



***SF* Environment**

Our home. Our city. Our planet.

A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program

2011 Annual Report

CommuteSmart

September 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program furthers San Francisco's Transit First Policy, encouraging commuters to use sustainable commute modes by providing a way to respond to emergencies. By doing so, the program helps in meeting the city's larger goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 in a cost effective manner.

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) Department of the Environment administers the Emergency Ride Home program for San Francisco employers and CCSF employees. All San Francisco businesses are eligible to enroll in this free program by submitting an employer agreement.

Analysis of the Emergency Ride Home program for the 2011-12 fiscal year identified a number of very positive conclusions and some areas for improvement in coming years.

1. **Cost-effective program.** Overall, ERH is a cost-effective program generally considered to be a good motivator to walk, bike, take transit or rideshare to work over driving alone.
2. **Supports and encourages use of sustainable modes.** Having this program in place has encouraged many commuters to try sustainable transportation when they would not have otherwise, having a way to travel home quickly and safely in cases of unforeseen emergencies. The program supports more consistent and frequent usage of these modes at a low cost for the City and for employers.
3. **Infrequent use by many participants.** The majority of participants use ERH once a fiscal year, highlighting the strength of the program in providing a service for many individual participants when it is needed, rather than frequent use by a few participants.
4. **Increases confidence in sustainable transportation.** When participants were asked if they would continue to walk, bike, take transit or rideshare if the ERH program were discontinued, many said they would continue their use of sustainable transportation with the same frequency. This displays the effectiveness of the ERH program in helping participants realize the benefits of sustainable transportation and feel confident in using other modes even with the absence of a "safety net".

Although Emergency Ride Home has demonstrated significant positive results over the years, measures to make the program more effective have been or plan to be implemented:

1. **Yearly renewal process.** The existing program structure allows a business to register for the ERH program once and remain active in the program indefinitely. An annual renewal process will require businesses to register each fiscal year for the program, at which time they will be sent collateral to share with their employees to promote the availability of the

services. The annual renewal process was implemented for the 2012-13 fiscal year and will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.

2. **Electronic Reimbursement Process.** Reimbursement requests are submitted by mailed in paper forms, which require staff time to input the information. Offering an online reimbursement request will reduce the staff time required to administer the program, as the responses can be immediately tabulated in a database for analysis. Online employer registration and participant reimbursement request forms were implemented for the 2012-13 fiscal year and will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.
3. **Update in Program Rules.** The program rules during the 2011-12 fiscal year included unscheduled overtime as a qualified emergency and trips for this purpose were eligible to be reimbursed without additional burden of proof. To discourage misuse of the program, a supervisor authorization requirement for claimed unexpected overtime was added in the 2012-13 fiscal year. At the same time, a requirement was implemented that all trips due to unexpected overtime must take place after 10 p.m. The effectiveness of these measures will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.
4. **Increased Outreach and Marketing.** Increased program visibility is necessary to increase awareness and usage of the ERH services. Many commuters are still unaware of the program options, and most San Francisco employers have not registered for the service, indicating potential for program expansion.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Many commuters cite unforeseen circumstances or personal emergencies as a reason to drive alone to work. To eliminate this concern, the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home program provides a free ride home in cases of emergency. With this “safety net” available, commuters have been more willing to travel to work using sustainable modes, as shown through the data collected since program inception in 2005.

1.1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) Department of the Environment administers the Emergency Ride Home program for San Francisco employers and CCSF employees. All San Francisco employers are eligible to enroll in this free program by submitting an employer agreement. This form is included in Appendix A. The employer agreement specifies the rules of the program and the limits on employee reimbursements.

After submitting the agreement, businesses receive promotional materials, including posters and sample emails, to notify employees about the program. When a participant experiences an unexpected personal or family emergency and takes a taxi, rental car or public transit ride home, they submit their original receipt and a reimbursement request to Commute Smart and be reimbursed for the trip if their ride abides by the program rules.

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 the Emergency Ride Home program:

- Walking
- Bicycling
- Transit (bus, train, ferry)
- Carpool/Vanpool, including casual carpool

A qualified emergency is one of the following:

- Personal illness or crisis, or that of an immediate family member
- Unexpected overtime (participant was not aware of the situation before the start of the workday)
- 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

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% 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% 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. Other trips not eligible under the Emergency Ride Home program will not be reimbursed and will remain at the participant's personal cost. These trips include personal errands, medical emergencies that require an ambulance, transit service breakdown or interruption and non-emergency related side-trips on the way home.

With each reimbursement request, participants complete a brief questionnaire about their trip and their use of the program. The full set of rules and the reimbursement forms are provided in the appendices.

1.2 BENEFITS TO BUSINESSES AND CITY

Emergency Ride Home programs serve many purposes, both for the agency administering the program and the participants that utilize the service. ERH programs provide a solution for the "what if" scenarios that may otherwise prompt commuters to drive alone to work. This helps to increase the number of commuters using or trying sustainable commute modes.

In San Francisco, the Emergency Ride Home program furthers San Francisco's Transit First policy,¹ encouraging more commuters to use sustainable modes. By doing so, the program helps in meeting the city's larger goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

¹ Transit First Policy, San Francisco City Charter, Section 8A.115. http://www.sf-planning.org/ftp/general_plan/14_Transportation.htm#TRA_TF (Accessed September 2012).

2. ADMINISTRATION OF THE EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM

CommuteSmart, an initiative of the San Francisco Department of the Environment, administers the Emergency Ride Home program. The management of this program involves processing reimbursement requests, outreach and education about the program and on-going program management and monitoring.

Outreach about the ERH program is conducted at tabling events and through promotional materials distributed to San Francisco employers. The program is also promoted at all CCSF informational events where CommuteSmart offers information. Management of the program also involves updating the [SFERH website](#) and continual monitoring of program metrics.

