



**CODE OF CONDUCT &  
PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITY  
POLICY**

Adopted: September 02, 2010

## Policy Statement

The mission of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority is to be the most innovative and responsive public transportation system. The reason the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority exists is to enable people to access the activities of our community through public transportation.

We will provide that in a manner that is:

**Reliable**

**Timely and Safe**

**Accessible**

**Affordable**

**Friendly**

To achieve our mission statement we at TARTA have a great responsibility to do our jobs to the best of our ability. With that in mind, we also must implement passenger criteria to achieve the environment desired by our passengers. We will accomplish this through using good customer relation skills, including educating the passenger as well as treating them with the utmost respect. The following are passenger guidelines to ensure that your TARTA experience is a good one.

## Section A

### Code of Conduct Regulations

1. **Elderly Disabled Seating** - The aisle facing bench seats at the front of the buses are reserved for the use of disabled and elderly passengers. Non-qualifying passengers must vacate such seating upon request of any TARTA Operator or employee.
2. **Smoking Prohibited** - No person shall smoke tobacco or any other substance, or carry any burning or smouldering substance, in any form, aboard a TARTA vehicle or within the boundaries of any TARTA station.
3. **Alcohol and Drugs Prohibited** – No person shall use or possess alcohol or illegal drugs on/in a TARTA vehicle or Station, except for lawfully possessed and unopened alcoholic beverages.
4. **Criminal Activity** – No person shall engage in any activity prohibited by Federal, State or Municipal law while on a TARTA vehicle, or within a TARTA Station, or any part of the TARTA system.

5. **Threatening or Offensive Language** – No person shall intentionally or recklessly disturb, harass, or intimidate another person by means of threatening or offensive language, or obscenities on a TARTA vehicle or in a TARTA station or bus stop.
6. **Food and Beverage** – For the protection of public safety, no person shall bring aboard a TARTA vehicle any food or beverage in any open containers. No person shall consume food or alcohol on any TARTA vehicle. Passengers may consume non-alcoholic beverages only from containers made of plastic or metals with snap-on or screw-on lids.
7. **Littering or Spitting** – No person shall discard or deposit, other than into a trash receptacle provided for that purpose, any rubbish, trash, debris, cigarette butts or offensive substance in or upon a TARTA vehicles, stations or bus stops. No person shall spit, expectorate, defecate, or urinate in or upon any TARTA vehicles, stations or bus stops.
8. **Safety**
  - a. All passengers (except infants who are held) must wear shoes, pants/shorts and shirt, a dress/skirt or comparable clothing on TARTA vehicles and in TARTA stations. In addition, all passengers must cover any exposed skin that may transmit communicable disease.
  - b. No person shall in any manner hang onto, or attach himself or herself onto any exterior part of a TARTA vehicle at any time. In addition, no person shall extend any portion of his or her body through any door or window of a TARTA vehicle.
  - c. No person shall ride a skateboard or bicycle, or roller skate or in-line skate in a TARTA vehicle or in and around TARTA stations.
  - d. No person shall throw or cause to be thrown or projected, any object at or within a TARTA vehicle, TARTA station or TARTA shelter.
  - e. No person shall interfere, in any manner, with the safe operation or movement of any TARTA vehicle.
  - f. No person shall impede or block the free movement of passengers, or otherwise disrupt the functions of TARTA stations, vehicles or shelters.
  - g. No unnecessary conversation with the TARTA Operators
  - h. Remain behind yellow/white standee line while bus is in motion
9. **Harassment** – No person shall intentionally or recklessly harass or annoy another person by:
  - a. Subjecting such other person to offensive physical contact;



