
CITY OF CHICAGO

RULES



CHARTER/SIGHTSEEING VEHICLE RULES

Last Updated: July 19, 1996



BY AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION PURSUANT TO **CHAPTERS 2-25 AND 9-114**, THE FOLLOWING RULES REGARDING **CHARTER/SIGHTSEEING VEHICLES** ARE ADOPTED HEREIN.

By Order of the Commissioner:

Signed: 
Commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek

Date: July 28, 2015

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Effective: **July 19, 1996**

I. LICENSING

Rule 1. Charter/sightseeing vehicle licenses are valid from the date of issuance until the following December 31. Applicants may opt for a license with an expiration date June 30th after licensing. All renewed licenses will have either a December 31 or June 30 expiration date, depending on the one chosen at the time of initial licensing. Any licensee with more than one license must have the same expiration date for all licenses.

Rule 2. Every charter/sightseeing vehicle with a capacity of more than ten persons to be licensed must carry a public liability insurance policy with \$1,000,000.00 combined single limit coverage per occurrence. Every charter/sightseeing vehicle with a capacity of ten persons must carry a public liability insurance policy with \$350,000 combined single limit coverage per occurrence. Every public liability insurance policy must meet the requirements of state law, including but not limited to those provisions governing coverage for damages from owners or operators of uninsured motor vehicles, hit-and-run motor vehicles, and underinsured motorists.

All insurance policies or copies thereof certified by the insurers as required by Section 9-112-220 shall be filed with the Department of Consumer Services and no insurance policy or bond or contract shall be subject to cancellation except on thirty days' previous notice to the Commissioner of Consumer Services. Every policy submitted by an applicant who is not licensed by the United States Department of Transportation must have an expiration date of the following December 31 or June 30th, depending on the expiration date of their license.

Charter/sightseeing vehicles for which proof is submitted that they are licensed by and in compliance with the insurance requirements of the United States Department of Transportation will be deemed to be in compliance with this rule.

II. VEHICLES

- Rule 3.**
- a) Vehicles licensed by the United States Department of Transportation need not be replaced as long as they continue to meet all safety requirements and pass inspection.
 - b) A charter/sightseeing vehicle not licensed by the United States Department of Transportation may not be more than seven (7) model years old, including the current licensing year, unless it meets the exceptions in (c) or (d) below.
 - c) Vehicles licensed as charter/sightseeing vehicles that are

designed to carry more than twenty-one (21) persons need not be replaced as long as they continue to meet all safety requirements and pass inspection.

- d) Vehicles licensed as charter/sightseeing vehicles that have been designed or modified to be wheelchair accessible need not be replaced as long as they meet all safety requirements and pass inspection.

III. INSPECTION OF VEHICLES

Rule 4. Charter/Sightseeing vehicle license holders shall, as a condition of licensing and renewal, submit to the Commissioner, annually and in the form of inspection sheets, proof that the licensed vehicle has passed inspection performed under the auspices of the Illinois Department of Transportation or the United States Department of Transportation. Such inspections shall be conducted no more than 90 days prior to the application for licensing or renewal of licensing.

Rule 5. The Commissioner, in her discretion, may order a licensed charter/sightseeing vehicle to be inspected at other times during the licensing year to investigate complaints or otherwise insure compliance with the Municipal Code or these rules and regulations.

IV. TEMPORARY PERMITS

Rule 6. The Commissioner, in her discretion, may issue temporary permits to operate additional vehicles as charter/sightseeing vehicles on a temporary basis to the holder of one or more City of Chicago charter/sightseeing vehicle licenses or a motor carrier of passengers located outside the City of Chicago who occasionally provides service within the city.

Rule 7. The daily fee for a temporary permit to operate a non-city licensed charter/sightseeing vehicle shall be as follows:

- a. For temporary permits applied for by a holder of one or more City of Chicago charter/sightseeing vehicle licenses--\$2.00 per vehicle;
- b. For temporary permits applied for by any other motor carrier of passengers--\$5.00 per vehicle.

Rule 8. Persons seeking temporary permits may register with the Department of Consumer Services for the right to obtain temporary licenses during the following year.

Rule 9. Applicants for a specific temporary permit or permits must submit proof of insurance that any vehicles operating under a temporary permit have the minimum insurance coverage indicated in Rule 4 above

and proof that the vehicle meets safety requirements.

