurate manner.

Reporters are not required to be approved drivers and are not responsible for operating the vehicle.

Responsibilities

- Complete and submit monthly reports through the TripSpark system by the required deadline
- Ensure all ridership, participant, and mileage information is accurate and complete
- Coordinate with drivers and participants to verify reporting details
- Communicate with the Commuteride team regarding any reporting issues or corrections

Eligibility & Benefits

- Reporters may be eligible for applicable reporting incentives or benefits, as determined by Commuteride policy
- Reporter incentives are contingent upon timely and accurate report submission
- Reporter benefits are separate from driver incentives and do not require driving responsibilities
- A route may only receive one Monthly Reporter Incentive for the primary reporter selected in the vanpool management software

Requirements

- Must be an active participant in the vanpool
- Must be approved by the Commuteride team to serve in the Reporter role
- Must maintain compliance with all program policies and reporting standards

Commuteride may assign, approve, or remove Reporter roles as needed to ensure consistent and accurate reporting.

Mileage and ridership reporting for the previous month must be submitted electronically through the TripSpark system no later than the fifth business day of each month. Timely and accurate reporting is required to support billing, program compliance, and overall route management.

FARES

Vanpool participants pay a fixed monthly fare based on the vanpool's daily round-trip mileage and an average number of commuting days per month. Monthly fares are established in advance and are not prorated based on individual usage, except as outlined in specific program policies. Monthly fares are subject to periodic adjustment as part of Commuteride's fare analysis and program sustainability efforts.

STANDARD RIDERSHIP

The fare structure is based on an average of 21 commuting days in a standard five-day work week and accounts for typical holidays and non-service days. Fare calculations are based on an assumed average number of participants per vanpool to support cost distribution and program sustainability, recognizing that actual occupancy may vary.

PART-TIME RIDERSHIP

Commuteride offers a part-time fare option for eligible participants whose commute schedules do not require full-time ridership. Part-time ridership is intended to support flexible or hybrid work schedules while maintaining the operational and financial stability of the vanpool.

- Part-time riders may use the vanpool for up to 8 days per month
- Part-time fares are typically set at a reduced rate (generally 50% of the full fare)
- Availability of part-time seats is limited and managed to maintain overall route stability and cost recovery
- Priority for seating is given to full-time participants when capacity is constrained

Part-time riders may be required to transition to full-time status or may lose their seat if minimum ridership or route viability is impacted

FARE ANALYSIS

The Ada County Highway District Commuteride conducts an annual review of its vanpool fare structure to ensure alignment with program goals and financial sustainability.

The fare review is guided by the following principles:

- Provide vanpool service at the lowest reasonable cost to participants
- Maintain full operational cost recovery over time

In conducting this analysis, Commuteride may consider factors such as ridership levels, vehicle and maintenance costs, fuel prices, and overall program performance.

Fare adjustments may be implemented as needed to maintain program sustainability. Participants will be provided with advance notice of any fare adjustments prior to implementation.

FARE PAYMENTS

Each participant makes a commitment to make on-time fare payments when they sign **the Participant Agreement**.

Many participants in the vanpool program receive some sort of fare subsidy from their employer. There are several payment options for participants.

- **TRANServe benefit card** (Military and General Schedule members)
- **GO! benefit card** (employees of Veteran's Affairs Hospital)
- **Qualified Fringe Benefit**
- **Personal checks**

EMPLOYER RELATED INCENTIVES

Many Treasure Valley employers offer incentives to support smart commuting options such as vanpooling. Participants are encouraged to check with their Human Resources department to determine eligibility for available programs.

QUALIFIED TRANSPORTATION FRINGE BENEFIT

Under Section 132(f) of the Internal Revenue Code, employees may receive a tax-free transportation benefit of up to the IRS allowable monthly limit (as adjusted annually) for eligible commuting expenses, including vanpool fares. This benefit may be provided in one or more of the following ways:

Employer-Paid Subsidy:

- Employers may provide a monthly allowance to help cover vanpool costs. These funds are not treated as taxable income and are exempt from payroll taxes.

Pre-Tax Payroll Deduction:

- Employees may elect to set aside a portion of their wages on a pre-tax basis to pay for vanpool fares.

Combination of Both:

- Employers may offer a combination of employer-paid subsidy and pre-tax payroll deduction.

These programs can provide tax savings for both employees and employers. Employers may also realize payroll tax savings when offering transportation benefits in place of additional taxable wages.

Contact your HR or finance team for more details.

FEDERAL TRANSIT BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Eligible federal employees, including military and General Schedule (GS) personnel, may receive a transportation benefit through programs such as:

- TRANServe Mass Transit Benefit Program (MTB)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Transit Benefit Program (TBP)

These benefits may cover up to 100% of an eligible participant's monthly vanpool fare, subject to federal program limits and guidelines.

Transportation benefits are issued and managed by each federal agency; however, participants are responsible for applying through their respective agency or installation.

