



**National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS
PROGRAM**

**GUARANTEED RIDE HOME
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

**WASHINGTON, DC
REGION**

DRAFT REPORT

FY2024 (JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024)

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Program Background

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) through its Commuter Connections program, under the auspices of its state funding agencies introduced the Guaranteed Ride Home program (GRH) in the Washington, DC region beginning FY1997. In FY2011, GRH was expanded to include the Baltimore Metropolitan region and St. Mary's County, Maryland.

A "commuter insurance" program, GRH is designed to encourage non-Single Occupant Driver use by providing a way home for qualifying commuters in the case of an unexpected personal/family illness or emergency, or unscheduled overtime when their normal alternative commute mode is not available. Many area workers who consider switching commute modes from Single Occupant Vehicles (SOV) to carpools, vanpools, and transit are concerned about being stranded at work if they need to leave before or after standard work hours unexpectedly. GRH eliminates this concern and encourages alternative methods of commuting.

Commuters working within the region who use alternative transportation methods twice a week or more are provided with six free GRH rides home per year. Alternative mode commute practices reduce the number of automobiles on the road and help the region support air quality goals. The GRH program's Participation Guidelines and survey samples used during FY2024 are provided in the appendix of this report.

Survey Methodology

The GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey collection period is ongoing throughout each fiscal year. All GRH customers who obtained a free ride home through the program during FY2024 were provided the opportunity to participate in the survey. Emails with a survey link were sent the day following the GRH trip.

The survey allows respondents to rate the GRH service and provide written feedback; see appendix. Note: some respondents did not answer all questions, as a result, response totals to some questions may not be equal to the total number of survey respondents.

Survey Design

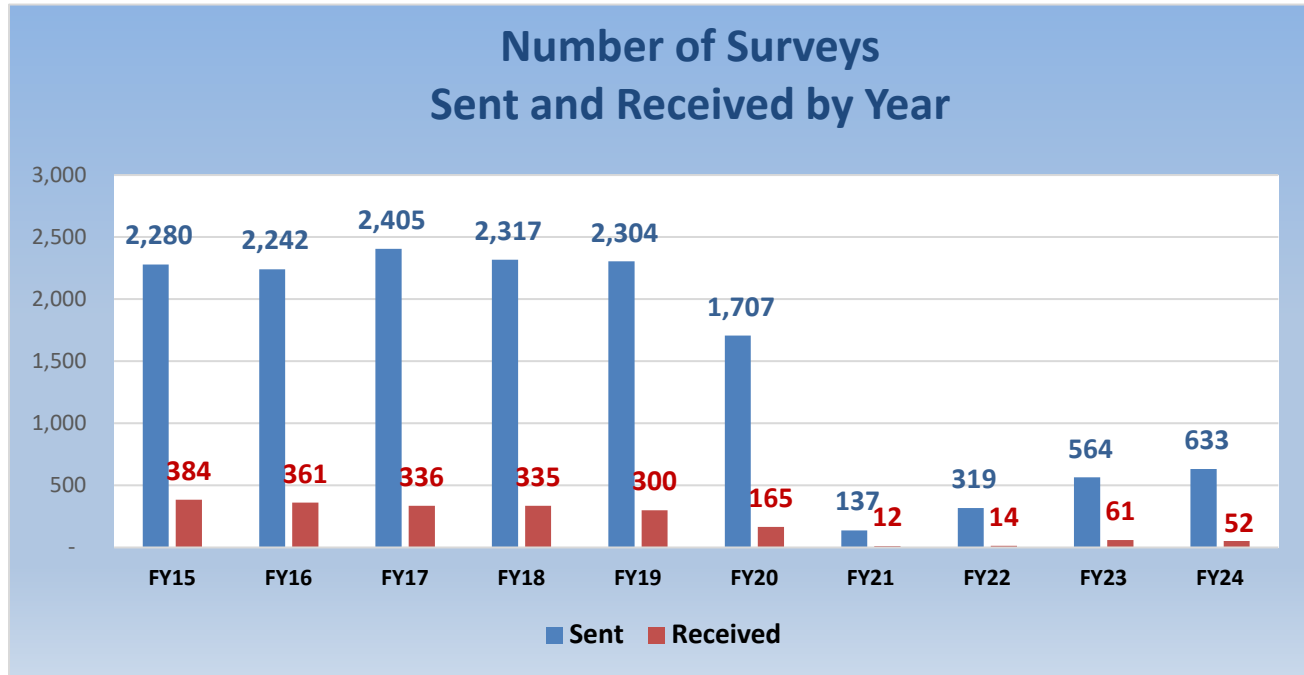
The survey consists of five multiple-choice questions, one fill in the blank and an area for comments. Four questions provide insight into customer opinions regarding various operational functions of GRH and ask respondents to rate aspects of the service by selecting one of four responses “Poor,” “Fair,” “Good,” or “Excellent.” Another multiple-choice question asks the reason for the trip, and a fill in the blank question asks respondents to indicate their wait time. The comments area provides an open-ended forum to offer specific or general feedback, whether positive or negative.

The performance areas of GRH were addressed by multiple-choice questions pertaining to: reservations staff; transportation service; response time and overall service. Reservations staff refers to the operators who answered telephone calls from commuters requesting GRH service, verified the request in accordance with the official GRH participation guidelines, and arranged the ride for the commuter. These contracted staff are employees of Diamond Transportation Services, Inc., which provides such services under arrangement with COG. Transportation service refers to the modes of transportation (taxi, ridehailing, or rental car service) and the affiliated organizations (e.g. XYZ Cab Company, Uber, Enterprise Rent-a-car) that provided the trips from the workplace to the destination. The transportation modes used for the GRH trips are selected by Diamond Transportation Services based on the type and severity of the emergency, distance traveled, and availability.

