



Community Bus Hire Guidelines

1. PREAMBLE

Bass Coast Shire Council has three community buses available for hire. Councils Community Buses aim to achieve maximum levels of access and inclusion in community activities, to support independence and to maintain an optimum quality of life.

These guidelines applies to any member of the community, Councillors and Council departments who are seeking to hire one of Councils Community buses and will detail the conditions of use of the buses.

Council reserves the right to refuse future access to the bus by a group/individuals which have not met the terms and conditions of these guidelines.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of these guidelines is to detail the:

- Eligibility for groups wishing to hire Council's community buses.
- Booking procedure and requirements for cancellation.
- Driver requirements and responsibilities.
- What to do in the event of an accident.
- Council's insurance policy and the excess charged to the hiring organisation.
- Requirements of how to leave the bus.
- Fees and charges to hire the community bus.
- Etag requirements.
- Use of the wheelchair hoist in the buses.
- Reasons Council would refuse an application.

3. STATEMENT

ELIGIBILITY

Access to Councils Community buses is targeted towards members of the community who are frail aged or have a disability. However, when it is not required by groups catering for this target group, the buses are available for hire by local community groups within the municipality. The hiring organisation must supply a licensed driver. The community bus is not available for use by profit organisations, commercial organisations, and activity groups from commercial organisations or for commercial use by any organisation. Conditions for hire of the bus have been set by Council.

Use by Council departments or Councillors for community/council related activities or programs, must be in accordance with these guidelines.

BOOKINGS AND CANCELLATIONS

The process to book the bus is as follows:

1. Hiring organisations should confirm their eligibility and the bus availability before completing forms or paying a deposit. Bus availability can be checked by calling council on 1300 BCOAST (226 278)
2. The hiring organisation must read and agree to the 'Community Bus Hire Guidelines' as agreed to by Council.
3. Once availability, eligibility and agreement to the Community Bus Hire Guidelines has occurred, the hiring organisation should then complete an 'Application form'. The application form must be lodged at one of Councils Customer Service Centre's, together with a deposit (refer to the application form for the current fees and charges.) This application needs to be received at Council at least three working days before bus is to be hired.
4. The return of the 'Application forms' and receipt of deposit shall serve as confirmation of the booking.

If the hiring organisation cancels the booking with less than 48 hours notice, the deposit will be retained.

The community bus may only be hired overnight if there is bus availability on both days and if you can provide evidence that the bus will be housed in secure parking off the street. This is for insurance reasons. If you are hiring the bus over a weekend and are unable to house the bus securely, you will be required to return the bus each evening.

Every effort will be made to keep the bus in operation. Any booking is subject to vehicle availability. In the event of the bus not being available for any reason after a booking has been made, the Bass Coast Shire Council will be under no obligation to provide alternative transport.

The Bass Coast Shire Council reserves the right to withdraw the vehicles in the case of a Municipal Emergency when Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) action is in operation.

DRIVER REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The hiring organisation must nominate one or two drivers to hire the bus. Only in an extreme emergency situation, may any person other than the nominated driver/drivers, drive the vehicle.

The driver must be aged between twenty five (25) and seventy (70) and hold a current Victorian Drivers Licence with no convictions for driving in the last 5 years. Probationary Licence drivers are NOT permitted to drive the bus. The driver must have a zero alcohol level and must not be under the influence of any drug of intoxication or medication which could impair driving ability.

Any parking infringements, traffic offences or toll fines that occur are the responsibility of the person who commits the offence or the hiring organisation.

The driver is required to leave the bus full of fuel when returning the bus. Failure to do so will incur an additional fee which is reviewed annually. The fuel is in addition to the hire cost and must be paid for by the hiring group. Under no circumstance is the fuel card associated with the bus, to be used to refuel the bus.

The driver must also ensure that the log book located in the buses is completed and that the 'Trip Report' is completed and returned with the keys. Failure to complete the form and return it to our office within 5 days will incur the maximum charge of hire for the day applicable to your organisation.