TRANServe / VAMC Go Card:

- Gowen Field | 208-272-4228 (Building 442, HRO)
- MATES OCTC | 208-272-7642
- Mountain Home Air Force Base | 208-828-2488 or 208-828-2488 (Building 1132, LRS)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
V20-Benefits@va.gov or V20-WorkLife@va.gov

COMMUTERIDE INCENTIVES

INCENTIVES, REWARDS, & ACCOUNT ACTIVITY

Commuteride offers incentive and rewards programs to encourage participation, accurate reporting, and use of alternative transportation modes. These programs may include, but are not limited to, commute logging rewards, driver incentives, and reporting incentives. Rewards may be issued through platforms such as Tango.

Eligible Activities

Participants may earn incentives or rewards through activities including:

- Logging commute trips on the regional Share the Ride Idaho platform (or its successor system)
- Serving as an approved driver and meeting driver incentive criteria
- Serving as a Reporter and submitting accurate, timely monthly reports
- Participating in Commuteride approved promotions or campaigns

Program Transition

Commuteride is transitioning incentive tracking and account management into a unified system within the TripSpark platform.

As part of this transition:

- Incentive programs, commute logging, and vanpool management will be consolidated into a single system
- Program rules, earning structures, and redemption processes may be updated
- Participants are responsible for maintaining an active account in the current system during and after the transition

Account Activity and Point Expiration

Participants must maintain an active account to retain accumulated rewards or points.

- Accounts with no activity for a period of 12 consecutive months may be subject to deactivation
- Upon deactivation, any unredeemed rewards or points may be forfeited and removed from the account
- Activity includes, but is not limited to, logging trips, participating in a vanpool, or earning/reporting incentives
- Participants are encouraged to regularly log activity and redeem rewards to avoid loss of accumulated benefits.

General Conditions

Incentives and rewards are subject to available funding and program guidelines. Commuteride reserves the right to modify, suspend, or discontinue incentive programs at any time. Misuse or fraudulent activity may result in loss of incentives, account deactivation, or removal from the program.

Only one Reporter incentive may be issued per route for each reporting period. Incentives are awarded to the individual who completes and closes out the monthly report on time.

UP TO FIRST MONTH FREE

New participants may receive up to one full calendar month of vanpool service at no cost during their initial month of participation. Participants who begin riding at any time within a given month (e.g., January) will not be charged for that month.

This introductory period is intended to allow new riders time to evaluate the program and determine if vanpooling meets their commuting needs. Returning participants may be eligible for this incentive if they have not participated in the program for at least 12 consecutive months.

Participants must remain active beyond the initial month to retain eligibility for the free month incentive.

Commuteride reserves the right to limit or deny this incentive in cases of misuse or where participation is not maintained in good standing.

TRANSI-CHECKS

New participants may be eligible for a \$20 monthly fare subsidy ("Transi-Check") during their second, third, and fourth months of participation.

Transi-Checks are provided through participating employers and are intended to support new riders as they transition into regular vanpool use.

Participants should check with their employer to confirm availability. If your employer does not currently participate, please contact the Commuteride team for assistance in exploring enrollment options.

Participants are only eligible to receive the Transi-Check incentive one time and may not re-enroll after previously receiving the benefit.

VAN DID NOT RUN CREDITS

In the event a vanpool is unable to operate due to the absence of a driver or a significant mechanical issue, eligible riders may receive credit toward the following month's fare. This is referred to as a "Van Did Not Run" (VDNR) credit.

Eligibility

VDNR credits apply only when a scheduled trip does not occur due to:

- Lack of an available approved driver
- Mechanical or safety-related vehicle issues

Drivers are not eligible to receive VDNR credits.

Request Process & Deadline

VDNR credits are not applied automatically. Each participant must request a VDNR credit on their own behalf.

- Requests must be submitted within 30 days of the missed trip
- VDNR requests submitted after this deadline may not be eligible for review
- Approved credits will be applied to the participant's next monthly fare
- VDNR credits are not issued as cash refunds

Credit Calculation

The VDNR credit is calculated based on the individual rider's out-of-pocket fare (excluding any employer-paid portion), divided by 21 (the average number of business days in a month).

Carpooling During VDNR Events

If riders choose to carpool on a day when the van does not operate, the individual serving as the carpool driver may receive:

- Their own VDNR credit, and
- Any unclaimed VDNR credits from participating riders

Exclusions

VDNR credits are not issued for service interruptions occurring on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth National Independence Day
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

REPORTER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Commuteride may provide a monthly Reporter incentive to support timely and accurate route reporting. Eligible Reporters may receive a \$5 incentive for completing and closing out the monthly vanpool report by the required reporting deadline.

Only one Reporter incentive may be issued per route for each reporting period. The incentive will be awarded to the individual who submits and closes the report on time. Monthly reports must be complete, accurate, and submitted in accordance with Commuteride reporting requirements.

Late, incomplete, duplicate, or corrected reports may not qualify for the incentive.

PARTICIPANTS AND GROUPS

This section discusses what it takes for a group to be successful, including an overview of required forms and roles and responsibilities.

