

# Guaranteed Ride Home Programmes

[www.gw.govt.nz/getting-to-work](http://www.gw.govt.nz/getting-to-work)

## What is a guaranteed ride home programme?

If employees walk, cycle, catch public transport or carpool to work, a guaranteed ride home programme ensures a lift home in the event of an emergency or unexpected event.

Typical circumstances that qualify for a guaranteed ride home include personal or family illness or crisis. It may also include situations such as unscheduled overtime and a carpool driver not being able to take carpoolers home as planned.

In these situations, the employer covers the cost of the employee returning home. This may be by public transport, fleet car, rental car or taxi, depending on the situation and the organisation's guaranteed ride home programme.

## How effective is a guaranteed ride home programme?

Guaranteed ride home programmes can significantly increase use of alternative commute modes. One study found that the existence of a Guaranteed Ride Home programme (GRH) is among the most important factors determining the effectiveness of a Commute Trip Reduction

(Comsis, 1994). One survey of commuters found that 59% of carpoolers and public transport users consider a guaranteed ride home important in their decision to use these modes (K.T. Analytics, 1992). Another survey found that the availability of GRH has a value roughly equivalent to subsidized public transport fares at a fraction of the cost (Hunt and McMillan, 1998)."

In a recent evaluation of the ride matching service, Let's Carpool, carpoolers from an organisation which also had a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programme, had very positive feedback. 95.2% of people rated the GRH scheme as either 'very useful' or 'useful.'



greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Pane Matua Taiao

## How much will it cost?

Guaranteed Ride Home programmes often cost less than employers initially expect. Overseas research indicates that between 1-13% of eligible employees take up the offer of a GRH every year. Use is higher where overtime qualifies for a ride home compared to emergency use only. Anecdotal evidence from medium sized New Zealand organisations currently offering GRH programmes is that the take up rate is less than one ride a month. Employers may also set a cap on the amount of subsidy provided for a single trip and the number of times a year an eligible employee may use the programme.

In the example below a maximum of \$80 per trip is subsidised and employees may use up to four rides a year. If public transport passes and fleet car use are included as preferred options for non-emergency rides the average cost per trip may be significantly lower.

Guaranteed Ride Home programmes can also be trialled for a set period of time such as one year. During this time the organisation can monitor the costs and benefits of the programme more accurately before committing to the programme long term.

## Does a Guaranteed Ride Home programme incur Fringe Benefit Tax?

The payment of public transport or taxi fares to travel home is a fringe benefit and would also be subject to GST on the value of the cost provided by the employer.

However, an exemption may apply to fringe benefits in this category if the general employee exemption and maximum employer exemption are met.

This exemption may apply when the total taxable value of all unclassified benefits to each employee, including guaranteed ride home payments, is less than \$300 in each quarter for each employee with a maximum of \$22,500 per annum for all employees. For more information please see [www.ird.govt.nz/fbt/](http://www.ird.govt.nz/fbt/)

## Templates

Download the Guaranteed Ride Home Programme Word template from:

[www.gw.govt.nz/getting-to-work](http://www.gw.govt.nz/getting-to-work)

*Modify this template for your organisation by following the instructions in italics.*

## Guaranteed Ride Home Employee Information

*(Insert organisation name)* Guaranteed Ride Home programme

The *(organisation name)* Guaranteed Ride Home programme guarantees you a ride home from work when unexpected circumstances arise. Take the bus, train or ferry, carpool, walk or cycle to work, and we now can assure you of a ride home in case of illness, family crisis, unscheduled overtime, or a missed carpool trip.

### When can I use this?

All relevant considerations will be taken into account and employees will be treated fairly. Each employee is eligible for a maximum of four guaranteed rides home per year.

Examples of where you may take a guaranteed ride home include, but are not limited to circumstances where you walked, cycled, took public transport or carpooled to work that day, AND:

- You or an immediate family member suffers from an illness or severe crisis.
- You must work unscheduled overtime (manager's approval required) which means you will miss your carpool ride home or suitable bus, train or ferry.
- Your bicycle breaks down.
- Your ridesharing vehicle breaks down or the driver has to stay late or leave early.
- Any valid emergency.

Examples of where the programme may NOT be used include but are not limited to:

- Personal errands
- Pre-planned medical appointments
- Emergency trip to hospital (call an ambulance)
- Business-related travel
- Anticipated overtime or working overtime without a manager's request
- Car or bicycle breakdowns that can be easily repaired on site (e.g. flat tyre, dead battery, empty fuel tank)
- Weather emergencies, building closings or evacuations

### How does it work?

*(Insert organisation name here)* offers *(insert your organisations choice here)* one or more of the following four options, depending on which is most appropriate.

Once you have chosen your option, fill out the form below:

#### **Option One: Public transport**

Take public transport if all of the following apply:

- You need a ride for reasons other than personal or family illness or crisis.
- There is a bus, train or ferry leaving within 20 minutes of your departure time that offers a reasonable service to your destination. Call Metlink on 0800 801 700 or go to [www.metlink.org.nz](http://www.metlink.org.nz) to find the best route for you.

*(Insert your office information on where to collect a pre-paid public transport pass/reimbursement form here)*

## **Option Two: Fleet Car**

Take a fleet car if all of the following apply:

- You need a ride for reasons other than personal illness or crisis. Another staff member may be able to drive you home in some circumstances.
- There is a fleet car available and you can return it at an appropriate time. Talk to (insert fleet manager's name) about whether there is a car available.
- You are 21 years of age or older, are able to drive, feel comfortable driving, and have a valid driver's license.

*(Insert your office information on booking a fleet car here)*

## **Option Three: Rental Car**

Take a rental care if all of the following apply:

- You need a ride for reasons other than personal illness or crisis.
- Your journey is more than 30 kilometres (e.g. Further than Wellington City to Upper Hutt or Wellington City to Plimmerton)
- You are 21 years of age or older, are able to drive, feel comfortable driving, and have a valid driver's license.
- You are able to meet requirements of the rental car company regarding pick up and drop off times and locations.

NB The cost of fuel is not covered by this policy.

*(Insert details of booking with your organisations' preferred rental car supplier here)*

## **Option Four: Taxi**

Take a taxi if the following applies:

- Your circumstances do not meet the criteria for any of the above options.

A maximum of \$80 of the taxi ride will be covered by the organisation.

*(Insert instructions on where to collect a taxi chit/reimbursement form here)*



# Guaranteed Ride Home form

Name .....

Reason for using Guaranteed Ride Home

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Mode of transport used (e.g. public transport, taxi, fleet car, rental car)

.....  
.....

Date of guaranteed ride home .....

Amount spent (please attach receipt)

\$ .....

The cost code for reimbursements is (*insert organisation GRH cost code here*)

I, the undersigned, have read and agree to follow the terms and conditions of (*insert organisation name here*) guaranteed ride home programme.

Signature of participant .....

Signature of manager .....

Date .....

If possible, please have this form signed by your manager before you use your guaranteed ride home. In the event of an emergency, please fill out this form within one week of using this service.

Please send this form to (*insert organisation GRH contact person name here*)