The ERH program is made possible by a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's County Manager Transportation Fund for Clean Air, administered by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA), and the Prop K sales tax also administered by the SFCTA.

2.1 REIMBURSEMENT ANALYSIS

As seen in Table 1, overall program costs remained low, with approximately \$1,850 in total reimbursements being paid for 57 reimbursement requests in fiscal year 2011-12. The majority of requests came from employees of San Francisco businesses, with a small number of requests originating from CCSF employees.

Table 1. Total Cost Reimbursed and Number of Reimbursements FY 2011-2012

Employer	Total Cost Reimbursed	Number of Reimbursements
SF Businesses	\$1,579.71	47
City and County of San Francisco (CCSF)	\$274.83	10
Total	\$1,854.54	57
Average Cost per Reimbursement	\$32.54	

* Total Number of SF Businesses enrolled in ERH: 477

While program costs have been nominal, the total reimbursement payments have increased overall over the last seven years since program launch, as seen in Figure 1. Between FY05-06 and FY 06-07, total reimbursements increased approximately \$1,000, and continued at this level through FY10-11. In the past fiscal year, the total reimbursement amounts have increased by approximately \$600.

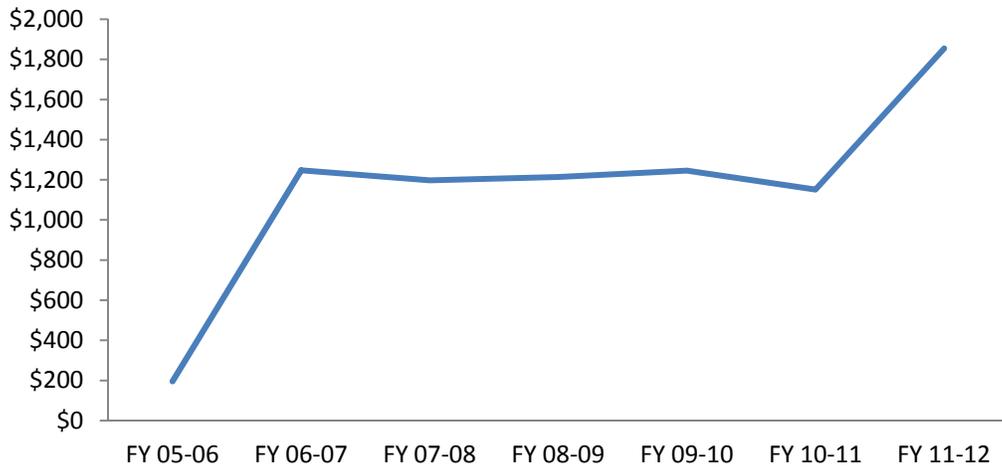


Figure 1. Total Reimbursements by Fiscal Year

n=182

As seen in Figure 2, the average cost per reimbursement has remained fairly stable, indicating the increase in program cost is primarily due to increased usage of the program rather than more expensive reimbursements. This is likely due to increased outreach and awareness of the program.

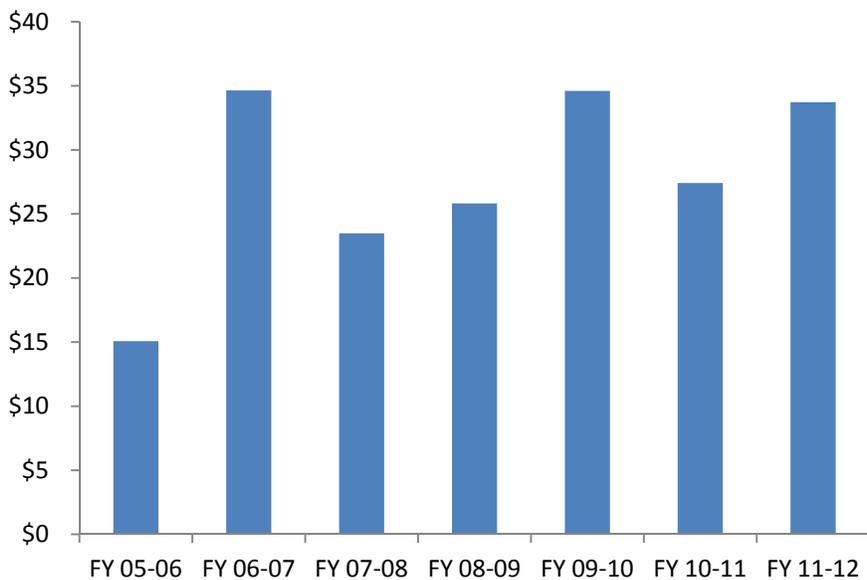


Figure 2. Average Reimbursement by Fiscal Year

n=182

Out of an annual budget of \$9,000 for reimbursements and outreach, about 12 percent of the budget is utilized each year, making the program a cost-effective strategy to increase the use of sustainable transportation modes.

2.2 USAGE TRENDS

The number of reimbursements submitted increased in the last fiscal year as seen in Figure 3, pointing to the positive effects of better outreach and education. This is confirmed by the sharp increase in the number of participants using ERH rather than existing participants utilizing the program more frequently.

The data also shows a moderate increase in the number of businesses represented by the program participants, showing a more widespread recognition of program availability. While 478 employers registered for the program, including the City and County of San Francisco, about 20 businesses had employees submit a reimbursement request, and this number fluctuates throughout recent years. Note that the difference in participants using ERH and the total number of reimbursements submitted is due to the participant's ability to request up to four reimbursements in one fiscal year.

