MDOT MTA
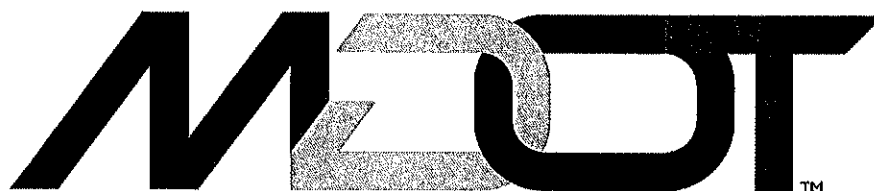
Passenger Code of Conduct Analysis

April 7, 2023

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

MARYLAND TRANSIT
ADMINISTRATION

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Executive Summary

As part of MDOT MTA's efforts to address operator assaults, MDOT MTA determined that an effective and enforceable passenger code of conduct would be a helpful tool to support the safety and security of MDOT MTA employees and customers. The MDOT MTA Office of Safety Management and Risk Control ("Office of Safety") tasked the WSP/Gannett Fleming JV Team (WSP Team) to conduct a review and analysis of peer transit agencies' passenger codes of conduct and identify the elements of an effective, enforceable passenger code of conduct for MDOT MTA.

The report follows the structure outlined below.

- **Literature review:** The most relevant findings from the literature review portion of this study relate to federal and state requirements. The federal funding requirements most closely related to having a clear and effective passenger code of conduct are: (1) compliance with ADA and other federal civil rights statutes; and (2) compliance with safety management requirements. In terms of state requirements, Section 7-705 of the Maryland Code, Transportation lists actions that are unlawful for any person in a transit facility or transit vehicle owned or controlled by MDOT MTA.

  Peer agency analysis: The contents of 24 U.S. peer transit agencies' passenger codes of conduct were reviewed for this study. The elements of those codes of conduct were sorted into five themes and 23 conduct areas. The resulting analysis separated the conduct areas into three buckets based on the percentage of peer agency codes of conduct that contained each of the 23 conduct areas: Very Common Conduct Areas (70 percent or more), Common Conduct Areas (50 percent or more), and Less Common Conduct Areas (50 percent or less). Overall, the code of conduct elements within the Personal Safety and Security theme are likely to have the most direct impact on the safety and/or security of MTA passengers and employees and are thus the most relevant to the scope of this study.[1]

- **Structuring a code of conduct:** This study includes an evaluation of the variety of structures employed by different peer agency codes of conduct, which the assessment team categorized as: Codes Based on Prohibited Actions, Codes Expressed in Positive Language, and Codes Structured in Other Ways. The Codes Structured in Other Ways category included several agencies that take a hybrid approach between prohibited actions and positive language. Based on communication with MDOT MTA staff representatives from the Office of Safety and the Office of Communications and Marketing, a hybrid framing would likely best serve an MDOT MTA code of conduct.

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[1] It is helpful to note that the distinction between safety and security is *intent*: safety is freedom from *unintentional* harm (e.g., tripping on a broken tile), whereas security is freedom from *intentional* harm (e.g., being assaulted by a person). However, the colloquial use of the term safety, as in "I feel unsafe," can often be referring to a security issue, as in "the unwanted attention I experienced from another passenger makes me feel unsafe." Further, there is both *real* and *perceived* security, where *real* security refers to the presence of an actual security threat (e.g., a person present with the intent to do harm) and *perceived* security refers to the interpretation of a scenario or environment as threatening regardless of the presence of an actual threat (e.g., darkly lit sidewalk with poor sightlines where a person with the intent to do harm may or may not be hidden). This study uses "safety/security" to encompass all potential uses of the terms.

- **Communicating a code of conduct:** The WSP Team reviewed a Journal of Public Transportation study "Engaging Passengers in Public Awareness Campaigns," which made several recommendations regarding how a passenger code of conduct should be communicated to an agency's customers. The study encourages agencies to keep their code of conduct at a high level and not be overly detailed or verbose; to positively frame the code in language that conveys shared ownership and mission; and that recommends using a variety of communications methods to make customers aware of expected behavior on the transit system.

- **Conclusions and next steps:** Under the scope of work for this task, the WSP Team was not directed to make recommendations to MDOT MTA on what elements should/should not be included in the agency's new passenger code of conduct. Instead, this report focuses on common elements and specifically on those elements that may impact passenger and employee safety and/or security. To assist MDOT MTA in the next steps of passenger code of conduct development, this report also applies three filters on the conduct area elements identified:
  - How common is the conduct area?
  - Is the conduct area referenced in the Maryland Code list of prohibited actions?
  - Is the conduct area likely to impact passenger and employee safety/security?

  The results of this analysis are shown in Table 1 below. MDOT MTA may want to consider including code of conduct elements that: (1) are explicitly referenced in the Maryland Code; and (2) may impact the real or perceived safety and/or security of passengers and employees.

Table 1: Most to Least Common Conduct Areas, Maryland Code and Safety/Security Impact

Theme	Conduct Area	% of Total	How Common	Maryland Code	May Impact Safety and/or Security
Operations	Loud music, conversation, noise	100%	Very Common	Yes	
Health & Sanitation	Smoking, alcohol, other drug use	92%	Very Common	Yes	
Health & Sanitation	Eating, drinking restrictions	88%	Very Common	Yes	
Accessibility	Stroller, cart, baggage storage	79%	Very Common		
Health & Sanitation	Littering	79%	Very Common	Yes	
Operations	Correct fare, paid fare area	79%	Very Common	Yes	
Quality of Life	Non-service animal restrictions	75%	Very Common	Yes	
Accessibility	Designated seating	71%	Very Common	Yes	
Operations	Distractions or disruptions of driver or service	71%	Very Common	Yes	
Personal Safety & Security	Flammable substances, hazardous materials	67%	Common	Yes	Yes
Health & Sanitation	Spit, urination, defecation	63%	Common	Yes	
Quality of Life	Vandalism, graffiti	63%	Common		
Health & Sanitation	Required clothing, shoes	58%	Common		
Personal Safety & Security	Harassment, disruption of others	58%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Loitering, vagrancy	58%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Vulgar language, gestures	58%	Common		Yes
Quality of Life	Respect the ride, others	58%	Common		
Accessibility	Microtransit	54%	Common		
Quality of Life	Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities	54%	Common	Yes	
Personal Safety & Security	Violence, including threat of	50%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Weapons	50%	Common	Yes	Yes
Accessibility	More than one seat	46%	Less Common		
Personal Safety & Security	Trespassing	46%	Less Common		Yes

I. Introduction

MDOT MTA's mission and vision statement is, "To provide safe, efficient and reliable transit across Maryland with world-class customer service." A clear, and legally sound passenger code of conduct defines expected behaviors for transit customers and, when effectively communicated and applied with compassion and common sense, can promote a pleasant and positive experience on transit—including a more welcoming environment for new riders and an improved work setting for agency personnel. Currently, MDOT MTA has a list of actions that are prohibited on transit, consistent with the Maryland Code, Transportation Section 7-705. However, this list of prohibited actions (as shown in Figure 1), is not easily accessed from MDOT MTA's main website, nor is it highly visible in bus and rail vehicles, stations, and other facilities. MDOT MTA has expressed interest in developing a passenger code of conduct that is consistent with the mission and vision of the agency, clearly and consistently communicated, and effective in helping to protect the safety and comfort of customers and agency employees.

