

ColumBus Transit Operator Manual

This manual was designed to provide you, the Operator, with a comprehensive handbook to enhance your knowledge, level of skill, passenger sensitivity and to provide awareness of essential safety procedures.

This manual is to be used by all staff of the ColumBus Transit Department. It is to be used in conjunction with all other City Policies and any other departmental policies, guidelines and procedures. Failure to adhere to procedures may result in disciplinary action.



Section 1 – Introduction

You as a professional

There are several characteristics of a professional. Each...

- Is specially trained for a job
- Is required to have special skills
- Provides a valuable service
- Is required to meet licensing standards
- Provide a high performance level

As a motor vehicle operator, your job is a very responsible one. You are required to handle many tasks:

- Operate the vehicle in a safe manner.
- Remain aware of all that is happening around you in traffic, on sidewalks and in your vehicle.
- Provide assistance to riders.
- Be attentive to special needs of riders and potential emergencies.
- DO all of this in a pleasant, courteous manner ALL of the time.

There are three (3) basic rules or skills that a motor vehicle operator must follow:

1. Provide Professional, Safe, and Reliable Service

- Drive safely and smoothly at all times.
- Adjust temperature controls for the comfort of your customers.
- Answer questions politely and completely.
- Speak clearly, calmly and with respect.
- Offer assistance to every rider/customer.

2. Be Courteous and Patient

- Use respectful language and tone of voice.
- DO NOT swear or call names, avoid sarcasm
- Leave your troubles at home.
- Remember your riders/customers are people.

3. Avoid Arguments

- Remain polite.
- Avoid discussions concerning policy.
- Remember that it takes two people to have an argument.

**Remember, you are ColumBus Transit's most important asset.
Perform your job as a professional and you will be successful.**

Section Two – Guidelines for Bus and Van Operators

Because bus and van operators are the transit department's primary link to our customers, and because operators are counted on to perform without a supervisor present, the transit department has assembled the following information to help operators understand what is expected of them.

2.01 Pre/Post-trip Inspection

The pre/post-trip inspection damage report form must be completed prior to the start of the route and at the end of the work day. Inspections must also include a check of all operating systems including air pressure, engine temperature, oil pressure, voltage meter, lights, turn signals, mirrors and radio.

These systems must be monitored frequently. To avoid serious damage, any indications or warnings of engine or transmission malfunction must be reported to the office immediately.

1. If during the pre/post-trip inspection a defect is found, you must report it to the mechanic immediately.
2. All vehicle defects or damage must be reported at the end of each use of a vehicle or when discovered. You must report to the mechanic and/or supervisor with the vehicle inspection form. The supervisor and mechanic will evaluate the defect and/or damage.
3. If you discover new damage to a vehicle during your pre-trip inspection, bring it to the attention of the mechanic and/or supervisor before starting your day or you may be held responsible for the damage.
4. See mechanic and/or supervisor with all defects and damage.

2.02 Cycling Lifts

Operators driving a lift equipped bus or van must cycle the lift before leaving the City Garage property in the morning.

2.03 Operators Trouble Report

Any repair that a bus or van may need must be reported. The maintenance staff relies on the operators to report problems with vehicles through the operator's trouble report.

2.04 Fares

Operators must collect the correct fare from every passenger. Operators must verify eligibility for reduced fares. The only acceptable forms of reduced fare

identification are Medicare Cards, ColumBus Transit Half Fare I.D. and Easy Rider Program I.D.'s. If a passenger refuses to pay the fare after being asked, the operator should notify a supervisor.

2.05 Transferring Passengers

Buses should generally wait for a period of time at the transfer area in order to accept transfer passengers. If an operator requests your bus to wait at a transfer point for a passenger to transfer and is not there in a timely manner call dispatch and/or other driver to confirm you are leaving.

2.06 Schedules and Time Points

Operators are responsible for knowledge of the schedules and time points for all bus routes. Operators are never to run early. An operator who is more than ten (10) minutes late on route must notify the dispatcher. Operators must have a reliable watch at all times.