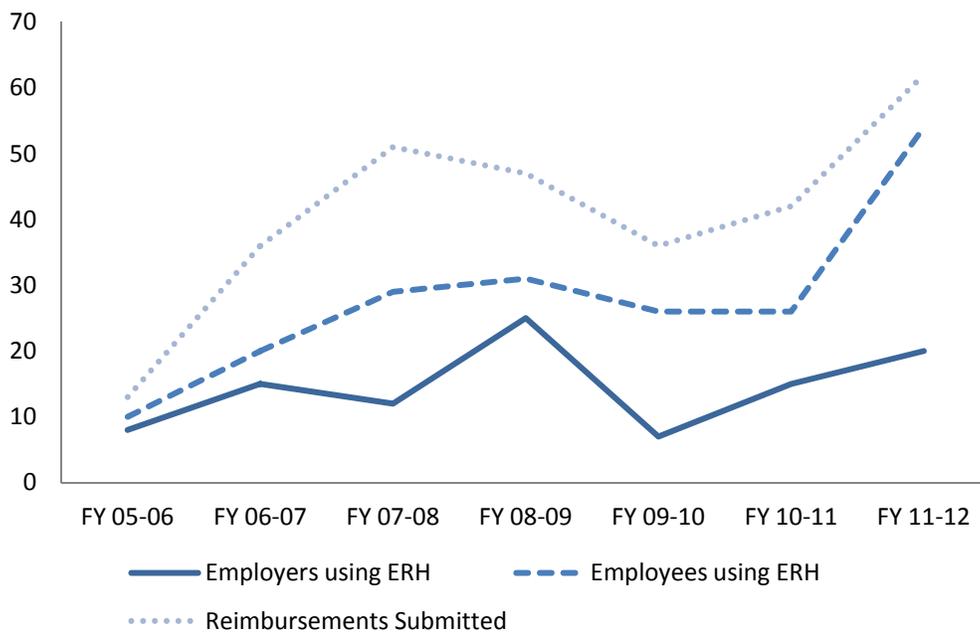


Figure 3. Program Usage

n=182

*A total of 478 employers were registered for the ERH program in FY11-12; this data represents employers with employees who submitted reimbursements through the program.

The number of people using ERH three or four times has remained fairly low and trends point to a decline in this level of usage. The majority of participants use ERH once, while a few use ERH twice, as shown in Figure 4. This data highlights the strength of the program in providing a service for many individual participants when it is needed, rather than abuse of the program by a few participants.

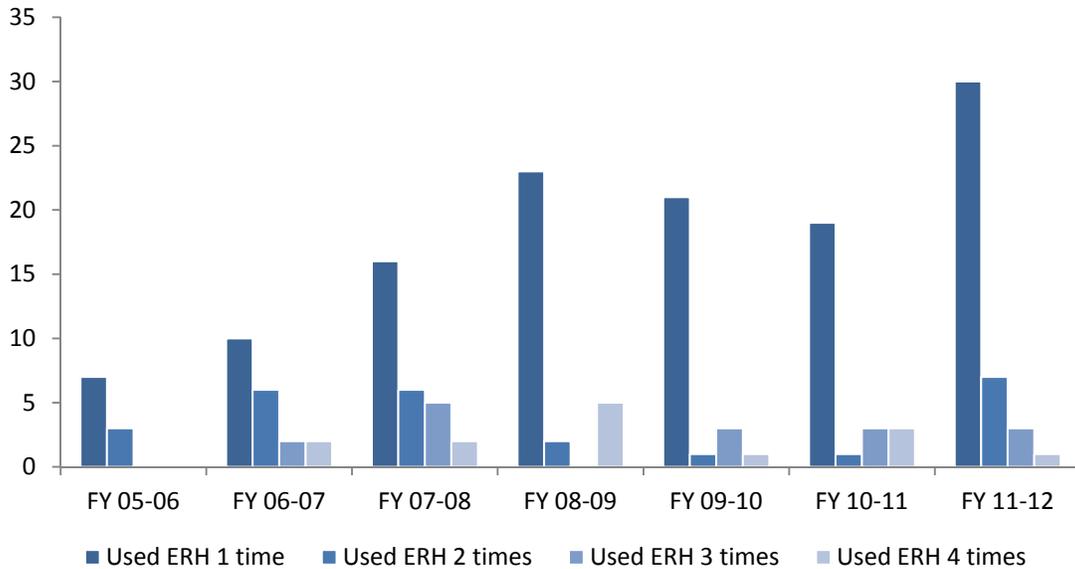


Figure 4. Participant Usage

n=182

Over the lifetime of the program, the primary reason participants utilize ERH services is due to unscheduled overtime, as seen in Figure 5. Since most participants reported taking the bus to work on the day they used the ERH program, and bus service is less frequent and reliable after 10 p.m., ERH assisted these participants in returning home safely late at night.

Personal or family member illness or crisis is the second most frequent reason cited for using the ERH program. Carpool/vanpool issues and bicycle problems represented very few cases, indicating an opportunity to increase public awareness of these qualified situations.

