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# The secret to riding I-77 Express for free



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By I-77 Mobility Partners

Feb 24, 2024

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Anyone who will be traveling along I-77 Express during the upcoming spring break should use an NC Quick Pass transponder to declare HOV3+ and drive on I-77 Express for free.

HOV3+ is a unique program between I-77 Mobility Partners and the NCDOT that is growing in popularity. On average, about 94,000 HOV3+ trips are taken each month in the express lanes by carpoolers, businesspeople, parents taking their children to school or sports practice, and other area residents who want to arrive at their destinations with greater reliability.

### **The right transponder**

NC Quick Pass transponders come in three types:

- The NC Quick Pass sticker (free).
- The NC Quick Pass (\$6.69).
- The NC Quick Pass Flex (\$16.49).

Declaring HOV3+ with the first two types requires drivers to set the status with the new NC Quick Pass app or on their computer 15 minutes before they travel in the express lanes. With the NC Quick Pass Flex, the declaration is instantaneous with the flip of a switch.

Virginia and Maryland E-Z Pass Flex accounts can also be used to declare HOV3+ on I-77 Express. But that's it. Although other E-Z Passes, Peach Pass and SunPass transponders can be used to pay for trips on I-77 Express, they can't be used to declare HOV3+. The Charlotte, North Carolina, area is full of people who have migrated from other states. If you're one of them, you may want to swap your old transponder for a new NC Quick Pass.

### **An innovative transportation solution**

A first of its kind for North Carolina, I-77 Express is a public-private partnership between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and I-77 Mobility Partners that developed an innovative solution to a critical transportation corridor that was often plagued by congestion. After responding to a competitive state-led procurement process, I-77 Mobility Partners secured more than \$500 million in private financing – money that did not come from taxpayers' pockets – allowing the NCDOT to make major improvements to 26.2 miles of I-77 roughly 20 years of ahead of schedule.

Those improvements have decreased travel times for all drivers – not just those who choose to use the express lanes. For example, prior to the start of construction in 2015, drivers needed about 45 minutes during the morning or evening rush hour to travel from Charlotte to Mooresville. In the free general-purpose lanes, the same trip now takes about 30 minutes.

In addition, I-77 Express' HOV3+ program – as well as the facts that motorcyclists and riders of public transit can also use the express lanes for free – encourages mobility practices that align with the region's environmental and sustainability goals. Keeping traffic moving, promoting carpooling or transit ridership reduces idling in traffic, decreases emissions and increases economic productivity.

Don't miss out. If you'll soon be hitting the road, be sure to put an NC Quick Pass transponder on your to-do list.

*Spend less time on the road and more time enjoying what matters. Save 35% on tolls with the NC Quick Pass transponder today.*

*I-77 Mobility Partners LLC financed, developed, designed, constructed, operates and maintains the 26-mile I-77 Express corridor as part of the first-ever public-private partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. NCDOT retains ownership of the roadway and helps ensure I-77 Mobility Partners adheres to the standards of their contractual partnership.*

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