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Regional Transit Commission
Employee Comprehensive Manual Update

Presented
August 1989

Prepared By
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments
531 Commercial; Suite 800
Waterloo, Iowa 50701

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REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION
PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

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REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION
(RTC)

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND POLICIES

A. Purpose of Personnel Policies

The purpose of this Personnel Manual is to provide you with a brief summary of all Regional Transit Commission benefits, policies and personnel procedures. It is designed to be a working guide for the employees of the Commission in the day-to-day operations.

This manual should further eliminate the need for personal decisions on matters of Commission policies and procedures, and help to assure uniformity throughout the organizational structure. Each employee will be given a copy of this manual to be kept for future reference.

All procedures and practices specified in this manual are subject to modifications and further development as the need arises. Such changes would occur only as a result of a direct action of the Board of Directors. All employees will be notified of all changes. Recommendations for additional items or changes should be directed to the employee's supervisor or the Director, regional Transit Commission.

B. Purpose and Mission of the Organization

The Regional Transit Commission (RTC) is a delegated authority group of the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments. RTC was established to develop and implement public transportation with special emphasis on elderly and handicapped clients.

The purpose of the RTC is to serve as the single administrative agency for federal, state, and local funding for transportation services. The RTC is responsible for the consolidation and coordination of all transit service in Region VII.

C. Statement of Coverage

The personnel policies of RTC, as approved by the INRCOG Policy Board, will cover all personnel employed by the Commission.

D. Amendments

1. Operation Rules - These policies contained within this document shall govern all employees of the RTC. However, the Director of RTC reserves the right to make operational rules that are in addition to these policies as the need arises. Notice of such policy additions will be made known to employees.
2. Amendment Process - The Director of Regional Transit Commission shall present to the Board personnel rules and regulations and amendments for its consideration and adoption shall be by motion. The rules shall cover policies and procedures to govern the principal phases of the personnel program.

3. Annual Review - This policy statement will be reviewed annually by the INRCOG Policy Board. Employees of the Agency will be advised prior to the scheduled review and will be given the opportunity to submit recommended changes.

E. Additional Orders and Instructions

In addition to the rules, regulations and procedures contained in this manual, special orders and instructions will be given by two supervisory personnel. All such special orders and instructions, even though they may conflict with the rules, regulations, and procedures contained in this manual, are to be obeyed during the stated period of time that they are in effect.

F. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity

The Regional Transit Commission is an AA/EEO employer. It is the policy of the RTC to recruit, employ, promote, transfer and treat all staff members and applicants for employment without discrimination as to race, color, creed, and/or religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, or because of sensory, physical or mental handicap, political ideology or sexual orientation.

The Commission's employment practices provide that all individuals be recruited, hired, promoted, compensated and retained on the basis of their qualifications and demonstrated ability.

RTC is committed to fulfilling its responsibility as an equal opportunity employer. In carrying out this commitment, the Commission has adopted an Affirmative Action Plan consistent with all local, state and federal civil rights laws.

If you have questions regarding our AA/EEO policy, feel free to contact your supervisor, Administrative Assistant, or the Director.

II. EMPLOYEE SELECTION PROCEDURES

A. General Policy Statement

The INRCOG Policy Board has the authority to engage and terminate the services of the Regional Transit Commission Director. The Director is also authorized to engage and terminate all agency personnel for the Regional Transit Commission. No person employed by the Regional Transit Commission, or any person seeking admission to employment, shall be appointed, promoted, demoted, removed, or in any way favored or discriminated against because of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, age, physical disabilities, or because of political or religious affiliations, in accordance with its Affirmative Action Plan.

B. Selection Procedures

It will be the responsibility of the INRCOG Policy Board to hire the Director. The Executive Committee will be responsible for the screening of applicants, but final approval must come from the Policy Board. General hiring procedures to be observed by the RTC are as follows:

1. It is the policy of RTC to fill vacant positions internally whenever possible. All current employees will be notified of all vacant positions before it is known to the public. Notification will either be mailed to all employees or will be posted within RTC.
2. If no applications are received from within the RTC, or it is found by the Director that no applicants from within meet the qualifications of the position to be filled, applications on file by the date the position was first mailed for consideration by employees will be reviewed and given consideration, along with all new applications. The position will be simultaneously advertised through the local media for the purpose of recruitment, in which case the local Job Service Office shall also be notified.
3. Applications will remain on file for one year unless withdrawn by the applicant.