Successful vanpools depend on active participation, clear expectations, and shared responsibility among all members. This section outlines the requirements, roles, and responsibilities that support safe and reliable vanpool operations.

All participants are expected to understand and follow program policies, complete required forms, and contribute to a respectful and cooperative group environment.

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

All participants must complete and sign the Commuteride Participant Agreement (PA) prior to riding in a vanpool.

The PA outlines the terms, conditions, and responsibilities associated with participation in the Commuteride program. The agreement is available as a digital form and is automatically submitted to Commuteride upon completion. Staff will follow up with new riders and drivers as needed to support onboarding and ensure compliance with program requirements.

RIDERS

By joining a vanpool and signing the Participant Agreement, each rider commits to supporting safe, reliable, and respectful group operations.

Participants are expected to:

- Pay the approved fare in advance, no later the first business day of the month. Fares are considered late by the 15th and may be charged a 10% late fee if payment is not made on time
- Accepted payment methods include cash, check, or debit/credit card
- Cash should not be sent by mail
- Arrive at designated pick-up locations on time
- Maintain a clean, safe, and orderly vehicle environment
- Follow operational guidelines established by Commuteride and agreed upon by the vanpool group
- Notify the driver in advance of planned absences
- Notify Commuteride before transferring to another vanpool
- Keep contact information current with both the driver and Commuteride
- Be familiar with group procedures for inclement weather and emergencies
- Always wear seatbelts while the vehicle is in motion
- Remove personal belongings daily; Commuteride is not responsible for lost or unattended items
- Dispose of trash and clean up spills promptly
- Treat fellow riders, staff, and the public with respect

Participants are also expected to help maintain a comfortable shared environment. This includes minimizing strong odors (such as smoke, fragrances, or work-related residues) and being mindful of behaviors that may impact others.

SAFETY & CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS

Participants must:

- Not ride if ill or exposed to a contagious illness, and follow applicable public health guidance
- Not use tobacco, marijuana, or vapor products in or within 25 feet of a Commuteride vehicle or facility
- Not possess or be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or prohibited substances while participating in the program
- Comply with all applicable non-discrimination laws and policies
- Be at least 18 years of age unless prior approval is granted by Commuteride and a parent or legal guardian

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension or removal from the program.

RIDERSHIP OPTIONS

STANDARD (FULL-TIME)

Standard (full-time) ridership is the primary participation model and provides the foundation for stable and reliable vanpool operations. Participants ride on a consistent basis aligned with the established route schedule and pay the full monthly fare.

Full-time riders support route viability, cost efficiency, and long-term service continuity for all participants. Due to their consistent participation, full-time riders are given priority for seat availability and ongoing placement within the vanpool.

PART-TIME (FLEXIBLE RIDERSHIP)

Part-time ridership is designed to support flexible and hybrid work schedules. Participants may ride up to 8 days per month at a reduced fare. Part-time seats are limited and managed to maintain overall route stability. Priority may be given to full-time riders when capacity is constrained.

Part-time ridership can be a good option for new participants exploring vanpooling or for those with variable work schedules.

TERMINATION / CONSOLIDATION OF ROUTES

Commuteride establishes a minimum operational threshold of five (5) paying participants per vanpool route.

Routes are expected to maintain a target of seven (7) or more participants to support full cost recovery and long-term program sustainability.

When ridership falls below the minimum threshold, the following graduated notice and recovery process will apply:

ROUTES WITH TWO (2) PARTICIPANTS

A thirty (30) day notice of termination will be issued. If at least one (1) additional paying participant is added during this period, the route will transition to a sixty (60) day recovery period. During this extended period, the route must continue to grow toward the minimum threshold of five (5) participants to remain in service.

ROUTES WITH THREE (3) PARTICIPANTS

A sixty (60) day notice of termination will be issued. During this period, the route is expected to increase ridership by at least one to two (1-2) additional paying participants and continue progressing toward the minimum threshold of five (5) participants.

ROUTES WITH FOUR (4) PARTICIPANTS

Routes will be closely monitored by Commuteride staff and provided targeted support to reach the minimum threshold of five (5) participants. Failure to meet the minimum within a reasonable timeframe may result in consolidation or termination.

All routes below the minimum threshold are considered by Commuteride at risk and must demonstrate measurable progress toward achieving at least five (5) paying participants within the applicable notice and recovery periods. Throughout any notice period, Commuteride staff will actively support recruitment efforts, including marketing, outreach, and rider matching.

If the route does not meet the minimum ridership requirement by the end of the applicable notice period or fails to demonstrate sufficient progress toward that threshold, the vanpool may be removed from service.

Staff will make reasonable efforts to place affected participants on other existing routes in the area where feasible.

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Vanpools operated through the Ada County Highway District Commuteride are driven by approved volunteer participants. Drivers are essential to the success of the program and serve as the primary operators and leaders of each vanpool.

PRIMARY DRIVERS

Primary drivers serve as the lead operator of the vanpool and are responsible for driving on scheduled service days; coordinating route operations, schedules, and rider communication; ensuring all riders have completed required agreements; maintaining adequate backup driver coverage and serving as the primary point of contact with Commuteride.