Response Rates

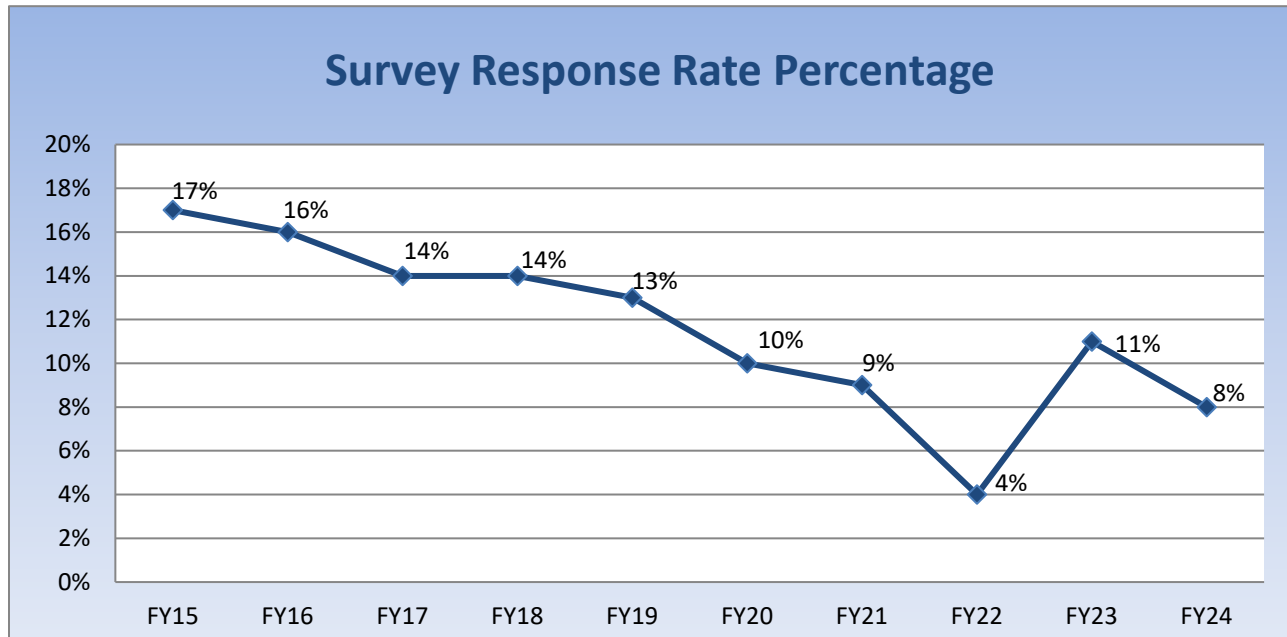
Number of Surveys Sent and Received Past Decade

Of the 633 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2024, 52 completed surveys were received.



Response Rates Percentage – All Fiscal Years

The response rate in FY2024 was 8.2 percent.



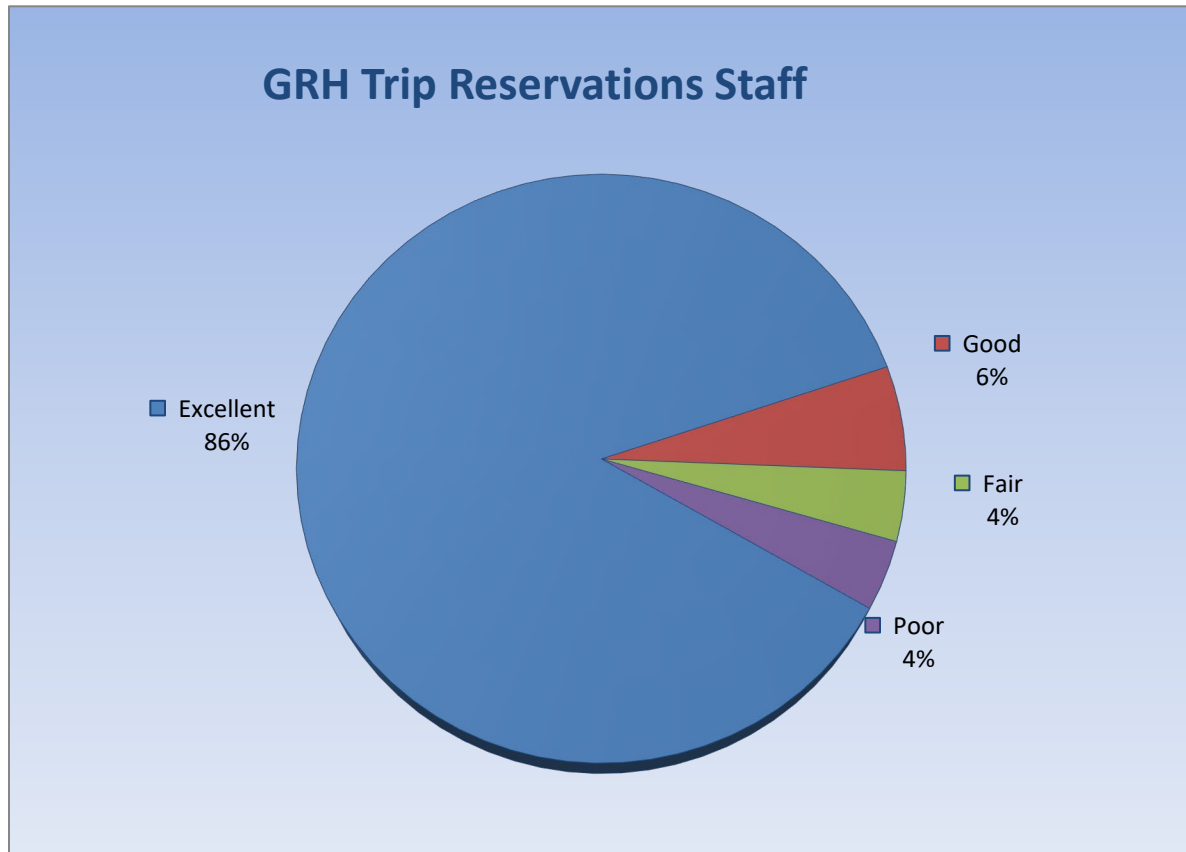
Fiscal Year Survey Results

This section indicates survey results from the 52 respondents for fiscal year 2024.

