ALAMEDA
County Transportation
Commission

Alameda County Transportation Commission
GUARANTEED
RIDE HOME

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Updated May 2016

Contents

The Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home Program

When unexpected circumstances arise, the Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program provides a free ride home from work for employees who choose to commute by not driving alone. The GRH program is free for employees who register for the program, work in Alameda County, and use sustainable forms of transportation including walking, biking, taking transit, or ridesharing. When a registered employee uses a sustainable mode to travel to work and experiences a personal or family emergency while at work, they can take a taxi, Transportation Network Company (TNC) service such as Lyft or Uber, rental car, car share, or public transportation ride home and be reimbursed for the cost of the ride.

This program allows commuters to feel comfortable taking the bus, train or ferry, carpooling, vanpooling, walking, or bicycling to work, knowing that they will have a ride home in case of an emergency.

The Guaranteed Ride Home Program helps to reduce traffic and improve air quality in the Bay Area by encouraging commuters to leave their car behind for their commute to work.

The Alameda County GRH program is a commuter benefit provided by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC). The Alameda CTC plans, funds, and delivers transportation projects and programs to improve accessibility and mobility in Alameda County. Funding for the Alameda County GRH program is provided by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District through a Transportation Fund for Clean Air grant in partnership with the Alameda CTC. For more information about the Alameda CTC, visit **www.alamedactc.org**.

Program Basics

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?

All permanent part-time or full-time employees 18 years of age or older who work in Alameda County are eligible to participate.

WHEN CAN I TAKE A GUARANTEED RIDE HOME?

People who work in Alameda County and are registered for GRH may request reimbursement for eligible expenses if they take a trip home in a qualified emergency situation and have used an alternative mode that day.

The following circumstances are considered **qualifying emergency situations** in the GRH program and **must occur on the date of the GRH trip**:

- Participant or an immediate family member suffers an illness, injury, or severe crisis.

- Participant is asked by supervisor to work unscheduled overtime, which causes participant to miss planned ride home. Supervisor verification will be required as part of reimbursement request.

- Participant carpool or vanpool vehicle breaks down or the driver has to leave early or late.

- Participant has a break-in, flood, or fire at residence.

- Participant's commute bicycle breaks down on the way to or from work and cannot be repaired at participant's work site.

In addition, participants must have **used an alternative mode on the day they take the ride** for which they will seek reimbursement through the GRH program. Eligible alternative commute modes include:

- Public transportation including: BART, AC Transit, ACE, Wheels, Union City Transit, ferry (WETA) and Amtrak

- Employer-provided shuttle or van service

- Carpool or Vanpool

- Bicycle

- Walk

WHAT SERVICES CAN BE REIMBURSED?

- Taxis

- Transportation Network Company (TNC) services such as Lyft or Uber

- One-day car rentals

- Car share (Zipcar or City CarShare)

- Public transportation (including BART, AC Transit, ACE, and others). Commute Choices provides a list of locally available public transportation options. It is available at: **commutechoices.alamedactc.org**

Qualifying emergency situation **+** **Used alternative mode to get to work** **=** **Eligible to take Guaranteed Ride Home**

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME IS FOR UNEXPECTED EMERGENCIES ONLY

There are numerous common circumstances where trips **cannot** be reimbursed through the GRH program. These include:

- Transit labor disputes (strikes), transit delays, or government shutdowns

- Pre-planned medical or dental appointments for participants or commute vehicle driver

- Personal errands

- Business-related travel

- Planned overtime

- Non-emergency side trips on the way home

- Ambulance service

- Poor weather, natural events (earthquakes), natural disasters

In occasions when there are questions about eligibility, a program participant may call the GRH Hotline (510-433-0320) or send an email (**ridehome@alamedactc.org**) and obtain a decision from available staff.

Emergency-related stops on your way home are permissible. Permissible emergency-related stops could include picking up a sick child at school or daycare, filling a prescription at a pharmacy, or stopping at an ATM for cash to pay a taxi driver.

Program Registration

Registration in the GRH program is required **before** taking a reimbursement-eligible ride. If an individual submits a request for reimbursement before he or she is registered in the program, that reimbursement cannot be honored. Participants may be asked to re-register or update their contact information periodically.