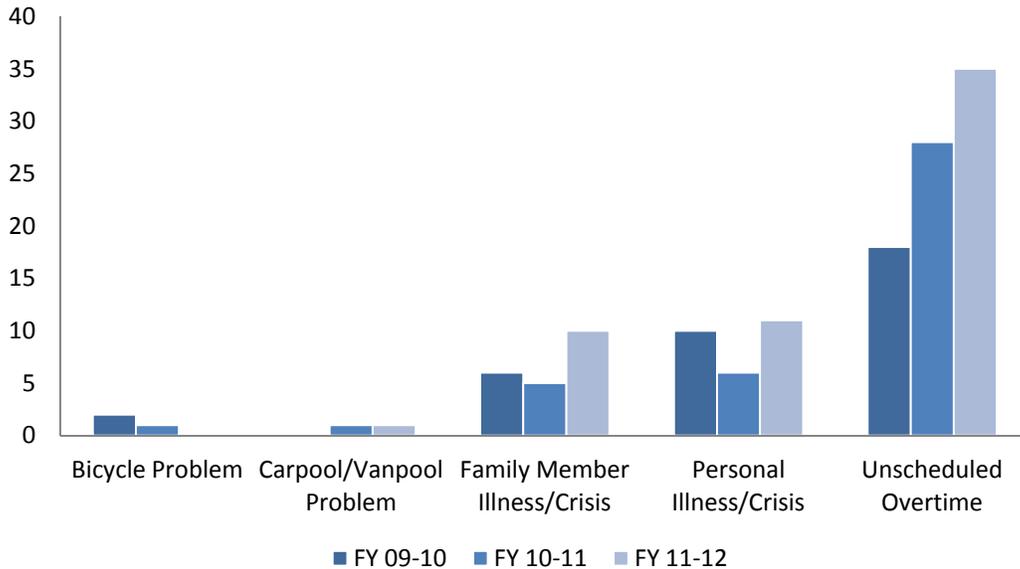


Figure 5. ERH Usage Reason

n=134

3. RESULTS OF THE EMERGENCY RIDE HOME SURVEY

CommuteSmart requires participants to complete a short survey, attached to the reimbursement form, to determine how ERH shapes participant decisions to use varying commute modes. A sample survey is included in Appendix D.

All duplicate responses from participants with more than one reimbursement request have been eliminated from the analysis. Trends indicate most participants use sustainable commute modes prior to their employers joining the Emergency Ride Home program. In fiscal year 2011-12, approximately 90 percent of participants were prior multi-modal commuters, indicating the ERH program is a solid enhancement to commuter benefits programs to encourage the continual usage of sustainable modes. Perhaps more importantly, the ERH program successfully encouraged ten percent of participants to use other modes when their employer registered for the service.

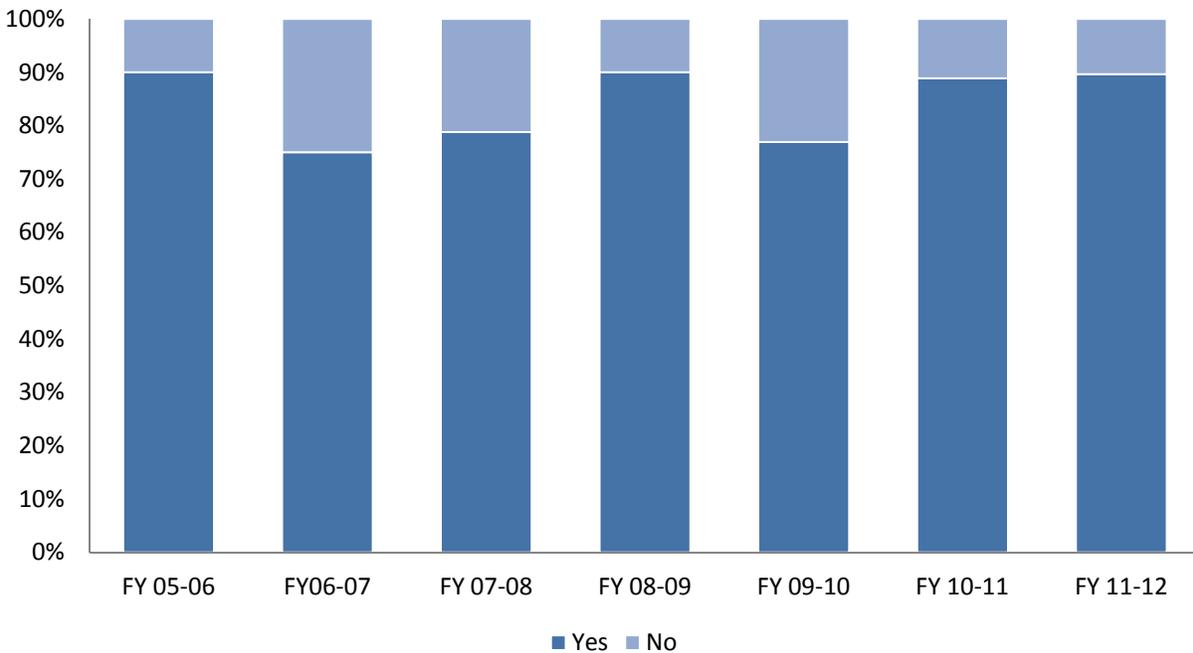


Figure 6. Use of Sustainable Commute Modes Prior to Employer’s ERH Registration

n=182

As depicted in Figure 7 those who were previously driving alone to work, the number of participants citing the ERH program as a factor in their decision to changes modes increased dramatically over the course of the program’s lifespan. This year, more than half of those participants who changed their commute noted the availability of ERH was very important in their decision, while the remainder cited the program as ‘important’ in that choice.

