Defensive Driving Guide

All across the nation, traffic accidents are a serious problem. The problem becomes more serious daily because of the ever-increasing number of vehicles on the street and because the majority of drivers are not trained in safe-driving principles.

Since it is impossible to train every driver, the reduction of accidents becomes the responsibility of those who do receive driver training. They must learn to drive defensively so that they do not cause accidents and can prevent untrained drivers from involving them in accidents.

In public transportation, there is the additional and equally serious problem of passenger accidents. Such accidents are not only costly, but they cause much pain and suffering to people who are directly in the care of the public transit Operator. This type of accident can also be reduced through defensive driving.

Fleet Operators of trucks, cars, cabs, and buses recognize the importance of defensive driving and have taken steps to make defensive driving part of their driver training. CTA, with the largest fleet of vehicles in Chicago, can settle for nothing less than a defensive driver behind the wheel of each of its vehicles.

This folder summarizes defensive driving for the CTA Bus Operator. It outlines four types of accidents, possible situations that can lead to these accidents, and the defensive actions the Operator must take to prevent these situations from developing into accidents.

No attempt is made to include in this folder every conceivable situation that could lead to an accident. However, any accident situation can be dealt with safely if the Operator applies the basic principles of defensive driving as outlined on the following pages.

Study the folder carefully. Know all the possible situations and the necessary defensive actions. After you are able to recognize these potentially dangerous situations and understand the necessary defensive actions, concentrate on applying the proper defensive action every minute you drive. When you habitually and automatically react defensively in all situations, you will be a defensive driver.

FIXED OBJECT ACCIDENTS

POSITION OF FIXED OBJECT

DEFENSIVE ACTION OF OPERATOR

FIXED OBJECT
AHEAD
BEHIND
ALONGSIDE

Check clearance carefully.

If in doubt of clearance, stop bus and get out to check.

Turn and back up slowly and cautiously.

Where there are steering column guide lines, align steering column on the guide line and follow the line slowly.

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

POSITION OF OTHER VEHICLE	POSSIBLE ACTION OF OTHER DRIVER	DEFENSIVE ACTION OF OPERATOR
OTHER VEHICLE AHEAD	Slow down or stop.	Maintain proper following distance. Watch traffic ahead.
	Back up or roll back.	Stop proper distance from standing vehicles.
OTHER VEHICLE BEHIND	Follow bus too closely.	Signal traffic behind when slowing down or stopping. Make slow, gradual stops. Make authorized stops only.
OTHER VEHICLE APPROACHING FROM OPPOSITE DIRECTION	Straddle center line.	Keep to right hand side of lane.
	Cut across or turn into path of bus.	Slow down - Stop if necessary. Do not rely completely on signals of other drivers.
OTHER VEHICLE APPROACHING FROM AN ANGLE	Cut across or turn into path of bus at intersections.	Look in all directions before entering intersections.
	Back out or pull out of alley or driveway into path of bus.	Be prepared to stop.
OTHER VEHICLE PASSING	Turn into path of bus while passing.	Slow down or stop to allow vehicle to cut in safely.
	Pass illegally on right hand side of bus.	Maintain proper distance between bus and curb to prevent possibility of passing on right hand side.
OTHER VEHICLE BEING PASSED	Race with bus as bus is passing.	Slow down to allow vehicle to proceed.
	Turn into path of bus while bus is passing.	Do not start to pass unless sure that vehicle will not have to cut in. Warn other driver before starting to pass. Maintain proper distance between bus and vehicle. Slow down or stop to allow vehicle to cut in safely
	Pull out from curb into path of bus.	Operate cautiously, maintaining proper distance between bus and parked vehicles.
	Open vehicle door on street side.	Observe parked vehicles for signs of occupancy. Slow down or stop to allow vehicle to pull out safely or to allow driver to close vehicle door.

PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS

POSITION OF PEDESTRIAN	POSSIBLE ACTION OF PEDESTRIAN	DEFENSIVE ACTION OF OPERATOR
PEDESTRIAN AHEAD	Stand or walk in front of standing bus.	Look in all directions before moving bus.
	Stand or walk in front of moving bus.	Slow down or stop to permit pedestrian to cross. Proceed only when certain that pedestrian will stay clear of bus.
PEDESTRIAN BEHIND	Stand or walk behind standing bus.	Look in all directions before backing bus.
	Stand or walk behind backing bus.	Slow down or stop to allow pedestrian to get in clear. Back slowly and cautiously when certain pedestrian will stay clear of bus.
PEDESTRIAN ALONGSIDE	Stand or walk in overhang area of bus.	Warn pedestrian in overhang area. Turn slowly and cautiously.

PASSENGER ACCIDENTS

POSITION OF PASSENGER	POSSIBLE ACTION OF PASSENGER	DEFENSIVE ACTION OF OPERATOR
BOARDING OR ALIGHTING	Approach or leave bus without watching where they step.	Stop where it is safe for passengers to board and alight.
	Attempt to board or alight while bus is in motion.	Open doors after making stop. Close doors before moving bus.
	Is not clear of closing door.	Be sure that passengers are clear before closing doors. If necessary, hold rear door open with door emergency switch.
ON BOARD	Stand or walk without holding on to seats or stanchions.	Start gradually, stop smoothly, turn slowly.
	Put arm or elbow out of open window.	Warn passenger of danger. Maintain sufficient clearance with fixed objects and other vehicles.
	Place bundles or packages where other passengers may trip over them.	Request passenger to move bundles or packages.