



**SF** Environment

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A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

# **San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program 2012-13 Annual Report**

## **CommuteSmart**

**January 2014**



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AIR QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program furthers San Francisco's Transit First Policy by encouraging commuters to use sustainable commute modes without the worry of finding a safe and fast ride home in the event of an emergency. This program helps meet the city's larger goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

The San Francisco Department of the Environment's CommuteSmart program administers ERH for San Francisco employers and all eligible employees. All San Francisco businesses are eligible to enroll in this free program by submitting an employer agreement. Membership is valid for the current fiscal year in which the agreement was submitted. Businesses that wish to continue participation in the program must submit a new employer agreement annually.

Analysis of ERH for the 2012-13 fiscal year identified a number of positive conclusions:

1. **Cost-effective program.** The program has successfully met the needs of participants each year while maintaining a low overall cost.
2. **Infrequent use by many participants.** Most commuters that access this program have only used it once a fiscal year, demonstrating that it is used only when appropriately necessary.
3. **Encourages commuters to use a sustainable mode.** If ERH were unavailable, almost all participants respond that they would continue using a sustainable commute mode to get to work. This program is effective in encouraging commuters to use sustainable modes of transit and, more importantly, continue to do so if having an emergency ride home were unavailable.

Although Emergency Ride Home has been a positive program for encouraging and incentivizing sustainable modes of transit among commuters, aspects of the program can be improved for the future.

1. **Increased Outreach and Marketing.** Ways to increase program visibility and awareness to businesses include marketing in newsletters and blogs, reaching out to previously registered employers, advertising on public transit vehicles and stations, and outreach to car commuters. Additionally, bicycle problems and carpool/vanpool problems are generally the most underreported reasons for using ERH, which leaves room for increased outreach so that commuters are aware of the eligibility of these modes for the program.

2. **Cross-Program Promotion.** Emergency Ride Home information can be included in other CommuteSmart programs such as the Commuter Benefits Ordinance and SchoolPool program.
3. **Improved Outreach to Small Businesses.** Through partnership with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), CommuteSmart will have the opportunity to conduct more in-person outreach to the small business community in San Francisco to encourage registration in the program to support employee use of sustainable modes.
4. **Commuter Campaign.** In the past, outreach was targeted during registration and renewal cycles. A new comprehensive commuter campaign will provide the opportunity to present a full transportation package to San Francisco employers.
5. **Paperless Reimbursement Process.** Employer registration and reimbursement requests can be completed online. However, the supervisor approval form along with a copy of the receipt(s) must be completed on paper and mailed to the San Francisco Department of the Environment. In the coming years, a way to collect receipts and receive supervisor approval electronically will be explored.
6. **Online Registration and Access.** An online registration platform that enables employers to log into their account and submit changes to their contact information will provide data for employers on which of their employees are registered for the program, data for how many reimbursements have been submitted from their employees, and the ability to complete supervisor approval for reimbursement requests.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Census Bureau has recently reported that about 42 percent of workers in San Francisco County carpooled, took public transportation, or biked to work.<sup>1</sup> However, there may be times when a personal or family emergency occurs and an employee needs to leave work immediately. Emergency Ride Home encourages commuters to travel to work using sustainable modes by providing a free ride home in case of these emergency situations.

### 1.1 BENEFITS TO BUSINESSES AND CITY

Emergency Ride Home is a free program with easy registration and access for businesses and their employees. For businesses, the program supports the commuter benefits program, and can help to reduce employee off-street parking demand. Additionally, walking, biking, taking transit or ridesharing to work promotes employee health.

ERH also supports San Francisco's policies and goals. In 1973, the San Francisco City Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors adopted the Transit First Policy<sup>2</sup> to prioritize investment for walking, biking and transit. ERH also helps meet citywide climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

### 1.2 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The San Francisco Department of the Environment's CommuteSmart program staff administers and promotes the Emergency Ride Home program. Funding is provided by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's County Manager Transportation Fund for Clean Air and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority through Proposition K.

The program is free and available to all businesses in San Francisco. Employers must first register for the program by submitting an employer agreement form. Once an employer is registered, their San Francisco employees are eligible to request reimbursement for emergency rides. The employer agreement specifies the rules of the program and the limits on employee reimbursements. Beginning with the 2012-13 fiscal year, the annual registration form is available online to streamline the process. A copy of the form can be found in Appendix A.

Upon submitting the agreement, businesses can download promotional materials, including a flyer and Program Rules, to notify employees about the program. Once a business is registered, all

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. Published 5 March 2013.

[http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/american\\_community\\_survey\\_acs/cb13-r22.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/american_community_survey_acs/cb13-r22.html) (Accessed November 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Transit First Policy, San Francisco City Charter, Section 8A. 115.

[http://www.sfplanning.org/ftp/general\\_plan/l4\\_Transportation.htm#TRA\\_TF](http://www.sfplanning.org/ftp/general_plan/l4_Transportation.htm#TRA_TF) (Accessed October 2013).

employees at that location are eligible to submit reimbursement requests for the current fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). At the end of the fiscal year, businesses must renew their registration by submitting the agreement form. This annual renewal process promotes active participation by businesses.

All permanent part-time or full-time employees of a San Francisco employer are eligible to participate in the program. Participants must use one of the following commute modes to work on the day they use ERH:

- Biking
- Walking
- Public transportation (bus, train, ferry)
- Carpool/Vanpool

Employees of registered businesses may request reimbursements for the following qualified emergencies:

- Illness or crisis of employee or immediate family member
- Carpool or vanpool ride is unavailable due to unexpected changes in the driver's schedule or vehicle breakdown
- Bicycle problem, including flat tire, mechanical failure, vandalism or theft
- Required unexpected overtime (i.e., employee was not aware of the situation before the start of the workday). Supervisor authorization is required

The Emergency Ride Home program will reimburse one-way taxi fare, a 24-hour car rental period and/or public transit fare only. These reimbursements are made with the following restrictions in place:

- Participants may be reimbursed for up to four trips per fiscal year, and each trip is reimbursable up to \$150 per taxi or public transit trip or \$60 per rental car trip
- Employers are limited to a total reimbursement cap of \$1,000 per fiscal year. After this limit is reached, the program will reimburse employers for 50 percent of the cost of each valid trip up to an additional \$1,000 maximum each fiscal year. Employers may opt to reimburse the remaining 50 percent if they choose
- All trips must originate at the participant's work location in San Francisco

Participants will be reimbursed for the costs that meet these restrictions. Trips not covered include personal errands, non-emergency related side-trips on the way home, medical emergencies that require an ambulance, transit service breakdown or interruption, natural disasters or civic emergencies, transportation to a doctor or hospital resulting from an on-the-job injury (ERH cannot be used to replace an employer's legal responsibility under workers' compensation regulations),

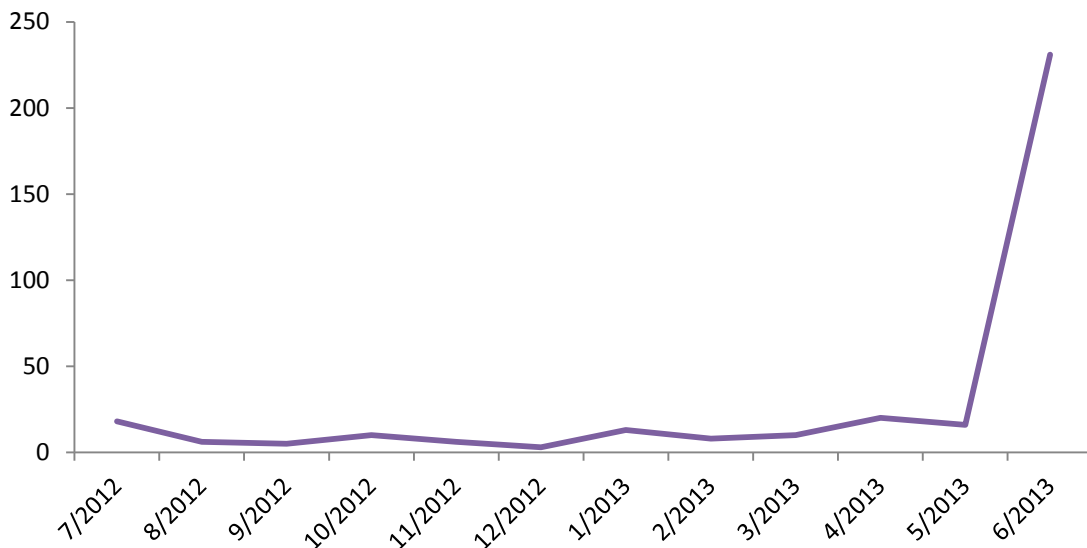
trips before 10 p.m. by regular transit riders who have unscheduled overtime, and trips made prior to business enrollment in the Emergency Ride Home program.

When employees are taking an emergency ride home, they must keep the original receipts from their trip(s). To request a reimbursement, participants must complete the online reimbursement form including the brief questionnaire about their trip and their use of the program (a copy of the reimbursement form and questionnaire are included in Appendix B and C, respectively). Once the reimbursement request is submitted, participants will receive a prompt to print a Supervisor Approval form, see Appendix D. This form will need to be sent to the San Francisco Department of the Environment along with employee's original receipts attached, any required documentation and their supervisor's signature. Reimbursements are processed within four to six weeks. The full set of program rules are provided in Appendix E.