C. Employment Application Policy

1. Eligibility to Apply - All applicants for employment with RTC shall be required to complete a standard application form. No person shall be denied the right to fill out an application for employment.
2. Information Verification - The Director is responsible for verifying the accuracy of information given on applications for employment for the final three candidates for any position, including salary and former employer check, and references. All findings will be documented, in writing, in the applicant's file. The information on file will be kept confidential.

D. Conflict of Interest

1. Employees will not accept part-time or other employment outside the RTC that will conflict with their job responsibilities.
2. An employee shall not engage directly or indirectly in financial transactions as a result of, or primarily relying on information which has been obtained through his/her employment.
3. An employee shall not have a direct or indirect financial interest that conflicts substantially with his/her employment duties and responsibilities. No employee shall participate in any matter in which their spouse, minor child, or an outside business associate or organization (private or non-profit) which the employee is connected or is negotiating employment, or has a financial interest.

E. Nepotism

1. No person will be hired for a job with the RTC while that person or a member of their immediate family serves on the RTC Board.
2. No employee will hold a job over which a member of his/her immediate family exercises supervisory authority.
3. Immediate family is defined to include:

Husband	Wife
Brother	Sister
Father or Mother-in-law	Son or Daughter-in-law
Father	Mother
Son	Daughter
Brother or Sister-in-law	Grandmother or Grandfather

F. Past Offenses

RTC will require full disclosure of a person's past criminal record. However, any such record will not automatically disqualify a person from employment with RTC. RTC is committed to eliminate arbitrary barriers to employment and shall exercise prudent judgement in relation to the position to be filled.

III. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

A. Introduction

The RTC is setting forth the policies, procedures, and rules for new employees and general employee conduct.

B. Orientation of New Employees

1. On the first day of work, or as soon thereafter as practical, a new employee will be informed of all RTC policies, practices, and procedures and will complete a variety of payroll, personnel, and fringe benefit forms. Once the new employee is satisfied that he/she has received a satisfactory orientation to sign a form certifying as to the familiarity with RTC's policies, practices, and procedures and his/her assent to the same.
2. At any time during the probationary period, the Director may immediately remove an employee if the employee's performance indicates that the employee is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of the position satisfactorily or that his/her habits and dependability do not merit his/her continuance in the service. Until the completion of the probationary period, an employee shall not have the right to appeal to the Executive Committee.

3. At least ten days prior to the expiration of an employee's probationary period, the employee's supervisor shall submit a completed evaluation report on the employee to the Director. The evaluation report shall be reviewed with the employee, and the employee shall receive a copy prior to its submission to the Director.

IV. EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

A. Career Development Policy

It is the policy of the RTC to encourage and provide for training of the RTC employees in order to promote efficiency, economy, and effectiveness in the operation of the RTC. Training is also provided to assist employees in improving abilities required for promotion in RTC services.

B. Training

1. It is the policy of the RTC to encourage the training of RTC employees. However, due to budgeting limitations the RTC is not able to authorize any expenditures for training that is additional to what is provided directly by RTC.
2. Additional in-house training that RTC provides will be required and an employee must participate.
3. All time spent by employees participating in in-house training will be paid for that time at the regular rate of pay.

C. Promotion Procedure

Promotion is viewed by the RTC as an advancement of employee to positions of greater responsibility.

Promotion generally includes assignment to the following:

1. Position
2. New job description
3. Placement within the Classification Plan

Salary adjustment would be between ranges, although generally to a lower step in the higher range.

D. Performance Evaluation

There are three types of evaluations: initial, annual, and probationary.

1. Performance evaluations are designed so that an employee can develop within the job and also to help understand the standards by which an employee is evaluated. Additionally, evaluations are the basis for periodic salary adjustments.

