



<b>Board Adopted Policy</b>	
Policy Title:	<b>Passenger Code of Conduct (NEW)</b>
Effective Date: 07/18/2023	Review Cycle: three (3) years
Review Date:	Review Date:

- I. Application: Authority wide
- II. Intent: The Benzie Transportation Authority (BTA) strives to ensure that all passengers experience a respectful and pleasant interaction with other passengers and BTA staff while being transported in a BTA vehicle.
- III. Procedure: All passengers should adhere to the following standards of conduct

### Passenger Behavior

BTA passengers have a right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times by BTA personnel.

A passenger's right to transportation can be terminated due to misconduct of the passenger. Disruptive or abusive behavior to other passengers or the driver will not be tolerated.

No profanity or vulgarity is allowed while on board a BTA vehicle, with the exception of passengers whose actions and verbiage are protected under ADA guidelines.

Passengers are not permitted to eat, vape or smoke in any BTA vehicle. Exceptions are made to allow eating when it is medically necessary due to a passenger's medical condition or treatment.

Non-alcoholic beverages must be in a container that can be securely sealed, such as a water bottle. No open containers. Alcohol is strictly prohibited.

No screaming, loud talking, singing or playing of loud music is allowed.

No inappropriate display of affection or sexual activity will be tolerated.

No intentional release of human waste, including spitting is allowed. This does not include instances of vomiting or incontinence due to treatment, medication, or illness.

The driver reserves the right to refuse transport to any passenger who appears to be overly intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

**Procedures for violations of these rules are as follows:**

First incident: After an occurrence of passenger' behavior disrupting the driver or other passengers, the Operations Manager, or his/her designee will speak privately with the passenger and/or the passenger's sponsoring agency representative (if the passenger is a human service agency client) about his/her behavior. The Operations Manager will state to the passenger the reason his/her behavior is objectionable and the steps the passenger must take to correct the behavior. The Operations Manager must document this verbal warning, indicating the date and time the discussion took place.

Second incident: If the passenger continues his/her disruptive behavior, the Operations Manager or his/her designee will speak with the passenger and the passenger's sponsoring agency representative (if the passenger is a human agency client) a second time. During this conversation, the passenger will be presented with a written warning stating the reasons his/her behavior is objectionable and the steps he/she must take to correct the behavior. The warning will also state that another incident will result in a suspension of privileges to ride the transportation system for up to 30 days.

Third incident: A third incident will result in a suspension of transportation privileges for up to 30 days. The suspension notice will be delivered either in-person, via email, or mail, to the passenger and/or the passenger's sponsoring agency (if the passenger is a human services agency client)If a passenger continues their disruptive behavior following their return from suspension, BTA reserves the right to permanently suspend that passenger from using its services. If applicable, a copy of this notice will also be sent to the client's sponsoring human service agencyThe BTA Operations Manager reserves the right to exceed the above violation procedures during any part of the process, including calling the police and having a disruptive passenger removed, should it become necessary for the safety of the driver and/or other passengers.

**No Shows or Late Cancellations**

The BTA understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. BTA also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely way for reasons that are beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely way can lead to suspension of service.

## **Definitions: No-Show, Pickup Window, and Late Cancellation**

### **No-show**

A no-show occurs when a rider fails to appear to board the vehicle for a scheduled trip. This presumes the vehicle arrives at the scheduled pickup location within the pickup window and the driver waits 3 minutes. **No Show fee is the one-way fare DOUBLED.**

### **Pickup Window**

The pickup window is defined as the 20-minute window provided when scheduling your ride. Riders must be ready to board a vehicle that arrives within the pickup window. Upon arrival, the driver will wait for a maximum of 3 minutes within the pickup window for the rider to appear.

### **Late Cancellation**

A late cancellation is defined as either: a cancellation made less than 1 hour before the scheduled pickup time or as a cancellation made at the door or a refusal to board a vehicle that has arrived within the pickup window. **Late Cancellation is the one-way fare DOUBLED.**

Riders should contact Benzie Bus when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

BTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations any missed trips due to BTA's error, such as:

- Trips placed on the schedule in error
- Pickups scheduled at the wrong pickup location
- Drivers arriving and departing before the pickup window begins
- Drivers arriving late (after the end of the pickup window)
- Drivers arriving in the pickup window and departing without waiting 3 minutes.

BTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations, situations beyond a rider's control that prevent the rider from notifying us that the trip cannot be taken, such as:

- Medical emergency
- Family emergency
- Sudden illness or change in condition
- Appointment that runs unexpectedly late without sufficient notice

### **Handling Subsequent Trips Following No-shows**

When a rider is a no-show for one trip, all subsequent trips on that day will be automatically canceled. It is the responsibility of the rider to reschedule the return trip if still needed.

### **Disputing Specific No-Shows or Late Cancellations**

Riders wishing to dispute specific no-shows or late cancellations must do so within 5 business days of receiving suspension letters. Disputes may be emailed to [dispatch@benziebus.com](mailto:dispatch@benziebus.com)

### **Unpaid Passenger Fares**

Passengers of the BTA must pay their fare when boarding the vehicle. Charges are not permitted except in extenuating circumstances. No rides will be permitted if a negative balance of \$9.00 is reached.

### **Carry On Package**

It is the policy of the BTA that carry-on packages are permitted provided they can be placed in a location where they will not interfere with the entrance, exit or free use of the aisles by passengers. The vehicle driver shall have the authority to exercise judgment on what can and cannot be brought aboard the bus.

### **Items Not Permitted on Buses:**

The following items are some, but not all, of the items that represent potential hazards and are prohibited from transport.

**Fishing poles** that are assembled and or hooks are attached.

**Sharp objects** or instruments.

**Gasoline** or other flammable or hazardous materials.

**Explosives**

**Non-Folding furniture**, baby carriages, or strollers

**Weapons** including, and with no exceptions, firearms and other legally defined weapons and chemical dispensing devices.

**Illegal drugs**

**Items that are large**, are of excessive weight, or cannot be properly secured.

**Small machinery** that may contain gasoline or flammable/hazardous material that is not in a carrying case.

### **Oxygen and Respirator Use**

It shall be the policy of the BTA to transport oxygen cylinders and respirators as required by the Americans with Disability Act. To facilitate this, the BTA will only transport oxygen in cylinders maintained in accordance with the manufactures' instructions.

Before boarding with the oxygen, drivers shall listen for leaks in the cylinder and visually inspect the cylinders for dents, gouges or pitting. If any of these conditions exist the BTA will not transport the cylinder.