## 2. EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

### 2.1 EMPLOYER REGISTRATION

Employers can choose to enroll in the Emergency Ride Home program at any time. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of employer registration by month. With the annual renewal process at the start of the fiscal year, enrollment spikes in June and July. In order to ensure that their registration is ready by July 1, employers need to register by June 30. Another minor increase can be seen around April 30th when the San Francisco Commuter Benefits Ordinance compliance forms are due.<sup>3</sup> CommuteSmart provides information on ERH and other programs in the confirmation email sent after receiving the compliance form. Companies that wish to remain active in the program must submit a new Employer Agreement form every fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).



**Figure 1. Employer Registration by Month**

n = 346

In order to publicize this program more effectively, CommuteSmart can provide more regular communications about the program through social media outlets, newsletters and partnerships with transit agencies.

<sup>3</sup> The San Francisco Commuter Benefits Ordinance requires businesses with locations in San Francisco and 20 or more employees nationwide to provide a commuter benefit. More information on the Ordinance can be found at [SFEnvironment.org/CommuterBenefits](http://SFEnvironment.org/CommuterBenefits).



## 2.2 REIMBURSEMENT ANALYSIS

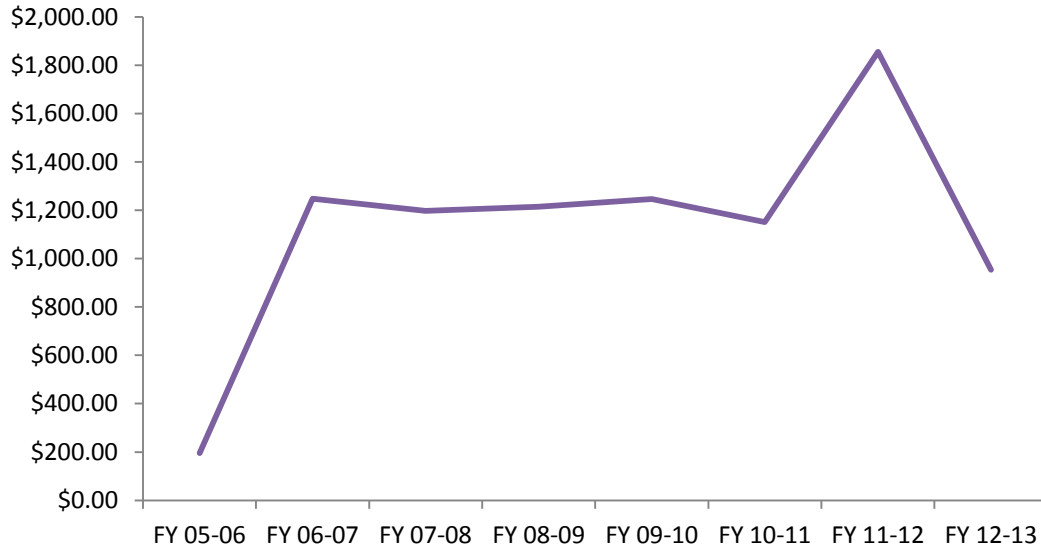
As seen in Table 1, the total cost reimbursed for the ERH Program in FY 2012-2013 was just less than \$1,000. Slightly more than half of the reimbursements were submitted by City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) employees while the rest were requested by employees at other San Francisco businesses.

**Table 1. Costs and Number of Reimbursements FY 2012-2013**

Employer	Total Reimbursement Costs	Number of Reimbursements
SF Businesses	\$552.45	11
City and County of San Francisco (CCSF)	\$401.90	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$954.35</b>	<b>25</b>
Average Cost per Reimbursement	\$38.17	

\*Total Number of SF Employers enrolled in ERH: 346

Total reimbursement costs have generally increased since the program launched until 2012, as seen in Figure 2. However, a decline in reimbursement costs can be seen in this past fiscal year. This could be due to a number of reasons, including lower employer registrations, fewer emergencies, other modes of transportation used, unreported claims or lower awareness of the program.

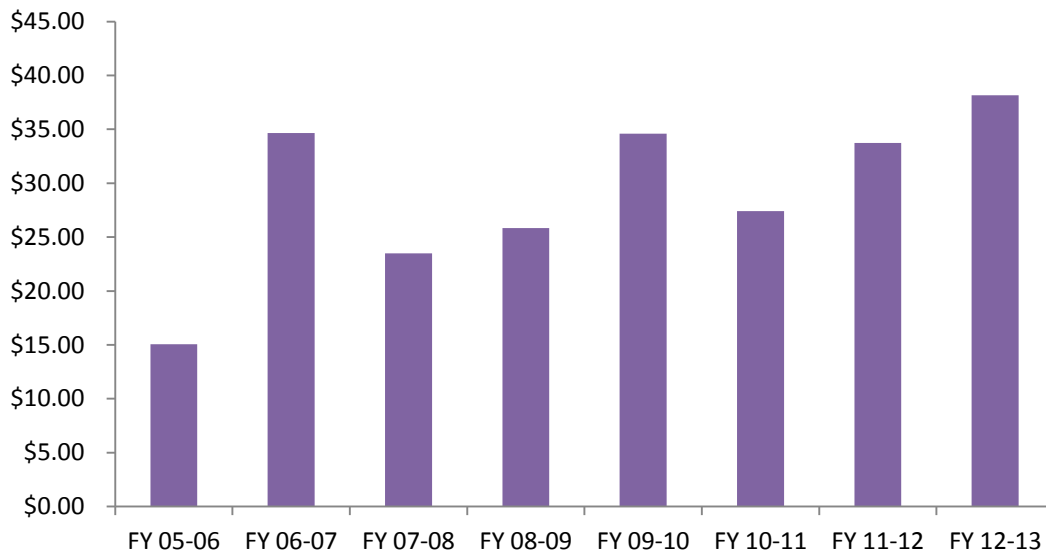


**Figure 2. Total Reimbursement by Fiscal Year**

n = 204

Figure 3 shows the average cost of reimbursements. Although total reimbursement costs have fluctuated throughout the years, the average cost per reimbursement has steadily increased over the last three years. This can be attributed to a number of factors, such as increased distance from

work, taxi fares or participant usage. With the growing availability of public transportation, employees may be commuting farther than before to work. The cost of living has increased over time which may cause taxi fares to increase as well.



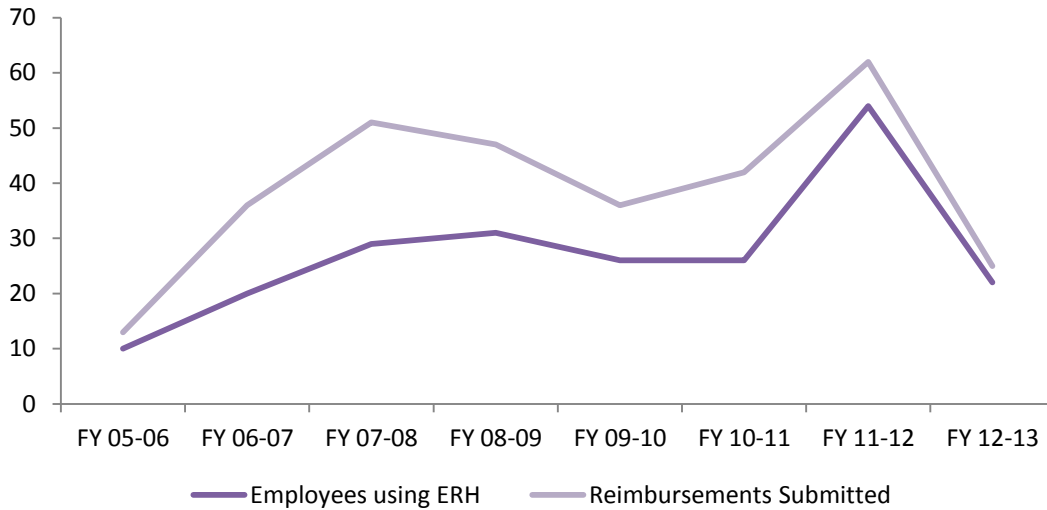
**Figure 3. Average Reimbursement by Fiscal Year**

n = 204

Overall, the Emergency Ride Home program is a cost-effective program that is used by participants when needed.

