



Kitsap Transit Vanpool Program

Puget Sound area transit agencies will soon roll out ORCA (one regional card for all) cards, as the latest fare transaction method on participating transit modes (bus, ferry and rail). Basically, an ORCA card is an electronic smart card that can store cash (similar to a debit card), a term pass (Puget Pass, KT Bus Pass, Cross Sound Pass, etc), and can be obtained through various employers or pass sales outlets. Commuters will use their ORCA card by 'tapping' it on card readers onboard enabled transit modes.

Since vanpools are not equipped with ORCA card readers, vanpool bookkeepers must input the card serial number (located on bottom corner) next to the card holder's name on the Ridership Report. Listed below is a Q & A aimed at providing additional information about ORCA. You can contact your Vanpool Coordinator for any additional questions you may have.

- 1. What is the ORCA Smart Card Project?** ORCA smart cards will replace more than 300 types of tickets and passes with a single fare card with smart card technology. Seven Western Washington public transportation agencies are working to streamline the fare payment system on buses, trains, rail systems and ferries across four counties in the Puget Sound region. ORCA cards will be valid for transit rides on Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit and Washington State Ferries.
- 2. What does ORCA stand for?** ORCA stands for One Regional Card for All and may be used for bus, train, and ferry rides on Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit and Washington State Ferries.
- 3. How does the ORCA Card work?** The ORCA Card uses contact-free technology. Cardholders may purchase a monthly pass or electronic-purse (E-purse) for their ORCA Card. To pay a fare, the cardholder just taps the ORCA card on the target sensor of the ORCA card reader on the bus, at the train or rail station or at the ferry terminal. The card reader will automatically calculate what product to use or deduct the correct fare from the E-purse, calculating transfers and appropriate Senior, Disabled, Youth and other discounts. The card reader will display how the fare was paid and/or the remaining E-purse value.
- 4. Are vanpools also part of the ORCA Project?** In order for vanpool to be a part of ORCA, the van must be equipped with an ORCA card reader or Portable Fare Transaction Processor, called a PFTP. Most agencies in the Puget Sound region have chosen not to equip their vans with PFTPs at this time. In the future, vans may be equipped with a PFTP or the agencies will create an alternative that would allow the use of an ORCA card to pay a vanpool fare. A review of potential alternatives will occur sometime after the launch of ORCA.
- 5. I heard Commuter Bonus Vouchers are going away. What should I do?** Commuter Bonus Vouchers will be discontinued upon ORCA launch. The agencies will continue to accept Commuter Bonus Vouchers until the individual voucher's expiration date. A business can continue to offer paper bearer instrument vouchers through other programs such as CommuterCheck, TransitCheck, TranBen and WageWorks. ORCA provides an electronic voucher option for businesses that can be used to purchase bus, train, rail and ferry passes, but cannot be used to pay a vanpool fare unless the van is equipped with a PFTP. Check with your Employee Transportation Coordinator to see how your employer will provide the vanpool subsidy.
- 6. What is an Electronic Voucher (e-voucher)?** Electronic vouchers allow a business to provide a transportation subsidy to as many cardholders as it chooses, at the same or differing subsidy levels. The subsidy amount can be kept consistent or changed from month to month. The cardholder can then decide how to "spend" the subsidy by applying the value and buying a pass or by converting the subsidy to an E-purse and spending it as needed.

7. **What is E-purse and how does it work?** E-purse stands for electronic purse and provides a means to store transportation value on an ORCA card. Riders can store up to \$300 in transportation value in an E-purse on their card. Since E-purse doesn't expire, the value remains on the card to be used whenever they ride a bus, train or ferry. When the rider taps the card at an ORCA reader on the bus, at the train station, or at a ferry terminal, the system automatically deducts the fare amount from his/her E-purse. The system also automatically recognizes the correct transfer value and deducts the correct transfer fare, if needed. Cardholders can easily check their balance and add value to their E-purse. E-purse may only be used to pay a vanpool fare when the van is equipped with a PFTP.
8. **Do I need an ORCA Card to participate in a vanpool?** No, you don't need an ORCA card to participate in a vanpool. There are two exceptions.
- If your transit agency provides PFTPs on its vanpools, it may require riders to use the ORCA Card for vanpool fare payment.
 - If you receive your vanpool benefit through an employer FlexPass or similar agreement (see below).
- You can continue to pay your Kitsap Transit vanpool fare with a check to your group's volunteer bookkeeper, accepted paper vouchers, or by submitting a photocopy of your ORCA card if your employer enters into an agreement that includes vanpool subsidies (similar to the current FlexPass Program). These options and requirements may vary by transit agency.
9. **Can an ORCA card be used for both vanpool and bus?** ORCA cards cannot currently be used for both vanpool and bus, except under the following conditions:
- A King County Metro or Kitsap Transit transit/vanpool combination pass is purchased.
 - An employer or organization enters into a subsidy agreement with the transit agencies. See #8 above.
10. **Can an employer still subsidize vanpool fares?** Yes. Most options currently available to employers to subsidize their vanpooling employees remain available under ORCA, including transportation vouchers, corporate check and subsidy agreements as well as some agency-specific options like special combo vanpool/bus passes, special subsidy "draw-down" agreements and company credit cards.
11. **If my employer gives me an ORCA card, can I use it on a vanpool?** It depends on the type of product the employer purchases. If the employer purchases retail products, then the ORCA card can only be used on King County Metro or Kitsap Transit vanpools and only when the product on the card is a transit/vanpool combination pass. If the employer enters into a Business Passport Agreement, then the ORCA Card will be accepted as full or partial payment, up to the maximum subsidy level, when vanpool is included in that agreement. Each agreement may have different parameters. Vanpool users should check with their Employee Transportation Coordinator for details. Vanpool fare payment by ORCA card will follow each individual agency's current processes for "flash" type passes, unless the vanpool is equipped with a PFTP.
12. **If I currently have a FlexPass, what are my vanpool options under ORCA?**
Your options remain unchanged. You will continue to use your FlexPass card until agreement renewal. When your agreement is renewed, you will receive an ORCA card and the new program will be called Business Passport. For vanpool users, you will most likely continue to use the card exactly as you do today – making a copy of the card that includes the serial number for your vanpool group's volunteer vanpool bookkeeper. No vanpool product will be loaded on these cards, but they will remain acceptable as full or partial vanpool fare payment as determined by your employer's agreement details. If you ride on a Portable Fare Transaction Processor (PFTP) equipped vanpool, then your card will be loaded with a vanpool product and you will tap your card on the PFTP each day that you ride – to pay your monthly or daily fare and to record your trips.