



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



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October 31, 2019

**VIA E-MAIL ONLY**

TO:  
CT Department of Transportation  
Contracted Rail Station Operators

Subject: Connecticut Department of Transportation  
Bureau of Public Transportation  
Free Speech Policy at State Owned Public Transportation Facilities

Enclosed please find a copy of the Connecticut Department of Transportation's policy regarding free speech at public transportation facilities. Please consider this a guide to assist in the management and operation of your respective facility(ies).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns you may have regarding this policy. I can be reached in New Haven at 203.497.3356 or [craig.bordiere@ct.gov](mailto:craig.bordiere@ct.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig M. Bordiere".

Craig M. Bordiere  
Transportation Supervising Rail Officer  
Bureau of Public Transportation

Enclosure

cmb/s

Connecticut Department of Transportation (hereinafter, the Department)

Bureau of Public Transportation Policy – Free Speech Activities

This policy describes the Department’s approach to free speech activities at train stations, bus stations, ferry landings and park & rides.

The Department is responsible for the state’s public transportation system. The trains, buses and ferries in this system move 84 million people annually. These customers pass through stations and terminals, often located at the center of communities and neighborhoods. Public transportation facilities are also public meeting places, hosting farmers’ markets, performing arts events and community celebrations. Additionally, individuals and organizations (“Parties”) may exercise their Constitutionally-guaranteed free speech rights at these facilities.

The Department has contracted the operation and maintenance of these public transportation facilities to third parties. The third party operators include municipalities, quasi-public agencies such as parking authorities and private contractors. Their primary responsibility is to maintain a safe, convenient and comfortable facility for public transportation users. They must carry out these duties in accordance with direction provided by the Department. Their duties include accommodating Parties wishing to exercise their Constitutionally-guaranteed free speech rights.

The Department makes no limitation on Parties that may speak at public transportation facilities nor the content of the speech. This policy, however, does not intend to exempt Parties from being responsible for the abuse of their free speech rights, e.g. making illegal threats. The Department does not require advance notice from these Parties. The Department encourages Parties to check-in with the facility manager, although this is not required.

Given the importance and significance of public transportation to the people we serve, as well as the Department’s obligations to third parties involved (train and bus companies, food and other vendors, park and ride users), safe and efficient business operations must take precedence over other activities at these locations. Therefore, the Department and its third party operators reserve the right to direct anyone exercising their free speech rights to locate in areas that do not interfere with the operation of the facility. Due to the safety risks evident on train platforms, Parties must not enter, obstruct, block or stand on any train platform during the exercise of their rights under this policy. Additionally, Parties must not block passageways, stairs, escalators or elevators; Parties must not obstruct ingress or egress to the facility including areas designated for drop-offs and pick-ups by personal or hired vehicles; Parties must remain within public areas of the station; and Parties are not permitted into areas reserved for employees, police, vendors or others not part of the public.

This policy has been distributed to all operators of State of Connecticut-owned public transportation facilities.

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