

**Commute Trip Reduction  
Frequently Asked Questions**  
**City of Bellevue**  
Updated December 2010

**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. And yet, traffic congestion continues to grow worse as we fail to take advantage of viable alternatives to driving alone. If we could drive 500,000 fewer miles in our state each day, traffic congestion could be improved without building a single road. Since 1993, CTR has resulted in 28,000 fewer vehicles on the road during peak commuting hours and a reduction in vehicle miles traveled of 302,400 per day.

**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. (Click [here](#) for a map of these areas, or visit <http://wsdot.wa.gov/TDM/CTR/efficiency.htm>). Most jurisdictions in King County, including Bellevue, are required to implement the CTR law.

**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

### **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

### **What if an employer doesn't comply with its local CTR ordinance?**

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 meet the minimum requirements of the law 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 law, and that fail to work collaboratively with their local jurisdiction.

### **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.