

2011

State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Program Report



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www.ctr.wa.gov

Washington State Department of Transportation,
Public Transportation Division, PO Box 47387, Olympia, WA 98504-7387

Phone: 360-705-7846

E-mail: transit@wsdot.wa.gov

To: Washington State Legislature

December 29, 2011

To: Washington State Legislature

From: Brian Lagerberg, Director

WSDOT Public Transportation Division

It is my pleasure to submit the 2011 State Agency Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Biennial Report. This report reflects implementation of the program during challenging economic times.

That state agencies continue to improve commute programs provided to employees is a testimony to their significance to employees and the transportation system as a whole. Through RCW 70.94.547 the Legislature directed state agencies to provide leadership in commute programs. During constrained times, this leadership is being demonstrated through innovative improvements and the dedication of state employees.

This report highlights successes and opportunities for continued program improvement. That not all measures of the program have improved reflects the financial and organizational realities of the agencies and employees. While agencies have struggled to provide meaningful programs during workforce transformation, the support that is provided is often critical to state employees.

The report offers crucial data and stories highlighting the value and evolution of commute programs including:

- The program continues to be effective. Washington State continues to have a lower drive alone rate than the U.S. average and CTR affected worksites are significantly lower.
- RideshareOnline.com has officially launched as a tracking tool at the Washington State Department of Transportation providing increased accountability and communications opportunities. Additional state agencies will transition to this system this biennium. Transitioning to RideshareOnline.com will leverage additional non-state resources and provide more uniformity across state agencies.
- Survey data indicates that over 70 percent of agencies have maintained their programs since 2009.
- A regional CTR program implemented following 2009 legislative direction has engaged nearly 2,100 employees in the smaller state worksites in Thurston County. All state agencies, regardless of their size in Thurston County, now have a plan and strategy to address commute needs of their employees.
- Employee use of Intercity Transit through the State Agency Rider (STAR) Pass, has increased significantly.

There is great work being accomplished on the state agency portion of the Commute Trip Reduction program. Should you have any questions about the information contained in this report, please contact me at 360-705-7878

Executive Summary

2010 and 2011 proved to be challenging for state agencies. As part of the largest restructuring of Washington state government in two decades, five state agencies were combined into three, affecting nearly 1,100 employees. More than 1,600 state employees were laid off or affected by workforce reductions due to budget cuts. Many state agencies implemented unpaid furlough days and made cuts to their CTR programs as ways of addressing budget shortfalls.

While 70 percent of agencies surveyed noted that their CTR programs had not changed since 2009, 29 percent reported a need to eliminate program elements or incentives due to budget constraints.

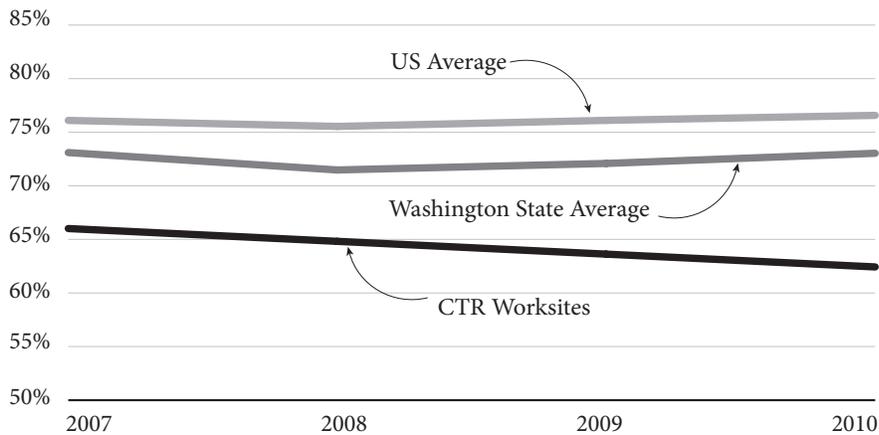
Despite all of the challenges facing state agencies and employees, state agency CTR programs continued to perform well. Even though state agencies are operating with fewer employees, they continue to make progress

in reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and drive-alone rates. More state employees chose to vanpool, ride the bus or bike to work as alternatives to driving alone as they looked for ways to save money in response to furloughs and salary reductions. Participation in telework programs and compressed work week schedules also increased. Telework and compressed work schedules benefit the overall agency by reducing the need for space and energy.