BACKUP DRIVERS

Backup drivers must be approved by Commuteride, be available when the primary driver is unavailable, and assume all driver responsibilities when operating the vehicle.

DRIVER GUIDELINES

Drivers must be approved by Commuteride prior to operating a vehicle, be at least 25 years of age with a qualifying driving record, maintain a valid driver's license and personal insurance, and complete all required background checks and training.

Drivers are responsible for conducting daily pre-trip inspections; reporting vehicle issues, incidents, or damage immediately; maintaining vehicle security (including key control); ensuring only approved drivers operate the vehicle; maintaining accurate daily and monthly records; coordinating fueling, maintenance, and cleaning; and using assigned driver identification tools (FOB/token).

Drivers are expected to:

- Operate the vehicle safely and in compliance with all traffic laws
- Maintain consistent and reliable route operations
- Support a respectful and cooperative group environment
- Communicate effectively with riders and Commuteride staff
- Complete required reporting and administrative tasks in a timely manner
- Consistent driver participation supports route stability, rider retention, and overall program performance.

Drivers are expected to maintain high standards of safety and professionalism. Failure to meet program requirements may result in corrective action, loss of incentives, or removal from driving privileges.

Driver Termination

The following violations may result in dismissal if a driver received more than three (3) reports within any six (6) months. Reports may include call in complaints, ACHD staff observations, and GPS aggressive driving notifications.

- 1) Using unsafe driving practices, including but not limited to speeding, driving too closely/tailgating, aggressive driving/cutting other drivers off, and/or not driving for the current road conditions.
- 2) Failure to follow rules on cell phone usage and or texting while driving.
- 3) Failure to pay for fare fares/personal miles in a timely manner.
- 4) Using the van for unapproved personal use.
- 5) Involvement in more than one (1) preventable incident in a twelve (12) month period, depending on the severity of the incident. ACHD Commuteride will remove a driver immediately if a preventable accident happens because of gross negligence of the driver.
- 6) Failure to complete additional online training required after the first preventable incident occurs.
- 7) Leaving the van unlocked when not in use or leaving a key in the van unless authorized by ACHD Commuteride.

A driver may be reinstated no earlier than six (6) months following a dismissal for any of the foregoing violations. Such reinstatement shall be subject to a six (6) month probationary period during which any violation shall result in an immediate and permanent dismissal.

The following violations shall result in immediate and permanent dismissal.

- 1) Receiving a DUI while an ACHD Commuteride driver.
- 2) Receiving more than 6 points on their three (3)-year driver's license check/record.
- 3) Representing ACHD in an unethical, unsafe, or unprofessional manner.

Driver Reporting

Drivers are required to report all moving violations that result in a notation on their official driving record, including out of state violations, to the ACHD Commuteride office promptly. ACHD Commuteride expects drivers to notify the ACHD Commuteride office within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving a DUI or other loss of driving privileges. Failure to report as required in this subsection may result in immediate six (6) month dismissal or immediate and permanent dismissal depending upon the nature of the violation the driver failed to report.

CORRECTIVE DRIVER ACTIONS

Commuteride provides training resources to support safe driving practices and ongoing driver development. These resources may include refresher courses, safety modules, or targeted coaching based on driving behavior and operational needs.

Completion of corrective training may be required to maintain driving eligibility in the following situations:

- Following a preventable incident or collision
- In response to identified unsafe driving behaviors
- When required by Commuteride staff based on performance or compliance concerns

Drivers must complete any assigned training within the specified timeframe. Failure to complete required training may result in suspension or removal of driving privileges.

DRIVER BENEFITS

REDUCED FARE DRIVER PROGRAM

Primary drivers who meet program requirements may be eligible for a reduced fare (typically 50%). Drivers are not eligible if they receive a fare subsidy.

Eligibility requirements include:

- Driving at least 70% of scheduled trips
- Route occupancy levels are at minimum requirements
- Route must complete and submit monthly reports on time
- Maintaining a safe driving record with no preventable incidents or new points on their MVR
- Using assigned driver ID FOB during operation

All eligibility criteria must be met to maintain reduced fare status.

QUARTERLY INCENTIVES

Volunteer drivers may receive incentives based on daily participation and performance. Driver performance is monitored through reporting and telematics data. Incentives are tied to safe driving behavior, compliance, and route performance.

PERSONAL USE OF THE COMMUTERIDE VEHICLE

Limited personal use of the van is permitted provided it remains incidental to the commute and does not interfere with scheduled vanpool operations.

APPROVED USE

Personal miles are trips not directly related to the vanpool route but occurring during normal commuting hours.

(e.g., brief stops for meals, errands, or appointments near the route)

The following are not permitted:

- Family or recreational trips
- Work-related transportation unrelated to the commute
- Group outings or non-commute travel
- Use outside normal commuting hours

MILEAGE LIMITS AND REPORTING

- Up to 25 personal miles per month are allowed per route and must be shared among approved drivers
- All personal miles must be reported in the monthly report
- Miles exceeding the allowance will be billed at the established federal per-mile rate

Personal use must not disrupt the route, schedule, or rider experience and must remain secondary to the primary commuting purpose of the program.