2.07 Passenger Stops

Operators shall refrain from making any passenger stops that may result in any hazards to passengers and traffic. Operators should use established bus stops where possible when boarding and debarking passengers.

2.08 Use of Turn Signals/Flashers

Operators should use turn signals to indicate they are about to make a service stop, and use four way flashers while picking up passengers. Operators should then use their left turn signal to indicate to traffic approaching from the rear of their intention to move back into traffic. In all cases, operators should use turn signals when pulling into and out of a stop.

2.09 Railroad Grade Crossings

Operators must always stop no closer than fifteen feet and no further than fifty feet from any railroad grade crossing. Operators shall listen and look in both directions for an approaching train. Do not cross until both directions of the railroad track are observable from an adequate distance. Use four way flashers during this maneuver.

2.10 Destination Signs and Interior Lights

Operators must display the correct destination information on the front and side signs at all times. Interior lights must be on while in service when daylight is low or at night.

2.11 Two Way Radios

Two way radios must always be on and at adequate volume. Radios are to be used for Transit business only. Personal conversations are prohibited at all times.

2.12 Unruly Passengers

When encountering passengers that are abusive, disruptive, or otherwise pose a threat, drivers should firmly ask the passenger to stop. If the annoyances continue, the driver should contact a supervisor or dispatch for assistance. Unruly passengers may be asked to vacate the bus or van if necessary in an emergency, or if approved by a supervisor or dispatcher. Passengers may not be refused the right to board any vehicle without the specific permission of a supervisor.

2.13 Animals and Carry-On Items

The only animals allowed on buses and vans are service animals or animals that are securely held within a carry-on container. Bicycles are only allowed on the vehicles equipped with an exterior rack for such purpose. Flammable products or explosive devices including weapons of any type are prohibited. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed unless they are unopened. Passengers may bring aboard packages or bags that they can carry-on in one trip. This includes up to four bags of groceries. Call the dispatcher if there is any question of what is permitted on the bus.

2.14 Smoking/Eating or Drinking

Smoking is prohibited on buses or vans. Smoking is also prohibited in shelters, the garage and the office. Eating or drinking is never allowed by operators while a bus or van is moving.

2.15 Unattended Buses

A bus or van must never be left unattended. When making a shift change or waiting for a relief driver, the operator must attend the bus or van until the relief driver can take over. When buses are at the Commons Mall for the ten minute layover, the operator must secure the bus or van by leaving the doors closed and turning off the engine.

2.16 Clothing/Shoes

Operators are required to wear shirts, sweatshirts, etc. that have been provided for them by the ColumBus Transit Department. Exceptions will be made for special

occasions. Operators are expected to maintain a neat and clean appearance while on duty. Shoes must be enclosed and have good tread on the soles.

2.17 Energy Conservation

To conserve energy turn the vehicle engines off during the ten minute layover at the Commons Mall. Do not accelerate rapidly, avoid hard braking.

2.18 Completion of Route

Operators are required to follow the assigned route to its last time point. Deleting any portion of a route without authorization is not allowed.

2.19 Use of AM/FM Radios/Cell Phones

AM/FM radios may be used on buses and vans. Music must be kept on low volume and should not cause any disruption to the passengers or to the safe operation of the bus or van. Acceptable radio stations would be those that do not have foul, suggestive, or religious language, either in music or conversation. The ColumBus Transit department reserves the right to restrict the use of AM/FM radios at any time while at work. No headphones or earphones are permitted at any time.

Operators may not use personal cell phones while operating a bus or a van. Personal cell phones should be turned off while the vehicle is in motion. This includes hands-free cell phones. Messages may be retrieved when the vehicle is not in motion.

Phones on the call-a-bus vans are for business purposes only. They will remain on but will only be answered when the vehicle is not in motion.

2.20 Special Efforts for People with Disabilities

Bus operators are responsible for certain special efforts on behalf of persons with disabilities that are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). These include assisting passengers in wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs within the bus, calling out major bus stops (see below), and other steps as directed.

2.21 Operations and Safety Memorandums

Occasionally, the company will issue a memorandum as a reminder about policies outlined in this manual, or to deal with situations not addressed here. All operators are required to familiarize themselves with these instructions, and to observe the directions outlined therein.

