

Guaranteed Ride Home Handbook

Free rides home when emergencies happen.



RIDESHARE
Keeping Ventura County Moving

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Program Overview

One of the most common concerns shared by commuters who rideshare to work is becoming stranded without a way to get home should an emergency arise. The Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program helps alleviate this concern by providing a safety net, which allows employees to rideshare to work free of worry should they experience an emergency. GRH ensures that ridesharing employees will be reimbursed up to six times each fiscal year (**July 1 - June 30**) for rides using taxis, transportation network companies and public transit. Employees must work in Ventura County.

GRH is a free service offered exclusively to employees who both:

- Rideshare to work on the day the employee needs an emergency ride home
- Work for a participating company currently enrolled in the Regional GRH Program (if your employer is not currently enrolled, call **951.352.8229** or email **cfranco@its-consulting.net** and we will work to get your employer signed up)

WHAT IS RIDESHARE?

Rideshare alternatives include carpooling, vanpooling, taking transit (bus or rail), bicycling and walking to work.



WHY IS GRH IMPORTANT?

GRH is essential in relieving employee anxiety that may arise when considering rideshare alternatives. Offering GRH can help eliminate some of the major objections employees may have about ridesharing to work.

WHAT QUALIFIES AS A VALID GRH PROGRAM EMERGENCY?

- Personal illness/emergency
- Unexpected illness/emergency of an immediate family member
- Carpool/vanpool driver has an emergency, illness or unexpected overtime
- Employee is required to work unscheduled overtime
- Childcare issues
- Natural disasters (i.e. that affects employee's workplace, commute or home)

Program Overview

Up to two times per year, GRH will cover the following

- Carpool/vanpool mechanical breakdown
- Public transit delays (one hour or more) or unscheduled cancellations

WHAT DOES **NOT** QUALIFY AS A VALID GRH PROGRAM EMERGENCY?

- Personal errands
- Non-emergency appointments/meetings/doctor visits
- Planned overtime
- Public transportation disruptions or delays under one hour
- Termination/lay-offs
- Being sent home from work early due to scheduling issues by Management
- Transportation to work
- Business travel
- Inclement weather
- Personal errands or non-emergency side trips
- Any trip where alternate transportation could be arranged in advance
- In place of a loaner/replacement vanpool vehicle
- If vehicle is towed, impounded or cannot be accessed
- Early release from work due to loss of power, lighting or network access at the worksite
- Being sent home from work early for any reason other than is specified in the rules as a valid GRH emergency

WHAT ARE VALID GRH DESTINATIONS?

Every emergency is different, and an employee may need to reach a different destination for each unexpected situation. The GRH Program offers flexibility, allowing the employee to choose from a variety of destinations to serve their unique needs. Destinations include:

- Home
- Personal vehicle (if parked at a Park & Ride lot or transit station)
- Medical facility
- Daycare or school
- Interim stops will also be accepted if they are needed to reach the final emergency destination

HOW OFTEN CAN EACH RIDESHARING EMPLOYEE USE GRH?

Each ridesharing employee can use the GRH Program up to six (6) times in a fiscal year (**July 1 – June 30**).

What Expenses Are Reimbursable?

Reimbursable transportation options include:

Taxi – GRH one-way fare reimbursement up to \$3.50 per mile, plus a tip of up to 15% of the total mileage cost (excluding any discounts) for the GRH trip. The tip must be clearly identified on the taxi receipt, along with the total amount paid.

Transportation Network Companies (TNC) – GRH one-way fare reimbursement up to \$3.50 per mile, plus a tip of up to 15% of the total mileage cost (excluding any discounts) for the GRH trip. The tip must be clearly identified on the receipt, along with the total amount paid. Examples of TNCs include Lyft and Uber.

Public transit such as any public transit operator in Ventura County, Greyhound, Amtrak or Metrolink – GRH fare reimbursement for the cost of their one-way transit ticket. Since the Regional GRH Program provides reimbursement for a maximum of six (6) emergency rides home per fiscal year (**July 1 – June 30**), we suggest that the employer identify supplemental options to get ridesharing employees home in case of an emergency. These options may include riding home with co-workers or using a company fleet vehicle. Vanpool participants are also encouraged to review their employer or leasing company's policy for backup vehicles.



How does GRH Work?

GRH is designed to be as easy to use as possible.

The employer worksite must be located in Ventura County.

Once the employer enrolls their company to participate in the GRH Program, all employees who rideshare to work are eligible for the GRH reimbursement. Employees do not sign up individually; once the company enrolls, all employees who rideshare to work qualify for the GRH Program.