Failure to follow these requirements, including misuse or failure to report miles, may result in repayment of costs, loss of driving privileges, or other corrective action.

VEHICLES

FLEET DETAILS

Vehicles are funded through a combination of federal, state, and local sources. Fleet replacement is managed through ongoing procurement cycles aligned with available funding and program needs. Commuteride operates a fleet of approximately 110 vehicles, primarily full-size 10–13 passenger vans, along with a limited number of minivans.

Vehicles are typically retained for 100,000 to 140,000 miles and 7 to 9 years. In certain cases, vehicles may be retained beyond typical replacement timelines to support service continuity or expand route availability.

Vehicle assignment is determined by Commuteride based on operational needs, funding requirements, and vehicle availability. Drivers may request a different vehicle size or type to better match their route; however, all vehicle placement decisions are made by the Commuteride team.

SURPLUS

Vehicles that have met useful life requirements or are no longer needed for service may be removed from the active fleet and declared surplus. Surplus vehicles are sold through public auction.

For vehicles purchased with federal funding, Commuteride complies with all applicable federal requirements regarding disposition. This may include reimbursement to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) or other funding partners based on the remaining federal interest in the asset at the time of sale.

In certain cases, vehicles may be retained beyond standard replacement thresholds to support service continuity, fleet availability, or operational needs.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Commuteride coordinates routine maintenance and repairs through the Commuteride team. Vehicles typically receive service approximately every 6,000 miles, including oil changes, filter replacement, and safety inspections.

Drivers are encouraged to monitor service intervals using the windshield service sticker and coordinate with the Commuteride team when service is due.

LOANER VANS

Loaner vans are provided to groups when their primary vehicle is in for service. There is approximately one loaner van in our fleet for every 10 vanpools on the road.

FUELING & APPROVED PURCHASES

Each vehicle is assigned a fuel card for authorized purchases.

Fueling Procedures:

- Use the assigned fuel card and enter the exact odometer reading and 4-digit PIN
- If the card does not work, request manual entry from the station attendant to avoid account lockout
- Use only 87-octane fuel

Authorized Purchases:

- Fuel
- Car washes
- Basic vehicle supplies (e.g., ice scrapers, sun visors, washer fluid)

Fuel cards must remain in the glove compartment in the provided pouch. Drivers must notify Commuteride immediately if a card is lost, stolen, or not functioning.

If a fuel card cannot be used, drivers may pay out-of-pocket and must submit receipts to Commuteride for reimbursement.

BIKE RACKS

Bike racks may be installed on vanpool vehicles upon request and approval by the Commuteride team.

Use & Storage Requirements

- The key to the hitch lock must be stored in the glove box
- The rack must be removed during vehicle washing
- When not in use, the rack must be secured in the upright position

Operation & Safety

- Drivers are responsible for ensuring the bike rack is properly installed and secured before operating the vehicle
- Bicycles must be properly loaded and secured according to manufacturer guidelines
- Drivers should use caution and have a spotter when reversing or maneuvering with a rack installed

Commuteride is not responsible for loss or damage to personal bicycles or accessories. Participants assume responsibility for properly securing their bicycles.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Commuteride utilizes contracted service providers to support vehicle maintenance, repair, and roadside assistance. These providers may change periodically based on operational needs, availability, and contract agreements.

Drivers may be directed to contact a service provider directly when arranging service. If you are unsure which provider to use, contact the Commuteride team for guidance.

- **AAA | Emergency Roadside Assistance | 800-222-4357 (After Hours)**
Accident response, emergency towing, battery service, lockout assistance.
Services: Be prepared to provide your location, van number, and AAA member number (located in the glove box).

- **Commercial Tire | General Maintenance & Repairs | 208-375-4661**
fairview@commercaltire.com

Commercial Tire has loaner vans available to help keep routes operating without interruption. For local routes, such as downtown Boise routes, vehicles may only be unavailable for a short portion of the day while routine maintenance is completed.

For longer-distance routes, such as Mountain Home routes, maintenance may be scheduled over the weekend to minimize service disruption.

Please notify the other drivers if Commercial Tire contacts you regarding service so they can expect a loaner vehicle if needed.

- **Windshield Repair Specialists | Replacement & Rock Chip Repair**
208-283-2447 | Info@boisewindshields.com

Drivers should report rock chips or windshield damage to Commuteride as soon as possible so repairs can be completed before the damage spreads.

Rock chips smaller than approximately a quarter can often be repaired without requiring full windshield replacement. Please include the location of the damage on the windshield when reporting the issue and, if possible, provide a photo.

DAILY INSPECTION

Daily inspection is essential to catch problems before the start of a commute. Our vans are a significant program investment. Maintaining the health and safety of the van keeps them operating properly over time, while helping Commuteride manage program costs.