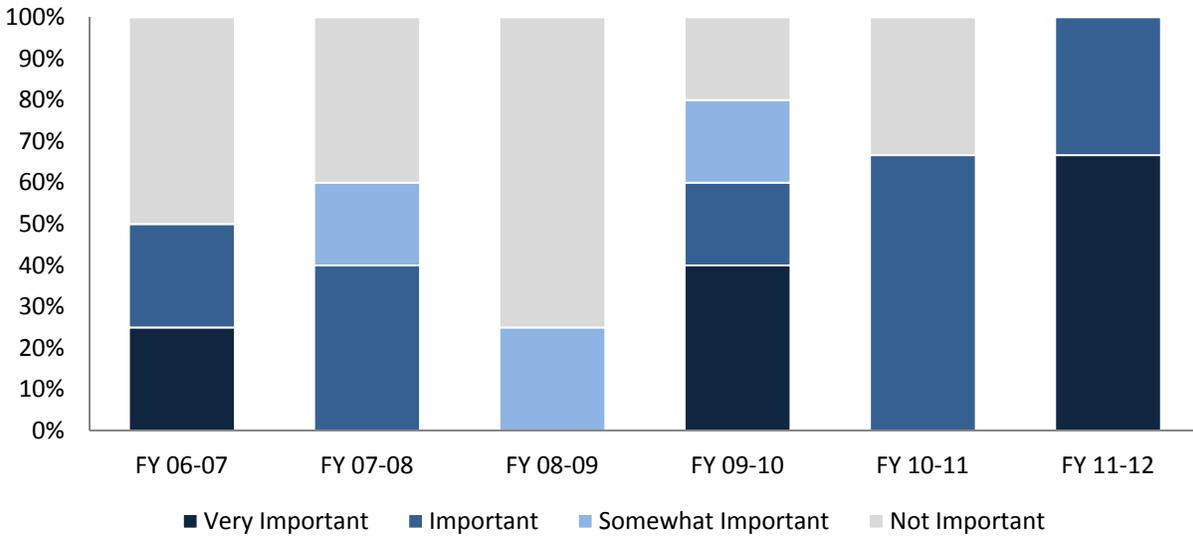


Figure 7. Importance of ERH in Commute Mode Choice

n=24

*The small sample size for this analysis is due to the small number of participants that drove alone previously.

The ERH program has proved to steadily encourage approximately half of participants to choose sustainable commute modes more regularly. Figure 8 demonstrates this trend, indicating the program has successfully increased the use of various transportation methods while at the same time supporting those who regularly use these modes.

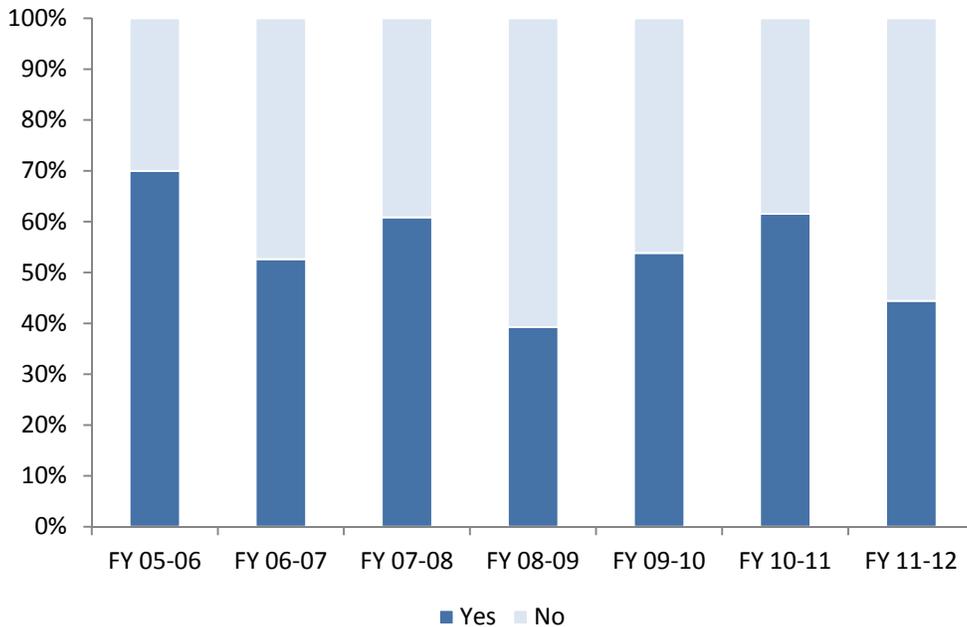


Figure 8. ERH Encouragement of Sustainable Commuting?

n=159

When participants were asked if they would continue to walk, bike, take transit or rideshare if the ERH program were discontinued, approximately 60 percent said they would continue their use of

sustainable transportation with the same frequency. Only 40 percent of participants said they would continue with less frequency.

Many participants walk, bike, take transit or rideshare five or more days per week. They are regular users who depend on public transit systems whether or not there is an ERH program. However, compared to past data, more participants in fiscal year 2011-2012 would continue to use these modes but at a lesser rate if ERH was discontinued.

At the same time, the number of respondents who would stop using sustainable transportation modes altogether if the ERH program was discontinued has decreased. This displays the effectiveness of the ERH program in helping participants realize the benefits of sustainable transportation and feel confident in using other modes even with the absence of a “safety net.”

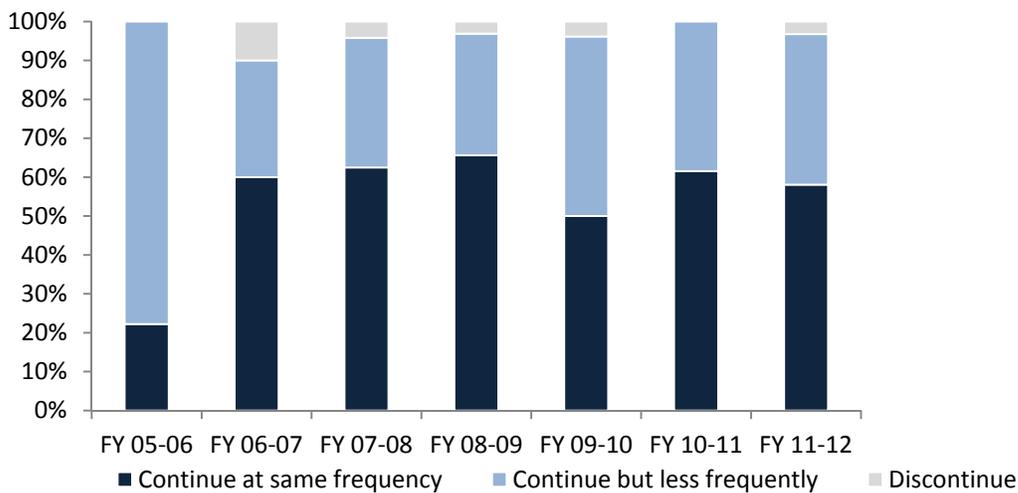


Figure 9. Use of Sustainable Modes if ERH Not Available

n=168

Participant commute distance also plays a role in willingness to use sustainable commute modes or to participate in the Emergency Ride Home program. As seen in Figure 10, during the 2011-12 fiscal year, participants who live less than ten miles from their workplace comprised the majority of ERH participants, and in particular those that live less than five miles from their workplace participated regularly.