### 2.3 USAGE TRENDS

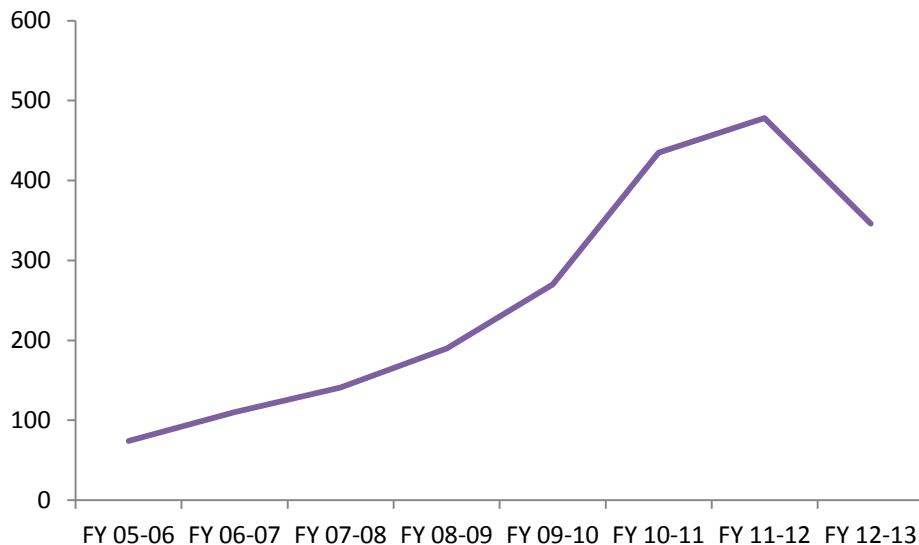
The past fiscal year saw a decline in the number of reimbursements submitted, see Figure 4. FY 2012-13 shows the number of reimbursements submitted is close to the number of employees using ERH, which reveals that most employees generally use the program once, rather than a few employees using the program multiple times.



**Figure 4. Program Usage by Employees**

n = 204

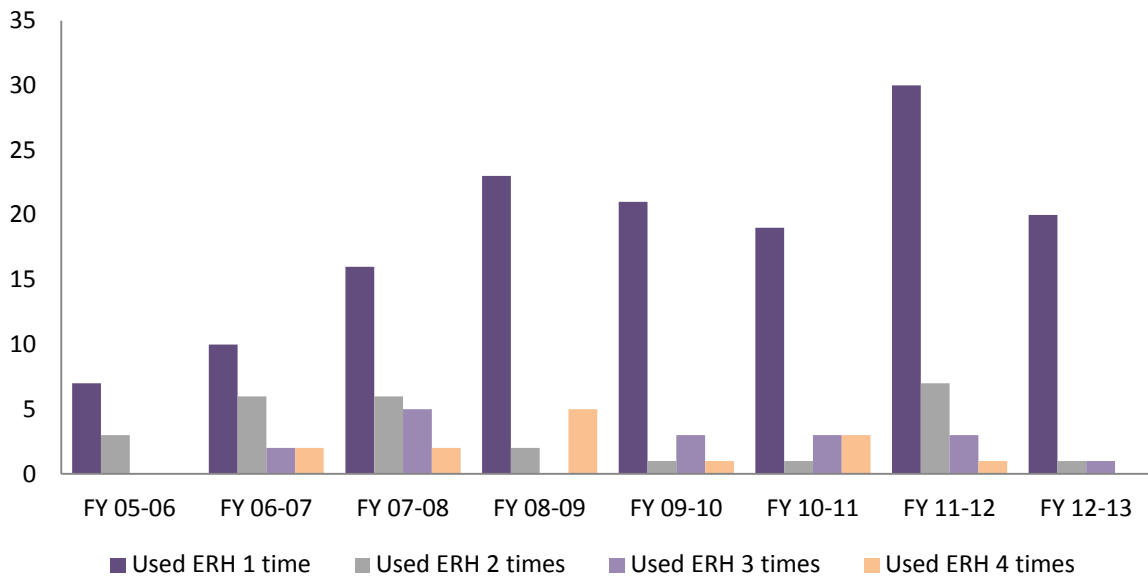
Since the inception of this program until FY 2011-12, businesses could register for ERH once and retain membership indefinitely. This process did not accurately reflect how many businesses were actively utilizing the program. Businesses may not be actively promoting this program to their employees and the program rules may be forgotten. To address this concern, beginning FY 2012-13, businesses were required to complete an annual employer agreement form. As a result, there were 80 fewer employers registered in FY 2012-13 compared to the previous fiscal year, see Figure 5.



**Figure 5. Enrolled Employers in ERH by Year**

n = 824

As seen in Figure 6, the majority of users tend to use ERH once. This illustrates that the program is used by participants who need it. The number of times participants have used this service two or more times in a fiscal year has remained low throughout the years since this program has been in place.

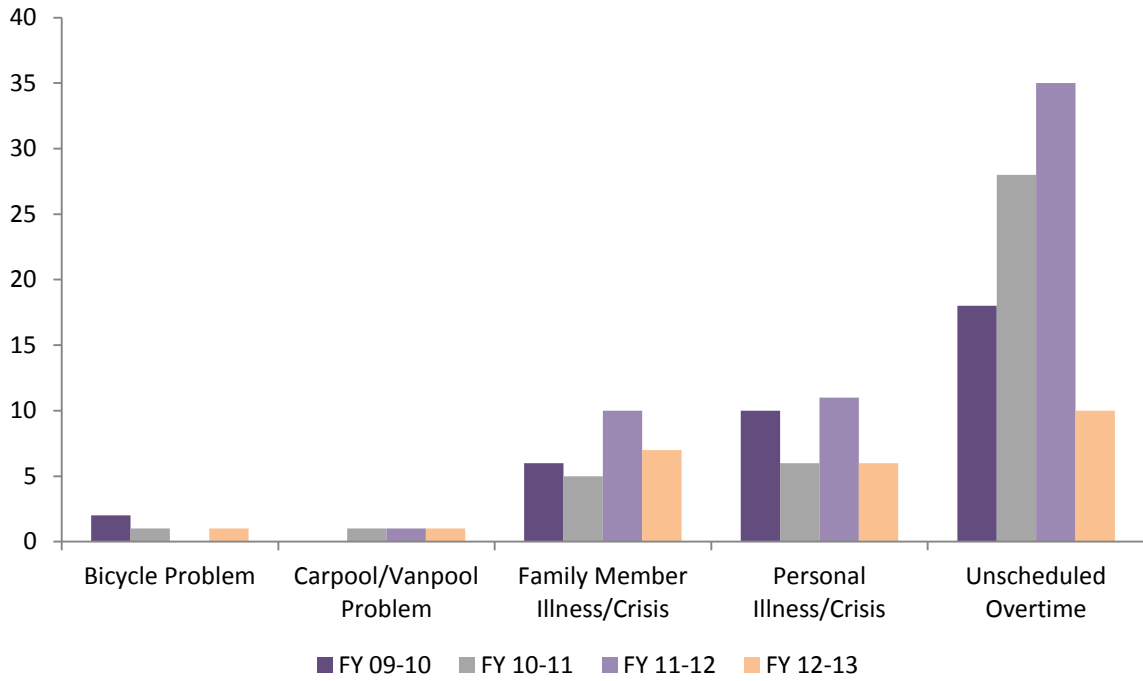


**Figure 6. Usage per Participant**

n = 204

Most people utilize ERH due to unscheduled overtime, as seen in Figure 7. However, the number of overtime reimbursements submitted has decreased significantly compared to previous years. This can be attributed to two updates in program rules to ensure that the program continues to be used for emergency purposes. One change required employees to provide their supervisor’s contact information and approval for confirmation of unscheduled overtime. The second specifies that only unexpected overtime requests from regular transit users that go past 10:00 PM will be reimbursed.

Personal or family member illness or crisis is the second most frequent reason why workers used the ERH program. Very few people reported using ERH for bicycle or carpool/vanpool problems, which leaves room to increase outreach so employees know that they can utilize this program if such problems arise.



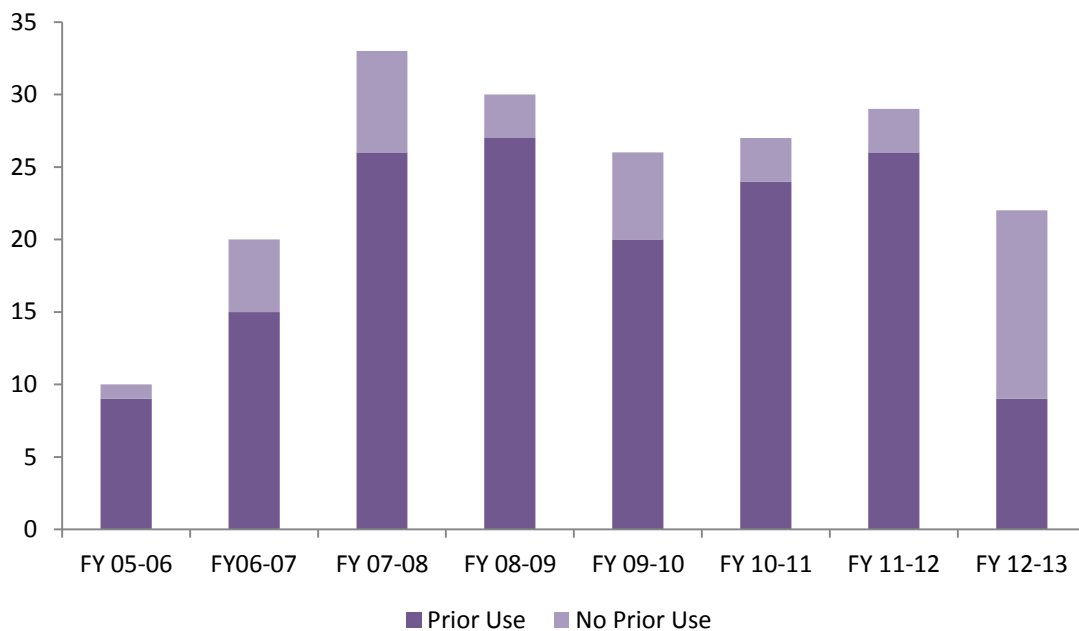
**Figure 7. Reasons for Using ERH**

n = 159

### 3. RESULTS OF THE EMERGENCY RIDE HOME SURVEY

CommuteSmart requires participants to complete a short survey, as part of the ERH reimbursement form, to determine how ERH shapes participant decisions to use varying sustainable commute modes.