Reservation Staff Rating

How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservation staff?

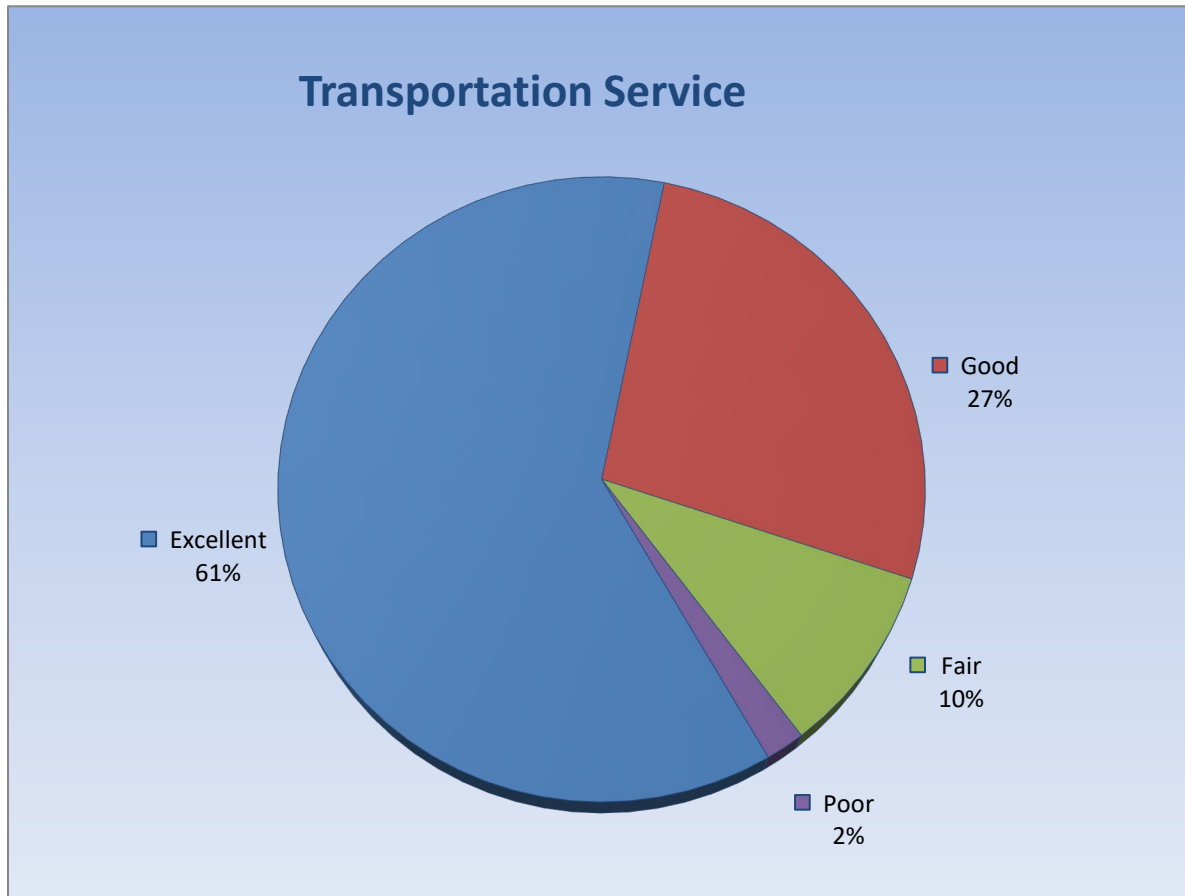
Combined excellent and good ratings equaled 92 percent.



Transportation Service Rating

How would you rate the taxi, ridehail, or rental car service?

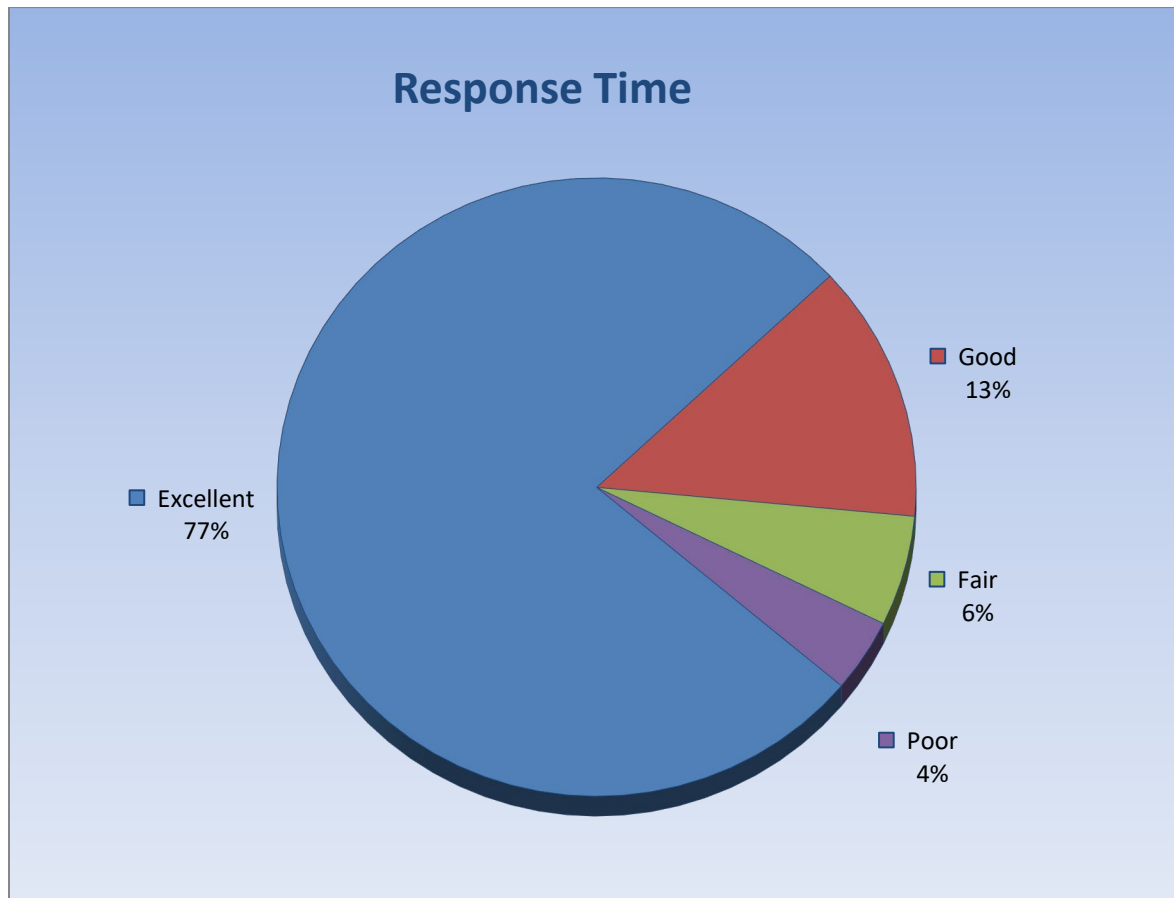
The favorability rating (combined excellent and good) equaled 88 percent.