2.22 Calling Out Stops

In accordance with ADA law, operators must notify passengers of main stops along bus routes. Use the PA system available in your vehicle or speak loudly enough so that all passengers can hear you. Failure to provide this service is a violation of the ADA and exposes operators to potential personal liability under the terms of the ADA.

2.23 Use of Lifts

The lifts must be used upon a passenger's request.

2.24 Equipment

Operation of specialized equipment (fare boxes, lifts, two-way radios, destination signs, etc.) is part of a bus operator's job. Proficiency in the use of such equipment is a condition of continued employment as a bus operator.

2.25 Seat Belts

The wearing of seat belts is required of all ColumBus Transit employees in all ColumBus Transit vehicles at all times while the vehicle is in motion (absolutely and without exception). Operators should report defective seat belts on their pre and post trip inspection reports.

Section 3 – Passenger Service

3.01 Conduct with Passengers

- Be courteous at all times. Remember you are a professional.
- Maintain a cheerful and calming manner with patience and understanding.
- During the course of a day, the operator, will have more contact with the public than any other employee of the ColumBus Transit Department.
- Remember “People First Language”; people with disabilities are “People First”. Put the person first rather than the disability.
- Always address a customer by their proper name. Never use terms such as honey, sweetie, dear, etc.
- Refer customers having policy questions and scheduling issues to the office using the main number. The dispatcher will direct the customer to the proper staff member.
- Avoid participation in controversial discussions with customers, especially personal matters involving religion, politics, family business, illness, etc.
- All customer information is strictly confidential.
- Report inappropriate customer behavior to a supervisor as soon as possible and complete a written incident report.

3.02 Passenger Transport

- Before driving, make sure that all riders are safely seated.
- Ensure the safety of the interior of the vehicle. Keep aisles free of any obstructions including wheelchair securements and packages.
- A passenger riding locally should not be on the vehicle for more than one hour.
- Any passenger cancellation, no shows or changes of any kind must be reported to dispatch as soon as possible.
- An assistant may accompany the passenger at no charge.
- Notify dispatch if you are running late. Dispatch will make every effort to give you assistance if possible.
- Never smoke in or around our vehicles.
- Drivers are not permitted to enter a passenger’s home.
- Operators may enter a customer’s garage area if necessary with prior authorization.
- Maintain the comfort level of the vehicle to reflect the needs of the passengers. Check with the passengers periodically to determine if the temperature of the vehicle is comfortable.
- Report any passenger incident immediately to Dispatch. This would include an actual or possible passenger injury on or off the vehicle. Follow up with a completed written incident report.
- In the event of a bodily fluid spill on the vehicle, it is the driver’s responsibility to immediately notify a supervisor or dispatch and take proper steps to clean

and decontaminate the area. Do not pick-up other passengers with an unclean vehicle. Bloodborne pathogens clean up kits are provided on every vehicle. It is your responsibility to make sure the supplies are replenished.

3.03 Passenger Assistance

- A passenger should never have to ask for assistance because the driver failed to ASK: Assistance – Sensitivity – Knowledge
- Always offer passenger assistance when boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- Be aware that passengers can have hidden disabilities such as: cardiovascular, respiratory disorders or cognitive disorders.
- Radio a supervisor or dispatch for direction if you encounter a problem.
- If a passenger requires emergency medical care while on the vehicle, stop the vehicle in a safe location and radio Dispatch.
- Please remember you might be the only outside contact your passenger may have. Many times the passenger may be in need of additional help from an outside agency such as Agency on Aging or Adult Protective Services. Report any issues or concerns that you may have to your supervisor and complete an incident report.

3.04 Assisting Visually Impaired Passengers

- Identify yourself first and then offer assistance to all visually impaired passengers.
- In many instances a visually impaired passenger may not require assistance and may have a service animal. Please do not distract the service animal.
- If assistance is required always ask how you can be of assistance and inform the passenger before administering the assistance.
- To assist, first determine which hand the passenger will use, and then offer the opposite arm by touching the hand of the passenger with your elbow.
- The operator should hold his/her elbow three inches away from their body and the passenger should hold the operators arm just above the elbow.
- The operator should not make any exaggerated motions and must inform the passenger of all turns.