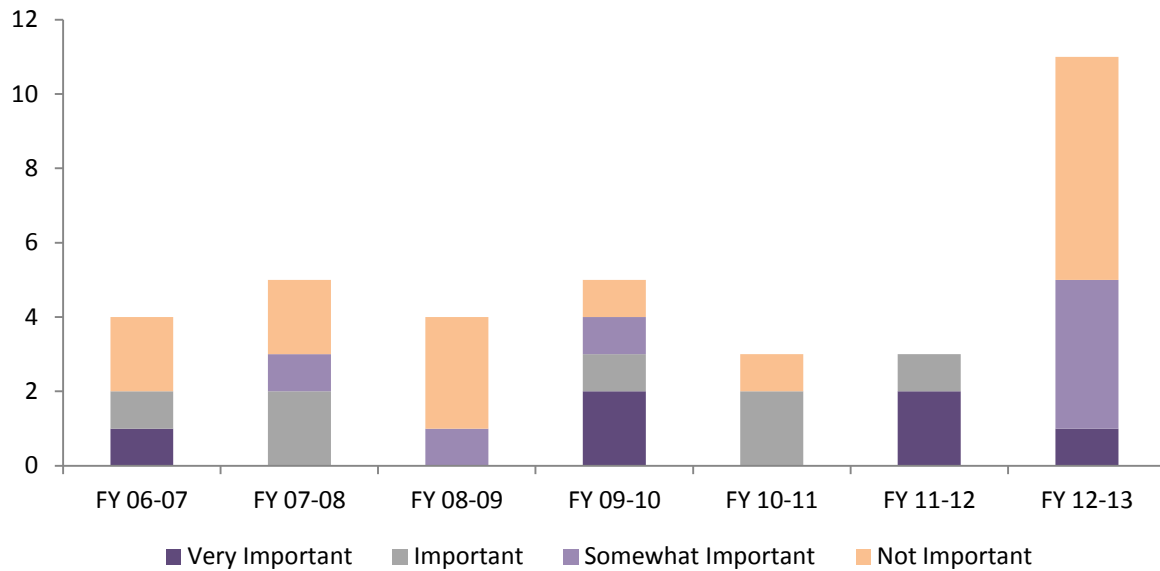
From FY 2005-2012, many participants indicated that they have used a sustainable mode for their commute prior to joining ERH, as seen in Figure 8. However, FY 2012-2013 shows more participants did not use a sustainable commute prior to using ERH. This may indicate that the program is becoming more effective in changing commute behavior and encouraging employees to drive less to work.



**Figure 8. Use of Sustainable Commute Modes Prior to Employer's ERH Registration**

n = 199

Of the participants who indicated they did not use an alternative mode for their commute prior to their employer registering for ERH, Figure 9 shows their responses to how important the program is in changing their commute mode. In previous years, participants have said that this program is important for deciding to switch to a sustainable commute choice, but the efficacy of this program in that regard has not always been consistent.

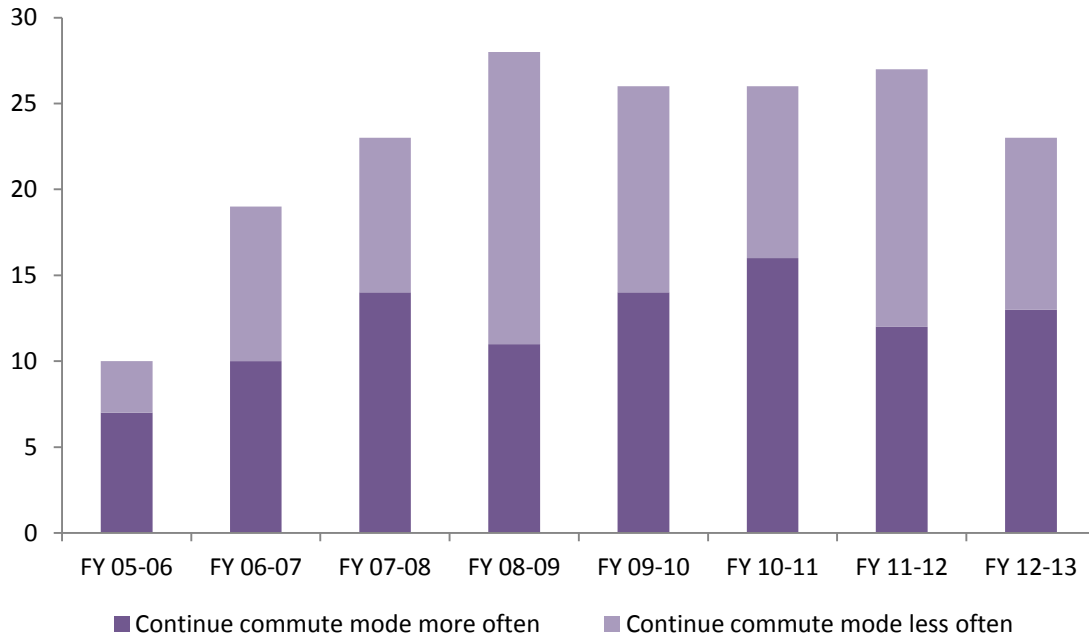


**Figure 9. Importance of ERH in Commute Mode Choice**

n = 35\*

\* = Participants who indicated no prior sustainable commute mode, about 17 percent of respondents

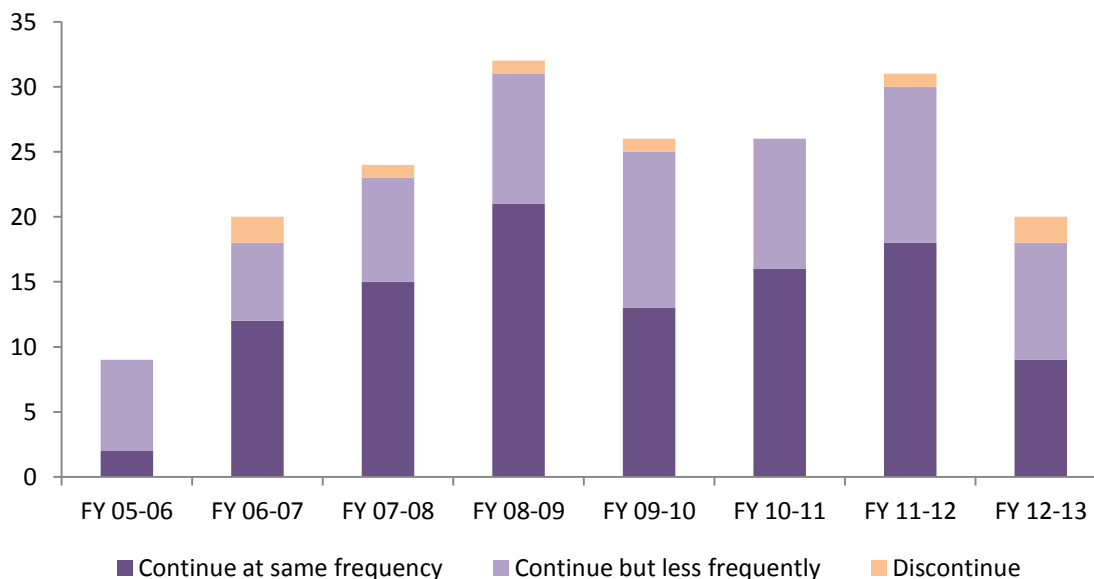
Participants were then asked if having an emergency ride home available would encourage them to use their commute mode more often than not. As seen in Figure 10, from FY 2005-2013 there were a cumulative total of 182 responses. Over 50 percent of participants indicated that they would use a sustainable commute mode more often with the assurance of an emergency ride while 47 percent of participants responded no. Some of these 'no' responses would be due to participants already using their sustainable mode every day. The program appears to encourage roughly half of commuters to use a sustainable commute more often. In addition, ERH may also be an added benefit for employees who already choose to commute sustainably.



**Figure 10. Influence of ERH on Encouraging Continued Commute Mode**

n = 182

If ERH were unavailable, almost all participants cited that they would continue using sustainable commute modes to get to work. Figure 11 shows that 56 percent of participants would continue commuting to work sustainably at the same frequency while 39 percent of participants would continue using their commute mode less frequently. Only four percent of the participants over the span of this program have said that they would discontinue using sustainable modes for their commute if this program was unavailable.