The registration process includes two steps:

COMPLETE A PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

There are two methods for registering with the GRH Program:

- **Online via the website: grh.alamedactc.org**
  Individuals can register for the GRH program via the program website. Both the participant information form and waiver are available online and require less than five minutes to complete.

- **United States Postal Service**
  If a program participant does not have easy access to the internet, hard copy registration forms are available upon request. These materials are available for download on our website, or can be requested via the GRH Hotline, 510-433-0320.

Program registrants can return these materials to:

> GRH Program
> c/o Nelson\Nygaard
> 116 New Montgomery Street, Suite 500
> San Francisco, CA 94105

AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE PROGRAM

In order to participate in the Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home program, participants must sign a waiver (available in online registration) accepting the risks of the program and acknowledging that the Alameda CTC or the program vendor (Nelson\Nygaard) are not liable for any damage that may occur due to rides taken via the program.

COMPLETED REGISTRATION

Successfully registering in the program enables individuals to be **eligible** for reimbursement under the rules of the GRH program. Actual reimbursement for a GRH ride can only occur after a reimbursement request form is completed, submitted to the GRH Program online or by mail, and approved by the GRH Program Administrator or authorized staff.

What Is Eligible For Reimbursement?

ELIGIBLE TRIPS

- Taxi, rental car, Transportation Network Company (TNC) services such as Lyft or Uber, public transportation or car share trips are eligible for reimbursement.

- All trips must begin in Alameda County and destinations must be within 125 miles of the trip origin.

- It is recommended that trips over 20 miles use a rental car or public transportation.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- **For rental car trips, only the base fare cost plus tax, tolls, and basic rental car insurance[1] are eligible for reimbursement.** Fuel costs are the responsibility of the participant.

  - In the case of rental cars, the cost of a one-day rental and basic car insurance is eligible for reimbursement. Additional days will not be eligible for reimbursement (e.g., costs for weekend car rentals will not be reimbursed if a rental car from a Friday cannot be returned until Monday).

  - Pre-paid fuel offered by rental car services will not be reimbursed.

  - Additional "extras" offered by rental car services, such as a GPS device or full-coverage car insurance, will not be reimbursed.

  - Program participants may not rent "premium vehicles" (SUVs, luxury, specialty). Only the rental of standard or economy vehicles will be reimbursed.

  - Transportation costs to/from a rental car rental location will not be reimbursed. However, some rental car companies (such as Enterprise) will provide this transportation service as part of the rental cost.

- The hourly or day rate cost of a car share vehicle rental may be reimbursed.

- For trips taken by taxi or Transportation Network Company (TNC) services like Lyft or Uber, gratuity should be paid for by the GRH participant.