3.05 Standees Using the Lift

- In very limited situations a passenger may use the lift to board the vehicle from a standing position if they request to do so. When allowing a passenger to use the lift to board from a standing position, proceed as follows:
 - Place the passenger on the lift in a standing position facing the interior of the vehicle.
 - Ask the passenger to hold the hand rails on the lift.

- Caution standee to use care entering the vehicle and to be aware of clearance restrictions. Be aware of the low entrance height of the vehicle from the lift.

3.06 Wheelchair Procedures

- All operators should be familiar with the manual operation of the wheelchair lift.
- All vehicles meet or exceed ADA requirements.
- In adherence with ADA regulations we transport all wheelchairs thirty inches in width and forty-eight inches in length. We also transport electric wheelchairs, scooters, and extra large wheelchairs provided they will fit on the lift and provided the wheelchair and customer combined weight is within the limits of the maximum weight for the lift.
- If you encounter a wheelchair larger than ADA requirements notify dispatch to ensure information is noted in our customer files.
- All wheelchair securement straps must be secured and the passenger must be secured with all securement belts.
- All wheelchairs must be fully secured in the vehicle.
- You are required to operate wheelchair equipment and assist wheelchair passengers on and off the vehicle. Training will be provided with the assistance of the Indiana Rural Transit Assistance Program. If you have not been trained or would like a refresher course notify your supervisor immediately.
- Do not carry any wheelchairs up or down any steps.
- Check the handgrips of the wheelchair to ensure they are snug and will not slide off.
- Report any wheelchair safety issues to a supervisor. This would include footrests, condition of wheel locks, cleanliness issues, etc.
- Always inform the passenger of your intent to move the wheelchair before doing so. Always check to be certain that the passenger has their arms, hands and elbows in and feet in a safe place before moving the wheelchair.
- Treat the passenger's wheelchair with care and respect.
- The wheelchair lift is to be operated from a standing position on level ground by the ColumBus Transit operator only. Do not ride the lift with a wheelchair passenger.
- Always replace the wheelchair lift safety belt and deployment hand control to proper receptacles, after use, to avoid damage.
- A wheelchair must be fully and safely secured at all times.

Section 4 - Fixed Route

4.01 Fixed Route Service

- ADA regulations require that all vehicles be equipped with wheelchair lifts, securement areas and securement systems.
- Passengers using a mobility device may board the wheelchair lift as outlined in department policy.
- Persons with oxygen and respirators may board the vehicle.
- ADA regulations require operators to assist and be courteous to customers with disabilities.
- ADA regulations require that operators allow service animals on the vehicle.
- ADA regulations prohibit operators from passing passengers with disabilities at bus stops even if the vehicle securement area capacity is full. The driver must stop and inform the passenger of the situation. Dispatch must be notified immediately of the situation and arrangements will be made to transport that individual with the Call-a-Bus.
- Standees may utilize the lift to board in a manner consistent with department policy.
- Wheelchair lift failure must be reported immediately.
- Standees are allowed and must hold the standee rails as provided.
- Keep alert for problems within the interior of the vehicle. Make a good habit of using the mirrors to scan the interior of the vehicle.
- Passengers can stumble when getting on or off the vehicle, therefore, remember to always ask each passenger getting on or off the vehicle if they require assistance.
- If a passenger is abusive or disruptive, radio Dispatch immediately. If the passenger is uncooperative and continues to be disruptive, stop vehicle in a safe, well lit location, and ask them to exit the bus. If the passenger refuses notify supervisor and supervisor will notify CPD.
- Operators are NOT responsible for carrying ANY packages.
- Service Animals and packages must not block the aisle or exits.
- Passengers cannot make repeated trips on and off the vehicle to carry on or unload packages.
- Ensure the safety of the interior of the vehicle. Keep aisles free of any obstructions including wheelchair securements as well as packages.
- All announcements must be made in a clear, understandable voice with sufficient volume to be heard in the rear of the vehicle.
- All transfer points, major intersections and destination points must be announced.
- Announce any stop requests received from passengers with disabilities.
- Follow all established rules for pre and post vehicle inspection.
- A vehicle inspection report must be completed at the beginning and the end of each day.