- Rule 10.** The Commissioner may authorize another state or local government agency to issue a specific temporary permit or permit(s) to applicants registered in accordance with Rule 8 above. Temporary permits may be purchased in blocks of ten.
- Rule 11.** Temporary permits are good only for the dates indicated on the permit.
- Rule 12.** The original of the temporary permit, fully completed, must be displayed on the front windshield of the vehicle when the vehicle is operating pursuant to that permit.
- Rule 13.** A charter/sightseeing vehicle operating pursuant to a temporary permit shall operate in compliance with these rules and regulations for charter/sightseeing vehicle as though it were regularly licensed.

V. OPERATION OF VEHICLE

- Rule 14.** A charter/sightseeing license will not be required for any vehicle transporting persons under contract from one point in the City of Chicago to another point in the City of Chicago if all of the following conditions exist:
- a. The initial pick up of the passengers by the vehicle pursuant to the contract occurs outside the City of Chicago; and
 - b. That only those specific passengers originally accepted for transportation outside the City of Chicago are transported from one point in the City of Chicago to another point in the City of Chicago; and
 - c. That the final destination of the passengers pursuant to the contract is outside the City of Chicago; and
 - d. The vehicle is licensed by the United States Department of Transportation.
- Rule 15.** No charter/sightseeing vehicle, except those operating pursuant to a temporary permit, shall be operated unless it has a current valid City of Chicago public passenger vehicle license sticker attached on the inside of the glass part of the windshield of the vehicle and a current valid City of Chicago Public Passenger Vehicle License Card displayed in a frame in the inside front of the vehicle or available on request.
- Rule 16.** No person shall operate a charter/sightseeing vehicle unless he has in his possession:

- a. a current, valid City of Chicago public chauffeur's license issued to him; or
- b. a valid Commercial Driver's License with a classification that authorizes the operation of the type of vehicle being driven; or
- c. if driving a vehicle licensed by the United States Department of Transportation, a valid driver license issued by any state or federal agency indicating that the driver is qualified to drive motor vehicles as, for or on behalf of motor carriers under the Federal Motor Carriers Safety Regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

Rule 17. No charter/sightseeing vehicle shall park or stand anywhere on the public way except:

- a. For the time necessary for the expeditious loading or unloading of passengers at a location designated by the city and marked with signs identifying the location as a bus stop, bus stand, passenger loading zone, hotel loading zone, bus terminal, or any other place specifically designated and marked with signs by the City of Chicago, and barring exigent circumstances, the loading or unloading of passengers shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes.
- b. No charter/sightseeing vehicle, when not engaged in the expeditious loading or unloading of passengers pursuant to paragraph (a) above, shall park or stand anywhere on the public way except in a specific place authorized by the City of Chicago for the parking or staging of charter/sightseeing vehicles.
- c. No licensee may permit more than one of the licensee's charter/sightseeing vehicles to occupy a bus stand at the same time.

Rule 18. No charter/sightseeing vehicle, while at a city designated parking or staging area, shall leave its engine idling, except that:

- a. a bus may have its engine idle for a ten (10) minute warm-up period immediately preceding departure;
- b. a bus may have its engine idle for one fifteen (15) minute period per hour when the outside temperature is above eighty (80) or below fifty (50) degrees fahrenheit;
- c. a bus may have its engine idle for two non-consecutive fifteen (15) minute periods per hour when the outside temperature is above ninety (90) or below twenty-five (25) degrees

fahrenheit;

- d. a bus may idle continuously when the outside temperature is below zero (0) degrees fahrenheit if the vehicle is not equipped with an alternative means to keep its fuel supply warm;

When multiple buses are parked or staged at a common location, drivers who are idling their buses in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) above, shall stagger their vehicle's idling periods with the other vehicles at the same location in order to have the fewest possible number of buses idling at any one time.

Rule 19. No person shall disseminate information or solicit passengers for sightseeing tours upon any public way except at bus stands designated by the City Council for those sightseeing vehicles and in no case may the licensee permit more than two persons to disseminate information or solicit passengers at the same location.

Rule 20. No bus equipped with an upper level shall allow:

- a. any passenger 10 years old or younger in the upper level, unless accompanied by an adult; or
- b. any passenger to stand in the upper level when the bus is moving.