CTR programs ebb and flow as the economy shifts. Overall, state agencies have done well to maintain program structure and participant levels. Compared to other states, Washington still leads the way with its innovative programs and CTR participation rates.

Commute Trip Drive Alone Rate Comparison

Percent Driving Alone to Work



Source: American Community Survey; CTR Data from WSDOT

The chart above shows the drive alone trends in Washington state compared with the rest of the nation. Year after year Washington state continues to have a lower drive alone rate than the U.S. average and CTR affected worksites are significantly lower.

Executive Summary

Leading the nation in smart commuting solutions

Washington state has 20 years of legislative, business and community support and effort behind our trip reduction programs, reinforcing the state's role as a forerunner of innovation committed to managing transportation demand.

The 1991 CTR law established state agencies as leaders in implementing effective commute trip reduction programs, mandating that they aggressively develop programs to reduce commute trips by state employees. In 2009, the Legislature further defined the leadership role of state agencies, calling upon them to develop a joint, comprehensive CTR plan among all state agencies in Thurston County. Since 2009 the number of agencies participating in CTR has increased from 44 to 65.

Agency recommendations for CTR

As of 2009, state agencies are required to report on their program's progress and performance, as well as provide recommendations for increasing program successes. WSDOT is the lead agency in this effort, collecting and analyzing the information before submitting it to the Governor's office.

In 2011 WSDOT invited state agencies to submit recommendations for improvements as part of a survey of their CTR programs. Respondents were asked to make short-term recommendations which could be implemented quickly and with little or no budget, as well as mid- and long-term recommendations. The information provided in the following section reflects the 56 survey responses returned thus far to WSDOT.

Summary of agency recommendations

Short-term recommendations

- Increased support for state agency telework programs.
- Expanded compressed work week options for state employees.

Mid-term recommendations

- Enhanced, secured parking for bicycles at non-Capitol Campus worksites.
- Enhanced, direct shuttle service between Lacey and the Capitol Campus during legislative sessions.

Long-term recommendations

- Enhanced, safer bicycle lanes, especially near the I-5 corridor.
- Increased transit service between Olympia and rural areas.

Introduction

As the lead for the state agency CTR program, WSDOT is required to report to the Legislature every two years on program performance, progress towards established goals and recommendations for program improvement.

RCW 70.94.547, the law governing CTR for state agency worksites, states:

“The legislature hereby recognizes the state’s crucial leadership role in establishing and implementing effective commute trip reduction programs. Therefore, it is the policy of the state that the department of transportation and other state agencies, including institutions of higher education, shall aggressively develop substantive programs to reduce commute trips by state employees. Implementation of these programs will reduce energy consumption, congestion in urban areas, and air and water pollution associated with automobile travel.”

The Interagency CTR Board works to enhance state agency CTR results

The Interagency CTR Board guides the state agency CTR program. The board is composed of 22 members representing state agencies, universities, colleges, Intercity Transit, Thurston Regional Planning Council and the Washington Federation of State Employees. The board defined which characteristics of state leadership enhance the state’s CTR results and reinforce its CTR leadership role. Agencies model leadership by implementing CTR programs designed to:

- Reduce employee drive-alone commute trips.
- Enhance agency plans for sustainability and economic growth.
- Locate worksites that encourage walking, ridesharing, bicycling and transit.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Improve quality of life by linking CTR with wellness.

To help achieve CTR leadership, the board has adopted guidelines and policies that support consistency among state agency commute trip reduction programs. Guideline areas include:

- CTR plans for co-located state agencies.
- Emergency ride home programs.
- Flexible work hours.
- Reporting requirements.
- State worksite locations.
- State agency parking.
- Telework programs.

Please visit www.ctr.wa.gov/employers/guide.htm for a complete list of guidelines adopted by the interagency CTR board.

The state agency CTR program, housed at WSDOT, supports agency efforts to develop and implement CTR programs by:

- Providing technical support.
- Chairing the Interagency CTR Board.
- Contracting with Intercity Transit for the State Agency Rider (STAR) Pass program.
- Providing emergency ride home programs to state employees in Thurston, Pierce, King, Spokane and Snohomish counties.
- Partnering with CTR jurisdictional administrators in the nine counties affected by the CTR law to provide a single source for state agency CTR implementation.
- Serving as liaison between state agencies and local jurisdictions.