- Be alert and remember the clearance of the vehicle, and to avoid trees, overhangs, and poles. Use common sense and caution.
- Upon returning to the garage check vehicle for any personal belongings left behind in the vehicle and passengers who may have fallen asleep.
- Any lost articles found on the vehicle must be given to the dispatcher along with a brief incident report, noting a description of the article found, route, date and time.
- Be aware that special notices, schedules and surveys occasionally may be conducted and/or posted on your vehicles.

4.02 Boarding and Discharging Passengers

- Reminder: It is unlawful to operate the vehicle with the doors opened. Doors must remain closed until the bus is at a complete stop.
- The operator must observe passengers getting on or off the bus making sure the passenger does not get caught in the doors before moving.
- Normal stops should be made from six to twelve inches from the curb. If you are unable to do this, stop three feet from the curb to avoid possible injury to the passenger.
- Do Not stop the vehicle where you may block cross walks or cross streets.
- Always signal your intent when entering back into the flow of traffic.

4.03 Service Animals

- Service animals are used to assist persons with disabilities including those with visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility impairments, epilepsy, arthritis, and other physical disabilities.
- Service animals provide assistance in a number of ways. They may be taught to retrieve dropped items, pick-up papers, pull their partner's wheelchair and carry items. Several animals are trained to push elevator buttons, turn light switches on and off, open doors, and to retrieve groceries from a store shelf.
- No identification of being a service animal is required for a service animal; however, you may ask, "Is this a service animal?" If the passenger replies "Yes" and the animal is under the control of the handler you must welcome them aboard.

4.04 Types of Service Animals

- Service Animals may include:
 - Guide dogs for persons with visual impairments.
 - Service animals for persons with disabilities (dogs, cats, monkeys, and pigs).
 - Hearing and signal animals (dogs and cats).

- Seizure response/alert animals that alert individuals with seizure disorders of oncoming seizures and give assistance and help during and following the seizure.

4.05 Safety Issues-Service Animals

- Service animals are socialized and trained to interact appropriately with other animals and people. However, it is possible that a service animal could be provoked and become aggressive. Therefore, according to the Department of Justice:
 - You may exclude any animal, including a service animal, from your vehicle when the animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. You may not make assumptions about a particular animal based on your past experiences with other animals. Each situation must be considered individually.
- Keep in mind that control of the service animal is the responsibility of the animals' handler. If an incident occurs the driver must notify dispatch at once and complete a written incident report upon returning to the garage.

4.06 Service Animal Review

- Use extreme caution with service animals.
- Do Not touch or give commands to a service animal, unless asked to by its handler.
- If necessary, remind passengers that the service animal is working and not to distract it.
- A service animal may board with the rider, if the rider is ambulatory or non-ambulatory.
- In most cases a service animal should not be permitted to use the lift (because of safety concerns) their tails, paws, heads, or equipment may catch in the lift mechanism, causing severe injury to the animal. An exception might be a standee using the lift.
- Service animals should sit or lie on the floor. Animals should not occupy a passenger seat.
- Service animals should not block the aisle or exits.
- Always ask if the animal is a service animal.
- A patrol dog may accompany a uniformed police officer.

4.07 Fixed Route Time Schedules

- All time schedules must be adhered to as closely as possible. At no time can a schedule run early. If you are experiencing a problem keeping to the time schedule, due to inclement weather or traffic conditions, call Dispatch to

advise them. If you have a mechanical breakdown, notify Dispatch when you are back up and running. The Dispatcher or Supervisor will advise you to continue with the route or how to adjust your schedule and stops.

- Any detours must be announced and/or posted and dispatch must be notified.
- In limited situations ColumBus Transit management reserves the right to determine the ability to accommodate the request.