Report defective equipment, new damage, and van problems to Commuteride as soon as possible. Drivers are required to complete a pre-trip inspection prior to operating the vehicle. This inspection includes a visual walkaround, startup check, and initial driving assessment to ensure the vehicle is safe for operation.

Drivers should inspect the vehicle's exterior, interior, and safety equipment, including the following:

- Check for fluid leaks, tire condition and inflation, visible body damage, windshield or window obstructions, and properly positioned mirrors
- Ensure no dashboard warning lights remain on and that the engine operates without unusual noise
- Confirm that steering and braking respond normally before entering traffic
- Verify proper operation of headlights (high/low), brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights
- Ensure driver and passenger seatbelts are present and functioning, mirrors are adjusted, and essential systems such as HVAC and windshield wipers are operational
- Confirm required equipment is present and in working order, including fire extinguisher, first aid kit, emergency/reflector kit, seatbelt cutter/window breaker, required documentation, and onboard technology (camera and Driver ID FOB)

Drivers should also:

- Ensure the fuel level is at least $\frac{1}{4}$ tank
- Be alert of unusual noises, smells, or performance issues

Do not operate the vehicle if:

- Warning lights remain on after startup
- Tires are damaged, underinflated, or unsafe
- Required lights or signals are not functioning
- Fluid leaks are observed
- Steering or braking feels unsafe
- Driver seat belt is not functioning properly

If any safety concern is identified, the vehicle must not be operated. Drivers must report the issue to the Commuteride team immediately.

GPS, TELEMATICS & VEHICLE CAMERA SYSTEMS

Commuteride vehicles are equipped with GPS tracking, telematics systems, and forward-facing vehicle cameras to support safety, fleet management, operational oversight, and incident investigation.

These systems help Commuteride:

- Improve participant and public safety
- Support driver training and coaching
- Investigate accidents, complaints, or reported incidents
- Defend drivers and the program against false allegations or fraudulent claims
- Monitor vehicle health, maintenance needs, and operational performance
- Improve route reliability and overall program efficiency

The camera system:

- Is intended primarily for safety, accident review, and claims investigation
- Is not continuously monitored or live streamed
- May automatically save footage when triggered by events such as:
 - Harsh braking
 - Rapid acceleration
 - Sharp cornering
 - Collision or impact events
- May also allow authorized Commuteride staff to retrieve footage associated with a specific vehicle, date, time, or reported incident

Recorded footage may be reviewed:

- Following collisions, complaints, or safety concerns
- To support insurance claims or legal proceedings
- To identify unsafe driving behavior
- To support corrective driver training or operational improvements

PRIVACY & DATA ACCESS

Vehicle data and recorded footage are considered Commuteride operational records and may be accessed by authorized personnel, insurance representatives, law enforcement, or legal representatives when necessary for legitimate business, safety, or legal purposes.

Commuteride will make reasonable efforts to manage vehicle data responsibly and consistent with applicable laws, District policy, and operational needs.

ACCIDENT / EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Although rare, accidents and breakdowns may occur. The following procedures are intended to protect the safety of all participants and ensure proper response and reporting.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All accidents, breakdowns, injuries, or property damage must be reported to the Commuteride team as soon as possible at **208-345-POOL (7665)**.

If you are unable to reach staff, leave a voicemail with details.

Each vehicle contains an Accident/Emergency Kit in the glove compartment with instructions and required forms. If the emergency kit is missing or incomplete, contact the Commuteride team immediately.

Safety is the top priority. Participants should report any safety concerns related to vehicles, drivers, or operations. Commuteride may take action, including changes to drivers or procedures, in the interest of participant and public safety.

ACCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES

In the event of a collision or serious incident, follow these steps:

- Check for injuries and call 911
- Provide aid to injured individuals and request emergency medical assistance if needed.

Move To a Safe Location

- If it is safe to do so, move the vehicle or participants out of traffic. Use hazard lights and place reflective triangles as needed.
- Contact Law Enforcement or 911 to report the incident. All accidents involving another vehicle, injuries, or property damage must be reported to police.
- Do not admit fault or liability at the scene.

Exchange information

- Provide the insurance information located in the glove compartment. Collect information from all involved parties.

Document the Incident and Follow the Instructions in The Accident/Emergency Kit, Including

- Completing required forms
- Having at least two riders complete witness statements

Do Not Leave the Scene

- Remain at the scene until released by law enforcement.
- Arrange for Vehicle Assistance

Contact Roadside Assistance If Needed

- AAA | 800-222-4357
- Be prepared to provide your location, van number, and AAA member number (located in the glove box).

Seek Medical Attention

- Obtain medical care if needed and coordinate with your personal insurance, as applicable.

Notify Commuteride

- Report the incident to the Commuteride team as soon as possible if not already completed.

Use Emergency Ride Home (ERH+) if Needed

- Participants may use the ERH+ program, if eligible, to return to their destination or personal vehicle.

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME +

Commuteride vanpool participants are automatically enrolled in the Emergency Ride Home (ERH+) program to ensure they are not stranded at work due to unexpected situations.

ERH+ is available to participants who used a vanpool to get to work on the day the ride is requested.