Figure 1 MDOT MTA's list of actions prohibited on transit (website PDF[2])
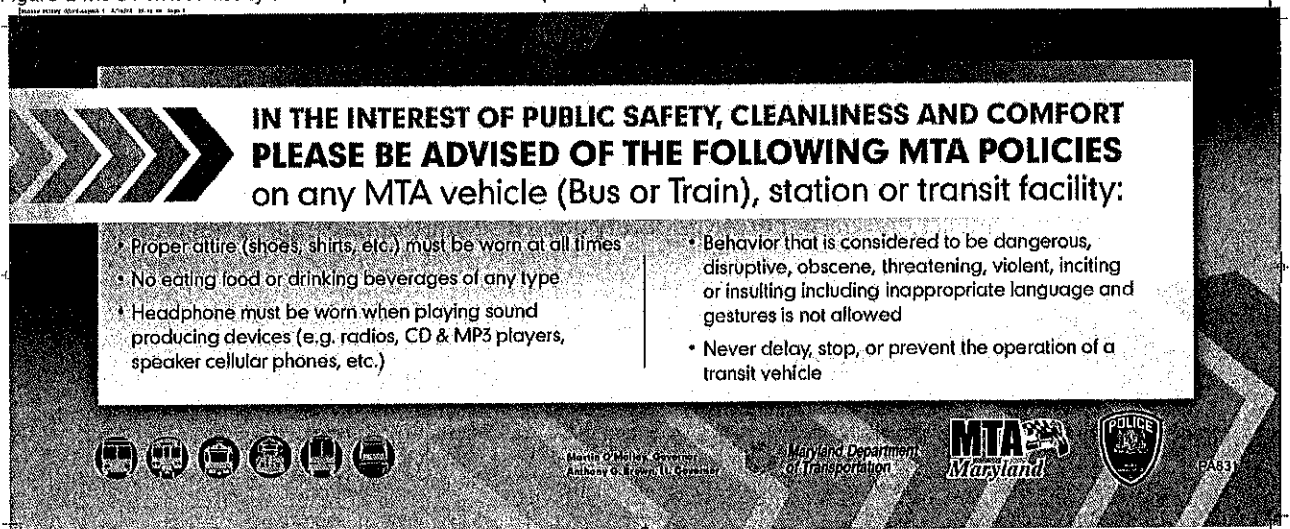
MDOT MTA has significant steps taken over the past two years to evaluate the agency's transit operator assault prevention and response programs and establish an agency-wide Operator Assault Task Force. As part of this effort, MDOT MTA determined that developing and implementing an effective and enforceable passenger code of conduct will support the safety and security of MDOT MTA employees and customers. Other passenger conduct-related activities that MDOT MTA has recently initiated include establishing a policy for safely welcoming personally-owned e-bikes and e-scooters on the bus and rail systems[3] and a campaign to raise awareness of and reduce incidents related to sexual harassment on transit.[4] The Office of Safety requested that the WSP Team support MDOT MTA's effort to develop a cohesive, effective, and enforceable passenger code of conduct for MDOT MTA by conducting a review and analysis of available research studies and reviewing peer transit agencies' passenger codes of conduct. The scope of this analysis does not extend to assessing code of conduct enforcement challenges and solutions, nor was the team asked to make specific recommendations for the language and design elements in an updated passenger code of conduct.

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[2] https://www.mta.maryland.gov/safety-quality-assurance-risk-management

[3] https://www.mta.maryland.gov/bike

[4] https://www.mta.maryland.gov/articles/360

II. Methodology

1. Literature Review

The WSP Team conducted a literature review of research papers, standards, Federal and State requirements, best practices, and other documents that address the issue of transit system passenger codes of conduct. Sources examined for relevant resources include the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), Journal of Public Transportation, and Center for Urban Transportation Research. The findings of the WSP Team's literature review are described in Section III. Literature Review.

2. Peer Agency Analysis

With the foundation of the literature review results, the WSP Team researched and reviewed the passenger codes of conduct of 24 different United States peer transit agencies. The team strove to reflect a diverse selection of agencies that range in service area size, geographical location, and type of service. Figure 2 below shows the 24 peer transit agencies by location. The findings of the WSP Team's Peer Agency Analysis are described in Section

IV. Peer Agency Analysis.

Figure 2. Map of the 24 Peer Transit Agencies Evaluated
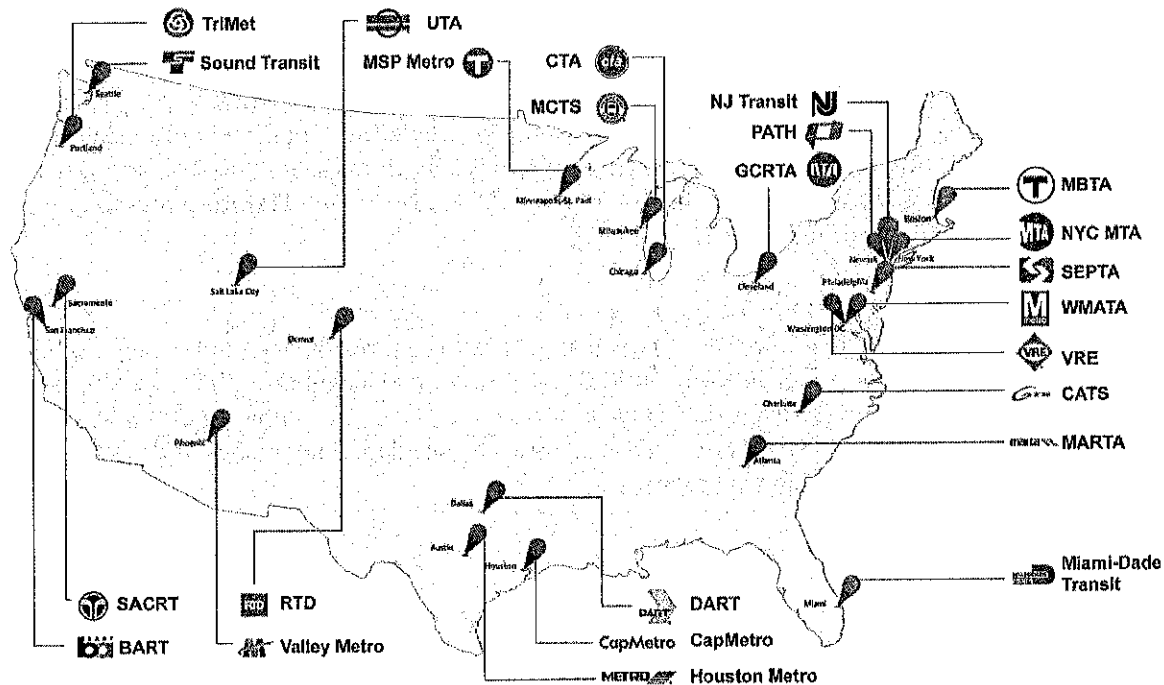
The WSP Team then organized the contents of the agencies' codes of conduct by theme areas (Accessibility, Health and Sanitation, Operations, Personal Safety and Security, and Quality of Life), and code of conduct elements within each theme area, to identify common elements and outliers. Additionally, the team assessed how the codes of conduct are communicated to the public, including signage, use of graphics, and other visual components, as well as general tone of the code of conduct and the level of specificity.

3: Synthesis and Report
The resulting deliverable is this Passenger Code of Conduct Analysis report that includes:
- Results of the literature review
- Analysis of the 24 peer transit agencies' codes of conduct, focusing on common elements and on those elements that can enhance transit operator and passenger safety
- Synthesis of the peer agency survey findings by theme area
- Discussions regarding how to effectively structure and communicate a passenger code of conduct
- Conclusions and next steps

III. Literature Review
1. Research Papers
The WSP Team reviewed the following research papers available online that describe or evaluate strategies for developing effective and enforceable codes of conduct.

TCRP J-05/Topic 18-02: Codes of Conduct on Transit Vehicles and Property – Legal Issues[5]

The objective of this report is to provides practical advice and checklists to transit agencies and their attorneys regarding the development, improvement, application, and enforcement of passenger codes of conduct. Although this research is still in progress, once TCRP has finalized and published the report, it should be extremely beneficial to MDOT MTA and other transit agencies as they examine the enforceability of their passenger codes of conduct.

TCRP Legal Research Digest (LRD) 58: Policing and Public Transportation[6]

This July 2022 report provides a summary of the laws and practices regarding constitutional issues that apply to policing public transportation systems. The report is a resource for lawmakers, police forces, public transportation agencies, and their attorneys to consult when making decisions about how to police public transportation systems. The study notes that transit agencies police their stations and other facilities to enforce applicable laws and the agency's code of conduct that generally prohibit threats to the safety of passengers and others, trespassing, and vandalism. Some agencies (particularly larger multimodal agencies) have a dedicated police force, but many rely on municipal police for law enforcement. This report should be beneficial to MDOT MTA and other transit agencies as they examine the enforceability of their passenger codes of conduct.

Journal of Public Transportation, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2014: Engaging Transit Riders in Public Awareness Campaigns[7]

This March 2014 study describes strategies for effective transit system engagement of passengers in public security awareness programs. The study provides key findings from research conducted for the National Transportation Security Center of Excellence focused on: (1) engaging transit riders in awareness campaigns; (2) identifying opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of public security awareness campaigns; and (3) documenting best practices and lessons learned from the campaigns. Although this study is aimed specifically at public security programs that will support increased vigilance of passengers and agency employees to prevent and deter terrorism (e.g., "See Something, Say Something"), the topics explored in the paper are also relevant to public safety and general awareness of communications that passengers experience when they use the transit systems. Several of the recommendations from this report regarding effective transit agency communication to their customers are included in Section VII of this report, Communicating the Code of Conduct.

TCRP Synthesis 127, 2017: Addressing Difficult Customer Situations[8]

The major findings of this report are that transit agencies try to prevent difficult customer situations through a combination of public education, extensive training of transit personnel, the use of technology to detect and discourage inappropriate behavior, the development of legal foundations for agency action in the form of trespass warrants or codes of conduct and gaining the assistance of higher levels of policy authority when necessary. Some specific examples of code of conduct enforcement practices that were cited in the TCRP synthesis are described below.

Pierce Transit, Tacoma, WA: "Not on Our Bus" program

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[5] The WSP Team confirmed with TCRP that the report's publication is delayed until at least spring 2023.

[6] https://nap.nationalacademies.org/download/26652#

[7] https://www.nctr.usf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/JPT17.1_Haider.pdf

[8] https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/24701/chapter/1

Passengers who litter, spit, smoke outside designated areas, or threaten others can be banned for 90 days from the system. Pierce Transit experienced a decrease in the number of people banned over a 4-year period from establishment of the program. Figure 3 shows an example flyer from the program.

Figure 3. Example Flyer from Pierce Transit's "Not on Our Bus" Program

Not On Our Bus
Pierce Transit Rules of the Road

To help ensure the safety, security, comfort and convenience of those who use our services, Pierce Transit regulates conduct on its buses and property. In simple terms, you need to show respect for your fellow passengers, transit employees and for the transit vehicles and facilities you use.

Everyone wins. Transit passengers enjoy a safe, secure, comfortable and inviting atmosphere, and the overall efficiency of the transportation system improves.

It only takes one person to ruin the ride. That's why we take our "Rules of the Road" very seriously. Those who violate the Rules of the Road or Unlawful Transit Conduct (UTC) may be asked to leave the vehicle or facility immediately. Violators may be excluded from transit services for a period of 90 days up to one year. In addition, Pierce Transit Police and local law enforcement agencies can cite those in violation of UTC.

MARTA, Atlanta, GA: "Ride with Respect" program

Initiated in 2016, the "Ride with Respect" program outlines several prohibited activities, including solicitation, selling goods or services, loud music, spitting, littering, eating on transit vehicles, drinking on transit vehicles without using resealable drink containers, fighting, and disruptive behavior. A mobile application (app) was launched with the new Passenger Code of Conduct so that customers can report problems using their mobile phones. The policy also promised a greater police presence and security cameras on all vehicles. Figure 4 provides example code of conduct signage from the MARTA system.

Figure 4. Code of Conduct Signage on a MARTA Rail Vehicle

SEPTA, Philadelphia, PA: "Dude It's Rude" campaign

SEPTA uses blunt messages and humor to address customer complaints about loud passengers and passengers eating and drinking on the buses and trains. Advertisements for the campaign, like that shown in Figure 5, are featured on interior car placards, decals, and digital displays on SEPTA's trains, buses, and trolleys and on schedule timetables.

Figure 5. Example SEPTA Ad

Dude It's Rude
You Have
►►EARBUDS◄◄
for a Reason

2.   Standards and Best Practices

The WSP Team did not identify an APTA Standard or best practice addressing the development, implementation, and enforcement of passenger codes of conduct.

3.   Federal and State Requirements

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) does not require transit agencies to have a written passenger code of conduct as a condition of federal financial assistance. FTA's program management oversight role seeks to confirm that a funding recipient:

- Demonstrates legal, financial, and technical capacity to carry out programs and projects
- Provides technical inspection and supervision by qualified professionals of all work in progress
- Ensures compliance with procurement requirements
- Complies with all applicable civil rights statutes and implementing regulations
- Complies with applicable safety and asset management requirements

The federal funding requirements most closely related to having a clear and effective passenger code of conduct are: (1) compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal civil rights statutes; and (2) compliance with safety management requirements. Under the ADA, fixed route systems must have signs designating seating for passengers with disabilities and at least one set of forward-facing seats must be marked as priority seating. Service animals trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability must be allowed in transit vehicles and facilities. Rider information must be provided in accessible formats for people with different types of disabilities (e.g., information in large print, braille, or alternative formats).[9] The FTA's safety management system (SMS) program and Public Transportation Agency Safety Program requirements under 49 CFR Part 673 focus on proactive hazard identification and risk mitigation. A passenger code of conduct that clearly addresses common safety hazards for passengers when using the transit system helps support a robust SMS.

Many transit agencies rely upon State law to determine the contents of their passenger codes of conduct. The Maryland Code, Transportation describes what constitutes illegal behavior on the MDOT MTA public transportation system.

Sec. 7-705. It is unlawful for any person entering a transit facility or transit vehicle owned or controlled by the MDOT MTA to:

- Fail to pay applicable fare, exhibit proof of payment, or provide truthful identification
- Expectorate
- Smoke or carry a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, or cigarette
- Consume food or drink or carry an open food or beverage container
- Discard litter (except in receptacles designed for that purpose)
- Play or operate music on a device unless connected to an earphone that limits the sound to the hearing of the individual user
- Carry or possess any explosives, acids, concealed weapons, or other dangerous articles
- Carry or possess live animals, except seeing-eye animals and hearing-ear animals properly harnessed and accompanied by a blind or deaf person, and small animals properly packaged
- Board any transit vehicle through the rear exit door unless directed to do so by an MDOT MTA employee
- Urinate or defecate, except in restrooms
- Fail to move to the rear of any transit vehicle when requested to do so by the operator or a police officer
- Fail to vacate a seat designated for the elderly or handicapped when requested to do so
- Solicit the purchase of any goods or services (except by contract with the MDOT MTA)

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[9] ADA National Network: https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-accessible-transportation

A person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not more than $500 per offense.

It is unlawful for any person to obstruct, hinder, or interfere with the operation or operator of a transit vehicle or railroad passenger car, or with a person engaged in official duties as a station agent, conductor, or station attendant. A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to a fine of not more than $1,000, imprisonment not exceeding 1 year, or both, for each offense.

IV. Peer Agency Analysis

As illustrated in the Figure 2 map above, the WSP Team researched and reviewed the passenger codes of conduct of 24 different United States peer transit agencies. Selected peer agencies reflect a diversity of systems by service area size, geographical location, and type of service. The contents of the agencies' codes of conduct were then sorted by five themes and 23 conduct areas, listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Theme and Conduct Areas

Theme	Conduct Area
Accessibility	Designated seating
	Microtransit
	More than one seat
	Stroller, cart, baggage storage
Health & Sanitation	Eating, drinking restrictions
	Littering
	Required clothing, shoes
	Smoking, alcohol, other drug use
	Spit, urination, defecation
Operations	Correct fare, paid fare area
	Distractions or disruptions of driver or service
	Loud music, conversation, noise
Personal Safety & Security	Flammable substances, hazardous materials
	Harassment, disruption of others
	Loitering, vagrancy
	Trespassing
	Violence, including threat of
	Vulgar language, gestures
	Weapons
Quality of Life	Non-service animal restrictions
	Respect the ride, others
	Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities
	Vandalism, graffiti

Table 3 on the next page for the matrix of peer agency codes of conduct separated by the above themes and conduct areas. The final two columns in 3 highlight the total number and percentage of the 24 peer agencies that address each conduct area.

Within the peer analysis, the project team identified common elements and outliers across theme and conduct areas. The resulting analysis is separated into three buckets based on the percentage of peer agency codes of conduct that contain each of the 23 conduct areas:

- **Very Common Conduct Areas:** Conduct areas that appear in 70 percent or more of the 24 peer agency codes of conduct analyzed in this study.
- **Common Conduct Areas:** Conduct areas that appear in more than 50 percent but less than 70 percent (50-69%) of the peer codes of conduct.
- **Less Common Conduct Areas:** Conduct areas that appear in less than 50 percent of the peer codes of conduct.

Table 3. Peer Agencies Code of Conduct Matrix

Theme	Conduct Area	BART	CapMetro	CATS	Cleveland RTA	CTA	Dallas DART	Denver RTD	Houston Metro	MARTA	MBTA	MCTS	Miami-Dade Transit	MSP Metro Transit	NJ Transit	NYC MTA	PATH	SACRT	SEPTA	Sound Transit	TriMet	UTA	Valley Metro	VRE	WMATA	Conduct Area Total	Conduct Area % of Total
Accessibility	Designated seating				1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	1	17	71%
	Microtransit		1	1		1	1	1	1	1					1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1			13	54%
	More than one seat	*		1	1	1	1	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1*	1	1	1		1*		1*				11	46%
	Stroller, cart, baggage storage	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1	19	79%
Health & Sanitation	Eating, drinking restrictions	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	21	88%
	Littering	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	19	79%
	Required clothing, shoes	1	1			1		1				1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1		1	14	58%
	Smoking, alcohol, other drug use	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	22	92%
	Spit, urination, defecation	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1			15	63%
Operations	Correct fare, paid fare area	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	19	79%
	Distractions or disruptions of driver or service	1	1	1		1			1			1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1		17	71%
	Loud music, conversation, noise	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	24	100%
Personal Safety & Security	Flammable substances, hazardous materials	1		1		1		1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1			16	67%
	Harassment, disruption of others	1	1			1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1			14	58%
	Loitering, vagrancy	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1		1	1		1	1			14	58%
	Trespassing	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1									11	46%
	Violence, including threat of	1				1		1	1			1	1	1	1			1			1		1		1	12	50%
	Vulgar language, gestures	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1				1	1	1		14	58%
	Weapons	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1			1	1						12	50%
Quality of Life	Non-service animal restrictions	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1		18	75%
	Respect the ride, others	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1			1	14	58%
	Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1		1		1		1		14	58%
	Vandalism, graffiti	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1	15	63%

Note 1: Some agencies have separate policies that are not included in the agency-wide code of conduct analysis captured here.

Note 2: Agencies with the asterisk (*) reference no lying down or feet on seats but do not specify more than one seat as a blanket statement.

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1. Very Common Conduct Areas

Very common conduct areas, for the purposes of this study, are defined as conduct areas that appear in 70 percent or more of the 24 peer agency codes of conduct analyzed. Nine very common conduct areas were identified and are listed below. Within the Operations theme, "Loud music, conversation, noise" was the only conduct area that 100 percent of peers included. The Personal Safety and Security theme did not contain any very common conduct areas, though six out of seven of those conduct areas appeared in at least 50 percent of peer codes of conduct, as illustrated in the next subsection.

Table 4: Very Common Conduct Areas

Theme	Conduct Area	% of Total
Accessibility	Designated seating	71%
	Stroller, cart, baggage storage	79%
Health & Sanitation	Eating, drinking restrictions	88%
	Littering	79%
	Smoking, alcohol, other drug use	92%
Operations	Correct fare, paid fare area	79%
	Distractions or disruptions of driver or service	71%
	Loud music, conversation, noise	100%
Personal Safety & Security	None	N/A
Quality of Life	Non-service animal restrictions	75%

2. Common Conduct Areas

Common conduct areas are defined as conduct areas that appear in more than 50 percent but less than 70 percent (50-69%) of the peer agency codes of conduct analyzed. Twelve conduct areas were identified and are listed below. Six out of seven conduct areas within Personal Safety and Security are common conduct areas, which seems logical given that this theme contains the types of behaviors that could most readily result in dangerous situations for operators and passengers alike, including psychological and/or physical harm. The Operations theme did not contain any common conduct areas.

Table 5: Common Conduct Areas

Theme	Conduct Area	% of Total
Accessibility	Microtransit	54%
Health & Sanitation	Required clothing, shoes	58%
	Spit, urination, defecation	63%
Operations	None	N/A
Personal Safety & Security	Flammable substances, hazardous materials	67%
	Harassment, disruption of others	58%
	Loitering, vagrancy	58%
	Violence, including threat of	50%
	Vulgar language, gestures	58%
	Weapons	50%
Quality of Life	Respect the ride, others	58%
	Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities	54%
	Vandalism, graffiti	63%

3. Less Common Conduct Areas

Less common conduct areas are defined as conduct areas that appear in less than 50 percent of the peer agency codes of conduct analyzed. Two conduct areas within two themes were identified. For the Accessibility theme, conduct area "More than one seat" is used by 46 percent of the 24 peer agency codes of conduct. For the Personal Safety and Security theme, Trespassing is used by 46 percent of peer agencies. Health and Sanitation, Operations, and Quality of Life did not contain any less common conduct areas.

Table 6: Less Common Conduct Areas

Theme	Conduct Area	% of Total
Accessibility	More than one seat	46%
Health & Sanitation	None	N/A
Operations	None	N/A
Personal Safety & Security	Trespassing	46%
Quality of Life	None	N/A

V. Synthesis of Peer Agency Findings by Theme

This section aggregates the key findings from each of the peer agency codes of conduct, separated by theme and associated conduct areas. The conduct areas within each theme are ordered by how commonly they appear across peer agencies. With most but not all conduct areas, one or more "spotlight examples" are highlighted to demonstrate best and most relevant practices for MDOT MTA. At the end of each theme section, an "outliers" subsection contains policies that are only employed by one or a handful of agencies. They are grouped by the theme that they most directly fall within.

1. Accessibility

Transit agencies must address the needs of all individuals – and in particular – of individuals with a disability, by facilitating accessibility of their services. According to the Peer Agencies Code of Conduct Matrix shown in Table 3, most agencies include accessibility in their code of conduct. In addition to providing equal access for disabled individuals, accessible features provide a safer and more comfortable trip for passengers.

Strollers, carts, baggage storage
Most peer codes of conduct – 79 percent – contain policies concerning strollers, carts, and baggage. In all cases, baggage storage must be safely packed and secured to prevent obstruction of the aisles and safety exits. Bringing packages or bags that are unable to be held in the lap of the passenger, excluding bags of groceries or limited amounts of luggage, is prohibited by all agencies that cover this conduct area.

Designated seating
Most – 71 percent – of peer agencies have a policy regarding designated seating. Priority seating and locations designated for use of passengers with disabilities and senior citizens is mandatory in transit code of conduct policies. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations at 49 C.F.R. Section 37.167(j),[10] drivers are required to ask the passenger without a disability to move to another seat for a priority passenger; however, they are not required to force a passenger to move upon refusal. All conduct prohibited by this code is subject to modification under the ADA. Transit agencies are required to make the proper modifications to their code of conduct policies to avoid discrimination and ensure the program is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Spotlight:
- Beyond clearly stating that seats next to the doors are reserved for senior citizens and riders with disabilities, WMATA encourages passengers to be courteous and to give their seat to someone who is in greater need of it.[11]

Microtransit
The majority – 54 percent – of agencies have a policy regarding microtransit, which often concerns the proper use and placement of bikes, scooters, and other forms of micromobility. Most agencies' buses are equipped with exterior bike racks located at the front of the vehicle. In some cases, folded bicycles are permitted onboard buses. Typically, roller skates, skateboards and other small wheeled recreational

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[10] https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/49/37.167 https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/49/37.167
[11] Rules and Manners | WMATA Rules and Manners | WMATA[11] Rules and Manners | WMATA

transportation devices are not to be used after boarding the vehicle. Some agencies have codes of conduct or other policies dealing specifically with electric-powered bicycles and scooters.

Spotlight:
- Valley Meto notes that e-scooter devices that fold and are placed under a seat by the owner and do not block the aisle are allowed on buses and light rail trains. The agency also specifies that other forms of microtransit – roller skating, in-line skating and skateboarding – are prohibited on agency property.[12]
- New Jersey (NJ) PATH prohibits the use of skateboards, skates, bicycles, scooters, or any other vehicles or devices, except a wheelchair or other ambulatory device assisting a disabled person.[13]

More than one seat
Policies specifying the prohibition against occupying more than one seat when seating is limited is a less common conduct area with 46 percent of peers addressing it.

Spotlight:
- According to the Denver RTD code of conduct – blocking or impeding the movement of another passenger or blocking a seat or an aisle, pathway, or door with one's body including sitting, standing, or lying down or any object (except a mobility aid) – hinders a passenger's movement, the ability to sit or displaces a passenger.[14]

Outliers – Accessibility
- Prohibited hazardous items
  - Metro Transit groups its prohibition of various forms of mictrotransit under prohibited hazardous items, listing out hoverboards and gas-powered scooters, along with lithium cells or batteries, car or motorcycle batteries and gasoline/fuel containers.
- Electronic balancing scooters (EBS)
  - SEPTA has specific guidelines concerning the use of electronic balancing scooters (EBS) based on age, ability, circumstance, and time of day.[15]
- Announcement request
  - Miami-Dade Transit specifies that customers with visual impairments who might not be able to identify their stop may request their stop to be announced.[16]

2. Health and Sanitation
Health and sanitation requirements have a direct impact on the safety and comfort of transit passengers and employees. According to the Peer Agencies Code of Conduct Matrix shown in Table 3, most agencies include health and sanitation provisions in their code of conduct.

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[12] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro Respect the Ride | Valley Metro[12] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

[13] Safety (panynj.gov) Safety (panynj.gov)

[14]Denver RTD

[15] Electric Balancing Scooters on SEPTA Vehicles | SEPTA

[16] Passenger Safety (miamidade.gov)

Smoking, alcohol, other drug use
Nearly all – 92 percent of – peer agencies prohibit smoking, the consumption of alcohol, and/or other drug use.
Spotlight:
- TriMet generally states that "smoking of any kind" is prohibited on vehicles and agency property and encourages passengers to be considerate by moving away from agency property before smoking.[17]
- Valley Metro specifies that all forms of smoking, including marijuana, are prohibited anywhere on agency vehicles or property.[18]

Eating, drinking restrictions
All but three – 88 percent of – peer transit agencies prohibit the consumption of any food or non-alcoholic beverages, excluding medicine while on board. Drinking alcoholic beverages or possessing open containers of alcohol is also prohibited while on board (see section below on Smoking, alcohol, other drug use).

Spit, urination, defecation
Spitting, urinating, or defecating – other than in restrooms – is prohibited by 63 percent of peer agencies.

Littering
A strict "no littering" rule is included in the majority – 79 percent – of peer code of conduct policies. Littering includes dumping, depositing, dropping, throwing, discarding, leaving trash as well as causing or permitting the dumping, depositing, dropping, throwing, discarding, or leaving of trash.

Required clothing, footwear
Most – 58 percent of – peer agencies highlight the requirement of footwear, shirts/tops, and pants/shorts/skirts to board any vehicle.

Outliers – Health and Sanitation
- Communicable illness
  - UTA specifies that individuals with a communicable illness are encouraged not to board a system vehicle and goes on to elaborate that an individual with exposed wounds, bodily emissions, and/or exposed bodily fluids is prohibited.[19]
- Noxious odor
  - UTA prohibits noxious odors emanating from a body, clothing, or possessions that disrupt service, unless the odor relates to a disability or medical condition that is not caused by exposed wounds, bodily emissions, and/or exposes bodily fluids.

3. Operations
The operations theme addresses conduct areas that pertain to the system's overall functionality, whether it be protecting the agency's financial solvency by submitting the appropriate fare payment, generally limiting distracting or disruptive behavior, or minimizing noise.

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[17] Rules for Riding (trimet.org)

[18] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

[19] Rider Rules (rideuta.com)

Loud music, conversation, noise

All 24 peer agency codes of conduct – 100 percent – contain a policy concerning noise of some variety, including loud music and/or conversation. CapMetro specifically prohibits inconsiderate cell phone use and explicitly states that headphones are required when using all audio and visual devices.[20] NJ PATH[21] and Sound Transit[22] have similar policies regarding headphone use.

Correct fare, paid fare area

Most – 79 percent – of peer agencies have a policy requiring passengers to submit proper fare payment prior to boarding and/or entering a paid fare area.

Spotlight:
- Within its code of conduct, TriMet helpfully provides a link to how to resolve a fare citation.[23]
- Cap Metro's policy strikes a commendable balance of being positive and helpful while also making clear the penalties associated with not complying: *"Have your pass or cash ready when boarding and keep your fare handy in case requested by a fare inspector. Customers without a valid fare will be asked to de-board and may result in a fine."[24]*

Distractions or disruptions of driver or service

The majority – 71 percent – of peer agencies prohibit passengers from engaging in behavior that is distracting or disruptive to the vehicle operator or overall transit service operations. Some of these policies are grouped together with the next conduct area: "loud music, conversation, noise," while others also include "vulgar language, gestures," which is grouped under the subsequent theme of Personal Safety & Security.

Spotlight:
- WMATA's instructions: "Don't: talk to the driver when the bus is moving" are very straightforward, compared to other codes of conduct which may rely on a passenger to interpret what qualifies as "disruptive" behavior.[25]

Outliers – Operations
- Fare-free payment structure
  - Four of the peer agencies have a partially fare-free payment structure (CTA, Denver RTD, Houston Metro, and Miami-Dade Transit). In recent years, an increasing number of U.S. transit agencies have adopted full or partially fare-free transit operations. There are a host of factors to consider when adopting a fare-free structure, such as the segments of the population that may stand to benefit the most from free transit service (low-income individuals, senior citizens, and youth), the financial burden placed on the transit system when reducing or completing eliminating fare revenue, and the potential for an increased demand for transit service.

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[20] Code of Conduct – CapMetro – Austin Public Transit

[21] Safety (panynj.gov)

[22] Rules and etiquette | Sound Transit

[23] Resolve your TriMet citation

[24] Code of Conduct – CapMetro – Austin Public Transit

[25] Rules and Manners | WMATA

4. Personal Safety and Security

Safety is defined as the freedom from harm resulting from *unintentional* acts or circumstances, while security is defined as the freedom from harm resulting from *intentional* acts or circumstances. For most transit passengers, these separate terms are interchangeable. For example, an individual might say, "I just don't feel safe on that bus route. After school lets out, rowdy teenagers get on in a group and it can feel threatening." The person is experiencing fear for their personal security but expressing that fear as feeling "unsafe." This section addresses passengers' rights to be free from both intentional and unintentional harm.

Flammable substances, hazardous materials

The majority – 67 percent – of peer agencies prohibit passengers from traveling aboard transit with flammable substances or otherwise hazardous materials.
Spotlight:
MBTA specifically lists the hazardous, inflammable and/or explosive objects that riders cannot bring into MBTA vehicles and stations, while also explicitly stating that riders who use respirators or other portable oxygen supplies are permitted to board vehicles and enter stations with their items. [26]

Harassment, disruption of others

The majority – 58 percent – of peer agencies prohibit passengers from harassing or otherwise disturbing or disrupting one another.

Spotlight:
- CTA specifies that engaging in harassment, sexual harassment, or bullying is prohibited both on all CTA property, and goes on to define each of the three terms.[27]
- In addition to citing harassment, Valley Metro also explicitly prohibits following or stalking passengers or personnel.[28]

Loitering, vagrancy

Exactly half – 58 percent – of peer agencies prohibit loitering or vagrancy. Agencies vary in the extent to which they define loitering or vagrancy, including whether individuals are prohibited from doing so on a transit vehicle, within the paid fare/station area, or adjacent to a transit stop – the latter of which is often in the public realm, such as a bus stop along a sidewalk.

Spotlight:
CTA's Code of Conduct lends itself well to avoiding this and other ambiguities, since it is formatted as a table of "prohibited activities" with three columns: Type of conduct, Transit vehicles, and Other CTA property. In the latter two columns, it is indicated whether the conduct is prohibited, allowed, or N/A. For item 14 in CTA's code of conduct, loitering is clearly defined as: *"(1) remaining on the CTA system for more than one continuous trip without exiting the paid area and re-entering by paying a second fare or (2) riding on the system continuously in excess of two hours without exiting the system."*[29]

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[26] Rider Rules and Regulations | Safety | MBTA

[27] Rules/Code of Conduct - CTA (transitchicago.com)

[28] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

[29] Rules/Code of Conduct - CTA (transitchicago.com)

Vulgar language, gestures

The majority – 58 percent – of peer agencies prohibit vulgar language and/or gestures.

Spotlight:
- Houston Metro clearly and simply states "no loud or abusive language" within the Prohibited Conduct section of its code of conduct.[30]

Violence, including threat of

Exactly half – 50 percent – of peer agencies prohibit violence of any kind, including the threat of violence.

Spotlight:
Valley Metro prohibits both the threat of assault or intimidation as well as fighting, taunting or other aggressive/disorderly behavior.[31]

Weapons

Ten – 50 percent – of the peer agencies explicitly prohibit passengers from carrying weapons.

Spotlight:
- Consistent with most other agencies that include this conduct area, Sound Transit very simply and directly states: *"Do not carrying unlawful weapons or firearms."*[32]

Trespassing

Ten – 46 percent – of the 24 agencies explicitly prohibit trespassing in their codes of conduct.

Spotlight:
- Miami-Dade Transit groups this conduct area under its "Violating Homeland Security Rules" section and indicates that trespassing on the transit system or entering any restricted area is a prohibited activity.[33]

Outliers – Personal Safety and Security
- Age-related restrictions
  - According to Valley Metro, children under the age of eight (seven or younger) cannot ride alone and must be accompanied by a responsible person, which is defined as one who can directly control and supervise the child. UTA, WMATA, and several other agencies have more general policies concerning parents being required to accompany and/or supervise their children.
- Emergencies
  - WMATA encourages its passengers to always follow official instructions, and to remain calm in the case of an emergency. The agency also encourages parents to devise a plan with their children if they get separated and informs parents that Metro employees are trained to assist in such situations. Additionally, WMATA provides specific guidance on how to stop an

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[30] METRO Code of Conduct | Public Transit and Transportation | Houston, TX (ridemetro.org)

[31] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

[32] Rules and etiquette | Sound Transit

[33] Passenger Safety (miamidade.gov)

escalator in an emergency.[34] NJ PATH has similar guidelines for alerting the crew of a problem, using emergency exits, and more.[35]

- Homeland security:
  - o Miami-Dade Transit has an entire section, with 11 sub-bullets, dedicated to violating homeland security rules.[36]
- Photography:
  - o Photographing or taking pictures is prohibited unless permission has been obtained aboard the NJ PATH system.[37] MBTA has a formalized process for filming and photography.[38]
- Privacy:
  - o Sound Transit simply states: "respect the privacy of other passengers."[39]
- See something, say something:
  - o Some systems, including WMATA and MBTA, have policies concerning reporting unattended packages or other suspicious activity. While most transit agencies convey this message in one form or another, it rarely lives in the code of conduct, versus a separate safety-related set of guidelines or a standalone "See Something, Say Something" campaign.
- System use:
  - o Most agencies provide specific guidelines on how to safely use the system – whether it be concerning how to board/alight, how to move through the stations, and where not to go. While many agencies have these instructions listed separately from their codes of conduct, others, such as WMATA, have them listed together.[40]

5. Quality of Life

Quality of life, defined as the standard of health, comfort and happiness experienced by an individual or group, is interpreted in this study to concern issues that span beyond the explicit realm of health and sanitation or personal safety and security, but nonetheless still impact one's overall sense of wellbeing and comfort riding the transit system.

Non-service animal restrictions

The vast majority – 75 percent – of peer agencies have policies pertaining to restricting, if not prohibiting, non-service animals. While most systems, such as CATS, do not permit non-service animals on transit, TriMet allows them but requires that non-service animals be kept in carriers. [41]

Spotlight:

- SEPTA has very detailed guidelines concerning service animals, clearly stating that as per USDOT ADA regulations, emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals. [42]

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[34] Rules and Manners | WMATA

[35] Safety (panynj.gov)

[36] Passenger Safety (miamidade.gov)

[37] Safety (panynj.gov)

[38] Filming and Sampling - Greystone (mbtarealty.com)

[39] Rules and etiquette | Sound Transit

[40] Rules and Manners | WMATA

[41] Code of Conduct (charlottenc.gov)

[42] Service Animal Policy | SEPTA

Vandalism, graffiti

The majority – 63 percent – of peer agencies have prohibitive policies concerning vandalism and graffiti.

Spotlight:
- Within Dallas DART's[43] *Regulations for Management of the Authority*, under *Prohibited Conduct and Enforcement*, a person is prohibited from committing the following act on a DART vehicle, facility, or property: *"Vandalize the vehicle or property by writing, marking, scribbling, defacing or causing destruction to the vehicle or property in any manner."*[44]

Respect the ride, others

The majority – 58 percent – of peer agencies have explicit policies concerning respecting their fellow passengers, the transit operator, and others.

Spotlight:
- MARTA's code of conduct, with the tagline "Ride with Respect" is centered around just that. MARTA has even collaborated with local Atlanta celebrities to develop a series of TV commercials "aimed at making MARTA something we can all enjoy."[45]
- Valley Metro's "Respect the Ride" Code of Conduct follows a similar approach.[46]

Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities

The majority – 54 percent – of peer agencies either prohibit or have specific policies concerning soliciting, busking, and/or other non-transit activities.
Spotlight:
- Sound Transit[47] and MBTA[48] have developed formal permitting processes for busking, thus promoting vitality and culture in a streamlined and enforceable way.

Outliers – Quality of Life
- Gambling
  - According to CTA[49], which prohibits gambling on all CTA property, gambling includes use of shell games, sleight-of-hand or juggling trick or other games to cheat, defraud or unlawfully obtain money or other things of value.[50] Though far less detailed, Miami Dade also prohibits gambling.[51]

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[43] DART Code of Conduct

[44] DART Code of Conduct

[45] MARTA (itsmarta.com)

[46] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

[47] Rules and etiquette | Sound Transit Rules and etiquette | Sound Transit

[48] https://mbtarealty.com/subway/

[49] Rules/Code of Conduct - CTA (transitchicago.com) Rules/Code of Conduct - CTA (transitchicago.com)

[50] Rules/Code of Conduct - CTA (transitchicago.com)

[51] Passenger Safety (miamidade.gov)

VI. Structuring a Code of Conduct

This section is characterized by the range of approaches taken across peer agencies to structure codes of conduct. Many peer agency codes of conduct are based on a list of prohibited actions, often based on state or local jurisdictions' laws. However, some peer agencies structure their codes of conduct in a more positive way, appealing to a sense of community responsibility. Several examples are highlighted below, separated into three categories: Codes Based on Prohibited Actions, Codes that are Expressed in Positive Language, and Codes Structured in Other Ways.

1. Codes Based on Prohibited Actions

CATS states at the beginning of its "Riders Code of Conduct" that it is adapted from two separate Charlotte Codes (Sec. 15-272 and 15-273), the violation of which may be enforced by civic penalty in the amount of $50 or by arrest.[52] The CATS code of conduct, like many other peer codes of conduct, focuses on acts that are prohibited.

New York MTA has two separate "Rules of Conduct" – one for New York City Transit Authority (NYCT) overall, and one specifically for the MTA Bus Company. [53,54] Generally speaking, both documents differ from most other codes of conduct analyzed in this study in two important ways. First, they begin by listing the relevant MTA rule, MTA offense description, and associated fine. Second, they are very lengthy and formal in their phrasing versus the succinct, bulleted list format of most other codes of conduct reviewed. SACRT's code of conduct is framed in a similar way. [55]

2. Codes Expressed in Positive Language

MARTA's code of conduct and accompanying "Ride with Respect" campaign, as referenced in the literature review and the synthesis of peer analysis, includes the use of a mobile app and a series of ads featuring local celebrities to drive home the message in a clearer and more compelling way.[56] The app features the new Passenger Code of Conduct and enables customers to report problems using their mobile phones.

TriMet's "Rules for Riding" emphasizes that riders have responsibilities, too. The agency clearly states that the rules listed are enforceable and carry a penalty of up to $250 and/or exclusion from the transit system. Each rule has a catchy and succinct slogan, i.e., "Fare is fair," "Take a stand," "Keep your cool" and so on.[57] TriMet also has a supplemental page "What can I bring on board?" that outlines what can and cannot be brought aboard the system.[58]

Valley Metro's "Respect the Ride" Code of Conduct is focused on creating a safe and positive user experience, while discouraging disruptive, intrusive, unsafe or inappropriate behaviors in a public setting.[59] Rather than separating out "Dos" and "Don'ts" – Valley Metro lists all behaviors and activities that are expected or prohibited on agency property or vehicles all together.

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[52] Code of Conduct (charlottenc.gov)

[53] Microsoft Word - Rules of Conduct and Fines.docx (mta.info)

[54] 54246 (mta.info)

[55] Microsoft Word - SB1561 Rules.doc (sacrt.com)

[56] MARTA (itsmarta.com)

[57] Rules for Riding (trimet.org)

[58] What can I bring on board? – TriMet & Hop Fastpass Help

[59] Respect the Ride | Valley Metro

3. Codes Structured in Other Ways

Sound Transit's "Rules and etiquette" are separated into three general sections: basic rules, expulsion and suspension, and passenger courtesies; followed by specific policies on busking and service animals. The passenger courtesies section clearly and respectfully guides all customers in acting courteously concerning seating, privacy, and noise.

VRE's "On-Board Policies" are not framed as actions that are permitted or not permitted. Instead, the agency lists each of the policies with a succinct, narrative description of the expected behavior within each category.[60] The page ends with a list of frequently asked questions and responses (specifically concerning the Quiet Cars).

WMATA's "Rules and Manners" takes a hybrid approach, separating actions under "Do" and "Don't". For further clarification, WMATA has three separate pages – an overall Rules and Manners list[61], as well as one specific to Metrorail[62] and another for Metrobus. [63] [64] [65] Within each of these pages, the list of "Do's" and "Don'ts" are separated into three categories: General, On Escalators, and For Parents. For the "Don't" items that are enforceable by law, WMATA groups them all together: *"Don't: Eat, drink, smoke, or litter on Metro vehicles or in the stations. Metro Transit Police issue citations or make arrests to enforce the law. Help keep the system clean."*

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[60] VRE On-Board Policies - vre

[61] Rules and Manners | WMATA Rules and Manners | WMATA

[62] Metrorail Rules and Manners | WMATA Metrorail Rules and Manners | WMATA

[63] Rules and Manners | WMATA

[64] Metrorail Rules and Manners | WMATA

[65] Metrobus Rules and Manners | WMATA

VII. Communicating a Code of Conduct

The Journal of Public Transportation study "Engaging Passengers in Public Awareness Campaigns" cited in the research section of this report has several recommendations regarding how a passenger code of conduct should be communicated to an agency's customers. The study encourages agencies to keep their code of conduct at a high level and not be overly detailed or verbose. Positively-framed language that illustrates a shared mission/ownership is encouraged (example: "Please help us keep this station safe"). The study also recommends that the code of conduct contain images of photos of passengers riding transit.

