

Uber will start paying drivers extra for UberPool trips

September 28 2017, by Tracey Lien, Los Angeles Times



Uber pitched its carpooling service as a way for passengers to save cash. But for drivers, UberPool felt like a raw deal because taking on extra passengers didn't mean they would collect extra payouts.

That changed Tuesday, when the San Francisco company announced that

it will start paying [drivers](#) for each additional passenger picked up.

Fares will vary from city to city. In Los Angeles, drivers will earn an extra 95 cents per UberPool pickup.

Previously, drivers were paid only a base fare when they picked up their first passenger, and were compensated for distance traveled and time spent performing the rides. Drivers received no additional compensation for picking up additional passengers as part of an UberPool trip. Now, drivers will earn the extra pickup fee on top of the base rate and mileage.

Uber will shoulder a portion of the cost by reducing its service fee, the company said.

"We heard from drivers that Pool feels like extra work without additional pay," said Aaron Schildkrout, Uber's head of driver product. "Multiple pickups in particular made Pool trips more challenging."

Prior to accepting a passenger, Uber does not tell drivers whether the ride is a regular Uber ride, in which only one stop is typically made, or if it's an UberPool ride, in which a driver may have to pick up multiple passengers from different locations and make more than one stop.

One of the greatest pains of UberPool, according to Lewis, was the sense that drivers had to go out of their way to do more work without being rewarded. An added fare for each additional pick-up makes the service more appealing, she said.

With the addition of extra UberPool fares, "our hope is drivers will begin to look forward to it," Schildkrout said.

Some drivers had a tepid response to the announcement, taking to message boards and Facebook groups to say they didn't believe the

added fares were adequate. Others welcomed the added compensation as long overdue.

"The changes make sense," said Eugenia Lewis, an Uber driver in California's Bay Area and Central Valley.

In Los Angeles, UberPool accounts for 31 percent of all Uber rides. The service is available in 14 cities across the U.S. and Canada.

The change to UberPool is part of a broader campaign the company started earlier this year titled "180 Days of Change," in which it launched a slew of features to appease existing drivers and woo new ones.

In addition to Tuesday's UberPool announcement, the company also said it will educate passengers on how UberPool works, including encouraging them to be ready at the curb to keep drivers and other riders from waiting, offering ratings protection to ensure that a driver's standing with the company isn't affected by [passenger](#) complaints that are beyond their control, suggesting pick-up and drop-off spots that could shave minutes off a trip and improving routes.

In the ongoing battle for drivers, Lyft on Monday announced that it also had new driver-friendly features, such as 24-hour phone and online support for drivers. Uber launched a similar feature in July.

Lyft's carpooling service, Lyft Line, is similar to Uber's previous system for UberPool in that it doesn't pay drivers extra for additional pickups.

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Citation: Uber will start paying drivers extra for UberPool trips (2017, September 28) retrieved

22 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-uber-drivers-extra-uberpool.html>

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