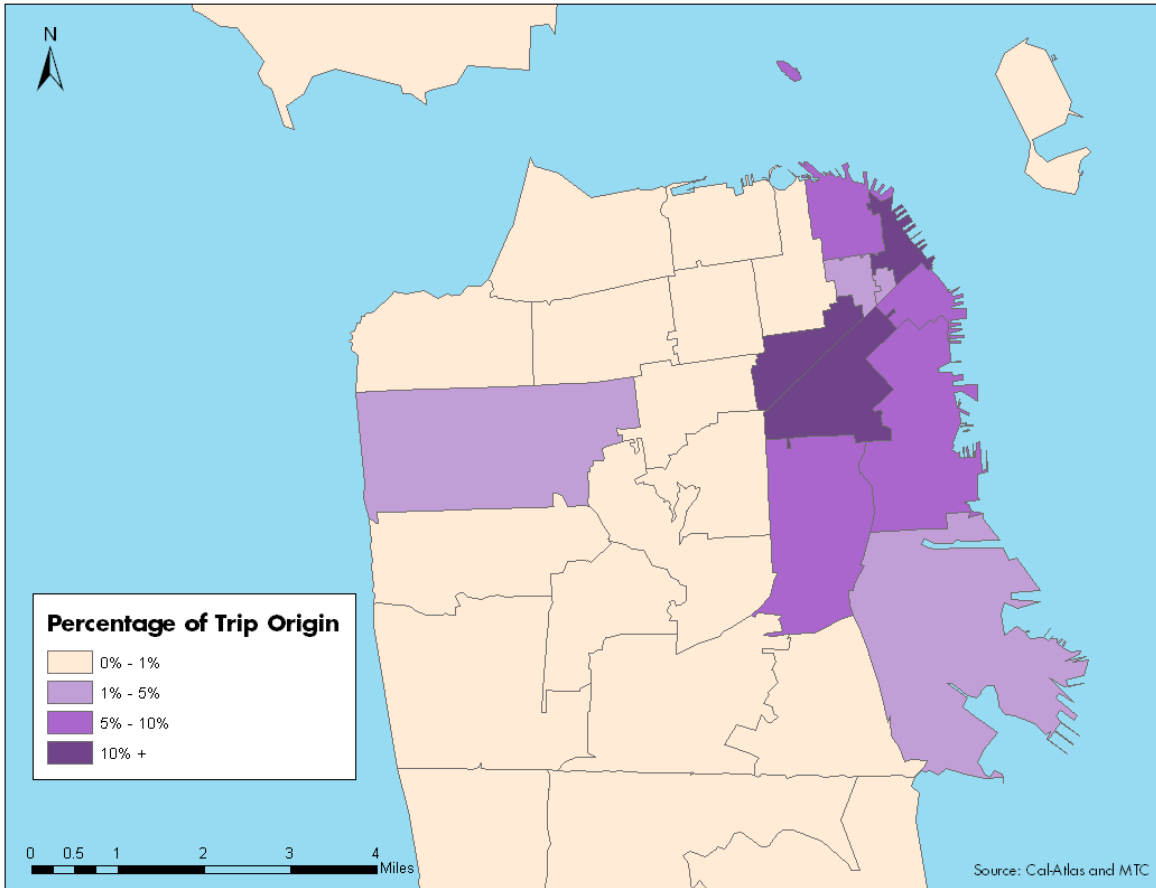


**Figure 11. Continuation of Sustainable Commute if ERH Became Unavailable**

n = 188



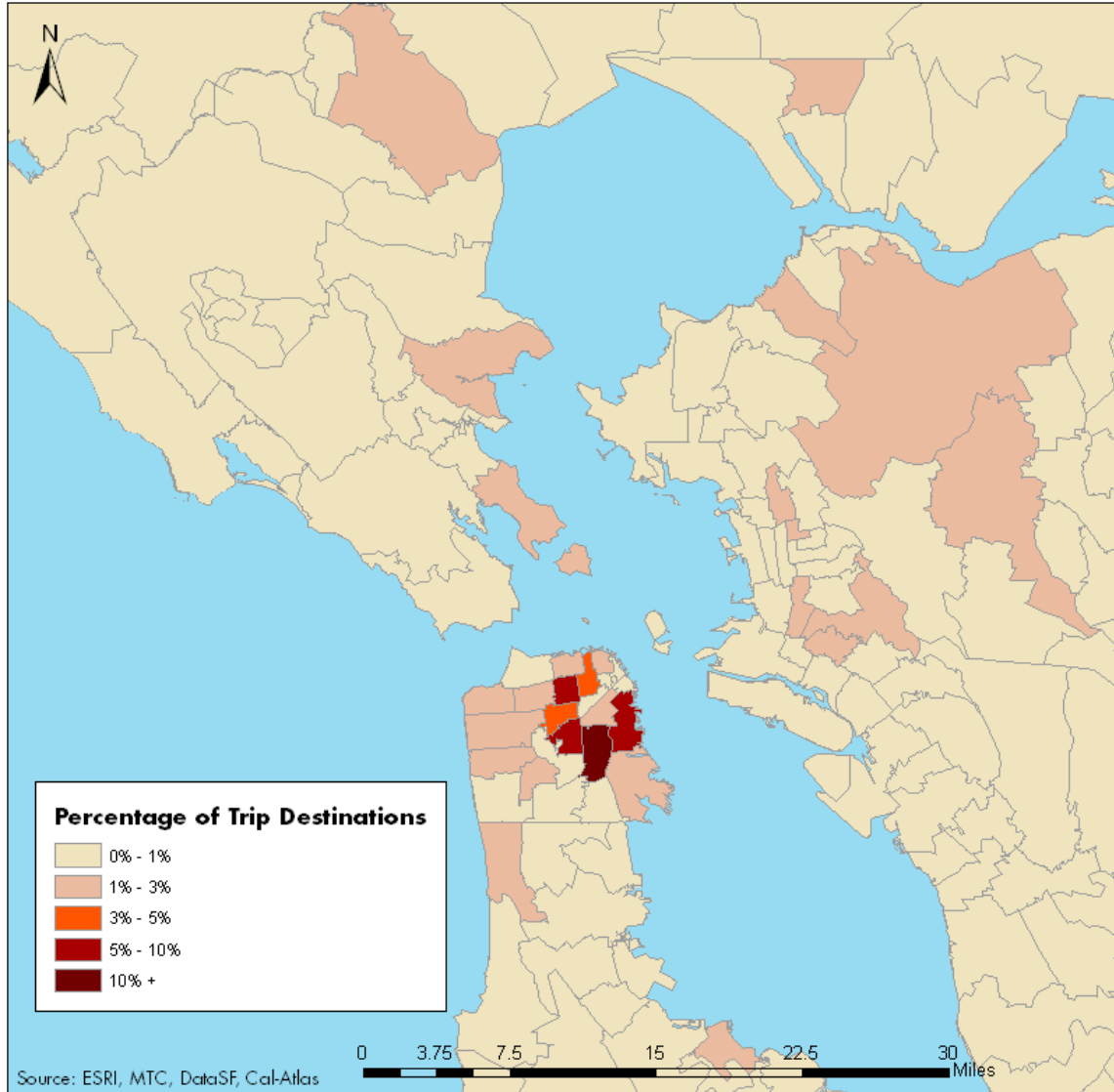
Emergency Ride Home trips must originate from the employee’s work location in San Francisco. Figure 12 shows the zip code starting location of participants for all years since the program has been in place. The majority of ERH trips originate in downtown San Francisco, Financial District and the South of Market neighborhood. Other regions of where trips occurred include Hunters Point, Mission Bay, North Beach, Potrero Hill, Richmond District and South Beach.



**Figure 12. Reimbursements by Zip Code of Workplace Origin for FY 2005-13**

n = 22

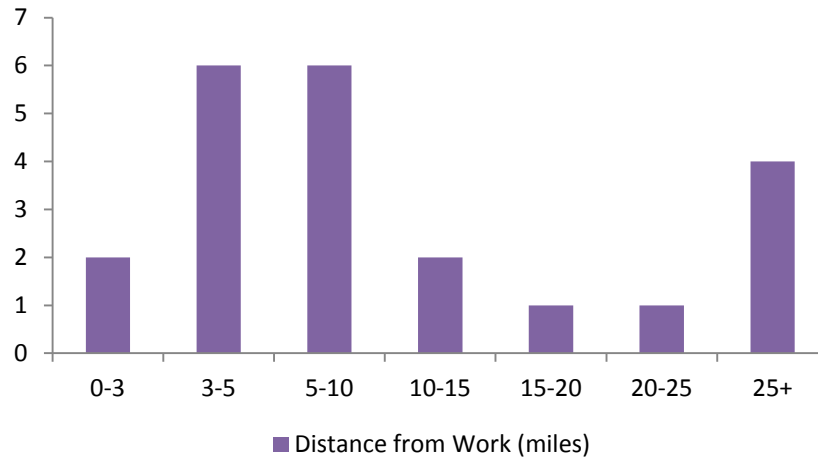
ERH trip destinations span across the San Francisco Bay Area. Most of the destinations are located within San Francisco, see Figure 13. Other ERH destination trips include the North Bay, East Bay and Silicon Valley.