4.08 Prohibited Passenger Conduct-ColumBus Transit Fixed Route

- No smoking
- No consumption of alcohol
- No illegal substance use of any kind
- No eating or drinking
- No defacing, damaging City property
- No inappropriate behavior to the operator or other passengers
- No swearing or offensive behavior
- No spitting on any vehicle
- No throwing or depositing of garbage, bottles, containers
- No throwing of any objects out any window or door
- No radio playing or video devices
- No possession of any explosives, flammable liquid, car batteries
- No firearms, with the exception of law enforcement officers
- No intentional interfering with the operator and the operation of the motor vehicle
- Passengers are not permitted to use the two-way radio

Section 5 – Accident and Emergency Procedures

5.01 Emergency Procedures

- The four basic procedures for handling accidents and emergencies are:
 - Keep Calm
 - Protect yourself, your passengers, and the vehicle
 - Contact dispatch
 - Document all pertinent information and complete required reports

5.02 Vehicle Operator Illness

- Notify dispatch of the nature of illness or assistance you need and your location. Dispatch will get back to you as soon as possible.

5.03 Passenger Illness/Injury

- Immediately stop vehicle in a safe location.
- Ask the passenger if they require medical attention.
- Do Not transport the passenger to a medical facility.
- Immediately notify Dispatch if a passenger requests or needs medical attention.
- Be prepared to relay all pertinent information to Dispatch such as the nature of the emergency, passenger name, and your location.
- Stand by for direction and/or assistance.
- Do Not attempt to administer first aid to a passenger. Do Not move the passenger. Give comfort to the passenger by talking in a soothing voice and tone. Keep other riders from crowding the injured or ill passenger.
- Do not touch a passenger having a seizure. Any personal touching may prolong the event.

5.04 Accident Procedures

In the event of an accident involving a ColumBus Transit vehicle:

- Immediately stop the vehicle, set the parking brake, and engage vehicle-warning flashers.
- Radio the transit dispatch office:
 - Advise dispatch that you have been involved in an accident.
 - Give dispatch your location.
 - Request police and an ambulance (if necessary)
 - Advise dispatch if injuries are apparent (they may want to dispatch more than one ambulance).

- Visually assess the situation-if passengers seem to be at risk by being in the vehicle, evacuate them to a safe location away from the vehicle and traffic. If passengers do not seem to be at risk, ask them to remain in their seats in the vehicle until help arrives.
- Once passengers in the transit vehicle are secured, advise others involved in the accident that emergency personnel have been contacted and dispatched.
- Ask for names of witnesses, and ask them to remain at the scene until police arrive.
- Do Not discuss the accident with anyone other than ColumBus Transit staff or the police.

5.05 Mechanical Breakdown Procedure

- In the event of a mechanical breakdown, radio the mechanic and/or dispatcher, give them your location and describe the problem. Try to move your vehicle to a safe location that will not obstruct traffic. Turn on your emergency flashers; use reflectors if necessary. Shut down the engine; remain in radio contact with the office. If there is a fire, evacuate passengers from the vehicle to a safe location. Use the fire extinguisher if necessary. Wait for assistance, direct traffic if necessary.

5.06 Preventable and Non-Preventable Accidents

The Transit Coordinator and/or the Public Safety Officer will review all employee involved accidents to determine the preventability or non-preventability of the accident. ColumBus Transit standard for these determinations is the standard established by the National Safety Council for preventable and non-preventable accidents and is described below.

A preventable accident is any accident in which the operator failed to do everything he/she could have done to avoid it. By contrast a non-preventable accident is any accident in which the operator has done everything he/she could have done to avoid it based on the criteria listed below. In interpreting preventable and non-preventable accidents, the Council defines the following as preventable accidents:

1. Intersections

- It is the responsibility of professional operators to approach, enter and cross intersections prepared to avoid accidents that might occur through the action of other drivers. Complex traffic movement, blind intersections or failure of the other driver to conform to law or traffic control devices will not automatically discharge an accident as non preventable. Intersection accidents are preventable even though the professional operator has not violated traffic regulations. The failure

to take precautionary measures prior to entering the intersection is factors to be studied in making a decision. When a professional operator crosses an intersection and the obvious action of another driver results in an accident, that accident is preventable if there is sufficient reason to expect the operator to anticipate and thereby avoid the collision.