If the employer is not a participant in the GRH program, the employee can email **cfranco@its-consulting.net** or call **951.352.8229** and VCTC will work to get the employer signed up.

Depending on the circumstances or employer's GRH policy, the employer or the employee pays up-front for the employee's selected ride.

If employer paid: once the employee provides their employer representative with valid receipt(s) (original or scanned) from the service provider, the employer representative will complete and submit a GRH Reimbursement Claim Form to the GRH office via regular email or email within 60 days of the GRH usage date. Mailing address and email address is provided on the GRH Reimbursement Claim Form.

If employee paid: the employee will complete and submit a GRH Reimbursement Claim Form to the GRH office via regular email or email within 60 days of the GRH usage date and provide their valid receipt(s) (original or scanned) from the service provider. The Claim Form must be signed by the Employer Representative. Mailing address and email address is provided on the GRH Reimbursement Claim Form.

The GRH office will review the GRH Reimbursement Claim Form and transportation receipt(s). Upon approval, the GRH office will send the reimbursement check to the party that paid for the expense as noted on the GRH Reimbursement Claim Form within 10 business days.

GRH Reimbursement Claim Forms received after 60 days will not be accepted and trip costs incurred shall become the responsibility of the employee and/or the employer.

GRH Enrollment

HOW DO EMPLOYERS SIGN UP FOR THE GRH PROGRAM?

To participate, employers must sign a service agreement with VCTC. The employer must also agree to adhere to the GRH guidelines set forth by VCTC and distribute materials designed for the program.

WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYER'S ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GRH?

The company must designate an employer representative to administer the program and provide the GRH office with an e-mail address in order to receive program information, forms, electronic updates and announcements. The employer representative will then print and distribute materials needed to implement the program. The employer representative is responsible for monitoring and ensuring proper use of the GRH Program by their employees. The employer representative will be notified (by the GRH office) when an employee has used their maximum number of GRH rides (six) within the fiscal year **(July 1 – June 30)**.

WHAT DO ENROLLED EMPLOYERS RECEIVE TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE GRH PROGRAM?

This Guaranteed Ride Home Program Handbook is the employer's primary source of program information. The employer representative will also receive a GRH Reimbursement Claim Form via e-mail. This claim form should be reproduced for program use. GRH marketing materials will also be made available to participating employers.

On-going commuter assistance program support is available through the sponsoring Agencies for all rideshare-related programs. Information is also available at goventura.org. Updates will be distributed electronically to all participating employer representatives. Employers will also receive posters promoting the program and other resources.



Establishing Your Internal Company GRH Policy

The GRH program provides the employer with flexibility in administering the program.

It is recommended that employers establish a written internal GRH company policy, which incorporates the GRH Program into their own company procedures.

Developing a company policy

A well-written company GRH policy should provide employees with GRH transportation option details and information on how the program works, including eligibility requirements, valid reasons for using GRH services, restrictions and step-by-step instructions to participate. In addition, the company policy should incorporate program accountability and internal monitoring procedures.

Companies may choose to either have their employee, the employee's supervisor or the company's employer representative arrange for the emergency ride. Companies may choose to pay the up-front costs of the GRH Program, establish accounts with local taxi companies and/or transportation network companies. The company's internal written GRH policy should reflect their chosen implementation procedures.



Program Procedures

Before implementing the GRH Program, it is recommended you make copies of the GRH Reimbursement Claim Form and keep them in an accessible area and be sure that other staff knows where they are located. They can also be downloaded from the VCTC website.

Before authorizing the use of the GRH Program, verify that the employee's emergency has met this program's definition of a valid emergency ride as stated in this handbook. If you are unsure if an emergency qualifies, call the GRH Program office during business hours at **951.352.8229**. Reimbursement claims will be denied if the ride home does not meet eligibility requirements. Remind your employee to collect all receipts during the ride since these will need to be submitted with the completed GRH Reimbursement Claim Form. If the ride is paid for by the employee, the Claim form will need to be signed by the Employer Representative before submittal.

It is recommended you track each employee's use of the GRH Program to ensure that individual employees use no more than six (6) trips per valid fiscal year (**July 1 – June 30**). The employer representative will be notified of the sixth trip via the final payment letter sent with the check. If the GRH trip is paid by the employee and not the employer, the employee will be notified via the final payment letter sent with their reimbursement check.



Denial of Reimbursement Claim

If a Reimbursement Claim Form is denied because the ride is deemed ineligible, the Reimbursement Claim Form and a denial letter will be mailed to the payor (employer representative or employee). If the employer representative is the payor, they are responsible for notifying their employee if the GRH is denied.

A follow-up survey will be emailed to the employee participants and the employer representative or consultant for their feedback on the program.