**Figure 13. Reimbursements by Zip Code Destinations for FY 2005-13**

n = 22

During the FY 2012-2013, 64 percent of participants who utilized the ERH program live or traveled to the emergency location within ten miles of their workplace, as seen in Figure 14. Eighteen percent live between ten to twenty-five miles and another eighteen percent live more than twenty-five miles away from their workplace.



**Figure 14. Distance Traveled using ERH 2012-2013 Fiscal Year**

n = 22

## 4. PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS SINCE LAST FISCAL YEAR

Continual improvements have been implemented to improve access to and participation in the program. The 2011-2012 ERH Report identified several aspects of the program that could be improved for the following fiscal year. These improvements have been incorporated into the 2012-13 Program Rules and are analyzed below.

1. **Annual renewal process.** In previous years, employers could register for the ERH program once and remain active in the program indefinitely. However, this process was changed due to inactive businesses and likely decreases in promotion of the program. Given the new annual renewal process, the total number of registered businesses in this program has decreased compared to the previous fiscal years. This outcome was expected and is being addressed through more intensive cross-promotion and outreach, as outlined in 5.1.2 below. The ultimate intent of the change is that the businesses which are enrolled play a more active role in using and promoting the program.
2. **Electronic Reimbursement Process.** Reimbursement requests were previously submitted solely through mailed-in paper forms. This process required additional staff time to input the information. This past fiscal year, participants were able to submit their requests electronically, streamlining the process both for participants and staff. As a result, qualified participants received their reimbursement checks sooner and the amount of paper necessary to submit a request was reduced.
3. **Update in Program Rules.** In previous fiscal years, ERH participants citing unscheduled overtime for their reimbursement were not required to provide authorization from their supervisor. Rather, they could obtain a signature from the ERH coordinator in their office. In addition, there was no time restriction of when unscheduled overtime could take place. In order to maintain program use as intended, two additional rules were added to the program during the 2012-13 fiscal year. First, employees need to submit their supervisor's signature confirming that the overtime claim was unscheduled and required. Second, overtime must occur after 10 p.m. for regular transit users. The data shows that the number of unscheduled overtime reimbursements decreased by about two-thirds compared to the previous fiscal year. However, this could be as a result of fewer reimbursements submitted.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS FROM FY 2012-13

The Emergency Ride Home program has proven to be a reliable and useful program for many participants. From the analysis, we can see that there is still room for improvement. In the past fiscal year, fewer reimbursements were reported than in the previous fiscal year. This shows that the program has the capacity for more participants by increasing outreach and promotion of this program.

Analysis of the Emergency Ride Home program for the 2012-13 fiscal year identified a number of positive conclusions:

1. **Cost-effective program.** In the past fiscal year, fewer reimbursements were submitted compared to previous years. As a result, the total amount of money used for reimbursements is lower than in previous years. The program has met the needs of participants each year while maintaining a low overall cost.
2. **Infrequent use by many participants.** From FY 2005-06 to FY 2011-12, about 70 percent of commuters that utilize this program have only used it once in a fiscal year. In the past fiscal year alone, over 90 percent of participants used the program once. This highlights the fact that ERH is used only when appropriately necessary.
3. **Encourages commuters to use a sustainable mode.** If ERH were unavailable, 90 percent of participants, in the past fiscal year alone, responded that they would continue using a sustainable commute mode to get to work. Specifically, 45 percent of employees indicated that they would continue commuting sustainably at the same frequency, while an additional 45 percent indicated that they would continue commuting sustainably but less frequently, and only 10 percent said they would discontinue their sustainable commute mode altogether. This program is effective in encouraging commuters to use sustainable modes of transit and, more importantly, continue to do so if having an emergency ride home were unavailable.

### 5.1 AREAS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

1. **Increased Outreach and Marketing.** In the past fiscal year, the number of participating businesses has decreased due to the requirement to register annually. Many businesses are unaware of this program. This can be improved by increasing program visibility and awareness to San Francisco businesses:

- More frequent marketing and communications outreach to San Francisco businesses, such as quarterly items for merchant association newsletters and blogs
  - Contacting participating employers and increasing promotion to non-participating employees
  - Reaching out to Human Resources departments previously registered for this program
  - Advertising on public transit vehicles and stations
  - Outreach to car commuters to inform them of the program's availability with the goal of having them request enrollment by their company and encouraging them to switch to more sustainable commute modes. Explore partnerships with Fastrak, Caltrans, DMV or other organizations which interface directly with car commuters
  - Targeting commuters who bike, carpool or vanpool to work. Since bicycle problems and carpool/vanpool problems are generally the most underreported reasons for using ERH, increased outreach could raise awareness to their eligibility of the program.
2. **Cross-Program Promotion.** Include information on ERH in promotion of other CommuteSmart programs to encourage participation in and knowledge of both.
    - Commuter Benefits Ordinance. Many of the companies which complete the online Commuter Benefits compliance form are not registered with ERH. Adding a simple one-click process for them to register at the same time could vastly increase the number of companies signed up for ERH in 2014
    - Schools Campaign. As part of our SchoolPool program include information about the ERH program in parent communications for promotion in their workplaces
  3. **Improved Outreach to Small Businesses.** Through partnership with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), CommuteSmart will have the opportunity to conduct more in-person outreach to the small business community in San Francisco to encourage registration in the program to support employee use of sustainable modes.
  4. **Commuter Campaign.** While targeted outreach around the ERH program has been conducted previously during registration and renewal cycles, a comprehensive commuter campaign has not yet been implemented. In the coming year, CommuteSmart has the opportunity to launch a campaign covering all programs, including ERH, to present a full transportation package to San Francisco employees.
  5. **Paperless Reimbursement Process.** Although transitioning the registration and reimbursement processes to an online format reduced the amount of paper associated with the ERH program, the paper Supervisor Approval Form continues to be a requirement. In the future year, determining a way to collect receipts and receive supervisor approval electronically will be explored.
  6. **Online Registration and Access.** Employers that request to enroll in this program need to complete an Employer Agreement form online. Once submitted, employers do not have access to make any changes. An online registration platform will allow employers to

log into their account and make changes in contact information. Another benefit is the potential to provide data for employers on how many reimbursements have been submitted by their employees, and the ability to complete supervisor approval for reimbursement requests.

## APPENDIX A: EMPLOYER AGREEMENT



# Emergency Ride Home Employer Agreement

On behalf of my employees, my organization would like to participate in the free San Francisco Emergency Ride Home program. I agree to abide by the policies of this program and inform our employees of the [proper use of this service](#).

I understand that neither the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program nor my organization is responsible for the actual transportation service provided.

Subject to the availability of funds, my organization is allowed up to \$1,000 per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) for full reimbursement of valid employee trips. After this limit is reached, the program will reimburse employees for 50% of the cost of each valid trip up to an additional \$1,000 maximum each fiscal year. Each employee may be reimbursed for up to four ERH trips each fiscal year.

I understand that by participating, my organization agrees to provide a contact person who will be responsible for the following:

- \*Informing employees about the program
- \*Informing employees on the program reimbursement rules and procedures
- \*Validating ride reimbursement requests
- \*Assisting with an annual program evaluation

Rule No. SFE-09-01-CBO

## REGISTRATION VALID UNTIL JUNE 30, 2014

EMPLOYER NAME: \*

EMPLOYER ADDRESS: \*

Street Address

Address Line 2

City

State / Province / Region

Postal / Zip Code

Country

EMPLOYER PHONE #: \*

 -  - 

###      ###      #####

# OF EMPLOYEES: \*

CONTACT PERSON: \*

First Last

CONTACT TITLE: \*

CONTACT EMAIL: \*

CONTACT PHONE #: \*

 -  - 

### ### ####

By clicking below, I agree to the Emergency Ride Home program rules and responsibilities. \*

I agree.

By clicking below, I agree to have my company name listed on the SFERH.org website as a participating employer. \*

I agree.

Name \*

First Last

Business Certificate Number

Date \*

 /  /  

MM DD YYYY

Where did you hear about the Emergency Ride Home program? (optional)

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### REGISTRATION VALID UNTIL JUNE 30, 2014

Please renew annually by June 30th each year for uninterrupted enrollment.

## APPENDIX B: REIMBURSEMENT FORM

# Emergency Ride Home Reimbursement Request

To request a reimbursement:

- 1) Complete the Request and Questionnaire below
- 2) Mail a copy of your original receipt(s) and supervisor approval to:

San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program  
 1455 Market St. Suite 1200  
 San Francisco CA 94103

Your request, receipt(s) and supervisor approval must be received within 30 days from date of trip and by June 30 of the current fiscal year.

**1** Reimbursement Request

**2** Reimbursement Questionnaire

Are you a City and County of San Francisco municipal employee?

