PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PASSENGER SAFETY AND RIGHTS DIRECTIVE

As part of the South Carolina Code Of Laws, Article 15, Section 58-23-1830 Public Transportation Passenger Rights Act, guidelines addressing passenger and driver safety have been implemented.

Further written information on safety and passenger behavior policy may be obtained from the driver or from:

Lower Savannah Council of Governments
2748 Wagener Road
Aiken, SC 29801
(803) 649-7981

www.bestfriendexpress.com

LOWER SAVANNAH COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSIT PROVIDER'S
BEST FRIEND EXPRESS AND DIAL-A-RIDE
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PASSENGER SAFETY AND RIGHTS
DIRECTIVE

The following rules for passengers are hereby established and will be enforced by the Transit Provider concerning the use of the transportation services provided by the Best Friend Express and the Dial-A-Ride System:

(a) No smoking, eating or drinking of any kind is allowed during transit.

(b) No illegal drug possession or usage is allowed during transit. Intoxicated persons may be excluded from riding in any public transportation vehicle by the vehicle's driver or operator.

(c) No person shall discard or deposit other than into a trash receptacle provided for that purpose, any rubbish, trash, or debris onto a public transportation vehicle.

(d) No person shall plan 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 ear.

(e) No person shall carry or possess any weapon, explosives, acids, other dangerous articles except for weapons carried by and used by a law enforcement official.

(f) No person shall carry live animals, except for a service animal that is defined as "any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items." (Federal Regulation 49 C.F.R. Section 37.3)

(g) No person shall obstruct, hinder, interfere with, or otherwise disrupt or disturb the operation of operator of a public transportation vehicle.

(h) No person shall board a public transportation bus through the rear exit door, unless so directed by an employee or agent of the carrier.

(i) No person shall 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.

All of the above prohibitions of unacceptable conduct may be enforced using a variety of disciplinary actions depending upon the severity of the violation such as warnings. The Lower Savannah Council of Governments gives the Transit Provider through its director the authority to implement the following disciplinary actions in lieu of or in combination with the criminal penalties authorized by South Carolina Code Section 58-23-1830(d).

(a) Passengers who fail to follow the stated rules, for the first offense shall be barred from riding the public transit system for 30-45 days.

(b) Passengers who fail to follow the stated rules, for the second offense shall be barred from riding the public transit system for 60-90 days.

(c) Passengers who fail to follow the stated rules, for a third offense shall be barred for a period of time up to permanently from riding the public transit system.

Procedures for enforcement of the above disciplinary actions:

a. An incident report must be completed by the Transit Provider anytime a passenger is in violation of the above mentioned responsibilities and an action or suspension is requested. A copy of the incident report is to be submitted to Lower Savannah Council of Governments within 24 to 48 hours of the incident.

b. The Lower Savannah Council of Governments, after reviewing the incident report, will respond to the action and/or suspension being requested.

c. The passenger being considered for action and/or suspension from riding the public transit system has the right to appeal the action to the Transit Provider Director.

d. The Transit Provider will be responsible for contacting the affected passenger. Notification of the action including the appeal process will be sent in writing by certified mail by the Transit Provider with a copy to Lower Savannah Council of Governments. If applicable, the notification will include the date he/she may resume using the Best Friend Express and Dial A Ride system.

e. Nothing contained herein shall restrict the employee of the Transit Provider operating the vehicle to refuse on a specific occasion to transport a person who is intoxicated or whose presence on the vehicle would create a risk to the safety of the operator or passengers as allowed by South Carolina Code Section 58-23-1830 (b) or (c).

This directive supersedes all previous guidelines and directives and is effective August 2025.