- The GRH program will not reimburse any expenses not explicitly identified as eligible for reimbursement.
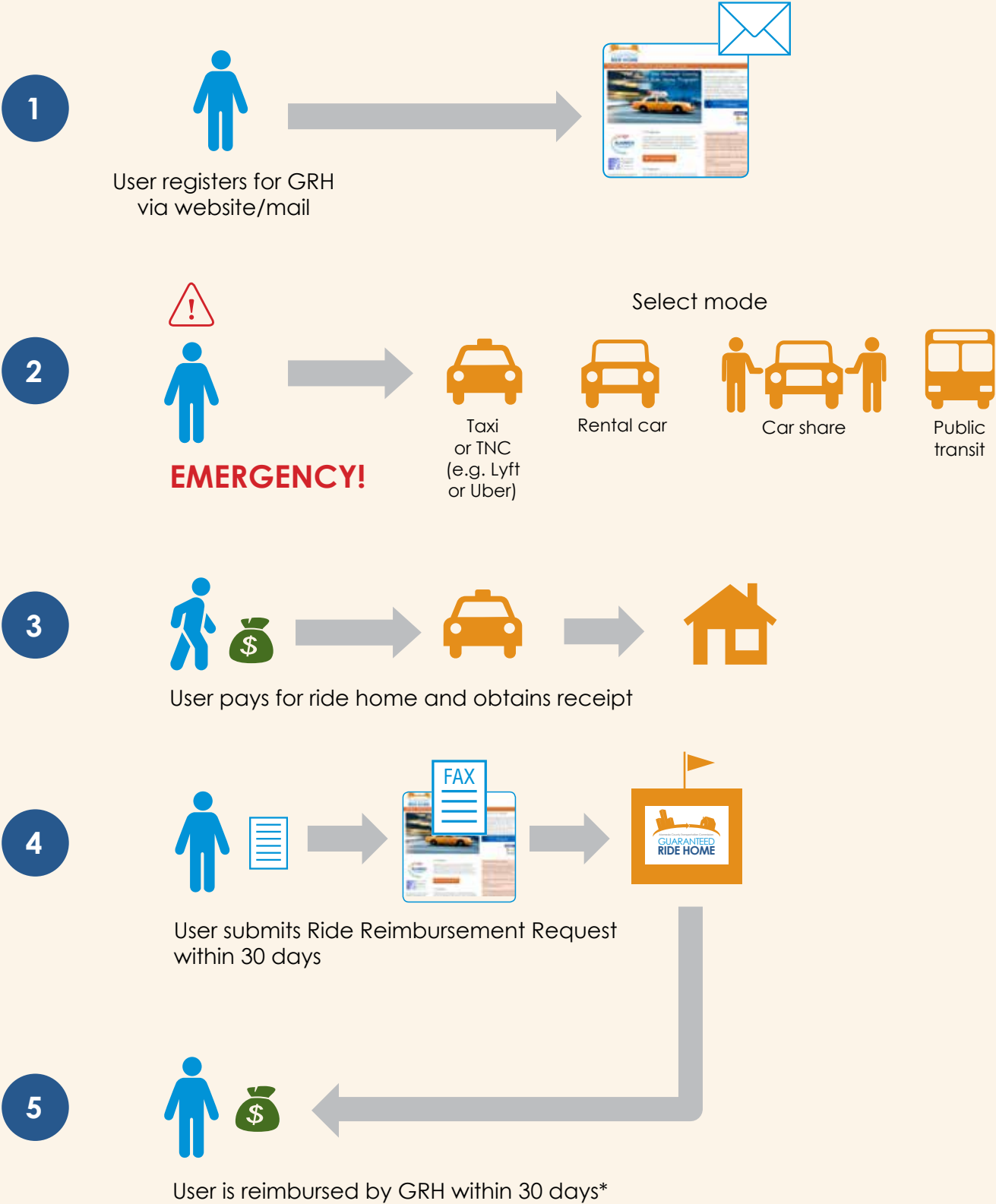
PROGRAM LIMITS

- The maximum reimbursement per trip, regardless of mode, is $125.

- Program participants are limited to a maximum reimbursement of $600 per calendar year[2] **or** six reimbursed trips per calendar year, whichever occurs first.

- The GRH program will notify participants when they are nearing reimbursement limits.

1 Supplemental Liability Protection; Personal Accident Insurance; and Damage Waiver Protection
2 $600 is the maximum limit to ensure that reimbursements do not exceed the threshold that would require the filing of an IRS 1099-MISC (taxable income).

How to Make GRH Work for You

1 User registers for GRH via website/mail

2 ⚠ EMERGENCY!

Select mode

Taxi or TNC (e.g. Lyft or Uber)

Rental car

Car share

Public transit

3 User pays for ride home and obtains receipt

4 FAX

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

User submits Ride Reimbursement Request within 30 days

5 User is reimbursed by GRH within 30 days*

*Assumes user adheres to program requirements

Requesting and Receiving Reimbursement

To be reimbursed for a GRH trip, program participants must complete the following steps:

USER PAYS FOR RIDE HOME AND OBTAINS A RECEIPT

Participants must obtain a receipt from the rental car, car share, taxi company, Transportation Network Company (TNC) service, or public transportation service used. The receipt or rental agreement should include date of service, service provider, and an itemized breakdown of costs (base fare, fuel, other extras).