\*

Yes

No

Company \*

Supervisor Name \*

First Last

Supervisor Phone Number \*

 -  - 

### ### ####

Supervisor Email \*

Employee Name \*

First Last

Date of Ride \*

 /  /  

MM DD YYYY

Employee Phone Number \*

 -  - 

### ### ####

Employee Email \*

Reimbursement Mailing Address \*

Street Address

Address Line 2

City

State / Province / Region

Postal / Zip Code

United States 

Country

Reason for Emergency Ride Home \*

Reason for Emergency Ride Home (other):

Starting/Pick-Up Address \*

Street Address

Address Line 2

City

State / Province / Region

Postal / Zip Code

United States 

Country

Destination/ Drop-Off Address \*

Street Address

Address Line 2

City

State / Province / Region

Postal / Zip Code

United States 

Country

Did the trip include going to any emergency related side-trips?

(Option 1)

Did the trip include going to any emergency related side-trips?

(Option 2)

Approximate Distance Traveled (in miles) \*

**Type of ERH Ride Taken and Cost to be Reimbursed (mail in receipts):**

For any ERH Ride types you did not use, leave the field blank.

Taxi (meter fare only; tip not included)

\$  .

Dollars                  Cents

Rental Car (gas not included)

\$  .

Dollars                  Cents

Transit (indicate service used in box below)

\$  .

Dollars                  Cents

Type of Transit Service Used

**TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \***

\$  .

Dollars                  Cents

How did you get to work on the day ERH was used? (Mode 1) \*

How did you get to work on the day ERH was used? (Mode 2)

By typing your name below, you verify that this request abides by the [San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program Rules](#).

Name \*

First                  Last

Date \*

/  /    
MM DD YYYY

## APPENDIX C: REIMBURSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE



# Emergency Ride Home Reimbursement Request

To request a reimbursement:

- 1) Complete the Request and Questionnaire below
- 2) Mail a copy of your original receipt(s) and supervisor approval to:

San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program  
 1455 Market St. Suite 1200  
 San Francisco CA 94103

Your request, receipt(s) and supervisor approval must be received within 30 days from date of trip and by June 30 of the current fiscal year.

1 Reimbursement Request

2 Reimbursement Questionnaire

## Questionnaire

To be completed by employee following a ride.

Employee Name \*

First Last

Date of Ride \*

 /  /  

MM DD YYYY

Company/Department \*

1. What is your typical mode of transportation to work? \*

2. How long have you been using your commute mode to travel to work? \*

3. About how often do you use your typical commute mode to get to work? \*

4. Did you use an alternative mode for your commute to work PRIOR to your employer joining the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program? \*

5. If No, how important was the Emergency Ride Home Program in your decision to BEGIN using your commute mode?

6. Does having an emergency ride home available when you need it encourage you to use your commute mode MORE OFTEN than you would otherwise? \*

7. If Yes, how much more often? (Answer in days per week)

8. If the Emergency Ride Home Program were not available, would you... (choose one) \*

What is your home zip code? \*

**APPENDIX D: SUPERVISOR APPROVAL FORM**



# San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program Original Receipt(s) and Supervisor Approval Form

To request a reimbursement, mail this form with a copy of your original receipt(s) and supervisor approval to:

**San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program**  
1455 Market Street, Ste. 1200  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Your: **1)** online request form, **2)** receipt(s) and **3)** supervisor approval must be received within 30 days from date of trip, and by June 30 of the current fiscal year. Your reimbursement will not be processed if we do not receive all three items within the specified time period.

Company/Department:	
Employee Name:	Date of Ride:

Please tape your original receipt(s) in the space below:

### Supervisor Approval

By signing below, you acknowledge that you are aware and approve of your employee's Emergency Ride Home request.

Supervisor Name:	
Supervisor Phone #:	Supervisor E-mail:
Supervisor Signature:	

## CommuteSmart



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## APPENDIX E: PROGRAM RULES



**SF Environment**

**Our home. Our city. Our planet.**

A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

**CommuteSmart**

# San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program Rules 2013



BAY AREA  
AIR QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT



PAID FOR  
BY YOUR  
PROP K  
SALES TAX



## **THE SAN FRANCISCO EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM**

The [Emergency Ride Home program](#) provides a free ride home in cases of unexpected personal emergencies for all employees of participating employers. Reimbursements and paperwork are provided by the San Francisco Department of Environment's CommuteSmart program, making the program no-cost and maintenance-free. All San Francisco employers are eligible to enroll in this free program by submitting a completed [employer agreement](#).

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- Who is eligible to participate?**
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# Program Basics

## What is Emergency Ride Home?

[Emergency Ride Home](#) is a free City program that provides a 'safety net' for San Francisco commuters using sustainable transportation, such as walking, biking, taking transit or ridesharing. When employees of registered businesses use a sustainable mode to travel to work and experience a personal or family emergency while at work, they can take a taxi, shared taxi service, transit or rental car and CommuteSmart will reimburse the cost of the ride.

Emergency Ride Home is free to employers and employees. Once a business has [registered](#), all their employees are eligible to use the program.

## Who is eligible to participate?

All permanent part-time or full-time employees of a registered San Francisco employer are eligible to participate. Employees must use one of the following commute modes on the day they use the Emergency Ride Home program:

- Walk
- Bicycle
- Public transportation (Bus, train, ferry)
- Vanpool/carpool (including casual carpool)
- Employer-provided shuttle or van

## What qualifies as an emergency?

Employees of registered businesses may [request reimbursement](#) for the following qualified emergencies:

- **Illness or crisis** of employee or immediate family member

- **Carpool or vanpool ride is unavailable** due to unexpected changes in the driver's schedule or vehicle breakdown
- **Unexpected bicycle problem**, including flat tire, mechanical failure, vandalism or theft
- **Required unexpected overtime** in which the employee was not aware of the situation before the start of his or her workday. Supervisor authorization is required, and the trip must take place after 10 p.m.

## Who pays for the ride home?

The employee pays for the cost of the ride and submits a [reimbursement request](#), including a ride questionnaire and original receipt(s), directly to the San Francisco Department of the Environment. The employee can complete the request and questionnaire online, and print out a Supervisor Approval form to complete and mail to SF Environment along with the original receipt(s).

By requesting assistance from the Emergency Ride Home program, participants explicitly acknowledge that the Department of the Environment and the City and County of San Francisco assumes no liability for any accidents that may occur during conveyance.

## Transit First Requirement

Participants must use transit for all or part of the trip whenever possible (for example, the employee can take a taxi to the BART station or from the BART station to home, rather than using a taxi for the entire trip). A taxi or rental car may **ONLY** be used if transit service is not practical or available, including:

- The situation is urgent and time does not allow for transit use
- Transit does not serve the destination needed
- The emergency occurs outside of transit service hours

# Program Registration

## Step 1 (Businesses): Register

Businesses must be officially registered for the program before employees are eligible to participate. Registration is fast, easy and free at [www.SFERH.org](http://www.SFERH.org). **Employers must renew their registration by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.**

## Step 2 (Businesses): Promote

Let employees know about the program. Share these Program Rules with employees and make them aware of how to request reimbursements when eligible emergencies arise. [Download a flyer](#) to email to your employees and post in common areas.

## Step 3 (Employees): Unexpected Emergency

An employee experiences an unexpected personal emergency and takes a taxi, shared taxi service, rental car or public transit ride home.<sup>1</sup> Costs are paid out of pocket and reimbursed (see next step).

## Step 4 (Employees): Reimbursement Request

The employee completes the [Emergency Ride Home reimbursement request](#) and questionnaire online.

## Step 5 (Employees): Supervisor Approval and Receipt(s)

---

<sup>1</sup> Transportation under the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program is provided by outside transportation vendors. The San Francisco Department of the Environment and its grantors are not responsible for actual service provided, nor do they have any liability in the provision of such services.

After completing the online reimbursement request and survey, the employee can download and complete the supervisor approval form. Mail the completed supervisor approval form and **original** receipt(s) to:

San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program  
1455 Market St. Suite 1200  
San Francisco CA 94103

## **Step 6 (SF Environment): Reimbursement**

The San Francisco Department of the Environment reimburses the employee if their ride abides by all program rules.<sup>2</sup> Reimbursements will be mailed six to eight weeks from the date of the submitted request.

Only those trips that adhere to the rules specified in this guide are eligible for reimbursement. To be reimbursed, the employee must complete the reimbursement request form and ride questionnaire online.

The employee then downloads and completes the supervisor approval form and mails:

1. Original receipt(s)
  - a. For public transit, please provide a fare chart printout, which must indicate the service used, the trip origin and destination and the total fare
  - b. For credit card payments for taxis or shared taxi services, a printed email receipt will suffice for reimbursement
2. Supervisor Approval Form

Reimbursements will not be processed unless all online and mailed components are received.

---

<sup>2</sup> The San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program reserves the right to investigate each trip claim to ensure it meets the program requirements. Invalid trips will not be reimbursed. Inappropriate use or intentional abuse of the program by employers or employees may result in exclusion from the program.

All Reimbursement Requests must be submitted within 30 days of the date of the trip. Payments will generally be issued to employees within 6 to 8 weeks from the date requests are received by the San Francisco Department of the Environment. Payments are made via check sent through U.S. mail to the employee address indicated on the Reimbursement Request.

**Maximum Reimbursable Costs<sup>3</sup>**

The program reimburses one-way taxi or shared taxi service fare, a 24-hour car rental period, and/or public transit fare only. The program will not reimburse taxi gratuity and fuel/parking for the rental car(s).