Eligible uses include:

- Personal or family illness
- Unexpected overtime
- Unplanned emergencies that prevent use of the regular commute home

ERH+ is not available for:

- Pre-scheduled appointments (e.g., doctor visits)
- Overtime known in advance
- Personal errands or non-emergency situations

How It Works

- ERH+ rides are provided through an approved ride service (e.g., Uber), depending on location. Participants may be required to enroll in an app-based system to request a ride.
- The ride provider bills Commuteride directly. Gratuities are limited to a maximum of 20%.

Program Limits

- Up to six (6) uses per calendar year
- Maximum of \$300 per participant per year
- Subject to available funding

Additional Requirements

- Commuteride reserves the right to verify that participants used an eligible commute mode on the day of the request.
- ERH+ is intended for occasional, unexpected situations and may be suspended for misuse or excessive reliance.

INSURANCE INFORMATION

ACHD Commuteride maintains insurance coverage in accordance with District policy, including liability, medical, and uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage. In the event of an accident, ACHD will manage the claims process.

- Drivers and participants must provide the other party with the insurance information located in the vehicle's glove compartment at the time of the incident.
- All accidents, damage, or incidents must be reported to the Commuteride team as soon as possible.
- If a Commuteride driver is not at fault, a participant's personal automobile or medical insurance may apply for injury-related claims.
- Drivers are required to always maintain valid personal automobile insurance.
- Commuteride may hold a driver responsible for repair or replacement costs if an incident is determined to be the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

For questions regarding insurance coverage or claims, contact the Commuteride team at **208-345-POOL**.

QUICK GUIDES

GETTING STARTED

Starting or joining a vanpool is designed to be simple and flexible. Commuteride staff are available throughout the process to help participants find a route, complete enrollment requirements, and begin riding.

STEP 1 – EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

Participants may:

- Join an existing vanpool with available seating
- Start a new vanpool route, with enough interested riders
- Explore other commute options such as carpooling, biking, walking, or transit

Commuteride staff will assist in identifying routes, schedules, pick-up locations, and commute matches based on work location and travel patterns.

STEP 2 – CONTACT COMMUTERIDE

To begin the process, contact the Commuteride team:

Email: commuteride@achdidaho.org

Phone: **208-345-POOL (7665)**

Website: <https://www.commuteride.com/>

Participants should be prepared to provide:

- Home area or preferred pickup location
- Employer or worksite
- Typical work schedule
- Desired start date

STEP 3 – ROUTE MATCHING & COORDINATION

Commuteride will:

- Identify available routes or potential matches
- Coordinate with drivers and participants
- Assist with route formation if a new vanpool is needed

Once matched, participants may be connected directly with the primary driver to discuss pickup times, locations, and group expectations.

STEP 4 – COMPLETE REQUIRED ENROLLMENT

Before riding, participants must:

- Complete the Participant Agreement
- Provide any required contact or emergency information
- Set up their TripSpark account, if applicable
- Establish a payment method or employer benefit arrangement

Drivers must also complete:

- Driver application and approval requirements
- Required training and documentation
- Motor vehicle record review and background screening, if applicable

STEP 5 – START RIDING

Once enrollment is complete:

- Participants may begin riding on the agreed start date
- New riders may qualify for promotional incentives such as “Up to First Month Free”
- Participants are expected to follow all program policies and group operating guidelines

ONGOING PARTICIPATION

Participants are responsible for:

- Paying monthly fares on time
- Maintaining current contact information
- Communicating schedule or employment changes
- Supporting safe, respectful, and reliable group operations

Commuteride staff remain available to assist with route changes, rider support, billing questions, maintenance coordination, and commute planning throughout participation in the program.

ACCESSING YOUR ACCOUNT

- After logging in, click “My Info” from the main menu.
- This will take you to your account dashboard.
- Go to Payments
- Select “Vanpool Payment” or “Vanpool Payment Methods.”
- This is where you can view charges and manage payments.
- Add a Payment Method (if needed)
- Click “Add New Payment Method.”
- Enter your card information and billing address.
- Save your payment method.
- Submit Your Payment

HOW TO PAY YOUR VANPOOL FARE

Vanpool fares are based on your group's monthly reporting. Once reporting is submitted, your fare is finalized and ready for payment.

Go to the Commuteride Website

- Navigate to: <https://www.commuteride.com/vanpool>
- Click "Pay My Fare"
- Select "Pay My Fare" from the top navigation menu or vanpool page.
- This will take you to the login and payment portal.

Log In

- Click "Log In" in the top right corner.
- Enter your email and password.
- If you do not know your login information, contact the Commuteride team for assistance.

SET UP AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

Automatic payments ensure your fare is paid on time each month.