Response Time Rating

How would you rate our response time?

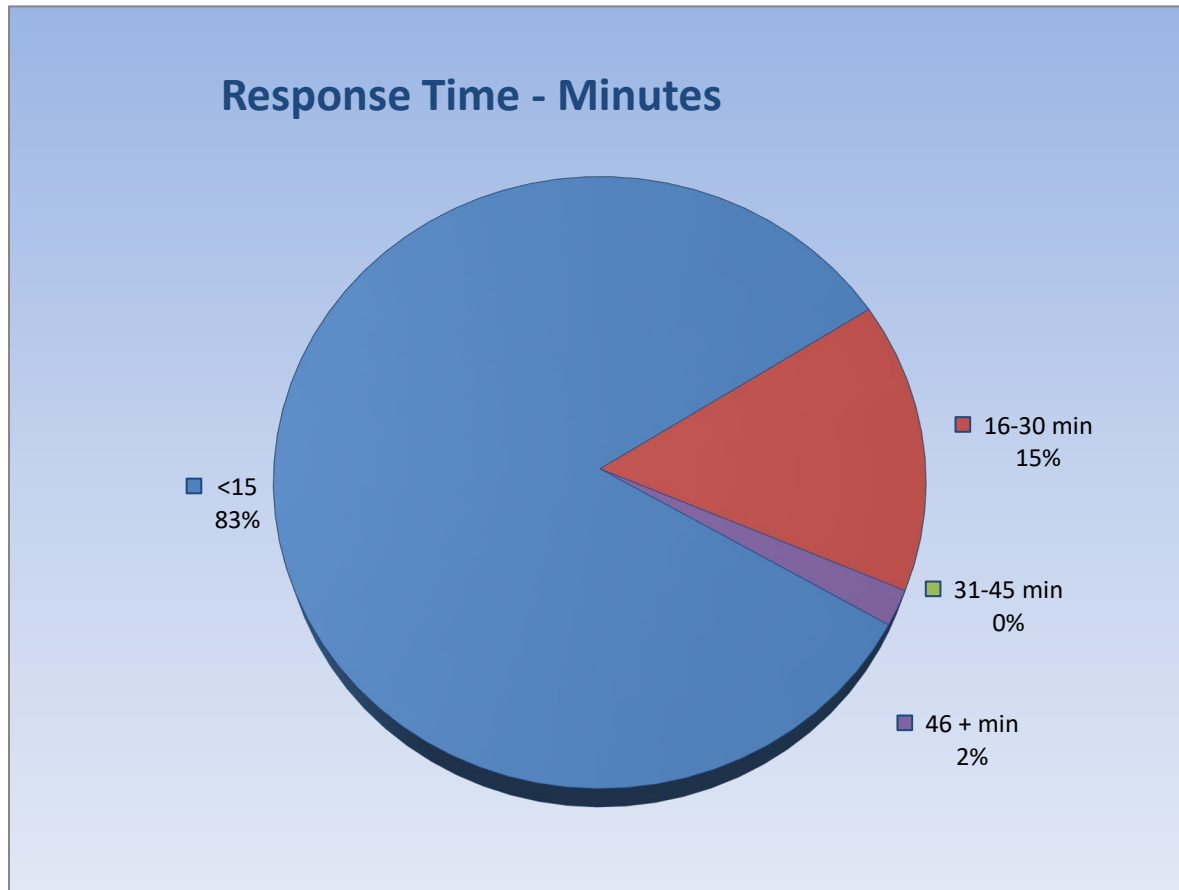
The favorability rating (combined excellent and good) equaled 90 percent.



Response Time – Minutes

Approximately how many minutes did you wait until your ride arrived?

