



# **POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENT**

## **Transit Management of Alexandria (TMA)**

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Charter Services				
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Chief Operating Officer	<b>Approval Date:</b>	01/25/2024	<b>Effective Date:</b>	01/25/2024
<b>Responsible Executive:</b>	Director of Operations	<b>Revision Date(s):</b>	N/A		
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Operations	<b>Number:</b>	OPS-009		

### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline how TMA may provide charter services to community organizations and private individuals. The policy and procedure is meant to define certain limitations and processes for ensuring the safety of our employees and the customers. This is also meant to ensure that TMA is receiving appropriate compensation that accounts for the staff labor, fuel and maintenance, and safety liability that charters incur.

### **2. ACRONYMS**

ATC: Alexandria Transit Company (DASH)

TMA: Transit Management of Alexandria

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

Charter service: A request to utilize TMA resources to provide transportation for an organization, event, group, or individuals outside of TMA that is paid for directly by the customer.

Customer: The requestor of the charter for which services are being provided and paid for.

Eligible Bus Operator: TMA Bus Operator that is in good standing, has been trained specifically for charter services, and has a commercial driver license that is "non-excepted interstate".

Extended charter service: Charter services being provided outside of the local and regional areas as defined.

Local charter service: Charter services being provided within the City of Alexandria (VA), City of Arlington (VA), and Washington, DC.

Regional charter service: Charter services being provided within the City of Fairfax (VA), Fairfax County (VA), Prince George's County (MD), and Montgomery County (MD).

### **4. APPLICABILITY:**

Eligible Bus Operators, Field Supervisors, Transit Operations Supervisors, Operations Manager, Deputy Director of Operations, and Director of Operations.

### **5. RESOURCES**

TMA Bus Operator Policies and Procedures Handbook

### **6. PROCEDURES**

#### **Charter Rate**

Effective January 1, 2024, the rates for charter services are:

- Local and regional charter services: \$175 per hour, per bus.
- Extended charter services: To be determined by the Director of Operations based on the details of the request.
- Charter services requiring a Trolley will add \$25 per hour, per Trolley.

These rates will be evaluated annually as part of the TMA budget process and updated each year on July 1.

TMA is required to recoup all costs associated with providing charter services in accordance with the ATC Board of Directors Policies and Rules. All charter services will have one (1) hour of the charter rate for each vehicle added to account for pre-trip and post-trip time to ensure safety and a high-quality customer experience.

All charter services will be billed for a minimum of three (3) hours, including the pre-/post-trip time.

Time required to fully complete a charter service will include all time between the start and end of the charter service and travel to and from the DASH facility unless otherwise preapproved by the Operations Manager as an exception. An example of this type of exception is when the charter service is split into two separate trips with sufficient time between trips for the operator to return to the facility and be relieved of duty. The time needed to return to the facility and go back to the charter service location will be included in the total time required.

Charter services requiring advanced planning such as practice runs or additional TMA staff time for planning above and beyond a typical charter service will be billed at the above charter rate for actual time spent. These charges will be determined by the Operations Manager and customers will be notified of this requirement at the time of booking confirmation.

These rates are to be charged for all charter services provided except in cases preapproved by the Director of Operations.

### **Type of Event**

TMA intends to provide charter services equitably throughout Alexandria and the local community. Unfortunately, not all types of events are able to be accommodated. TMA may not provide charter services that could be seen as unsafe, offensive, or that have a chance to negatively impact the reputation of DASH. The Operations Manager has the authority to approve or deny any request for any reason. Typical events that TMA may approve, but are not limited to, are:

- Weddings
- Professional conferences
- Local craft fairs, trade shows, parades, and other public events
- Workplace events or shuttles
- Governmental agency or regional transit partner requests
- Other types of events as approved by the Deputy Director of Operations or their designee

### **Service Needs**

TMA may not accommodate a request for charter service when that request could disrupt or negatively impact regular DASH service. This includes considering the staffing and vehicle needs for daily DASH operations. As such, there are certain limits on the number of chartered vehicles and staff that can be provided at one time:

- Weekdays: Up to two chartered vehicles and one staff
- Weekends and some holidays: Up to six chartered vehicles and two staff

The Operations Manager may make exceptions to these guidelines as appropriate. Availability is not guaranteed by TMA. Actual conditions may further limit these numbers at any time.