Steps to Enable AutoPay

- Go to "Vanpool Payment Methods"
- Select your payment method
- Click "Default Payment Method"
- Click "Enable Automatic Payments"
- Set Your Payment Schedule
- Set payment date to the 1st of the month
- Select your preferred processing time
- Click "Update Autopay Schedule" to save

Once enabled, your monthly fare will be processed automatically.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Payments are due by the 1st of each month and considered late after the 15th
- Late or missed payments may impact your ability to remain in the vanpool
- Contact the Commuteride team for any assistance

HOW TO COMPLETE A MONTHLY REPORT

- 1) Log in to the TripSpark RidePro system
- 2) Navigate to your vanpool route
- 3) Enter or verify:
 - Daily ridership for each participant
 - Participant roles (primary driver, backup driver, rider)
 - Any new or departing participants and their start/end dates
 - Monthly mileage and any additional trip details
 - Review all entries for accuracy
- 4) Submit the report electronically through the system

Once submitted, reports may be locked for processing. Any corrections must be coordinated with the Commuteride team. Failure to submit reports by the required deadline may impact billing, incentives, or continued participation in the program.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

WHAT IS A VANPOOL/RIDESHARE?

A vanpool is a shared commute program where a group of commuters traveling similar routes ride together in a Commuteride vehicle. Participants share the monthly cost of operating the vehicle, while Commuteride provides the vehicle, fuel, maintenance, insurance, and program support.

WHO CAN JOIN A VANPOOL?

Most participants are adults commuting to work on a regular schedule. Participants must complete the required Participant Agreement before riding.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE NEEDED TO START A VANPOOL?

Most vanpools begin with at least five (5) paying participants, including the driver. In limited situations, Commuteride may approve specialized routes with fewer participants.

HOW DO I FIND A VANPOOL?

Contact the Commuteride team with your general home area, work location, and schedule. Staff will help identify available routes or assist with forming a new route.

WHAT DOES THE MONTHLY FARE INCLUDE?

Monthly fares include:

- Vehicle use
- Fuel
- Maintenance and repairs
- Insurance
- Roadside assistance
- Administrative support
- Emergency Ride Home+ benefits

HOW MUCH DOES VANPOOLING SAVE?

Many participants save money compared to driving alone by reducing:

- Fuel costs
- Vehicle wear and tear
- Maintenance expenses
- Parking costs

Actual savings vary based on commute distance and route occupancy.

CAN I RIDE PART-TIME?

Yes. Eligible participants may ride up to 8 days per month under the part-time ridership option, depending on route availability and occupancy needs.

WHAT IF I NEED TO MISS A DAY?

Participants should notify the driver or group as soon as possible if they will be absent. Regular communication helps routes operate smoothly.

WHY SHOULD I BECOME A BACKUP DRIVER?

Each route is required to maintain approved backup drivers to help ensure continuity of service when the primary driver is unavailable. Backup drivers play an important role in maintaining reliable service and supporting the long-term success of the vanpool.

Participants interested in becoming a backup or primary driver are encouraged to contact the Commuteride team. Driver volunteers help strengthen route stability and may be eligible for reduced fares or other driver incentives, depending on program requirements and route performance.

WHAT IF THE VAN BREAKS DOWN?

Commuteride coordinates maintenance and roadside assistance services with AAA. Participants should follow the Accident/Emergency Procedures outlined in this handbook and contact the Commuteride team as soon as possible.

CAN I EAT OR DRINK IN THE VAN?

Vanpool groups may establish reasonable expectations regarding food and beverages. Participants are expected to help maintain a clean and respectful shared environment.

ARE SEATBELTS REQUIRED?

Yes. All participants must wear seatbelts whenever the vehicle is in motion.

CAN I USE COMMUTER BENEFITS OR PRE-TAX PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS?

Many employers offer commuter benefits or transportation subsidies that may be used toward vanpool fares. Participants should contact their employer or Human Resources department for eligibility information.

WHAT IS EMERGENCY RIDE HOME+ (ERH+)?

ERH+ provides eligible participants with transportation assistance in the event of an emergency that prevents them from using their regular vanpool trip home.

WHAT IF I CHANGE JOBS OR WORK SCHEDULES?

Participants should notify Commuteride and their driver as soon as possible regarding employment, schedule, or commute changes. Staff may assist with alternate route options if available.

CAN I TRANSFER TO ANOTHER VANPOOL?

Yes. Transfers may be possible depending on route availability and compatibility with your commute schedule. Check with the Commuteride team before making a transfer.

HOW DO I LEAVE A VANPOOL?

Participants must provide advance notice to both the driver and Commuteride when leaving a route whenever possible. This helps support route planning and rider replacement efforts.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A ROUTE FALLS BELOW MINIMUM RIDERSHIP?

Commuteride will work with participants to recruit additional riders and support the route. Routes that remain below minimum ridership thresholds may be consolidated or removed from service.

ARE COMMUTERIDE VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH GPS OR CAMERAS?

Yes. Vehicles may include GPS, telematics systems, and forward-facing safety cameras to support fleet management, safety, maintenance, and incident investigation.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I NEED HELP?

Commuteride staff are available to assist with:

- Billing and payments
- Route changes
- Rider support
- Vehicle maintenance
- Emergencies
- New route formation

Phone: 208-345-POOL (7665)

Email: commuteride@achdidaho.org

Website: <https://www.commuteride.com>