15. **Emergency Exit** – No person shall activate the “Emergency Exit” or alarm device of a TARTA vehicle or in a TARTA station in the absence of an emergency.
16. **TARTA Seats** – No person shall place his or her feet on any seat of any TARTA vehicle or TARTA station seating.
17. **Flammable Substance** – No flammable substance in excess of a quart (e.g. gasoline, starting fluid) or any other materials meeting this description will be permitted on TARTA vehicles or in TARTA stations.
18. **Weapons / Hazardous Items** – No person, except a Law Enforcement Officer, shall bring into or carry aboard a TARTA vehicle, or bring into a TARTA station, any knife, gun, bow/arrow, explosive device or material, fireworks, blackjack, club, and/or any illegal or unlawfully possessed weapon of any kind.
19. **Pornography** – No person shall read, view, expose or utilize any form of pornographic material from any media source on TARTA buses or in TARTA stations that may be viewed or heard by any passenger or TARTA employee.
20. **Solicitation/Panhandling** – No person shall solicit, sell or distribute any materials or products on TARTA buses or in TARTA stations unless written authorization is obtained from the General Manager or designee. No person shall panhandle, beg or make request for donation on TARTA buses or in TARTA stations.
21. **Non-Payment of Fare; Misuse of Bus Pass**
  - a. No person shall occupy, ride in or use, any transit vehicle unless the person has paid the applicable fare or has a valid and lawfully acquired token, transfer or bus pass.
  - b. No person shall use or attempt to use a TARTA bus pass to board or ride in a TARTA vehicle unless the bus pass was lawfully acquired at an authorized TARTA bus pass outlet by or on behalf of the person using the pass.
  - c. No person shall use or attempt to use a TARTA Group pass to board or ride a TARTA vehicle unless:
    - (i) The group pass was lawfully acquired at an authorized outlet by or on behalf of the person; and
    - (ii) The group pass is used according to the terms of the applicable group pass agreement; and

(iii) The person is a current member of the group to whom the group pass was issued pursuant to the applicable group pass agreement.

- d. Any TARTA employee or any Law Enforcement Officer may confiscate a bus pass or group pass used or presented for use in violation of subsections (b) or (c) of this section.
- e. Misuse of any bus pass, group pass, transfer or token is theft. Any person who violates subsection (a), (b) or (c) above, in addition to any penalties described herein, may be subject to criminal prosecution for theft of services.

**Exclusion** In addition to any penalties provided herein for the violation of the laws of the State of Ohio and the local municipalities, any Law Enforcement Officer, and any other persons as designated by the General Manager of TARTA, may issue a Notice of Exclusion from TARTA services to any person who violates this policy or who commits any offense as defined by the criminal laws of the State of Ohio and the local municipalities having concurrent jurisdiction over TARTA property, when such offense is committed upon any TARTA vehicle or property.

- (i) Except as provided in (ii) below, written notice signed by the issuing authority shall be given to a person who has been excluded from the TARTA system. The written notice shall specify the particular violations for reason for exclusion, duration for exclusion, and the consequences of failure to comply with the notice.
  - (ii) In order to ensure safety, convenience and comfort of all passengers, a TARTA Operator may, without written Notice of Exclusion, direct a passenger to leave a TARTA vehicle, or direct a prospective passenger not to board a TARTA vehicle, if the operator has probable cause to conclude that such passenger is in violation of any provision of this policy.
- b. A notice of Exclusion shall be effective immediately upon issuance and shall remain in effect until the exclusion expires, or is terminated by TARTA, or is rendered ineffective upon appeal. Any person receiving a Notice of Exclusion may appeal in writing to the TARTA General Manager or designee under procedures provided in Section C - Part 3. Such notice of appeal must be delivered to the office of the General Manager within ten (10) days of the receipt of Notice of Exclusion. The exclusion shall remain in effect during the pendency of the appeal. If the decision on appeal is in favor of the excluded person, the period of exclusion set forth in the Notice shall be terminated immediately.

- c. The TARTA General Manager or designee may, at his sole discretion, grant a variance if the person establishes a need to enter upon the TARTA System for reasons of employment, medical treatment or similar good cause. A variance may include such conditions as the TARTA General Manager or designee determines will prevent future offenses.
  
