



# Fact Sheet

## Employee Commute Options Program

[Oregon Administrative Rules 340-242-0010 through 0290](#)

### What are the ECO Rules?

The Employee Commute Options rules, also called ECO, apply to employers in the Portland metro area with 100 or more employees reporting to a work site. These employers must provide incentives for employee use of commute options like taking the bus, telecommuting, and carpooling. The incentives must have the potential to reduce commute trips to the work site by 10 percent from an established baseline.

ECO is part of a federally required plan to reduce smog levels. This plan also includes the DEQ Vehicle Inspection Program and industry regulations.

### Why do we have ECO?

The main goal of ECO is to protect public health by reducing air pollution from motor vehicles. Car exhaust is one of our region's largest single sources of air pollution.

ECO also helps reduce traffic congestion. Added time to deliver goods and services hurts the competitiveness of our region's businesses.

### Health and environmental effects of air pollution

Car exhaust is a main ingredient in ground-level ozone, also called smog. Breathing even low levels of smog can decrease lung function and aggravate asthma.

Smog hurts everyone but is especially harmful to children, older adults and people with heart disease and breathing problems like asthma. According to the Oregon Health Authority, approximately 12.2 percent of adults in Oregon have asthma. This is higher than the national average.

Car exhaust is a primary source of carbon dioxide, a global warming gas.

Car exhaust also is a major source of air toxics - chemicals known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health effects. A recent DEQ study shows unhealthy levels of benzene and other air toxics in Portland's air.

### Translation or other formats

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800-452-4011 | TTY: 711 | [deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:deqinfo@deq.oregon.gov)

## How does an employer comply?

DEQ requires employers to:

- Survey employees to determine current commute methods
- Prepare a plan to meet the target reduction and submit the plan to DEQ for approval
- Perform follow-up surveys every two years to measure progress toward the 10 percent trip reduction goal

## What are some typical commute options incentives?

Popular programs include:

- Transit and vanpool subsidies
- Allowing employees to purchase transit passes with pre-tax dollars (can also reduce an employer's FICA and unemployment taxes)
- Carpool matching and preferential parking for carpools
- Compressed work week scheduling (4/10s for example)
- Telecommuting
- Bike/walk incentives
- Emergency ride home program

## Is there a penalty for not complying?

Yes. DEQ requires an employer to demonstrate good faith effort. This means an employer must survey employees and submit and implement a reasonable trip reduction plan. Failure to follow through with these requirements can result in a fine. DEQ will not fine a company for not reaching its trip reduction goal.

## Contact information:

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
Air Quality Division – ECO Program  
700 NE Multnomah St., Suite 600  
Portland, OR 97232-4100  
Phone (503) 229-6154  
Email: [ECO@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:ECO@deq.oregon.gov)

## Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in administration of its programs or activities.

Visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).

## Regional partners & commuter resources

<b><u>DEQ ECO Program</u></b> (503) 229-6154 <a href="mailto:ECO@deq.oregon.gov">ECO@deq.oregon.gov</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECO reporting &amp; compliance</li> <li>• Rule interpretation</li> <li>• Survey forms &amp; guidance</li> <li>• Trip Reduction Plan assistance</li> <li>• Referral to community partners</li> </ul>
<b><u>TriMet Employer Programs</u></b> (503) 962-7670 <a href="mailto:employerprograms@trimet.org">employerprograms@trimet.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit pass plans for employees, students</li> <li>• Trip planning assistance</li> <li>• Survey processing</li> <li>• Online survey</li> <li>• Information about pretax payroll deduction</li> <li>• Employee transportation coordinator training</li> </ul>
<b><u>SMART (South Metro Area Regional Transit)</u></b> (503) 570-0332 <a href="mailto:marston@ridesmart.com">marston@ridesmart.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transit serving the Wilsonville area</li> <li>• Survey processing assistance</li> <li>• Commute planning assistance</li> </ul>
<b><u>Get There Oregon</u></b> (971) 202-9758 <a href="mailto:Employers@GetThereOregon.org">Employers@GetThereOregon.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rideshare and carpool matching</li> <li>• Commuter incentives</li> <li>• Walk, bike, transit, and vanpool trip planning tools</li> <li>• Trip-tracking diary and more</li> <li>• ECO Survey template</li> <li>• Employee transportation coordinator resources</li> </ul>
<b><u>Metro Regional Travel Options</u></b> (503) 797-1757 <a href="mailto:RTO@OregonMetro.gov">RTO@OregonMetro.gov</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free assistance to employers in setting up a customized workplace travel options program</li> </ul>
<b><u>Westside Transportation Alliance</u></b> (503) 489-8520 <a href="mailto:wta@wta-tma.org">wta@wta-tma.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves employers in Washington County</li> <li>• Free ECO survey processing</li> <li>• Trip Reduction Plan assistance</li> <li>• Commuter incentive programs</li> </ul>
<b><u>Portland Bureau of Transportation Employer Commute Options</u></b> (503) 823-4000 <a href="mailto:commute@portlandoregon.gov">commute@portlandoregon.gov</a>	
<b><u>Columbia Corridor Association</u></b> (503) 287-8686 <a href="mailto:info@columbiacorridor.org">info@columbiacorridor.org</a>	
<b><u>Explore Washington Park</u></b> (503) 319-0999 <a href="mailto:info@explorewashingtonpark.org">info@explorewashingtonpark.org</a>	
<b><u>Go Lloyd</u></b> (503) 236-6441 <a href="mailto:mail@golloyd.org">mail@golloyd.org</a>	
<b><u>Ride Clackamas</u></b>	
<b><u>C-TRAN</u></b> (360) 487-7733	
<b><u>South Waterfront Community Relations</u></b> (503) 972-2830 <a href="mailto:communityrelations@thesouthwaterfront.com">communityrelations@thesouthwaterfront.com</a>	