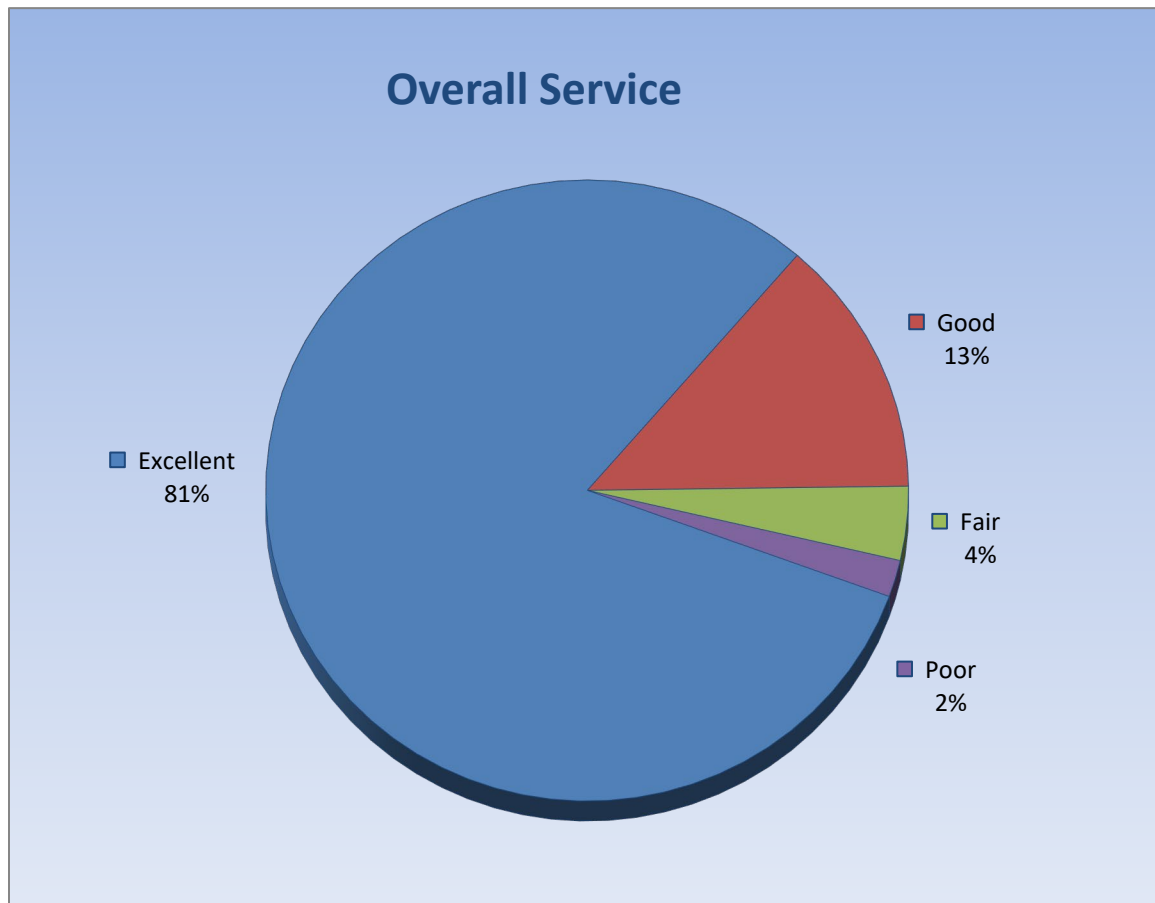
Average response wait in FY2024 was 12 minutes and 98 percent of customers waited 30 minutes or less.



Overall Service Rating

Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?

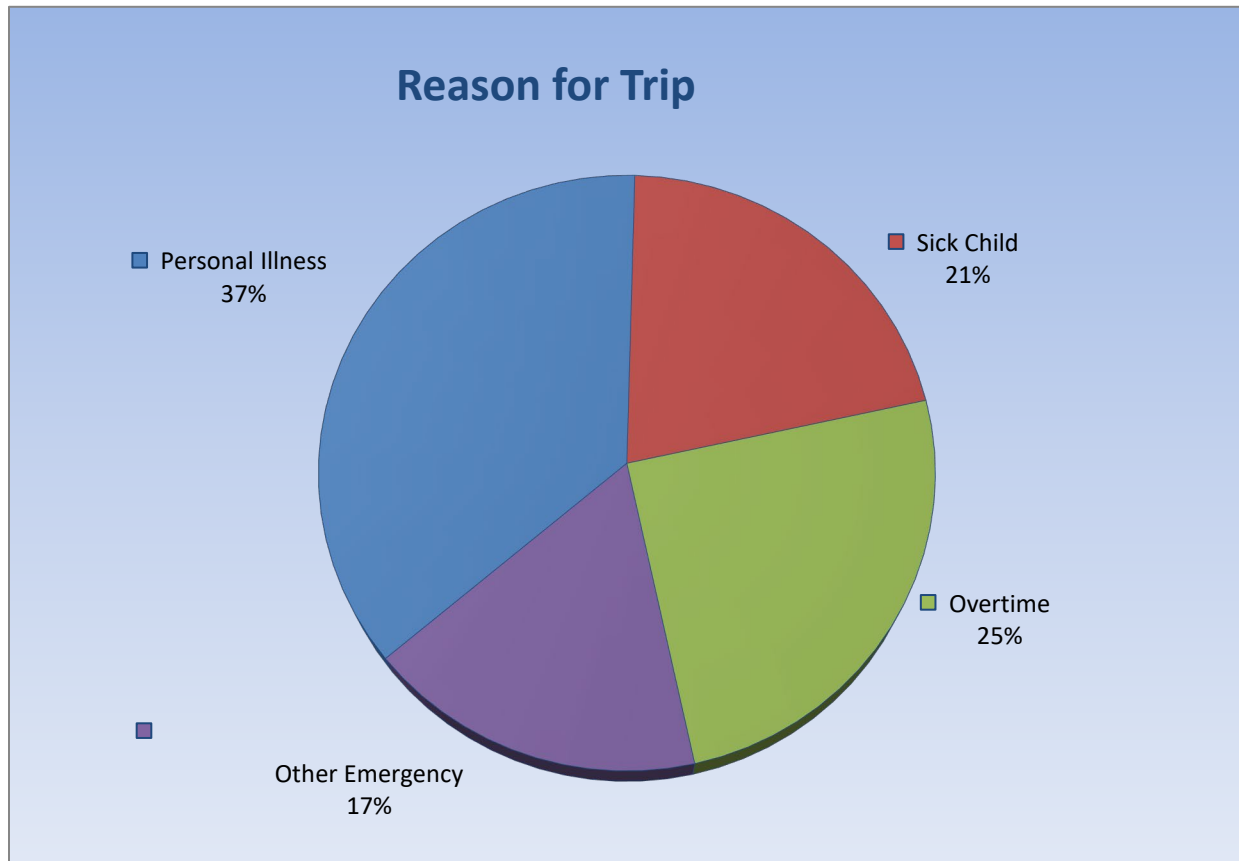
The favorability rating (combined excellent and good) equaled 94 percent.