Performance and progress

All CTR affected state agency worksites in Washington are required to survey their employees every two years to collect data on program performance and progress. While WSDOT encouraged and solicited recommendations from all state agencies, only the VMT and drive-alone rates for those agencies that surveyed in both 2007-08 and 2011-12 are included for comparison purposes. Please note that at the time of this report, not all state agencies and worksites had completed their 2011-12 measurement surveys.

The CTR program goals are to reduce employee drive-alone rates by at least 10 percent and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per employee by at least 13 percent from 2007-08 to the 2011-12 survey cycle. Survey results indicate that several agencies were able to exceed the 10 percent and/or 13 percent reduction goals.

The following are some outstanding examples of state agencies that exceeded their goals for reducing the drive-alone rate:

- The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife reduced its drive-alone rate by 10.3 percent, from 77.3 percent to 69.3 percent.
- The Washington State Auditor's Office reduced its drive-alone rate by 10.7 percent, from 80.4 percent to 71.8 percent.
- The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs reduced its drive-alone rate by 20.1 percent, from 86.6 to 69.2 percent.

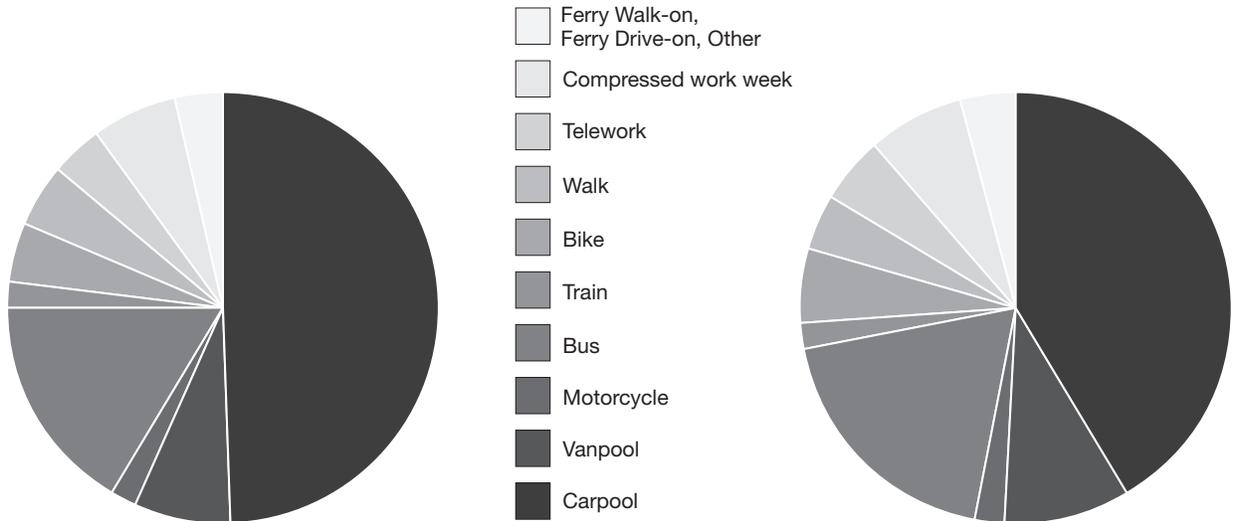
Reductions in VMT greater than 13 percent include:

- The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, which reduced its rate by 16.6 percent from 15.1 VMT per employee to 12.6.
- Administrative Office of the Courts, which reduced its rate by 19.9 percent from 13 VMT per employee to 10.4.
- The Washington State Department of Financial Institutions, which reduced its rate by 22.9 percent from 17 VMT per employee to 13.1.

Performance and progress

**Mode Split at State Agency Worksites
2007-2008**

**Mode Split at State Agency Worksites
2011-2012***



Mode split charts exclude drive alone to illustrate a more accurate view of the shared modes.

*Includes all state agencies who have surveyed in both 2007-2008 and 2011-2012.