In addition, the following maximums apply:

Employee Maximums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Up to four trips per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30)</li><li>• Up to \$150 per trip, unless the trip was taken by rental car</li><li>• Up to \$60 per rental car trip</li></ul>
Employer Maximums	Up to \$1,000 per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) is allocated to each registered business for full employee trip reimbursement. After this limit is reached, the program will reimburse employees for 50% of the cost of each valid trip up to an additional \$1,000 maximum each fiscal year.

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<sup>3</sup> All reimbursements subject to available grant funding.

# Trip Restrictions

All Emergency Ride Home trips must originate at the employee's work location in San Francisco. The employee can be dropped off at home, a transit stop, hospital or the location of their parked car (e.g. park-and-ride lot, carpool partner's home, etc.).

Emergency-related side trips on the way home are permitted, including picking up a sick child at school or daycare, filling a prescription at a pharmacy, or stopping at an ATM for cash to pay the taxi driver.

## **Trips which are NOT reimbursable through Emergency Ride Home**

- Personal errands or pre-planned medical appointments
- Medical emergencies (i.e. when an ambulance is needed)
- Business-related travel
- Overtime that was planned or known prior to the start of a workday, or that was not authorized by a supervisor
- Natural disasters or civic emergencies (e.g. earthquake, demonstration, etc.)
- Transit service breakdown or interruption in service
- Transportation to a doctor or hospital resulting from an on-the-job injury (ERH cannot be used to replace an employer's legal responsibility under workers' compensation regulations)
- Non-emergency related side-trips on the way home
- Trips before 10pm by regular transit riders who have unscheduled overtime
- Trips made prior to business enrollment or renewal in the Emergency Ride Home program

## **Rental Car Restrictions**

- Employees are required to use a rental car for trips of 20 miles or more (it is more cost-effective than taking a taxi), unless the employee is unable to drive. Employees should not use a rental car if they are experiencing illness, emotional distress or exhaustion, or are not able to return the car the next day (charges beyond 24 hours will not be reimbursed.)

- The ERH program will reimburse up to \$60 for the 24 hour period plus insurance
- The program **DOES NOT** reimburse for gasoline, parking expenses, any penalties/fees incurred through use/misuse of rental vehicles, or for any charges beyond a 24 hour period

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How much does ERH cost?

ERH is free to employers and employees. Employers must [pre-register](#) for the program, and once registered all employees working in San Francisco are eligible to [request reimbursement](#) for eligible expenses.

## Is it really free? What's the catch?

There is no catch. This program supports and encourages walking, biking, taking transit or ridesharing for commuting purposes. Employees pay out of pocket for the emergency ride, and submit a request to be reimbursed. Businesses do not have a financial obligation to register for the program.

SFE will reimburse employees for up to four trips per fiscal year, and there is a \$150 limit per trip for taxi, shared taxi service and transit rides and \$60 for rental car trips. SFE will reimburse 100% of the trip cost for the first \$1,000 per company; after the first \$1,000, SFE will reimburse employees 50% the cost of the trip.

## Can my employees who live outside of San Francisco use the program?

Yes, any employee working in San Francisco is eligible to submit a [reimbursement request](#) for a qualified emergency, including travel to locations outside San Francisco. If reimbursement requests exceed the \$150 per trip limit, the participant will receive \$150 in reimbursement and will be responsible for the remainder of the ride cost.

## Are employees required to use a certain taxi service or rental car agency?

No, employees may use any taxi, shared taxi service or rental car service to travel home or to the location of the emergency. They pay for the cost out-of-pocket and submit original receipts for reimbursement.



**My organization enrolled for ERH mid-fiscal year. Do we still submit a renewal by June 30th?**

Yes, regardless of when your organization enrolled for ERH, a renewal must be submitted annually by June 30<sup>th</sup> to continue participating the following fiscal year.

**If we register mid-year for the ERH program, are we still eligible for the full \$1,000 fiscal year maximum per employer?**

Yes. Upon enrollment confirmation, employees are eligible to submit reimbursements up to the full fiscal year limits, even if the company enrolls midway through the fiscal year.

**Will we be notified when our business and/or employees get close to reaching program limits?**

Yes, the CommuteSmart team at the Department of the Environment will notify businesses when reaching the annual \$1,000 fiscal year limit and when employees submit their 3<sup>rd</sup> approved reimbursement request in the fiscal year.

**After the annual \$1,000 limit is reached, are employers responsible for any costs?**

No. After the initial \$1,000 annual limit is reached, the Department of the Environment will reimburse 50% of requested costs for an additional \$1,000 maximum for the fiscal year. Employers may choose to reimburse the employee the remaining 50% of the ride cost, but are not required to do so.

# A Complete Transportation Program

## Congratulations on joining the Emergency Ride Home program!

Now that you're registered, consider these other easy, low-cost solutions to help encourage your employees to use sustainable transportation modes. Choose one or all, and know that you're on your way to providing a full range of transportation program options for your employees.

1. **Offer pre-tax commuter benefits.** Commuter Benefits give employees the opportunity to use pre-tax dollars to pay for transit and vanpool expenses. Visit [SFEnvironment.org/CommuterBenefits](https://SFEnvironment.org/CommuterBenefits) to learn more.
2. **Request a free consultation with CommuteSmart staff.** Meet with CommuteSmart staff one-on-one or over the phone to discuss how to implement or add to your transportation programs for all of your employees' commute needs.
3. **Conduct an in-depth employee transportation survey.** You've learned how your employees get to work, now learn more about why they've chosen their commute mode and barriers that may keep them from using a sustainable mode. Use this [free](#) survey, available through 511, to understand employee commute needs and concerns. We will compile the results in a report for you.
4. **Custom ridematching site.** CommuteSmart and 511 team together to offer employers a customized ridematching portal that fits seamlessly within your company's website to assist employees find carpool and vanpool partners.
5. **Employee residential density map.** CommuteSmart can create a map based on ZIP codes to help you identify the best ways to help your employees commute.
6. **Invite CommuteSmart to company benefits fairs or presentations.** CommuteSmart is available to attend your company events to share sustainable transportation information with your employees. Submit a [free event request form on our website](#).

# Contact Us

CommuteSmart

An Initiative of the San Francisco Department of the Environment

[commutesmart@sfgov.org](mailto:commutesmart@sfgov.org)

415.355.3727

[www.sferh.org](http://www.sferh.org)



## Emergency Ride Home

**Emergency Ride Home (ERH) is a free program that takes the worry out of finding a ride if an emergency ever strikes.**

It's easy, free and all part- or full-time employees of a registered San Francisco business are eligible.

**Registering is easy... and the ride is free!**



CommuteSmart offers other commuter programs to save you time and money while improving air quality and traffic congestion.

#### **Businesses:**

- ▶ Free assistance to set up your commute program
- ▶ Employee outreach at staff meetings and fairs
- ▶ Surveys to help you learn about your employees' commute

#### **Commuters:**

- ▶ Find potential carpool/vanpool partners
- ▶ Save on transit expenses

**To learn more, visit:**

[SFEnvironment.org/CommuteSmart](http://SFEnvironment.org/CommuteSmart)

**Commute safely.  
Commute together.  
CommuteSmart**

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San Francisco

## Emergency Ride Home

We've got you covered!



## How does it work?

### San Francisco Businesses

Support your employees' commute choices with this no cost, hassle-free program. Once you register, your employees will be eligible for ERH reimbursements.

**Step 1** Register at [SFERH.org](https://www.sferh.org)

**Step 2** Let your employees know about the program

Each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), CommuteSmart will reimburse your employees up to \$1,000.



## How do I use it?

### Employees

If your employer is registered and you have an unexpected emergency, CommuteSmart will reimburse your ride! To qualify for ERH, you must:

- ▶ Have a qualified emergency
- ▶ Be a part-time or full-time employee
- ▶ Have shared a ride, taken the bus, biked or walked to work on the day the ride is needed

For all the nitty-gritty, and to get reimbursed for your ride, visit [SFERH.org](https://www.sferh.org).



## How do I get started?

For more information about the Emergency Ride Home Program and to sign up, visit [SFERH.org](https://www.sferh.org).

Still have questions? Contact CommuteSmart, an initiative of the San Francisco Department of the Environment.

### CommuteSmart

(415) 355-3727

[CommuteSmart@SFGov.org](mailto:CommuteSmart@SFGov.org)

[SFERH.org](https://www.sferh.org)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** My organization enrolled in ERH mid-fiscal year. Do we still submit a renewal by June 30th? Are we eligible for the full \$1,000/fiscal year employer maximum?

**A:** Yes, regardless of when your organization enrolled for ERH, a renewal must be submitted annually by June 30th to continue participation. Upon enrollment confirmation, organizations are eligible to submit

reimbursements up to the full fiscal year limits, even if enrolled midway through the fiscal year.

**Q:** Will we be notified when our organization and/or employees get close to reaching program limits?

**A:** Yes, the Department of the Environment will notify organizations when they are close to their annual \$1,000 fiscal year limit and when employees submit their 4th ride in the fiscal year.