Reason for Trip

What was the reason for your GRH Trip?

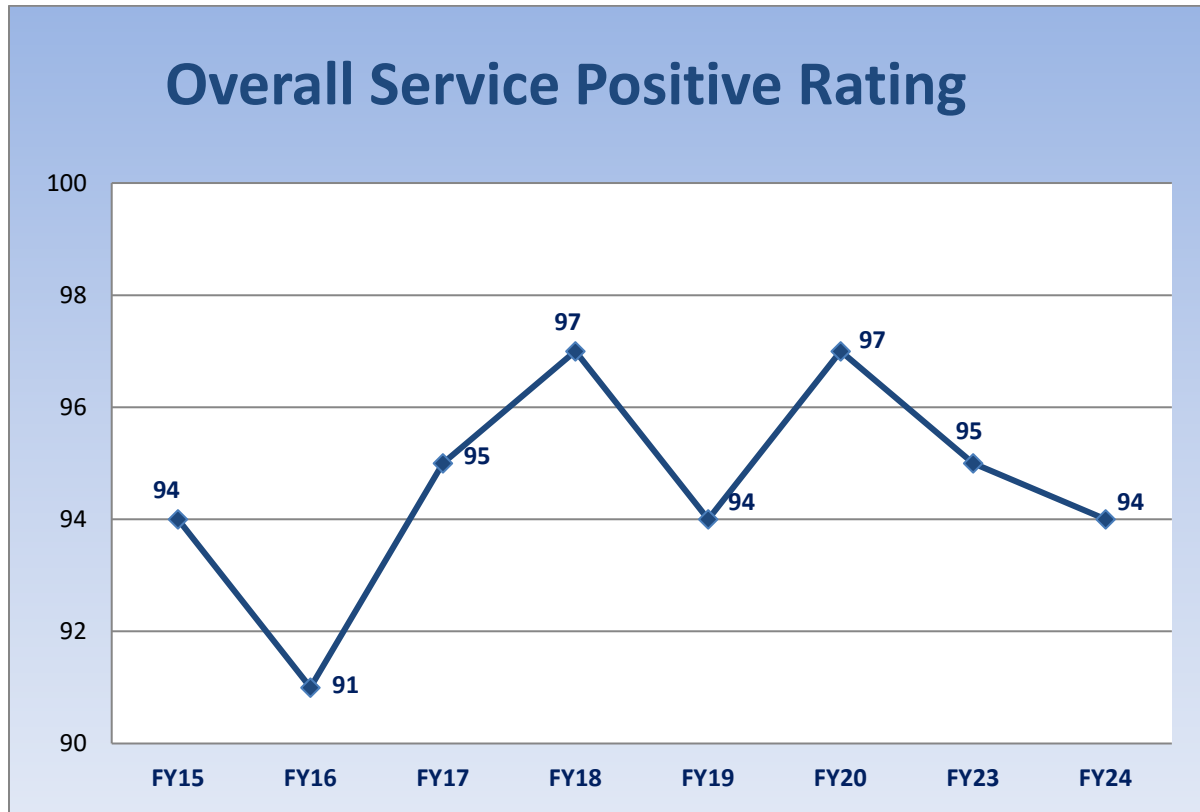
More than one-third (37%) of respondents indicated “Personal Illness” as the reason for using the GRH service. Combined with Sick Child, illness represented more than half (58%) of trip reasons.



Overall Service Rating
Past Ten Fiscal Years

Overall, how would you rate our GRH service?

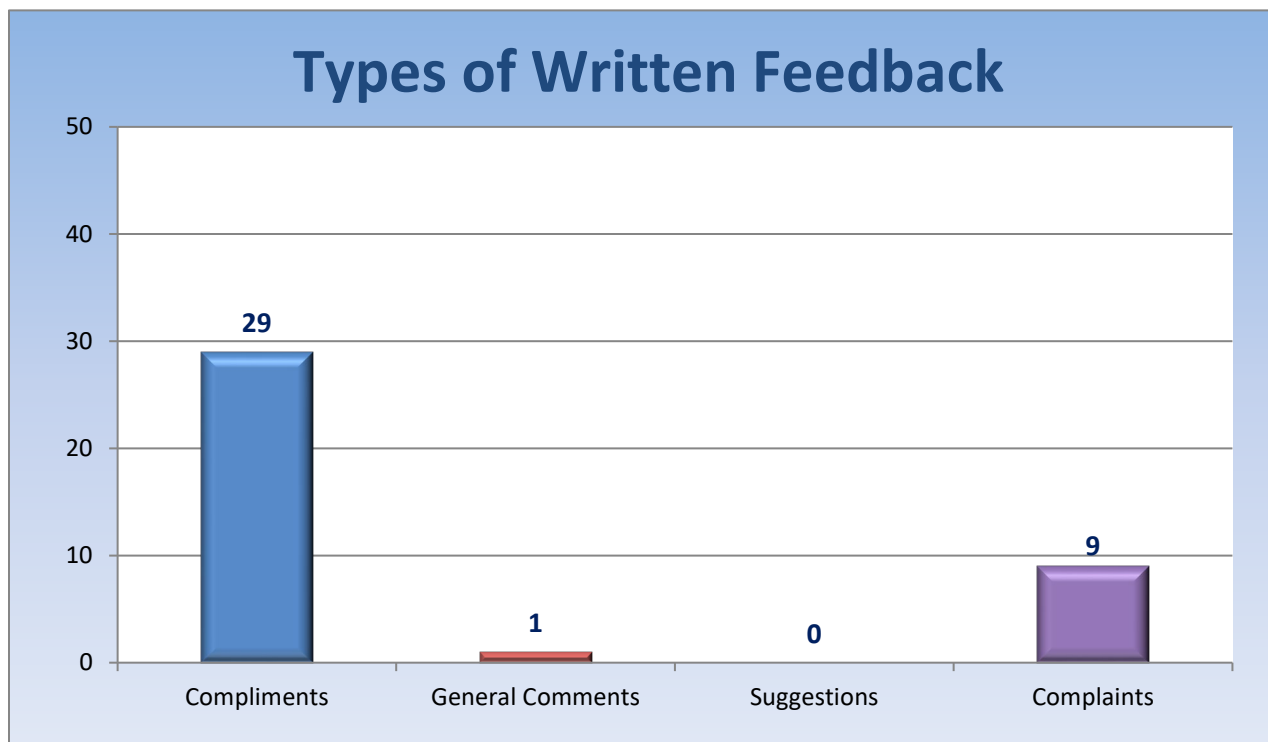
The favorability rating (combined excellent and good) in FY2024 was 94 percent.