Thurston County state agencies partner for CTR planning to further develop state agency leadership in trip reduction. In 2009, the Legislature modified the CTR Law to require that all state agencies within the urban growth areas of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater implement a joint, comprehensive CTR program. The legislation affected 65 agencies and more than 2,100 employees, including 119 worksites new to CTR. To prepare for these changes, WSDOT convened a task force composed of Interagency CTR Board members and representatives from the newly affected agencies and developed a joint CTR plan for Thurston County. Thurston Regional Planning Council—which leads the effort in the county—created and implemented a process to ensure that all agencies meet the new requirements of the law, including implementing new programs within 90 days of the plan’s adoption by the Interagency CTR Board.

State budget crisis continues to tighten commute subsidies

State agencies may use state funds to provide financial subsidies to employees who choose not to drive alone to work. Currently, most of the surveyed state agencies continue to offer CTR subsidies, which range from reimbursements for vanpools and transit and ferry passes to incentives for carpooling, walking or bicycling. Since the release of the 2009 state agency report, five agencies have eliminated their subsidies due to budget reductions. In addition, several agencies now offer reduced subsidy packages. You can find a complete list of CTR subsidies by agency in Table B of this report.

Performance and progress

Taking a cue from DSHS: WSDOT implements targeted teleworking

WSDOT's Public Transportation division is leading a phased telework pilot project with a participation goal of 31 percent. To more accurately gauge the success of a broad, aggressive telework program, eligible employees are expected to telework at least once a week during the pilot. WSDOT's approach modeled the successful telework pilots recently implemented by the Department of Social and Health Services.

The Public Transportation Division is midway through phase one of the project, testing higher rates of telework along with new processes for determining eligibility and work accountability. So far, managers are reporting increases in productivity and morale.

The second phase of the pilot will broaden the scope of the program to other divisions at WSDOT. At the conclusion of phase two in August 2012, WSDOT will present its findings to executive management on the benefits of broad, agency-wide telework program.

Anticipated benefits include employee recruitment and retention, reduced real estate expenses, decreased agency GHG emissions, ensured continuity of operations and improved work/life balance. It is hoped that once presented with findings and conclusions of the project, WSDOT along with other state agencies will explore opportunities to endorse and expand telework as an integrated cost-savings and employee-benefits strategy.

RideshareOnline.com

Since 2001 RideshareOnline.com has been an online tool for coordinating carpool and vanpool trips. In 2008 WSDOT secured federal funding to help transform RideshareOnline.com into a comprehensive trip and commute management system. Its new features have significantly improved its efficiency and usefulness as a management tool for agencies, particularly for those that offer CTR subsidies. RideshareOnline.com is not only used by state agencies and other employers in Washington, but by employers and employees in two other states, Oregon and Idaho.

Major upgrades have been implemented since its inception and WSDOT was the first agency to successfully migrate its employees from an in-house database to the web-based system. Since the transition, WSDOT has led other state agencies toward the transition to RideshareOnline.com for their CTR programs. This consistency fosters a more uniform approach to better share and leverage resources. The RideshareOnline.com development team continues to upgrade and improve the system with innovative features often based on feedback from customers and program participants.

2009 – 2011 state agency CTR services

WSDOT administers commute services for state employees using funds from employee parking fees on the Capitol Campus. The legislature appropriated \$734,000 from the state vehicle parking account in 2009-11 for the program. In the 2011-13 biennium, the amount provided from the parking account is \$452,000.

State Agency Rider (STAR) Pass

Since 2000, all state employees working in Thurston County have been eligible for a STAR Pass, which allows them to ride fare-free on any Intercity Transit bus. During an average month in 2010, pass users took more than 17,000 trips on Intercity Transit, an increase of nearly 3,000 trips from the 2008 average. Employees commuting from Mason, Pierce and Grays Harbor counties to Thurston County were eligible for a subsidy of 55 cents per trip from the state agency CTR program. Currently, 32 employees (of 106 registered) receive this subsidy. It is expected this number will decrease in the future, as Pierce Transit will no longer offer express service to Thurston County.