If a public transit service was used, the participant must provide either a receipt, transfer ticket, or another form of proof-of-payment, along with an account of the public transit agency's name and the origin and destination of the trip.

USER SUBMITS RIDE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Requests can be completed online or submitted via fax, 415-284-1554. Request must include submission of the receipt as well as workplace management approval if the GRH trip is used due to unexpected overtime. **Reimbursement requests <u>must</u> be received within 30 calendar days of the ride. Any requests received after 30 days will not be eligible for reimbursement.**

USER IS REIMBURSED BY GRH

Reimbursement payments will be made to program participants within 30 days of receipt of request. Participants may elect to be reimbursed via check mailed to an address provided to the GRH program or electronically (via PayPal) for faster processing. The participant will receive notice once their request has been approved.

Other reimbursement notes:

- If a participant is found to have falsified information related to the reason for using the Guaranteed Ride Home Program or the commute mode taken on the day the program is used, or otherwise abuses the program, the participant will not be reimbursed for the ride and will be issued a written warning (email) from the GRH Program.

- If there is any information missing from the Ride Reimbursement Request, GRH program staff will contact the participant for clarification or to obtain additional information.

DISPUTES

If a participant feels that he or she has not been properly reimbursed based on a ride request, the participant may file a request for review with the GRH Program Administrator using the email address on the GRH website or via the GRH hotline. The GRH Program Administrator will review the materials submitted by the participant, and make a final and binding determination as to reimbursement eligibility and amount, consistent with the rules outlined in this document. Final reimbursement eligibility decisions are not subject to further appeal.

Liability Waiver and General Release of All Claims

The Guaranteed Ride Home program ("GRH Program") is a voluntary program offered by the Alameda County Transportation Commission ("Alameda CTC") which serves as a supplemental commuter benefit for employees working in Alameda County. The GRH Program reimburses commuters for certain transportation expenses in qualifying emergency situations. I hereby acknowledge that Alameda CTC offers no endorsement or certification of any taxi, Transportation Network Company (TNC), car share, rental car company, or public transportation service as fit to perform reimbursable transportation services under the GRH Program, and I hereby acknowledge that I am solely responsible for choosing a provider of transportation services in emergency situations for potential reimbursement through the GRH Program. I further hereby acknowledge that participation in the GRH Program is strictly voluntary, and hereby assume full responsibility for all liability and all risk of injury or loss, including death, which may result from my participation in the GRH Program. I hereby agree to hold harmless, release, waive, forever discharge and covenant not to bring legal action or claim against the Alameda CTC from any and all claims or demands I may have by reason of any accident, illness, injury or death, or damage to or loss or destruction of any property, arising or resulting directly or indirectly from my participation in the GRH Program and occurring during such participation or any time subsequent thereto. This Liability Waiver and General Release of All Claims is binding on my heirs, executors, administrators and all of my family members. I hereby acknowledge that my participation in the GRH Program does not in any manner imply that I am acting in the course and scope of official business for my employer, nor does it in any manner establish an employer-employee or agency-employee or agency relationship with the Alameda CTC.

I affirm that the information I have provided is true and I have reviewed the rules and regulations of the GRH Program and the foregoing paragraph. I recognize that I will be charged by the Alameda CTC GRH Program for any proven fraudulent use of the GRH Program.

Alameda County Transportation Commission

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RIDE HOME
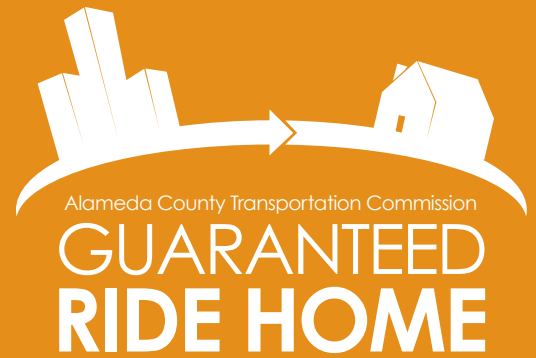
grh.alamedactc.org

EMAIL: ridehome@alamedactc.org
HOTLINE: 510-433-0320

(9AM–5PM Monday-Friday)

FAX: 415-284-1554

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