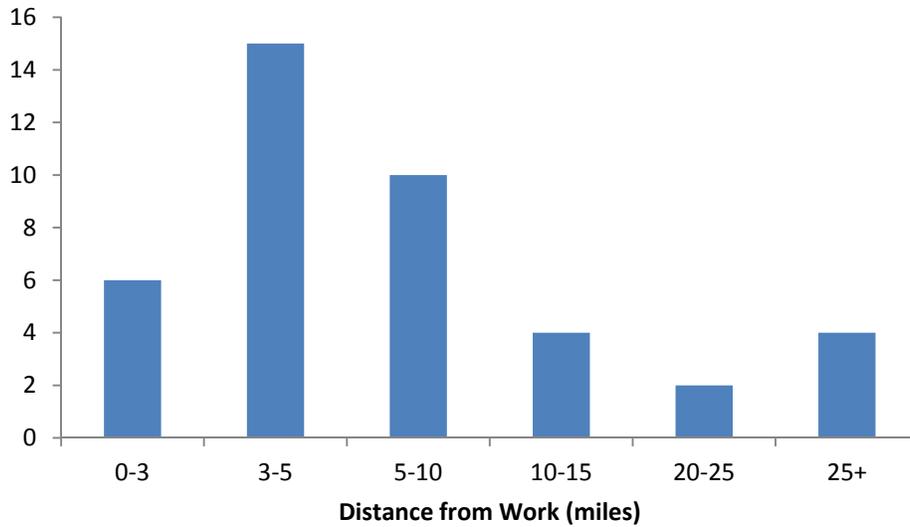


Figure 10. Participant Commute Distance – 2011-2012 Fiscal Year

n=41

When examining the same data with relation to participant’s distance from their workplace, the strength of the ERH program becomes more pronounced. As seen in Figure 11, for those who live near their workplace, participants are equally or more likely to continue using sustainable modes at the same frequency if ERH were not available. For those who live between five and ten miles from their workplace, they are significantly more likely to decrease their use of alternate modes if the program were not available. Beyond ten miles, the responses were equal in terms of frequency of usage if the ERH program was not an option.

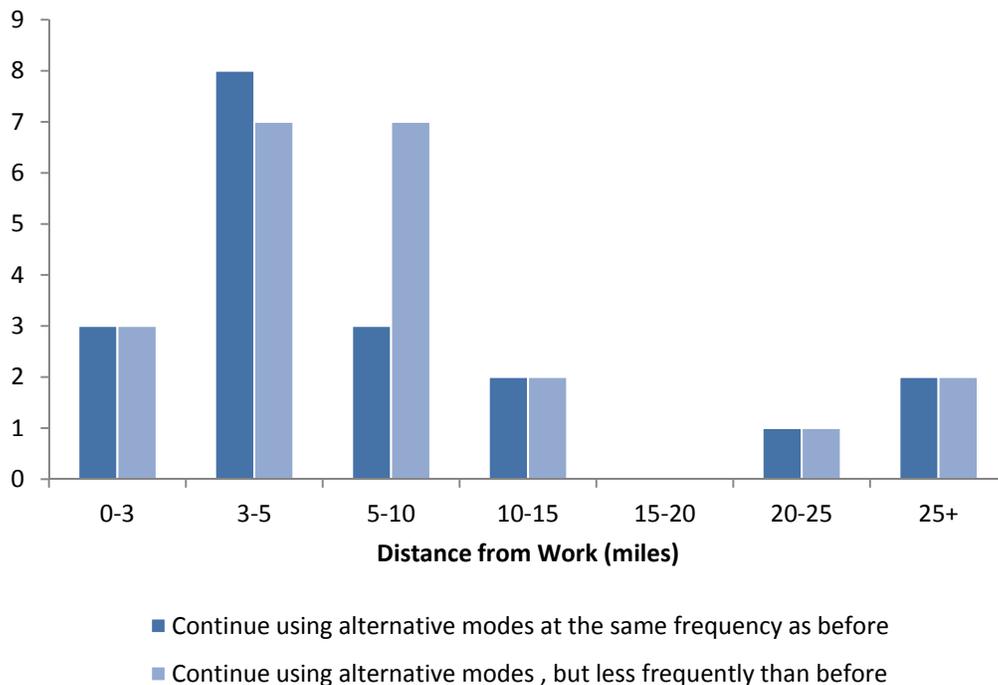


Figure 11. Distance from Work and Program Reliance – 2011-2012 Fiscal Year

n=39

4. CONCLUSION

Analysis of the Emergency Ride Home program for the 2011-12 fiscal year identified a number of very positive conclusions and some areas for improvement in coming years. Overall, ERH is a cost-effective program, considered to be a good motivator to walk, bike, take transit or rideshare to work over driving alone. Having this program in place has encouraged many commuters to try sustainable transportation when they would not have otherwise, having a way to travel home quickly and safely in cases of unforeseen emergencies. At the same time, the program supports more consistent and frequent usage of these modes at a low cost to the City and employers.

