

Policies regarding Bus Operator Cell Phone Use

Information compiled June 25, 2007

The Question: What is your policy regarding bus operator cell phone use? Allowed or banned?

Ben Franklin Transit says... Drivers can use them at transfer layovers. They are not to use them while driving or while they need to be helping passengers. Blue tooth, ear buds and the like devices are banned from work. We have progressive discipline violations as unsafe operation of a vehicle and failure to follow procedures.

Everett Transit says... Our policy is that Operators can not use cell phones while driving. They can not have the cell phone turned on while driving (so they are not tempted to answer). They can not use the cell phone while dealing with passengers or when they should be dealing with passengers (standing outside and near the bus or inside the bus while parked). They may only use their cell phone when they are on-duty when they are away from the bus and/or not expected to be dealing with customers. This policy includes the use of hands-free and Blue tooth head phones. Operators are prohibited from wearing any type of head phone (cell phone, radio, CD, etc.) while on the job.

Grant Transit says... We do not have a formal policy. Drivers do have cell phones that are used when they are out of range of dispatch. In Grant County, the routes to the north of Moses Lake are out of range a lot of times.

Grays Harbor Transit says... Here is our policy on cell phones.

- b) For Safety purposes Operators may carry personal cell phones while on duty, however, Operators are not permitted to use a cell phone while driving his/her bus.

Island Transit says... We allow Operators to carry cell phones but they must be turned off while driving. If they have a lay-over they can use the cell phone. There are no exceptions to this for any reason.

Jefferson Transit says... We discourage personal use while driving. However, we do supply all operators with Nextel phone / walkie-talkies as an alternate form of official communications when radios are not convenient.

Kitsap Transit says... It is specifically banned, unless the coach is stopped and they're off the bus.

Link Transit says... Operators may use cell phones when **not** occupying or operating Link vehicles.

Pullman Transit says... Our drivers are allowed to carry their personal cell phones with the following restrictions:

1. They can use them only when they are stopped.
2. It does not affect their schedule.
3. They are not allowed to answer calls while they are driving (i.e. they can't pull over just to answer a call).

We have given them a strict warning that if anyone is caught breaking any of these rules they will lose this privilege. So far we have not had any problems or public complaints.

Skagit Transit says... Coach operators are not to use cell phones while driving a coach, no exceptions. If they are pulled over or at a layover area, they can but only as long as it does not disrupt or delay services. Those who choose not to follow this will face disciplinary action.

Spokane Transit says... We do not allow coach or van operators to use cell phones unless on a scheduled break.

Twin Transit says... Operators are supplied with company cell phones and many have personal cell phones as well. Operators are allowed to use either cell phone (company cell for business only), but not while driving. They are allowed to use their personal phones while on a break and off the bus, and in the case of family emergency, etc., but must pull over and stop driving first. When dispatch needs to communicate privately with an operator by phone, they call over the radio and ask the operator to call in to dispatch when they have the chance (i.e. can pull over and stop driving), rather than just calling the operator directly.

Valley Transit says... [Click here](#) to view our Personal Communication Equipment policy. It has been in place since 1999. We take violation of the policy pretty seriously.

Whatcom Transit says... Operators may carry personal cellular phones on board buses, but may only use them to call out on a scheduled layover, and only after the vehicle is stopped, properly parked and secured. After first attending to passenger needs, the Operator may then step off the bus to make a call. During unpaid meal breaks, Operators may receive incoming calls as well as place calls. Aside from outgoing calls during rest breaks and any calls during meal breaks, the cellular phone must otherwise be turned off.

Yakima Transit says... They can not use them while on route even at stops. It's OK during layovers.