ACCIDENTS AND INSURANCE

In event of an accident, names, addresses and vehicle registration numbers are to be obtained from the other party. Under no circumstances should any indication be given by the driver for blame, responsibility or fault in regard to the incident. Bus passengers are covered to the extent of the vehicle's compulsory Third Party insurance cover, and the vehicle is covered under Council's Comprehensive Motor Vehicle cover. In the case of an accident or claim on insurance, the excess of \$500 will be the responsibility of the hiring organisation. A \$1,000 excess will be charged to organisations where the driver involved in the accident is under 25 years old. (Please note – Councils policy and conditions of hire state that the driver must be between 25 and 70 years of age.) Hiring organisations need to ensure that they have the financial capacity to pay the insurance excess in the event of an accident or insurance claim.

All accidents and damage to the bus, including any mechanical defects noticed in the vehicle at the time of delivery or after use, must be reported immediately upon return by completing the 'Trip Report'.

In the event of an accident or damage to the bus, a 'Hazard and Incident Report' should be completed and if required to claim on insurance, an insurance claim form would also need to be completed. This should be done on the next business day following the accident. These forms can be completed by attending your nearest Customer Service Centre.

BREAKDOWNS

The vehicle is covered by RACV and if a breakdown occurs please call them on 13 11 11.

If you need to contact the Council call 1300 BCOAST (226 278).

If the bus breaks down and there are costs involved to repair the bus (eg battery), please call the Aged and Disability after hours number 0429 970 382 to obtain approval for the costs. If possible, please pay the service organisation and submit the receipt with the 'Trip Report' to obtain a refund.

HOW TO LEAVE THE BUS

The bus must be left with a full fuel tank at the end of the journey. This fuel cost is to be paid for by the hiring organisation. The driver's compartment and main floor of the bus must be swept and mopped, seat belts placed on seats and the exterior to be washed if dirty. All rubbish is to be disposed of and removed from the vehicle. A cleaning fee will be imposed on any user group, if the vehicle is returned in a dirty condition. This fee is reviewed annually by council, when all Aged and Disability fees and charges are reviewed.

FEES AND CHARGES

There are two fee ranges, one for Senior Citizen Clubs, Home and Community Care Groups or Community groups targeted towards people who are eligible for Home and Community Care Services. The other fee is charged to community based groups. The fee schedule is reviewed each year and is stated on the 'Application Form'. Hiring organisations will be charged a cleaning fee and a fee for not refuelling the bus (as detailed earlier). There is a maximum charge of 10 hours per day.

If the fire extinguisher fitted to the community bus has been discharged or is removed, the organisation responsible will be billed the recharging or replacement cost.

In the case of a municipal emergency and Councils community buses are used, there will be no charge for the hire of the bus. Usage of the buses under these circumstances should be approved by the Chief Executive Officer either in writing or by email.

In the case of Councillors or another Council department requiring access to the Community bus, the 'Community Group' fee will be charged and it is an expectation that they would refuel the bus at the end of the journey.

E-TAG

The bus is not fitted with an e-tag. You can obtain a pass from City Link by contacting their office on 13 2629 or by visiting their website on www.citylink.com.au. Any fines incurred will be the responsibility of the hiring organisation.

WHEELCHAIR HOIST

Community Groups are only able to use the hoist if the driver has been provided with training. This is important to minimise injury to yourself, people with disabilities and also damage to the hoist.

REFUSAL OF APPLICATION

Council reserves the right to refuse any application by a group/ individual which have not met the terms and conditions of these guidelines in the past, or who do not agree to abide by these terms and conditions. Council also reserves the right to refuse an application when hiring organisations are behind in their payment of accounts for past bus hire, or where there is a likelihood of intoxicated people being transported on the bus. Council may also refuse an application if the purpose of the trip is thought to be in direct competition with the taxi directorate.

4. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

The Community Bus Hire Guidelines must be read in conjunction with the Community Bus Hire Application Form, Community Bus Hire Drivers Declaration, Community Bus Hire Driver Information and the Community Bus Hire Trip Report. These documents are handed out to organisations when they make a booking for the Community bus.

5. REFERENCE TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

In the event of an accident or damage to the bus, a Hazard and Incident Report should be completed and if required to claim on insurance, an insurance claim form would also need to be completed.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

A review of these guidelines will be conducted every three years

7. ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS

Request for Guidelines initiated by:

Strategic and Quality Coordinator

Samantha Wightman

Guidelines to be reviewed by (date):

December 2013