4.1 AREAS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

Although Emergency Ride Home has demonstrated significant positive results over the years, measures to make the program more effective have been or plan to be implemented:

5. **Yearly renewal process.** The existing program structure allows a business to register for the ERH program once and remain active in the program indefinitely. This provides an inaccurate view of the actual program usage by businesses, thereby reducing staff ability to identify areas where additional promotion could be focused to increase participation. This also may result in businesses overlooking the program when informing their employees about transportation options, leading to reduced visibility of the program. An annual renewal process will require businesses to register each fiscal year for the program, at which time they will be sent collateral to share with their employees to promote the availability of the services. This will also provide an annual opportunity for CommuteSmart staff to conduct a widespread campaign about the program to all San Francisco commuters to encourage greater use of the services. The annual renewal process was implemented for the 2012-13 fiscal year and will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.
6. **Electronic Reimbursement Process.** Reimbursement requests are submitted by mailed in paper forms, which require staff time to input the information. In future years, offering an online reimbursement request will reduce the staff time required to administer the program, as the responses can be immediately tabulated in a database for analysis. This will also decrease the wait time for participants to receive their reimbursement checks while reducing the amount of paper necessary to submit a request. Online employer registration and participant reimbursement request forms were implemented for the 2012-13 fiscal year and will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.
7. **Update in Program Rules.** The program rules during the 2011-12 fiscal year included unscheduled overtime as a qualified emergency and trips for this purpose were eligible to be reimbursed without additional burden of proof. To discourage misuse of the program, a supervisor authorization requirement for claimed unexpected overtime was added in the 2012-13 fiscal year. At the same time, a requirement was implemented that all trips due to unexpected overtime must take place after 10 p.m. The effectiveness of these measures will be analyzed in the 2012 Annual Report.

8. **Increased Outreach and Marketing.** Increased program visibility is necessary to increase awareness and usage of the ERH services. Many commuters are still unaware of the program options, and most San Francisco employers have not registered for the service. Conducting more widespread informational campaigns via email, newsletters and outreach events will help to educate employers about this free program so that it is available when their employees need the services.

APPENDIX A – ERH EMPLOYER AGREEMENT

ERH Employer Agreement



On behalf of my employees, my organization would like to participate in the 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. To view the full program policies, please visit the website at www.sferh.org.

Neither the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program nor the employer is responsible for the actual transportation service provided. Each employer is allowed \$700 per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) for full reimbursement of valid employee trips. After this limit is reached, the program will reimburse employers for 50% of the cost of each valid trip up to \$2000 maximum each fiscal year. Each employee can be reimbursed for four maximum ERH trips each fiscal year.

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

- Informing employees about the program
- Providing employees with ride reimbursement forms
- Validating ride reimbursement requests
- Assisting with an annual program evaluation

Rule No. SFE-09-01-CBO

REGISTRATION VALID UNTIL JUNE 30, 2012

EMPLOYER NAME: _____

EMPLOYER ADDRESS: _____

EMPLOYER PHONE #: _____

EMPLOYER FAX #: _____

OF EMPLOYEES: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

CONTACT TITLE: _____

CONTACT EMAIL: _____

CONTACT PHONE #: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

MAIL TO:

SF ERH - SF ENVIRONMENT
11 GROVE STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

FAX TO:

(415) 554-6393

APPENDIX B – ERH REIMBURSEMENT FORM

San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program Reimbursement Request Form

Please complete this form and attach original receipts.
Must be received within 60 days from date of trip and by June 30 of the current fiscal year.

Company Name _____

Supervisor/ERH Coordinator _____

Supervisor/Coord. Phone _____ Supervisor/Coord. Email _____

Employee Name _____ Date of Ride _____

Employee Phone _____ Employee Email _____

Reimbursement Mailing Address: _____

Reimbursement Made Payable To: Employer: _____ OR Employee: _____

Reason for Emergency Ride Home:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Illness/Crisis | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool/Vanpool Problem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member Illness/Crisis | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Problem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unscheduled Overtime | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain): _____ |

Starting/Pick-Up Address: _____

Destination/Drop-Off Address: _____

Did the trip include going to any locations other than home? Yes No

If Yes, Where? _____

Type of ERH Ride Taken and Cost to be Reimbursed (attach receipts):

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi (meter fare only; tip not included) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rental Car (gas not included) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car share vendor | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transit (indicate service used: _____) | \$ _____ |

TOTAL COST: \$

How the Employee Got to Work on the Day ERH Was Used:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BART | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrain | <input type="checkbox"/> Ferry | <input type="checkbox"/> Vanpool | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |

Employee Signature

Supervisor/ERH Coordinator Signature

Mail Original Form & Receipt(s) To:

San Francisco ERH Program
11 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102

APPENDIX C – CCSF ERH REIMBURSEMENT FORM

SF Emergency Ride Home Reimbursement Request Form For CCSF Employees

Please complete this form and attach original receipts.
Must be received within 60 days from date of trip and by June 30 of the current fiscal year.

Department Name _____

Supervisor Name _____

Supervisor Phone _____ Supervisor Email _____

Employee Name _____ Last 4 Digits of SSN _____

Employee Phone _____ Employee Email _____

Employee Mailing Address: _____

Date of Ride: _____

Reason for Emergency Ride Home:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Illness/Crisis | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool/Vanpool Problem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member Illness/Crisis | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Problem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unscheduled Overtime | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain): _____ |

Starting/Pick-Up Address: _____

Destination/Drop-Off Address: _____

Did the trip include going to any locations other than home? Yes No

If Yes, Where? _____

Type of ERH Ride Taken and Cost to be Reimbursed (attach receipts):

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi (meter fare only; tip not included) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rental Car (gas not included) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car share vendor | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transit (indicate service used: _____) | \$ _____ |

TOTAL COST:

How the Employee Got to Work on the Day ERH Was Used:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BART | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrain | <input type="checkbox"/> Ferry | <input type="checkbox"/> Vanpool | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |

_____ Employee Signature	_____ Supervisor Signature
------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Mail Original Form & Receipt(s) To:
San Francisco ERH Program
11 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102

APPENDIX D – SURVEY

SF Emergency Ride Home Follow-Up Questionnaire

To be completed by employee following a ride. Submit with reimbursement request form.