Written Responses

In addition to the multiple-choice questions, survey respondents were offered the opportunity to provide open-ended written comments. The types of open-ended written responses included compliments, general comments, suggestions, and complaints. Feedback is valuable for assessing customer attitudes regarding specific service areas and it helps to gauge the general pulse of the program.

More than half (65%) of respondents provided written comments, 34 out of 52 returned surveys. A portion of the comments received fell into more than one type of feedback. For example, a respondent's comments could contain both a compliment and suggestion, or even a compliment and a complaint. For this reason, the numbers below add up to more than the number of total respondents who provided comments.



Written Feedback Compliments

A total of 29 compliments were received, making positive feedback the most prevalent type, measuring at a 3 to 1 margin over complaints. Many respondents provided personal stories about how GRH helped them during their emergency situation, while others simply expressed gratitude. Some explicitly credited GRH as a reason which allowed them to use an alternative commute mode.

Sample of actual compliments from FY2024

- *Wonderful and stayed in constant communication with me until I was in my cab.*
- *This service is the absolute best - thank you so much!*
- *My first time using the service and it was a great resource to have when I needed it.*
- *Very impressed with the speed and ease of getting a ride home!*
- *I love this service and I couldn't have asked for a nicer agent!*
- *I had just arrived at work and immediately received a call from my son's daycare that he was sick and that I should pick him up ASAP.*
- *The customer service lady who handled my case was very understanding.*
- *The person that took my call was very professional even as I was nervous about my child and emergency situation.*
- *I was impressed by the outstanding quality of the service provided by the GRH agent and the driver.*
- *Driver was polite and took me to the commuter lot safely. Fast! Smooth! Convenient!*
- *Overall this is a very good and helpful service for employees*
- *Appreciate getting home and not being stuck at work*
- *I just love having the option of an emergency ride home, it brings comfort when without my car.*
- *This program is very helpful for me for the last couple of years I was using.*
- *Wonderful taxi driver and very safe driving.*
- *Excellent service and provider*
- *I had a great experience! It was so easy using this service. I am so grateful this program exists.*
- *Love the service. Love the customer service!*
- *The staff was excellent, very courteous and very fast response time.*
- *"Great service. The taxi cab driver was extremely polite and friendly. Great job all around.*
- *This is a great service, I go out of my way to make sure my fellow commuters are aware of the program.*

Complaints

A total of nine survey respondents provided complaints about the GRH service. Most were beyond Commuter Connections' direct control.

Samples of actual complaints from FY2024:

- *This driver and vehicle were unsafe. Because she was driving so slowly, it created a traffic hazard!*
- *My only issue was with the cab driver. He wasn't very friendly and wasn't a great driver either.*
- *The taxi was not clean and smelled of food.*
- *Driver did not call or text his arrival. I happened to look outside and saw him waiting.*
- *That driver was all over the place driving! He didn't pick me up on time.*

Recap Summary

Of the 633 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2024, 52 (8%) surveys were completed. The vast majority (94%) of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. At 37 percent, Personal Illness was the most reported reason for using the service. Written responses were provided by 65 percent of respondents and the majority contained compliments vs. criticism. For every program category, good or better ratings were given by 88 percent or more of respondents. The average response wait time was 12 minutes and 98 percent waited 30 minutes or less.

Appendix

Sample Online Survey

Commuter Connections GRH Satisfaction Survey

We'd like to know how you feel about our program. Please take a moment to complete this survey. Your response is greatly appreciated.

How would you rate the service you received from our GRH trip reservation staff?

☐ Poor

☐ Fair

☐ Good

☐ Excellent

How would you rate the taxi or rental car service?

☐ Poor

☐ Fair

☐ Good

☐ Excellent

How would you rate our response time?

☐ Poor

☐ Fair

☐ Good

☐ Excellent

Overall how would you rate our GRH service?

☐ Poor

☐ Fair

☐ Good

☐ Excellent

Approximately how many minutes did you wait until receiving your ride?

Sample Online Survey (con't)

What was the reason for your GRH trip?

- ☐ Sick Child
- ☐ Personal Illness
- ☐ Unscheduled Overtime
- ☐ Other Emergency

Please Provide us with any comments about your GRH experience.

Do you consider your comments to be a: (check all that apply)

☐ Compliment



☐ Suggestion



☐ Complaint



☐ General Comment



Do your comments refer to: (check all that apply)

