



## Everybody Benefits

Helping your employees obtain their bus passes is a great way to encourage bus ridership. The Choice Pass Program is a simple way to do just that. With the Choice Pass Program, your employees can get their bus passes at work. Plus, the bus passes they get from you are discounted. The minimum savings is \$48 a year.

	Regular Fare	<u>Employer Pass Fare</u>
31-Day Local Pass	\$36	\$32
31-Day Universal Pass	\$70	\$62
3 Month Local Pass	\$93	\$82
3 Month Universal Pass	\$180	\$158

AAA estimates the cost to own and operate a sedan in the U.S at 59.2 cents per mile (based on 15,000 miles a year). This estimate includes gas, maintenance and insurance. Compare that to the cost of riding the bus:

	Drive Alone	31 Day Pass	Savings
Caldwell to Boise (27 miles)*	\$671.33	\$62	\$609.33
Nampa to Boise (22 miles)*	\$547.00	\$62	\$485
Meridian to Boise (12 miles)*	\$298.37	\$62	\$236.37
Within Boise (7 miles)*	\$174.05	\$32	\$142.05

*\*Based on 21 commute days a month*

Additionally, riding the bus reduces your employees' stress levels, parking issues and helps reduce road congestion and air pollution. For information about bus routes and schedules call RideLine customer service at 345-RIDE (7433) or go to [www.valleyride.org](http://www.valleyride.org).

## Getting Started

Participating in the Choice Pass Program is easy. First, complete the Choice Pass Program Participation Request Form, letting us know your company information and how many of each type of bus pass you'd like each month. We'll mail you your bus passes prior to the first of the month. You can then distribute the discounted bus passes to your employees.

We'll bill you for the number of passes you receive. If you have unsold passes, you can either mail them back to us along with payment for the passes you sold, or pay for them and hold on to them to distribute the following month (unused passes will be valid for at least two years). The monthly passes do not have to be used during a specific month. They are good for 31 days from the day they are first used.

### **Pre-Tax Savings**

You can make the Choice Pass Program an even better deal for your employees by setting up pre-tax accounts. With a pre-tax account, employees put part of their paycheck directly into the account, before taxes are taken out. This money is then used to purchase their bus passes from you. It works just like the pre-tax accounts that many employers have for health care or childcare. The current limit for transit benefits is \$130 a month.

### **Covering Part Of Their Costs**

To further encourage commuting by bus, many employers cover all or part of the cost of their employees' bus passes. If you choose this option, determine the amount you want to pay toward each bus pass. Then, simply collect the difference from your employees. You'll send us a payment for the complete bill.

There are tax benefits to employers who provide a free or discounted bus pass to their employees. Federal tax law allows employers up to \$130 a month in tax-free transit benefits to each employee. Employers can deduct the cost of providing a transit benefit as a normal business expense. In addition, you don't have to pay your share of the federal payroll taxes on this benefit.

You can combine a bus pass subsidy with a pre-tax account. You pay for part of the bus pass and the employee pays for their portion out of their pre-tax account.

### **Promoting Your Choice Pass Program**

It's important to let your employees know that you are selling bus passes on site. We can help you design an employee flyer for posting at your workplace. A VRT staff member also can come out to your workplace and meet with interested employees. If you have any questions, need additional marketing materials or assistance in designing a flyer, please contact RideLine customer service at 345-7433.