2. Vehicle Ahead

- Regardless of the abrupt or unexpected stop of the vehicle ahead, an operator can prevent rear end collisions by maintaining a safe following distance at all times. This includes being prepared for obstructions on the roadway, adverse weather and road conditions, and avoiding “overdriving” headlights at night.

3. Vehicle Behind

- Investigation often discloses that operators risk being struck from behind by failing to maintain a margin of safety in their over all following distance. Rear end collisions preceded by a roll back, an abrupt stop at a grade crossing, when a traffic signal changes, or when the operator fails to signal a turn at an intersection, would be charged as preventable. Failure to signal intentions or to slow down gradually should be considered preventable.

4. Passing

- Failure to pass safely indicates faulty judgment and the possible failure to consider one or more of the important factors a driver must observe before attempting such a maneuver. Unusual actions of the operator being passed or of oncoming traffic might appear to exonerate an operator involved in a passing accident; however, the entire passing maneuver is voluntary and the operator’s responsibility.

5. Being Passed

- Sideswipes and cut offs involving a professional operator while being passed are preventable when the professional operator fails to yield to the passing vehicle by slowing down or moving to the right when possible.

6. Oncoming

- It is extremely important to check the action of the operator when involved in a head on or sideswipe accident with a vehicle approaching from the opposite direction. Exact location of vehicles prior to and at the point of impact must be carefully verified. Even though an opposing vehicle enters your traffic lane, it may be possible to avoid a collision. For example, if the opposing vehicle was in a passing maneuver and the operator failed to slow down, stop or move to the right to allow the vehicle to re-enter his/her own lane, then the operator has failed to take action to prevent the occurrence. Failing to signal the opposing driver by flashing the headlights or sounding the horn should also be taken into account.

7. Fixed Objects

- Collisions with fixed objects are preventable. They usually involve failure to check or properly judge clearances. Even though fixed objects may be obstructive, the operator must be constantly on the lookout for such conditions and make the necessary allowances.

8. Backing

- There are almost no circumstances under which a fixed route bus should back. When absolutely necessary the operator should get assistance from another operator or supervisor to watch the backing process. The operator must be sure during the entire operation that the way is clear.

9. Pedestrians

- Traffic regulations and court decisions generally favor the pedestrian hit by a moving vehicle. An unusual route of a pedestrian at mid block or from between parked vehicles does not necessarily relieve an operator from taking precautions to prevent such accidents. Whether speed limits are imposed on the area or not, speed too fast for conditions may be involved. School zones, shopping areas, residential streets, and other areas with special pedestrian traffic must be traveled at reduced speeds equal to the particular situation. Bicycles, motor scooters, skateboards, and similar equipment are generally operated by young and inexperienced people. The operator who fails to reduce his/her sight distance has failed to take the necessary precautions to prevent an accident. Keeping within posted

speed limits is not taking the proper precaution when unusual conditions call for voluntary reduction of speed.

10. Passenger Accidents

- Passenger accidents in any type of vehicle are preventable when they are caused by faulty operation of the vehicle. Even though the incident did not involve the collision of the vehicle, it must be considered preventable when the operator stops, turns, or accelerates abruptly. Emergency action by the operator to avoid a collision that results in passenger injury should be checked to determine if proper driving prior to the emergency would have eliminated the need for the evasive maneuver.

11. Speed

- Operators are to observe speed limits at all times. Operators shall not exceed 15 miles per hour while on private or commercial property. Weather and road conditions are not causes of accidents, only conditions to be contended with. The operator who does not adjust his/her driving to these conditions is more likely to become involved in accidents than those who do. Extremely slippery conditions call for reductions in speed. Driving under adverse road conditions also calls for an increase in the following and stopping distances. In fact, almost ten times the normal stopping distance is needed to stop on ice.

12. Traffic Laws

- It is the operator's responsibility to know and observe all traffic laws, ordinances, and ColumBus Transit safety procedures. If an operator receives a traffic ticket, it will be the operator's responsibility to pay it.