- d. A person excluded under this policy may not remain or enter upon any part of the TARTA System during the stated period of exclusion. In addition to penalties imposed by this policy, an excluded person who enters or remains on TARTA property or vehicles may be charged with Municipal Codes and/or ORC #2911.21 for Criminal Trespass and subject to the penalties thereto.

## Section B

### REFUSAL OF SERVICE, EJECTION

#### **1. Failure to Comply**

Passengers who repeatedly test the system or habitually violate the Rules of Conduct established in this policy will not be tolerated. The following procedures will be used in refusing transportation or ejection:

- a. Three Strike Policy – A passenger will be warned twice before being ejected from the bus on the third violation, normally on the same trip. That same passenger will not be continually allowed “Three Strikes” for each trip. The right to refuse service could increase in length up to and including permanent exclusion.
- b. If the passenger is warned twice of a violation on an outbound trip and then boards the bus later on an inbound trip; the first time that passenger violates a Rule for Conduct, the passenger will be ejected.
- c. If a passenger establishes a history of non-compliance with this policy, (three refusals/ejections) a letter of exclusion of service by TARTA may be issued.

#### **2. General Incident Protocol**

The following is the general procedure and protocol that TARTA will follow in enforcing the rules described within this policy:

- a. TARTA encourages respect and good action from passengers on all TARTA vehicles and facilities. Passengers who undertake or participate in any conduct set out in Section A will be requested to cease the action, and warned that if the action continues [he/she] will be asked to leave the bus, transit station or other TARTA facility.
- b. TARTA reserves the right to immediately refuse all TARTA services to a passenger when necessary to protect the health and safety of other passengers or employees, regardless of the progressive steps of exclusion reflected in this policy, when the actions involve violent, illegal or seriously disruptive action. In such cases an Exclusion Notice may be issued immediately by a law enforcement officer or TARTA Supervisor.



c. Period of exclusion imposed will follow the guidelines listed below but may be longer or shorter depending upon the circumstances of each case.

- First Offense: up to 7 days
- Second Offense up to 30 days
- Third Offense up to 180 days
- Each Subsequent Offense up to 365 days

## **1. Appeal**

- a. The Service Exclusion Notice submitted to a passenger shall include notice to the right of appeal the decision to the General Manager or designee. The passenger may file a Notice of Appeal within ten (10) working days after receiving a Service Exclusion Notice.
- b. The passenger may request a hearing or may request a review without a hearing based on a written statement or interview outlining the reasons why the exclusion should be revoked. If requested, the hearing shall be held by the Transportation Superintendent or designee within thirty (30) days.
- c. Following the hearing, or if a hearing is not requested, the General Manager or designee shall render a decision within ten (10) days after receipt of the Notice of Appeal or the completion of the hearing. The decision may be conveyed to the passenger in writing.
- d. TARTA will not provide service to the passenger pending resolution of the Appeal.

**EXCLUSION FORM**

DATE of VIOLATION: \_\_\_\_\_

EXCLUSION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TO: \_\_\_\_\_ (If Student) Bus Pass Confiscation \_\_\_\_\_  
(Passenger Name) Yes No

This letter serves as notice of exclusion of service for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Privileges will be reinstated on \_\_\_\_\_ unless this exclusion order is violated.

This exclusion of service is for the following reason(s):

Violation of Conduct, *Section A; Paragraph* \_\_\_\_\_ as adopted by the TARTA Board of Trustees.

Should you choose to appeal this order, it must be submitted in writing to the attention of the Transportation Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of this order. You may request a hearing or may request review without a hearing based on a written statement setting forth the reasons why you believe this exclusion order is invalid or improper. This exclusion order will remain in effect during an appeal process.

Refusal to immediately comply with written or verbal exclusion notice shall be grounds for criminal prosecution for Trespass.

If a student's bus pass was confiscated, it shall be returned to Toledo Public Schools with a copy of this exclusion order. Toledo Public Schools will determine whether to re-issue.

Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Notification: U.S. Mail (return receipt) \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