☐ Taxi or Rental Car Service

☐ Overall Service

☐ Reservation Staff

☐ Response Time

Survey Response Summary Table

Survey Questions	Responses	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Trip Reservations Staff	E	83%	79%	84%	85%	86%	91%	n/a	n/a	79%	86%
	G	12%	13%	12%	13%	11%	7%	n/a	n/a	15%	6%
	F	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	n/a	n/a	5%	4%
	P	2%	5%	1%	1%	1%	0%	n/a	n/a	1%	4%
Transportation Service	E	74%	71%	77%	74%	74%	80%	n/a	n/a	56%	61%
	G	21%	19%	16%	19%	21%	15%	n/a	n/a	34%	27%
	F	2%	6%	4%	4%	2%	3%	n/a	n/a	5%	10%
	P	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	n/a	n/a	5%	2%
Response Time	E	75%	73%	81%	83%	82%	88%	n/a	n/a	62%	77%
	G	16%	17%	13%	13%	14%	9%	n/a	n/a	25%	13%
	F	5%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	n/a	n/a	10%	6%
	P	4%	6%	4%	3%	3%	2%	n/a	n/a	3%	4%
Overall Service	E	81%	77%	80%	85%	82%	86%	n/a	n/a	79%	81%
	G	13%	14%	15%	12%	12%	11%	n/a	n/a	16%	15%
	F	4%	4%	3%	1%	4%	3%	n/a	n/a	2%	4%
	P	2%	5%	2%	2%	2%	0%	n/a	n/a	3%	2%

E = Excellent
G = Good
F = Fair
P - Poor

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN AREA

1. Commuters must be officially registered with Commuter Connections before using the Guaranteed Ride Home service. However, commuters who have not been officially registered may use the GRH service one time, providing they meet all other eligibility criteria. This is referred to as a “one-time exception.” Any commuter granted a one-time exception must officially register before additional trips are granted. Commuters must provide the supervisor name and phone number and at least two (2) phone numbers (home/cell and work) in order to register for GRH service. Registered commuters are those who have received an official registration letter and GRH ID card from Commuter Connections. Registered and one-time exception commuters must be carpooling, vanpooling, taking transit, bicycling, or walking to their site of employment at least two (2) days per week and on the day they use the GRH service. GRH is only available to people commuting to and from work.
2. Commuters must call Commuter Connections and receive authorization from Commuter Connections prior to using the GRH service. Commuter Connections will issue an authorization number to the commuter to approve a GRH trip. Commuters will not be reimbursed for trips not authorized by Commuter Connections. After approval, Commuter Connections will make the GRH trip arrangements for the commuter and, if necessary, provide instructions on how and where the GRH transportation provider will pick up the commuter. Commuter Connections is equipped to provide wheelchair accessible transportation as part of the GRH service as needed.
3. Registered commuters may use the GRH program up to four (4) times annually from their official registration date. Commuters who received a one-time exception then officially register with Commuter Connections may use the GRH service three (3) more times within 12 months from the date of their one-time exception GRH trip. The GRH trip credits are non-transferable.
4. Commuters must re-register annually to maintain their GRH registration. Commuters may contact Commuter Connections to re-register and update their registration information or request re-registration through the Commuter Connections website.
5. The GRH program may only be used in cases of unexpected personal or family emergency, unexpected illness, or unscheduled overtime. Cases in which the GRH program cannot be used include, but are not limited to, the following: previously scheduled medical appointments, trips to the doctor, urgent care center, emergency room or hospital for a commuter that needs medical attention, personal errands, transit service disruptions and/or delays, business related travel, working late without a supervisor's request, weather emergencies, any type of office or building closings and/or evacuations, natural and/or man-made disasters. If any of the above unqualified cases should lead to a qualifying reason, the trip will be denied due to its underlying cause.
6. Requests to use the GRH program because of unscheduled overtime must be made before the commuter's registered work end time, and a supervisor's verification will be required at the time of the request.
7. GRH service is available between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except designated program holidays and any planned and/or unplanned Federal Government office closings. GRH TRIPS MUST BE TAKEN BEFORE 10:00 P.M to ensure that the commuter has received their ride. Designated program Holidays include: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

8. To be eligible, a commuter must be physically working in the following areas in the Washington, D.C. or Baltimore, MD regions. These areas include: the District of Columbia, the Maryland counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's; the City of Baltimore, and the Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William; and the City of Alexandria as well as all cities within the aforementioned counties.
9. Eligible commuters can live anywhere inside the areas listed in Guideline #8 or in any of the following areas: Allegany, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot or Washington counties in Maryland; and Caroline, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Frederick, King George, Lancaster, Madison, Northumberland, Orange, Page, Rappahannock, Richmond, Shenandoah, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Warren, or Westmoreland counties, the City of Fredericksburg, or the City of Winchester in Virginia; and Berkeley, Hampshire, or Jefferson County in West Virginia; and Adams, Franklin, or York counties in Pennsylvania. Any residence outside of the above-mentioned areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
10. All GRH trips must originate from the commuter's registered work location. Depending on the nature of the emergency, and home and work locations, a commuter using the GRH service may be required to use a taxi, car rental, transit, or any combination of these services to reach their destination point. Commuter Connections will determine the type of service used and will issue a valid GRH authorization number at that time.
11. Commuter Connections will pay for one vendor service and/or one transit service per request. If the GRH trip uses a taxi, Commuter Connections will pay for all charges, excluding gratuity, to the destination. The commuter is responsible only for tipping the taxi driver. Cancellation on the part of the commuter of a GRH trip may count as one of the four annual trips. If a transit option is used for part of the GRH trip, the commuter will be mailed a transit reimbursement voucher form. The transit reimbursement voucher must be completed and submitted back to Commuter Connections within thirty days of transit use in order for payment to be made. Please allow 45 days for reimbursement. A commuter's supervisor must sign the transit voucher for any trip granted because of unscheduled overtime in order for the reimbursement to be issued. If the GRH trip is made by rental car, the commuter is responsible for signing a standard rental agreement, showing a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, providing a credit card number for collateral, returning the rental car within a 24-hour period, and the following charges: gasoline refueling charges, taxes, purchase of insurance (if necessary), and additional rental charges if auto is not returned within a 24-hour period (unless Commuter Connections has given prior approval for additional rental time). The commuter will be responsible for any loss or damage to the rental car.
12. GRH is a free service provided by Commuter Connections at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). COG will use its best efforts to provide the Guaranteed Ride Home in accordance with the guidelines shown above. By requesting assistance from the Guaranteed Ride Home program, the participant in the program explicitly acknowledges that COG assumes no liability for the timeliness of the GRH participating vendor(s) or any accidents that may occur on the conveyance.