### **Supervisor Requirement**

For certain events, TMA may require one or more TMA Field Supervisors or Transit Operations Supervisors to be on duty to assist with logistics and customer safety. In these cases, the customer will be responsible for paying an hourly rate of \$75 per hour for each Supervisor provided by TMA, including travel time to and from the DASH facility. Customers will be notified of this requirement at the time of booking. These types of events may include, but are not limited to:

- Regional or extended charter services,

- Requests with multiple vehicles,
- Events with a potential safety or security risk associated with them and,
- Charter services with important or complicated details and/or routing that need to be supervised.

## **Booking**

Requests for charter services, or “bookings”, may be requested through the DASH website, through various third-party websites that TMA contracts with, or via the DASH customer service phone number or email. Bookings must be reviewed for accuracy, pricing, and approved by the Operations Manager or their designee before a quote is provided to the customer and the reservation is confirmed. All quotes will have an expiration date of 30 calendar days and will be communicated in writing to the customer.

Bookings must be requested at least seven (7) calendar days in advance and are subject to staff and vehicle availability. TMA cannot guarantee any type of vehicle at the time of booking. Specific vehicle styles, if available, may be requested by the customer and provided at the discretion of the Operations Manager when possible with an additional rate charged if applicable.

## **Payments and Deposits**

Payment is required in full seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of service. Services are subject to cancellation without notice if the payment is not received within this time period. Charters booked less than seven (7) calendar days prior to the charter service must be paid in full at the time the booking is approved.

In the event of major fuel price increases or other unforeseen circumstances, TMA reserves the right to adjust the contracted price accordingly with a fuel or inflation surcharge. This price increase will only be applied to charters not yet quoted or those with a quote that has expired.

## **Cancellations**

Cancellations require 30 calendar days’ notice prior to the scheduled charter service date to obtain a full refund.

Cancellations made with less than 30 days’ notice before the scheduled charter service date will be charged a \$100.00 cancellation fee per vehicle.

Cancellations made less than 7 days’ notice before the scheduled charter service date will be charged 50% of the entire charter service cost.

## **Additional Charges**

Additional charges may apply if the trip exceeds the scheduled times that are confirmed at booking due to the customer or their party’s actions or needs. The customer will be billed accordingly. There will be no additional charge for uncontrollable occurrences such as traffic delays and delays due to inclement weather.

## **Bus Signage**

DASH vehicles are equipped with digital display signs on the front, sides, and rear of the vehicle. The customer may request a custom sign to be created for their event at least 30 days in advance at the cost of \$50. This amount is not refundable except in cases where TMA is unable to provide the signage as requested.

## **Bus Operators**

For the safety of our customers and our Bus Operators, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration established that drivers are limited to a 10-hour driving period and a 14-hour spread time. After these time limits are met, they must have an 8-hour off duty resting period before resuming duties.

Bus Operators must be properly trained and certified by the Training Department to be assigned charter services. Refresher training is required at a minimum annually.

## **7. Customer Responsibilities**

All responsibilities of the customer will be provided at the time the quote is provided by the Operations Manager. The customer must agree to all terms and conditions, including limitations on liability, at the time the booking is approved.

### **Cleanliness**

Cleanliness is the joint responsibility of the customer and the Bus Operator. TMA will make every effort to have the bus clean at the start of a charter service.

