



FAIR WORK CENTER

How employers in our region can help us all ride out the Seattle Squeeze

Employers in our region have a key role to play in helping us all ride out the dramatic transportation impacts of the three-week shutdown of WA-99 through downtown Seattle and the ongoing traffic constraints that will follow. Public agencies and some large companies have encouraged telecommuting, altered work schedules, and other similar steps — but not everyone works in an office.

*Here are some best practices for how employers can also offer some relief to the **hundreds of thousands of people in our region who work in food service, retail, warehouses, caregiving, delivery, and other fields** that require that a worker show up at a particular workplace in order to do their jobs.*

What employers can do:

☐ **Provide at least two weeks' notice of work schedules.**

Employees will need extra time to plan their lives, accommodate caregiving needs, and adjust their commutes given the level of congestion and increased travel-time expected.

☐ **Set a minimum shift length of at least four hours.**

Extended commute times will make short shifts particularly hard for employees, and fewer shift changes means less trips in the region.

☐ **Do not rely on on-call shifts.**

Expecting employees to be prepared to come to work without notice and arrive within a short time of being called in will be practically impossible during this period.

☐ **Accommodate workers who need to modify their availability.**

Employers should go the extra mile to adjust employees' schedules to accommodate transportation challenges, and plan more shift overlap to account for added unpredictability in travel times.

☐ **Establish employee-to-employee shift swapping systems.**

Employees should be allowed to trade shifts with co-workers (including those who work at different locations) so they can provide additional flexibility to each other.

☐ **Waive discipline for employees who arrive late to work due to transportation.**

Employees should not be penalized for our region's transportation squeeze, including through the application of "points" in occurrence-based discipline systems, algorithmic management systems, and similar practices.

☐ **Contribute to employees' transportation costs.**

Policies which make transit free to employees can greatly increase ridership, reducing traffic impacts for everyone.

☐ **Audit for compliance with Seattle's Secure Scheduling Ordinance.**

Large food, coffee, and retail chains doing business within the city limits of Seattle are already obligated by law to provide advance notice, pay for on-call shifts, accommodate transportation-related scheduling needs, and more.

What gig economy companies can do:

☐ **Adjust pay algorithms to give more weight to time spent on a job.**

Short-distance trips may take far longer to complete than usual, so pay rates should reflect time spent on the job rather than distance traveled.

☐ **Provide workers the estimated time involved in a given job.**

Workers will need this information before choosing to accept or reject a job so they can avoid longer trips if they have family obligations or otherwise require flexibility.

☐ **Don't penalize workers for declining jobs that don't work for them.**

Nobody should risk their livelihood because they choose not to take jobs requiring long trips during a period of maximum traffic constraint.

☐ **Waive application of customer star ratings to workers' evaluations.**

Some customers will express frustration with extended travel and delivery times through in-app ratings. Workers do not have control over these conditions, so these ratings should not be applied to decisions on discipline, terminate, or other evaluations.

☐ **Ensure access to company representatives when assistance is needed.**

Workers should have a place to go to resolve the situation if there is a transportation-related problem with completing a job.

Questions about how to best accommodate employees' needs during the Seattle Squeeze?

Ask the people who work for you!

Endorsed by:
