

# San Mateo County Transit District Code of Conduct and Enforcement Policy for Use of District Services

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## **Purpose**

The San Mateo County Transit District (District) is committed to the safety and security of all passengers using its services and of all District staff, including SamTrans bus operators. The District seeks to ensure that all its services, including SamTrans, Redi-Wheels, RediCoast and Ride Plus, are operated in a safe manner and that appropriate, respectful conduct is maintained on all District vehicles and property so that members of the public may use these services and facilities safely.

The District has developed a Code of Conduct and Enforcement Policy to establish rules and expectations regarding appropriate conduct on District vehicles, describe the enforcement mechanisms, and foster a safe and welcoming environment that promotes civil and respectful interaction for all who use District property, buses, and facilities. Passengers are prohibited from engaging in disruptive or harassing conduct. This Code of Conduct and its Enforcement Policy is intended to minimize the risk of (1) harassment and assault against bus operators and, (2) conduct that may disrupt the safe operation of SamTrans buses and other District vehicles. The following Code of Conduct and Enforcement Policy applies to all passengers who use District services, including passengers entering, exiting, or riding the bus, paratransit, or microtransit; or waiting for the bus at a designated SamTrans bus stop.

## **Code of Conduct**

1. Harassment against SamTrans bus operators or other staff or passengers is not tolerated on the bus, paratransit, microtransit, or at bus stops and stations. "Harassment" includes physical harm, intimidation, verbal threats, name-calling, and sexual harassment.
2. Avoid disruptive conduct, horseplay, unnecessary conversation, and close contact with District vehicle and bus operators. Let drivers focus on the road.
3. The District does not tolerate discrimination towards any passenger or SamTrans employee based on their race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, age, military status, disability, genetic information, or any other protected status.
4. Paying the correct fare is required to ride the bus.
5. Sexual harassment, sexual conduct, and indecent exposure towards a fellow passenger or SamTrans employee are strictly prohibited.
6. Fighting, pushing, unwanted physical contact, spitting, throwing objects, vulgar language, yelling, shouting, and excessive noise are prohibited on buses, and at bus stops and stations.

7. Opening or tampering with emergency windows and doors is prohibited, except during an emergency.
8. The use of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, and illegal drugs is prohibited on buses, paratransit, and microtransit, and at bus stops and stations. Open containers of alcohol are not allowed on buses, paratransit, and microtransit.
9. For safety reasons, congregating or loitering on a bus near the doorways and in aisles, or at a bus stop in a way that blocks entry and exit to a bus, or intentionally delaying a bus, is prohibited. All aisles must be kept clear of personal items throughout a bus.
10. Weapons, firearms, projectiles, knives, replica weapons, explosives, and containers including flammable materials are not allowed onboard District vehicles.
11. Riders must always comply with the instructions of the driver regarding operating of the vehicle and matters of safety to avoid an accident.
12. Please be respectful and attentive of others. If you see something, say something.

Report incidents and complaints by calling SamTrans Customer Service at 1-800-660-4287.

### **Code of Conduct Enforcement Policy**

#### **PROHIBITED OR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES:**

Illegal activity in violation of any applicable federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation, including operator assault and harassment, is an actionable offense that is subject to enforcement action ranging from verbal warnings, ejection, and exclusion from vehicles or property, to issuance of a citation, arrest, and prosecution.

#### **ENFORCEMENT:**

Bus operators and other front-line employees are the primary observers of Code of Conduct violations. If they observe a violation, bus operators and front-line employees are responsible for gathering facts needed to report the incident, and for reporting the incident to Radio Control, who will then notify the appropriate responders. If law enforcement arrives, bus, paratransit, or microtransit operators should request a Criminal Protective Order against the person who violated the Code of Conduct.

#### **EJECTION:**

A person who violates the Code of Conduct or commits another public offense may be immediately removed from a District facility or vehicle, without a fare refund, by any authorized representative, including Transit Police or any law enforcement officer.

When a person fails to comply with an order to leave a District vehicle or facility, they will be deemed a trespasser and subject to further enforcement action.

**EXCLUSION:**

A person who violates the Code of Conduct or commits another public offense on a District vehicle or facility may be excluded from SamTrans and other District vehicles and/or facilities for a defined or indefinite period of time. Exclusions are issued by court order sought by the District's General Counsel.

**REMAIN ON-SCENE:**

**Only if it is safe to do so**, any operator or front-line employee who witnesses a prohibited or illegal activity should attempt to remain at the scene with the victim or reporting party until a first responder or another District official arrives and releases them. If a violator is still on the SamTrans bus or other District vehicle, operators should stop at the nearest safe location, open all doors to the vehicle, and allow everyone who wishes to exit, the opportunity to do so.

**FIRST RESPONDERS:**

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Transit Bureau is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for District security incidents. Additional first responders include SamTrans safety and security personnel and supervisors, and members of other responding law enforcement agencies. When appropriate, law enforcement personnel from neighboring jurisdictions or allied agencies in the SamTrans service area will respond to incidents and provide support until Transit Police arrive.

**The Code of Conduct is not intended to limit, replace, or conflict with any federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance, and does not limit or prevent any law enforcement agency or entity from taking any lawful action against any person in or on any District vehicle, facility, or property.**