The creative components of a campaign should reflect the character, idiosyncrasies, and realities of the community and transit environment in which they will be placed. The use of humor can be tricky but can be appealing to the riding public and help get their attention. It is important to use both text and graphics to communicate the message and strategically match the design of campaign components to the environments in which they will be placed. For example, materials placed in areas where transit riders will be rushing through should contain as little text as possible since they will not have the time or inclination to read them. Conversely, materials posted in vehicles or places where people are waiting for vehicles can include more text since people may pass the time by reading them. Some basic design principles include:

- Promote single, simple, do-able behaviors one at a time.
- Reflect the diversity of transit riders.
- Depict situations and scenarios that are realistic and relevant.
- Use color or other graphic design techniques to catch the viewer's eye.
- Limit the amount of text by communicating the message in a clear and concise manner.
- Link messages using a consistent logo, slogan, tagline, or other device.
- Select a limited number of themes or approaches and create different versions to maintain interest or to better match the environment in which the message will be displayed.

Just as there are multiple approaches possible for designing and phrasing a code of conduct, there are numerous options and tools communicating a code of conduct, including:

- Agency website
- Printed materials (rider guides, schedules, transit passes, fare cards)
- Brochures, flyers, seat drops
- Interior vehicle advertising
- Exterior vehicle advertising
- On-board announcements
- In-station advertising
- Station announcements
- Platform/Bus Stop advertising
- Variable message signs and postings
- Station events
- Promotional items
- Press releases
- Social media
- Apps
- Community outreach (Community meetings, special events)
- Videos that can be shown on website, social media, at transit facilities, and community meetings

VII. Conclusions and Next Steps

MDOT MTA has a list of actions that are prohibited on transit, consistent with the Maryland Code, Transportation Section 7-705 that is on the agency's website and that is displayed in some MDOT MTA facilities and vehicles. However, this list of prohibited actions is not easily accessed from MDOT MTA's main website, nor is it highly visible in bus and rail vehicles, stations, and other facilities. There are also internal inconsistencies between the list of prohibited activities that is displayed in some vehicles and the website content. MDOT MTA has expressed interest in developing a passenger code of conduct that is consistent with the mission and vision of the agency, clearly and consistently communicated, and effective in helping to protect the safety and comfort of customers and agency employees. Developing a clear and cohesive MDOT MTA passenger code of conduct will provides opportunity to ensure consistency of messaging, explore new methods to communicate passenger behavior expectations, and focus on those conduct areas that are most likely to impact passenger and employee safety and comfort.

1. Conduct Areas Aligned with Maryland State Law and Safety/Security Benefits

The table below lists the 23 code of conduct elements that are included in peer transit agencies' passenger codes of conducts reviewed in this assessment, listed in order from most common to least. Column 5 identifies those conduct areas that are consistent with Maryland law; Column 6 identifies those conduct areas that may impact the safety and/or security for MDOT MTA employees and passengers. MDOT MTA may want to consider including code of conduct elements that: (1) are explicitly referenced in the Maryland Code; and (2) may impact the real or perceived safety and/or security of passengers and employees.

Table 7: Most to Least Common Conduct Areas, Maryland Code, and Safety/Security Impacts

Theme	Conduct Area	% of Total	How Common	Maryland Code	May Impact Safety and/or Security
Operations	Loud music, conversation, noise	100%	Very Common	Yes	
Health & Sanitation	Smoking, alcohol, other drug use	92%	Very Common	Yes	
Health & Sanitation	Eating, drinking restrictions	88%	Very Common	Yes	
Accessibility	Stroller, cart, baggage storage	79%	Very Common		
Health & Sanitation	Littering	79%	Very Common	Yes	
Operations	Correct fare, paid fare area	79%	Very Common	Yes	
Quality of Life	Non-service animal restrictions	75%	Very Common	Yes	
Accessibility	Designated seating	71%	Very Common	Yes	
Operations	Distractions or disruptions of driver or service	71%	Very Common	Yes	
Personal Safety & Security	Flammable substances, hazardous materials	67%	Common	Yes	Yes
Health & Sanitation	Spit, urination, defecation	63%	Common	Yes	
Quality of Life	Vandalism, graffiti	63%	Common		
Health & Sanitation	Required clothing, shoes	58%	Common		
Personal Safety & Security	Harassment, disruption of others	58%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Loitering, vagrancy	58%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Vulgar language, gestures	58%	Common		Yes
Quality of Life	Respect the ride, others	58%	Common		
Accessibility	Microtransit	54%	Common		
Quality of Life	Soliciting, busking, non-transit activities	54%	Common	Yes	
Personal Safety & Security	Violence, including threat of	50%	Common		Yes
Personal Safety & Security	Weapons	50%	Common	Yes	Yes
Accessibility	More than one seat	46%	Less Common		
Personal Safety & Security	Trespassing	46%	Less Common		Yes

Appendices

Appendix A: Document Review

Entity	Title of document
ADA National Network	The ADA & Accessible Ground Transportation Fact Sheet
AdvanceGeo Partnership	How to Write a Code of Conduct
APTA	The COVID-19 Pandemic - Public Transportation Responds: Safeguarding Riders and Employees
Journal of Public Transportation	Engaging Transit Riders in Public Awareness Campaigns (Vol. 17, No. 1, 2014)
Maryland Code	Md. Code, Transportation § 7-705 Prohibited Acts (current with changes from Executive Order 01.01.2023.02)
TRB: TCRP	Addressing Difficult Customer Situations: A Synthesis of Transit Practice (TCRP Synthesis 127, 2017)
TRB: TCRP	Codes of Conduct on Transit Vehicles and Property: Legal Issues (TCRP J-05/Topic 18-02)
TRB: TCRP	TCRP Legal Research Digest 58: Policing and Public Transportation

Appendix B: List of Peer Agencies

	Agency Name	Agency Jurisdiction	Agency State
1	BART - Bay Area Rapid Transit	San Francisco	CA
2	CapMetro - Austin Public Transit	Austin	TX
3	CATS - Charlotte Area Transit System	Charlotte	NC
4	Cleveland RTA - Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority	Cleveland	OH
5	CTA - Chicago Transit Authority	Chicago	IL
6	Dallas DART - Dallas Area Rapid Transit	Dallas	TX
7	Denver RTD - Regional Transportation District	Denver	CO
8	Houston Metro - Metropolitan Transportation Authority Harris County	Houston	TX
9	MARTA-Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority	Atlanta	GA
10	MBTA - Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority	Boston	MA
11	MCTS - Milwaukee County Transit System	Milwaukee	WI
12	Miami-Dade Transit	Miami-Dade	FL
13	MSP Metro Transit	Minneapolis-St. Paul	MN
14	NJ Transit	New Jersey/Metro NY	NJ
15	NJ PATH	New Jersey/Metro NY	NJ
16	NYC MTA	New York	NY
17	SACRT - Sacramento Regional Transit District	Sacramento	CA
18	SEPTA – Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority	Philadelphia	PA
19	Sound Transit	Seattle	WA
20	TriMet – Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon	Portland	OR
21	UTA – Utah Transit Authority	Salt Lake City	UT
22	Valley Metro	Phoenix	AZ
23	VRE – Virginia Railway Express	Alexandria	VA
24	WMATA – Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	Washington	DC