Any food or drink left on the vehicle is the responsibility of the customer to remove. Food and drink on the vehicle is a privilege and can be revoked by the Bus Operator if inappropriate behavior warrants such action. If extra time is needed by TMA staff to clean a vehicle due to the customer's actions, an additional charge of \$100 per hour will be billed to the customer. Additional charges may apply in exceptional circumstances, such as irreparable stains or damage.

### **Damage to the Vehicle**

Damage done to the vehicle or its contents by the customer or any passengers is the financial responsibility of the customer.

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

The customer's itinerary should allow sufficient travel time. Sufficient travel time means making allowances for construction delays, traffic, and time needed to pack/unpack and load/unload the vehicle, rest stops, and meal stops if applicable.

TMA will not be liable for delays caused by acts of nature or traffic delays and therefore does not guarantee arrival or departure from any given point at a specified time. Every effort will be made to meet the original itinerary, however the safety of the Bus Operator, customer, and general public will be the first priority.

If the trip exceeds the allotted times that are agreed upon, the customer will be billed accordingly. However, in the case of delays caused by such mitigating circumstances as described, there will be no additional charges.

### **Maps and Itineraries**

Final maps and itineraries must be received no later than seven (7) days before the scheduled departure date to allow adequate preparation time. Detailed itineraries are essential and should list all stops with addresses and phone numbers for contact at all destinations. TMA will not be held responsible for delays incurred due to insufficient information for destinations or pickup locations. Any changes to itineraries (loading location or pickup times, etc.) must be made directly to the Operations Manager.

### **Equipment**

TMA will thoroughly inspect and clean/detail each vehicle before being assigned to a trip to ensure uninterrupted service. If a mechanical failure makes necessary the replacement of a vehicle originally assigned to the charter service, every effort should be made to utilize the same type of vehicle.

Security equipment is installed on all DASH vehicles. Passengers will be subject to audio and video recording at all times.

### **Baggage**

TMA vehicles are primarily designed for public transit use. They cannot safely accommodate excessive luggage or baggage. The vehicle may not operate if aisles or exits are blocked.

All personal property must be taken off the vehicle when the passenger exits, unless pre-arranged with the Operations Manager. TMA will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen articles.

### **Objectionable Persons and Age Restrictions**

TMA reserves the right to refuse to transport persons under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or who are, or are likely to become, a disturbance to the Bus Operator.

Customer must be at least 18 years of age to charter a vehicle. Passengers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a chaperone on the vehicle at all times. If applicable, the customer must supply a minimum of two chaperones, 18 years or older, per vehicle. One chaperone is to be stationed at the rear of the bus and the other at the front. The chaperones are responsible for the behavior of their passengers. The Bus Operator is not a chaperone.

### **Conduct of Passengers**

Passengers shall not interfere with the operator in the discharge of his duty or tamper with any apparatus or appliance on the bus.

### **Weapons and Explosives**

Possession of weapons, explosives, and fireworks (whether in baggage or on a person) is strictly forbidden on/in the vehicle.

### **Prohibited Items**

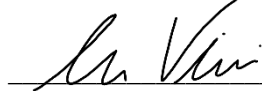
The following items are prohibited on chartered vehicles:

- Alcoholic Beverages
- Decorations
- Fuel containers
- Generators
- Glass containers
- Golf shoes or other shoes with spikes
- Smoking
- Vaping

## Approvals

The individuals below, submitting and signing this Charter Services policy and procedure verify that it was prepared in accordance with the requirements set forth by the appropriate federal or state laws, guidelines, regulations; that they are authorized representatives of the Transit Management of Alexandria, Inc.; that their signatures attest that all items and conditions contained in this manual are understood, accepted and approved; and that they are committed to following the policies and procedures contained herein.

### RECOMMENDED BY:



Ryan Visci, Director of Operations, TMA

1/24/2024

Date

### APPROVED BY:



Stephanie Salzone, Chief Operating Officer, TMA

1/25/2024

Date

Review / Revision History

Revised on	Revised by	Version	Section	Description	Approved by