

# CITY OF SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT

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## Public Transportation Service To and From Schools Introduction

Utilizing public transit in the City of Santa Clarita is a privilege. California law and City policy establish standards of operation for public transportation services.

This pamphlet has been designed to familiarize student-riders with the rules of public transportation and the City of Santa Clarita Transit system.

The City of Santa Clarita Bus Operators are trained professionals. Before beginning training, applicants must submit to fingerprinting for a criminal background check, pass drug and alcohol screening and DOT physical, and obtain a permit for a Commercial Driver's License. The initial training involves over 150 hours of classroom and behind the wheel training. The final road test is approximately four hours and involves a complete inspection of the bus and a skills course as well as driving on urban and rural roads and interstate highways. Drivers must submit to and pass annual drug and alcohol screenings, participate in classroom refresher training, biennial DOT physicals, and many of the drivers maintain First Aid and CPR certification. Legislation also restricts the number of hours bus drivers can work each day and during any seven or eight day period.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) conducts annual inspections of each bus before it is licensed, annually and after any accident.

The City of Santa Clarita Transit system is regulated on placement of bus stops, proximity of stops to an intersection or a railroad crossing, and the direction the door faces while loading and unloading passengers. The City is required to have and use 2-way communications on the City busses. Drivers are prohibited from using personal cellular telephones (or headsets and earphones) while the bus is in motion.

The employees of the City of Santa Clarita Transit System, the City of Santa Clarita's Transit Manager along with the Wm. S. Hart Union High School District Director of Transportation worked in partnership developing the attached Rules of Conduct. These policies were developed to insure the safe and comfortable transportation of all students who utilize the City of Santa Clarita's transit system. All State regulations and City rules are intended to protect the safety of each student.

### **Riding the City transit system is a privilege that can be suspended or revoked.**

It is the responsibility of each student and parent/guardian to be familiar with the Bus Rules that govern the City of Santa Clarita Transit system. Copies of the rules and City transit schedules are available at each school, Santa Clarita City Hall and on line on the City Transit Website and through a link on the William S. Hart Union High School District Transportation Department Webpage.

Jeffery J. O'Keefe  
City Transit Manager

Richard J. Varner  
Director of Transportation



## Public Transportation Service To and From Schools

### Bus Rules and Student-Rider Behavior

1. Students should arrive at the bus stop no less than five to ten minutes before scheduled departure time and students who must cross a street must cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus and should **cross the street at an intersection or crosswalk**. Students should wait in an orderly manner and line up when the bus arrives at the stop. Students may be civilly or criminally responsible for property damage at a bus stop and for their conduct while waiting for the bus.
2. Students should board the bus, go to a seat and sit down or go to the back of the bus to stand. Students must stay in their seats or in the place where they choose to stand. Students shall sit with their backs against the seat backs, with their legs facing forward and all parts of their bodies clear of the aisles. If standing students must hold onto the handrails designed for standing passengers, they must always stand behind the standee line.
3. Students shall comply with all instructions given by City of Santa Clarita bus drivers and supervisors. The driver is always the authority on the bus and **students must comply with directions from the driver the first time they are given**.
4. Students should treat each other, drivers, aides, all other customers and property with respect. No teasing, "put downs", profanity, sexual or racial innuendos, discussion or comments.
5. Students shall not carry any prohibited items that include but are not limited to:
  - Tobacco in any form
  - Any beverage containing alcohol
  - Any controlled substance (including prescription drugs)
  - Asthma Inhalers & Bee Sting Kits may be carried
  - Animals, insects or reptiles (with the exception of service animals)
  - Glass objects (except eyeglasses)
  - An explosive device, gun, knife, other weapon or any item that can be used as a weapon
  - Laser pointers, matches, or lighters
  - Passengers shall control any object they carry onto the bus
  - No object may jeopardize the safety of any passenger, as determined by the driver
6. All items brought on board, including musical instruments, skateboards or any equipment related to sports may be transported but must be carried on the student's lap and shall be in the student's control at all times. Items brought onto the bus may not block the aisle or emergency exits at any time. The City of Santa Clarita and their service provider are not responsible for items that are lost, stolen or damaged on the City buses.

7. Eating, chewing gum or drinking on the bus is not allowed.
8. Students should use quiet voices to talk with students in their immediate proximity. (The driver will determine if a passenger is too loud). No yelling, screaming or whistling. If students choose to wear headphones, the volume must be low enough to hear the driver's directions.
9. Students may not open windows without the driver's permission and shall not place any part of their body out of a bus window or door except when exiting. Students may not touch any vehicle equipment or controls for any reason.
  - Students should keep hands, backpacks, books and other objects to themselves & inside the bus
  - No touching other students for any reason
  - No horseplay or throwing objects
  - No inappropriate personal contact (kissing, displays of affection)
  - No threatening or intimidation of passengers
10. Bus passes are the property of the City and must be surrendered upon request. Students are required to present their school identification to a driver or supervisor upon request. **Failure to surrender your bus pass or present your school identification upon request will result in an immediate suspension of transportation privileges.**

## **Discipline Procedures**

Depending upon the severity of an offense the normal disciplinary sequence will be:

**First offense** - The driver will discuss the incident with the student and the driver will give the student a verbal warning.

**Second offense** - The driver will complete a City Transportation Referral form which the student's parent/guardian must sign. **Students must return the signed copy of the Transportation Referral form to board the bus the following day.**

**Third offense** - A second transportation Referral form will be completed by the driver. With supervisory or City of Santa Clarita management approval, the student will be suspended from the bus for minimum of three school days.

**After the third offense, or in the case of a serious offense, a student may receive a long-term suspension or revocation of transportation privileges. While student conduct/discipline on City of Santa Clarita Transit buses is at the direction of the City, additional in-school consequences may be imposed at the discretion of the William S. Hart Union High School District for any incident a student-rider is involved in at the bus stop or while on the city transit.**

Copies of all Transportation Referrals will be forwarded to the District Director of Transportation by the City.

**In addition to the disciplinary action outlined above, the following may result in criminal prosecution or civil action:**

- Displaying or possession of a weapon
- Fighting, assault or battery
- Threatening or intimidating a driver, aide or student, or any other customer
- Sexual harassment
- Destruction of property (personal, or City of Santa Clarita)
- Intentionally distracting driver during hazardous driving conditions
- Any other criminal activity

### **Contact Information**

Students and parents are encouraged to provide feedback relative to any concerns, complaints and compliments by contacting the City of Santa Clarita Transit at (661) 295-6300, or by visiting the City of Santa Clarita Transit website and sending an e-mail to the appropriate party. The City of Santa Clarita attempts to acknowledge all contacts within one to two working days; we may not be able to resolve all issues within that time frame however, we will keep you informed of our progress.

Your feedback about the services we provide is encouraged and is utilized to improve our services. We hope this information pamphlet is useful to you in preparing to utilize the City transit system.

In the event your concerns are not addressed, please contact the City Transit Manager, Jeffery J. O'Keefe, at (661) 295-6308, or the William S. Hart Union High School District Director of Transportation, Richard Varner, at (661) 259-0033 at extension 339.