Employee Name _____ **Date of Ride** _____

Department Name _____

1. About how often do you use an alternative transportation mode (BART, bus, ferry, vanpool, carpool, bicycle, etc.) for your commute to work?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 or more days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 day a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 day a week |

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

- No Yes → (Skip to Question 3)
↓

If No, how important was the Emergency Ride Home Program in your decision to BEGIN using an alternative transportation mode for your commute to work?

- Very important. (It was the main reason for my switch.)
 Important. (It was an important part of my decision.)
 Somewhat Important. (It had some influence.)
 Not Important. (I began using alternative modes for other reasons.)

3. Does having an emergency ride home available when you need it encourage you to use alternative modes MORE OFTEN than you would otherwise?

- No Yes → How much more often? _____ days per month

4. If the Emergency Ride Home Program were not available, would you... (check one)

- Discontinue using alternative modes and go back to driving your car.
 Continue using alternative modes, but less frequently than before.
 Continue using alternative modes at the same frequency as before.

5. What is your home zip code? _____

Thank You!

APPENDIX E – PROGRAM RULES



Program Rules

NOTE: Only those trips that adhere to the following Program Rules are eligible for reimbursement.

1. Eligible Employees

In order to be reimbursed, an employee must be a permanent part-time or full-time employee of a registered employer at a worksite in San Francisco. The employee must have used an alternative commute mode on the day ERH is used.

2. Approved Alternative Commute Modes

Acceptable alternative commute modes include public transit (bus, train, ferry), vanpool, carpool (including Casual Carpool), bicycling, and walking.

3. Trips that are Reimbursable Through ERH

- **Illness or crisis** of employee or immediate family member.
- **Employee is unexpectedly required to work late** (i.e. employee was not aware of the situation before the start of the workday). Supervisor authorization is required.
- **Carpool or vanpool ride is unavailable** due to unexpected changes in the driver's schedule or vehicle breakdown or mishap.
- **Bicycle problem**, including flat tire, mechanical failure, vandalism, theft, or unsafe bicycling conditions due to inclement weather.

4. Eligible Trip Origins, Destinations and Stops

All trips must originate at worksites located in San Francisco, with the exception of vanpool/carpool vehicle breakdown on the way to work. The employee can be dropped off at home, a transit stop, 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.

5. Trips which are not Reimbursable through ERH

- Personal errands or pre-planned medical appointments.
- Medical emergencies (i.e. when an ambulance is needed).
- Business-related travel.
- Working late that was planned or known prior to the start of a workday or that is not authorized by a supervisor.
- Natural disasters or civic emergencies (e.g., earthquake, terrorist attack, 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.

6. Transit First Requirement

Participants must use transit for all or part of the trip whenever possible (for example, if 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, rental car, or car share vendor 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; or
- Getting to or from the transit stop requires walking in an unsafe area at night.

7. Paying for the Ride

When an employee needs a ride, either the employee will pay the cost of the ride, to be reimbursed by their employer or the ERH Program, or the employer will provide the employee with funds to pay for the ride. Employers may wish to establish a petty cash fund to provide readily available funds for rides. If employees must pay and they do not have adequate funds on hand, the Program permits them to stop at an ATM machine during the course of their ride. In addition, most taxis accept credit cards.

8. Reimbursable Costs

The Program will reimburse for one-way taxi fare, a 24-hour car rental period, up to 24-hours and 200-miles of car share usage, and/or public transit fare. Employees or employers are responsible for the taxi gratuity and fuel for the rental car (the Program will not reimburse for these costs).

The following limits apply:

- Employees can be reimbursed for up to **four (4)** ERH trips per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).
- Trips will be reimbursed up to a **\$200 maximum** per trip, unless a lower maximum amount applies as stated in these Program Rules.
- Each employer will have an allowance of **\$700 per fiscal year** (July 1 to June 30) for full reimbursement of valid employee trips. After this limit is reached, the Program will reimburse employers for 50% of the cost of each valid trip.
- The maximum total amount the Program will reimburse any employer is \$2,000 per fiscal year.

The Program will not pay for any penalties or fees incurred through use/misuse of car share or rental car vehicles, charges beyond a 24-hour period for car share or rental cars, more than 200 miles of car share vehicle usage, or car share monthly membership fees. See additional rental car and car share restrictions below.

9. Rental Cars

Employees are encouraged to utilize a rental car for trips of 20 miles or more (it is more cost-effective than taking a taxi). 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 24-hour period plus insurance. Note that Enterprise Rent-A-Car provides vehicle drop off and pick up service to any location in San Francisco. Employees must present a valid driver's license and credit card when renting a vehicle. The Program DOES NOT reimburse for gasoline expenses.

10. Car share

The employee must be a valid, registered member of a car share vendor prior to the day an ERH trip is needed. This can be through either individual membership or the employer's business membership (individual employees must still be registered). The employee must make the reservation directly through a car share vendor's reservation system. Employees should not use a car share if they are experiencing illness, emotional distress, or exhaustion, are not able to return the car within 24 hours, or need to travel more than 200 miles (charges beyond 24-hours and 200 miles will not be reimbursed).

11. Reimbursement

Trips that meet all of the above requirements will be considered Eligible Reimbursements. For each trip to be reimbursed, the employer/employee must submit a completed Reimbursement Request form, follow-up questionnaire, and valid receipt(s). For car sharing, participants must provide a copy of the invoice with the trip charges identified. For public transit, please provide a fare chart printout along with the Reimbursement Request, which must indicate the service used, the trip origin and destination, and total fare. All Reimbursement Requests must be submitted within 60 days of the date of the trip and by June 30 of the current fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

Payments are typically processed by the Program once a month on a regular schedule. Most payments will be issued to employers/employees within 6 to 8 weeks from the time Reimbursement Requests are received by the Program administrator. Payments are made via check sent through the U.S. mail.

12. Questions?

Please contact the San Francisco Department of the Environment at commuterbenefits@sfgov.org or (415) 355-3727.