13. Non Collisions

- Many accidents, such as overturning or running off the road may result from emergency action by the operator to preclude being involved in a collision. Examination of his/her driving procedure prior to the incident may reveal speed too fast for conditions or other factors. The operator's actions prior to involvement should be examined for possible errors or lack of defensive driving practices.

14. Miscellaneous

- Improper use of doors, interlock systems, or passenger accidents resulting from passenger behavior such as hanging out of windows are preventable by the operator.

5.07 Judgment of Accidents

All employees involved in preventable accidents may be either classified as a minor accident or a major accident for purposes of discipline (if necessary).

A minor accident is any accident that results in less than \$1,500.00 in property damage (as determined by the City of Columbus, Risk Management Dept.) and no personal injury, nor results in any conviction of any traffic violation.

A major accident is any accident that results in \$1,501.00 or more in property damage (as determined by the City of Columbus, Risk Management Dept.), any personal injury or conviction of any traffic violations.

Section 6 – Vacation, Personal and Sick Time Policies

6.01 Vacation Time

- A maximum number of three employees will be approved for vacation time usage on any given workday, with the exception of the month of December when two employees will be allowed off at a time. A request form must be completed and submitted to the dispatcher by a due date falling in January. Once request forms are received one week at a time will be approved per employee based on seniority. Your highest level choice will be considered first. Starting with the highest seniority employee, one week will be granted, then the second highest, and continue until each employee has been approved for their first week. After that time, again based on seniority, your second week of vacation will be considered. This will continue until all requests are calendared.
- Secondary requests for day(s) will be approved after consideration for any requested weeks off have been approved. Half days will only be allowed in case of an emergency, illness or in an approved vacation week that has ½ day Holiday in that given week. (Example: Good Friday)
- You will be notified when this process is finished. If requests are denied-due to an excess number of requests-your request form will be returned to you with what time has been denied.
- Employees' will not be allowed to trade days off until all paid time has been used. Time off without pay will only be allowed in the case of an emergency; after all paid time has been used.
- It is the employees' responsibility to check the vacation calendar for any cancellations occurring throughout the year.
- DO NOT make any changes to the official vacation calendar. A supervisor and/or dispatcher will make any modifications to the official vacation calendar.
- A detailed memo, work schedules, and vacation request forms will be given to each employee at the end of each calendar year. This will outline the vacation request procedure and will have a date that the requests should be returned to the supervisor. Vacation requests submitted after that date would be considered on a first come, first serve basis.

6.02 Personal Time

- Two Personal Days are given to all permanent employees each year.
- Personal Days must be used in increments of one full day and are not carried over from one calendar year to the next.

6.03 Sick Time

- Each permanent employee is given 48 hours of sick time each calendar year. Sick leave may be accumulated without limitation.
- Excessive use of sick hours or a pattern of sick hour's abuse may be considered as a disciplinary infraction and will be monitored. Employees' should refrain from establishing a pattern of being absent on the day before and/or the day following their scheduled day off.
- When calling out sick, all employees' are required to notify the supervisor or dispatcher two (2) hours in advance of their scheduled start time if at all possible. Under no circumstances can a sick call be left on a voice mail.
- If you should call out sick during normal business hours you must speak directly to a supervisor.
- Early morning employees' calling out sick must call the supervisor at home as soon as possible, preferably the evening before, to allow time to assign a replacement driver.
- Sick hours may be used for "verifiable" absences caused by illness or injury to the employee's family. "Verifiable" means caused by illness or injury and is certified by hospital admission or a visit to a licensed physician.
- A notification from a physician that an employee is able to return to work may be required for any absences of three days or longer. Supervisor may request a physician's certification for any absence.
- When all sick hours have been used in a calendar year, any unpaid absences may be "verifiable".

This "ColumBus Transit Operator Manual" was adopted on the _____ day of _____ 2007 by the Board of Public Works and Safety:

Fred L. Armstrong, Mayor

ATTEST:

Judy Johns-Jackson, Member

Brenda Sullivan, Clerk-Treasurer

William P. Russell, Member

January, 2007