

**Commute Trip Reduction  
Frequently Asked Questions  
City of Bellevue  
Updated December 2019**

**What is Commute Trip Reduction (CTR)?**

Washington's CTR Law ([RCW 70.94.527](#)) was adopted by the legislature in 1991 and revised in 2006, and has been incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. Its purpose is to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and minimize energy consumption by encouraging people to utilize ways to get to work other than driving alone. The law requires affected employers (see definition below) in the most congested areas of the state to promote commute alternatives such as transit, carpool, vanpool, bicycling, walking, working from home, compressed work weeks, and flexible work schedules. The 2006 revision also requires jurisdictions to work toward trip reduction targets and coordinate with regional governments.

**Why should the average citizen care about CTR?**

Wherever congestion occurs, the delay in employee productivity and freight delivery translates to lost money. Washington's economic vitality depends on personal mobility and the efficient movement of goods and materials. Reducing the proportion of single-occupant vehicles and number of vehicle miles traveled increases the efficiency of our roadway space. As indicated in the 2017 State CTR Board's report to the legislature, an analysis of the central Puget Sound region in 2009 showed that the program's performance reduced congestion nearly 8 percent, equating to a reduction of 12,900 hours of delay and saving \$99 million in congestion costs due to lost time and wasted fuel. According to the WSDOT website, in the most recent 2017-18 survey, statewide commuters at worksites that participated in commute trip reduction left about 34,500 cars at home every weekday; instead, they opted to commute by bus, vanpool, train, bicycle, foot, or telework. These alternative commute trips reduced almost 13 percent of daily vehicle miles traveled per employee between 2007 & 2018 (from 10.9 to 9.5).

**Which employers are affected by the state's CTR law?**

The CTR law affects both public and private employers that have 100 or more full-time (35 hours per week or more) employees who work at a single worksite, and who begin work between 6 and 9 a.m. on two or more weekdays for at least 12 continuous months, located within jurisdictions in areas of the state with the most congested corridors. The law applies in certain urban growth areas of the state with a state highway segment exceeding one hundred person hours of delay; specific language is in [RCW 70.94.527](#). Most jurisdictions in King County, including Bellevue, are required to implement the CTR law. Affected jurisdictions, including the City of Bellevue, are required to pass a local CTR ordinance with specific requirements for that jurisdiction. Bellevue's city-specific CTR requirements are in [Chapter 14.40 of the Bellevue City Code](#).

**What are the goals for CTR-affected employers?**

Every two years affected employers use a state-supplied survey to ask employees how they get to work, how many miles they travel to work, and other information about their daily commute habits. The

results of this survey are used to measure the employer's progress against assigned baseline values for drive-alone rate and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). If an employer meets either the SOV or VMT goal, it is considered to have made goal. The reduction goals are 10% reduction in drive-alone rate or 13% reduction in VMT after four years.

### **What are employers required to do under the CTR law?**

An affected employer must make a good-faith effort to develop and implement a CTR program. This means, at minimum, doing the following:

- Designating an employee transportation coordinator (ETC)
- Displaying the ETC's name and contact information where employees are likely to see it
- Distributing information to employees about commute alternatives to driving alone
- Implementing a set of measures geared toward achieving the CTR goals
- Surveying employees about their commuting habits every two years
- Reporting regularly about progress toward meeting CTR goals
- Adjusting their program elements/offerings if not making progress toward goal

### **What can employers do to encourage employees to use commute alternatives?**

Under the CTR law, an employer must implement a program to reduce commute trips to the worksite. However, ETCs are only limited by their imagination. Some of the more popular program elements include:

- Encouraging ridesharing by matching employees for carpools and vanpools
- Encouraging transit ridership by subsidizing passes or vanpool fares
- Allowing employees to work from home one or two days per week
- Implementing parking management programs that minimize drive-alone commuting by charging employees for parking and/or designating preferred parking for carpools and vanpools
- Installing showers, lockers and bicycle racks for bikers and walkers
- Offering flexible work schedules that allow people to alter their start and quit times in order to take advantage of alternative commute options
- Setting up company-wide trip logging/reward networks (for instance, on [www.RideshareOnline.com](http://www.RideshareOnline.com))

### **What if an employer doesn't comply with CTR requirements or meet its CTR goal?**

The CTR goals are just that, goals. As long as the employer is making a good-faith effort to implement its CTR program, it cannot be penalized for failure to meet the CTR goals. Those employers that don't make progress toward their goals will be asked by their city or county to revise their programs to make them more effective.

The city or county is there to work with employers to create successful programs, not to penalize those that don't succeed. However, civil penalties may be assessed against employers that fail to meet the minimum requirements described above or make a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of the law.

### **Have any other states passed a CTR-type law?**

California, Arizona, Wisconsin, Texas, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Illinois all have CTR-type laws in place for regions within their states.