Emergency Ride Home Program

The state agency CTR program funds emergency ride home programs for all state employees working in King, Pierce, Spokane, Snohomish and Thurston counties. Employees are eligible for an emergency ride home on any day they do not drive alone to work. State employees who work at CTR-affected worksites in Clark, Kitsap, Whatcom and Yakima counties are eligible for an emergency ride home through their local jurisdiction's CTR program. The program ensures employees, especially those that commute a long-distance, a safety net in case they (or a family member or rideshare partner) become ill, they unexpectedly need to work overtime or an emergency disrupts their normal transportation arrangement. Most rides are the result of personal illness or family emergency, and most employees use the program only occasionally.

Employees may request up to eight rides each year, with no more than four rides permitted resulting from unexpected overtime. The program pays the first 65 miles of the trip and does not include a driver gratuity. Employees are responsible for paying for additional miles.

Program summaries by county for the 2009-11 biennium:

- King County: Home Free Guarantee Program- The program, contracted with King County Metro, serves about 4,000 employees. The program provided 71 emergency rides at a cost of \$3,563.
- Pierce County: State Agency Free Emergency (SAFE) Ride Program- The program, contracted between WSDOT and a taxi company, serves about 2,500 employees. The program provided one emergency ride at a cost of \$28.
- Spokane County: Guaranteed Ride Home Program- The program, contracted with Spokane County, serves about 3,000 employees. The program provided 58 emergency rides at a cost of \$2,912.
- Thurston County: State Agency Free Emergency (SAFE) Ride Program- The program, contracted between WSDOT and a taxi company, serves about 20,000 employees. The program provided 161 emergency rides at a cost of \$12,585.
- Snohomish County: Guaranteed Ride Home- The program contracted through Community Transit serves about 1,000 employees and provided 12 rides at a cost of \$670.

Recommendations

In 2011 WSDOT invited state agencies to submit recommendations for improvements as part of a survey of their CTR programs. Respondents were asked to make short-term recommendations which could be implemented quickly and with little or no budget, as well as mid- and long-term recommendations. Mid- and long-term recommendations may need agency and/or legislative support and funding.

Short term recommendations

- Increased telework opportunities and compressed work week options continue to be the leading recommendation across state agencies for short term improvements to CTR programs.

Other short term suggestions were:

- To have a collective agency fund so that all state employees would receive incentives and the program would be more uniform.
- Commute trip reduction program coordinators would like to see more support from their local jurisdictions.
- To install or identify preferential or better parking for vanpools and carpools.

Mid-term recommendations

- The first mid-term recommendation made in 2009 was to provide secured parking for bicycles at worksites off the Capitol Campus. The second was to provide a direct bus shuttle from Lacey to the Capitol Campus during legislative sessions.

Additional recommendations included:

- Provide all vanpoolers with the same subsidies in the form of vouchers and/or reimbursement to encourage equality within the agencies.
- Provide more shuttle services to areas where there is heavy traffic and limited parking on a year-round basis.

Long-term recommendations

- The long-term recommendations adopted in 2009 were to provide safer bicycle lanes, especially near the I-5 corridor and increase bus routes to rural areas.

Other recommendations included:

- Implementing incentives, subsidies, or rewards programs to encourage employees to use carpool, vanpool, and bicycling for their commute trips.
- A statewide free bus pass program supported by state employee involuntary contributions, or similar to what's in place at colleges.

Other highlights

The State agency rider pass program was listed as the top element of State agency CTR programs while compressed and flexible work schedules came in second. Not surprisingly, telecommuting rounded out the top three.

Table A: Performance by agency

Agency	Drive Alone change from 2007-2011	Vehicle Miles Traveled change from 2007-2011	Employees	Worksites
Reduced Drive alone by 10 percent or more since 2007				
Fish and Wildlife	-10.3%	-9.2%	472	1
Utilities and Transportation Commission	-11.8%	10.5%	147	1
Veterans Affairs	-20.1%	-16.6%	55	1
Reduced Drive Alone between 5 and 10 percent				
Administrative Office of the Courts	-9.9%	-19.9%	218	2
Reduced Drive Alone between 1 and 5 percent				
Labor and Industries	-1.9%	0.7%	1437	2
Ecology	-3.7%	-2.7%	1270	3
Liquor Control Board	-0.7%	8.7%	195	1
State Patrol	-2.4%	17.9%	144	1
Revenue	-1.5%	-12.6%		2
Attorney General	-4.9%	-0.5%	863	5
Social and Health Services	-2.7%	-0.2%	3824	27
Superintendent of Public Instruction	-4.8%	-6.5%	362	1
Gambling Commission	-0.8%	-3.1%	89	2
Increased Drive Alone and VMT				
Employment Security	11.9%	6.2%	1049	5
Agriculture	3.3%	12.7%	189	1
Transportation	3.9%	5.2%	2739	14
Sites consolidated and moved – no comparable data this cycle				
Commerce				
Reported in 2009 but has not yet surveyed in this cycle				
Health				
Corrections				
Health Care Authority				
Licensing				
Restructured into DES - have not surveyed				
Personnel				
Information Services				
General Administration				

