

**LOWER SAVANNAH COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BEST FRIEND EXPRESS AND DIAL-A-RIDE
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PASSENGER SAFETY AND
RIGHTS DIRECTIVE**

A part of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Article 15, Section 58-23-1830, Public Transportation Passenger Rights Act, effective May 12, 1986, as amended, is titled "General Prohibitions, persons who may be refused transportation; violations and penalties."

- (a) It is unlawful for any passenger to commit any of the following acts in a bus or any other public transportation vehicle:
 - (1) discard litter, except into receptacles designated for that purpose;
 - (2) play any radio, cassette, cartridge, tape player, or similar device unless controlled by the operator, unless the device is connected to an earphone that limits the sound to the hearing of the individual user;
 - (3) carry or possess any weapon, explosives, acids, other dangerous articles, or live animals, except for a seeing eye dog or a hearing ear dog properly harnessed and accompanied by its owner, small animals properly packaged, or weapons carried by or animals used by a law enforcement official;
 - (4) obstruct, hinder, interfere with, or otherwise disrupt or disturb the operation or operator of a public transportation vehicle;
 - (5) board a public transportation bus through the rear exit door, unless so directed by an employee or agent of the carrier;
 - (6) use profane, indecent, or obscene language or actions on a public transportation vehicle, or conduct himself in a boisterous fashion while on a public transportation vehicle.
- (b) Intoxicated persons may be excluded from riding in any public transportation vehicle by the vehicle's driver or operator.
- (c) The driver of any public transportation vehicle may refuse to transport any person who insists on boarding the vehicle in a manner that will obviously violate any of the above provisions.
- (d) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction for a first offense must be imprisoned for not more than thirty days or fined not more than two hundred dollars, for a second

offense, imprisoned for not more than sixty days or fined not more than five hundred dollars, or both, and for a third or subsequent offense, imprisoned for not more than ninety days or fined not more than one thousand dollars, or both.

In addition to the South Carolina Code of Laws, the following rules are established and will be enforced concerning the Best Friend Express and the Dial-A-Ride System:

- (a) No smoking, eating or drinking is allowed.
- (b) no illegal drug possession or usage is allowed.

All of the above behavior prohibitions may be enforced using a variety of punishments depending upon the severity of the violation. The Lower Savannah Council of Governments gives the Transportation Provider the authority to implement the following penalties in lieu of the more stringent punishments stated by the South Carolina Code of Laws.

- (a) Passengers who fail to follow the rules, for the first offense shall be barred from riding the public system for 30-45 days.
- (b) Passengers who fail to follow the rules, for the second offense shall be barred from riding the public system for 60-90 days.
- (c) Passengers who fail to follow the rules, for a third offense shall be barred from riding the public system permanently.

Guidelines for enforcement of the above punishments:

- (a) An incident report must be completed by the Transportation Provider anytime a passenger is in violation of the above mentioned responsibilities and disciplinary action or suspension is requested.
- (b) An investigation will be conducted by law enforcement or the Lower Savannah Council of Government's staff. The Lower Savannah Council of Governments, after reviewing the facts, will direct the disciplinary action and/or suspension.
- (c) The passenger being considered for disciplinary action and/or suspension from riding the bus system has the right to appeal the punishment to Lower Savannah Council of Governments.
- (d) Anyone whose appeal is successful or who receives disciplinary action will be notified in writing, to include the date he/she may resume using the Best Friend Express and Dial-A-Ride system, if applicable.

This directive supersedes all previous guidelines and directive, and is dated April 1, 2005.