Table B: CTR subsidies and incentives paid through agency funds

The table below is a sampling of state agencies that may or may not provide subsidies to qualifying employees.

Agency	Non-taxable subsidy**	Taxable incentives***	Parking Fee
Administrative Hearings	Up to \$100*		
Agriculture	\$15/month	\$15/month	
Attorney General	Up to \$100/month, ORCA for Seattle & Tacoma*	Eliminated August 2009	
Auditor	Up to \$90/month	\$25/month	
Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals	Up to \$110/month	\$2/trip	
Commerce	N/A	\$1/trip	
Corrections	Eliminated Fall 2009	Eliminated Fall 2009	
Court of Appeals	ORCA		
Early Learning	N/A	\$1/trip	
Employment Security	Up to \$50/mo (Thurston County) Up to \$25/mo (Spokane County) ORCA (King, Pierce, Snohomish Co.)	Eliminated 2008	
Financial Institutions	Up to \$80/month	\$1/trip*	
Financial Management	\$40/vanpool*	\$1/trip (max. \$2/day)*	
Gambling Commission	Up to \$100/month*	N/A	
General Administration	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	
Governor, Office of	Eliminated 6/2009*	Eliminated 6/2009*	
Health	Eliminated 7/1/2011*	Eliminated 7/1/2011*	
Health Care Authority	Up to \$60/month	N/A	
House of Representatives	Eliminated 2010	N/A	
Human Rights Commission	Up to \$65/month	N/A	
Insurance Commissioner	Up to \$230/month*	\$1/trip	
Judicial Conduct Comm.	N/A	\$2/trip	

Table B: CTR subsidies and incentives paid through agency funds

Agency	Non-taxable subsidy**	Taxable incentives***	Parking Fee
Labor and Industries	Up to \$70/month	\$1/trip; \$2/trip vanpool drivers	
Legislative Service Center	Up to \$105/month	\$1/trip	
Law Enforcement Officers/Fire Fighters	N/A	\$1/trip	
Liquor Control Board	Eliminated 8/2011*	Eliminated 8/2011*	
Lottery	N/A	\$2/roundtrip half workdays per month	
Lt. Governor	Eliminated December 2009	Eliminated December 2009	
Military Dept., Tacoma	Up to \$25/month*	Up to \$25/month*	
Personnel	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	
Recreation Conservation Office	Up to \$115/month	\$1/trip Up to \$46/month	
Revenue	Eliminated 10/1/2011*	Eliminated 10/1/2011*	
Retirement Systems	N/A	\$1/trip	
Senate	Eliminated 2010	N/A	
Social and Health Services	Eliminated 1/2009*	Eliminated 1/2009*	
State Patrol	N/A	Up to \$50/month	
Treasurer	Up to \$100/month	\$1/trip	\$25 or \$35 per month
Transportation	Up to \$50/month; ORCA*	Up to \$33/month*	
Utilities and Transportation Commission	Up to \$100/month	\$1/trip*	
Administrative Office of the Courts	Up to \$105/month	\$2/trip	\$15/month
Ecology	Up to \$50/month	\$1/trip	\$20 (voluntary)
Historical Museum, Tacoma	Up to \$100/month	N/A	\$4-\$20/month
Information Services	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES	Eliminated with Consolidation to DES
Licensing	Up to \$50/month	\$.50/trip	\$10/month or \$50/month

* Indicates a change from the 2009 report

**Non-taxable subsidies are paid directly to a provider such as transit or vanpool subsidy

***Taxable incentives are paid directly to employees that use modes other than driving alone to work such as biking, carpooling or walking.

Consolidated into DES.