2. A written evaluation of each new employee will be made by an immediate supervisor after the first 90 days of employment. (See Section 4.0.) Thereafter, evaluations will be made on an annual basis at the end of the fiscal year (July 1). Employees receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation after the 90 day probationary period will be terminated.
3. All other employees will be evaluated annually.
4. Each evaluation will be reviewed by the Director. The employee being evaluated will have the opportunity to participate in an sign his/her evaluation.
5. Any employee dissatisfied with his/her evaluation may appeal it through the line or level of the Director. Evaluations which do not result in disciplinary action, such as probation, are not applicable to the Executive Committee.
6. Any employee whose work does not merit a satisfactory evaluation may be placed on probation for a period not to exceed 90 calendar days. The employee will not be provided a written counseling statement. This statement will explain how the employee needs to improve in order to achieve satisfactory performance. Included in the statement will be a provision stating that the employee who does not improve satisfactorily may be put on suspension with the possibility of termination.

V. POSITIONS AND SALARIES

A. General Policy Statement

RTC uses a position classification plan to carry out a policy of like pay for the drivers work and to provide a systematic means for dealing with personnel matters. The Classification Plan comprises a list of grades with salary ranges. The classes represent the number of hours worked per week. The steps within a class are tied to experience within a position. New employees will start in the probation step and upon a successful evaluation by the supervisor will move to Step One. Each step increase, thereafter will be based upon a successful completion of the employee's performance evaluation (See Section ...) Class A represents a full-time employee who works a minimum average of 30 hours per week. Class B represents a part-time employee who works less than 20 hours per week. Class C represents a flex-time employee. The Director may establish new positions as needed in the Classification Plan as provided for in the budget.

B. Classification of Positions

1. All positions will be classified as to regular or temporary, full- or part-time.

All employees will be provided notification of their classification.

2. Regular Full-Time: These are employees who work a regular forty (40) hour work week. They are normally entitled to benefits, such as Social Security, IPERS, vacation and holiday leave.
3. Part-Time Employees: Any employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than a forty (40) hour work week. Employee is entitled to receive IPERS, Social Security, holidays and vacation prorated according to number of hours worked per week.
4. Temporary Employee: Any employee hired to work either a full- or part-time schedule for a limited period of time. They do not receive benefits.
5. Intern: An individual who contributes his or her time and effort to the success of programs and services of the RTC without remuneration. The individual is supervised by the Director and whose performance is evaluated and reported to an institution of higher learning.

C. Job Descriptions

There shall be job descriptions on file and maintained for each employee. Job descriptions shall include, at a minimum, the following six items:

1. General description of the work to be performed;
2. Responsibilities of the position;
3. Specific duties;
4. Line of authority (the person to whom the employee is responsible, and the persons who are responsible to that employee, if applicable);
5. Qualifications and skills necessary to fulfill the job; and
6. Job classification.

All employees of the RTC who have responsibilities which include access to RTC funds and/or checks shall be bonded in an appropriate amount. The bonded amount will be equal to the amount of funds to which they have access.

1. Personnel records, by individual, will be maintained centrally. Each file will contain the complete history of the person's employment with the RTC starting with the application and include all subsequent actions.
2. The individual's personnel file is regarded as confidential material and will be treated as such. The only persons with access to the file will be the employee, his/her immediate supervisor, and the Director.

3. Employee names, salaries, and job descriptions will be public information. Note: This is a required condition of many agencies supported by public funds.
4. Reprimands and warnings in the employee's file will be removed after twelve (12) months. Records of probation will be removed after twenty-four (24) months. Records of suspension and/or termination will not be removed.

VI. PAYROLL PROCEDURES AND WORK SCHEDULES

A. Purpose

To establish policies and procedures for payment of employees. To define regular working hours and overtime conditions of employees.

B. Pay Period

The length of the pay period is two weeks and will be listed for the employee.

C. Payday

Employees will be issued their paychecks on the Friday following the end of the pay period, except in the following instances:

1. When the Friday occurs on a holiday observed by the RTC. If this should occur, paychecks will be issued on the last work day preceding the holiday. NOTE: In no instance will an employee be issued a paycheck prior to the Wednesday following the pay period.
2. When the employee terminates employment with the RTC. The employee will be issued his/her final check on the Friday following his/her last week of employment. This will occur only if the employee has satisfied all outstanding financial obligations to the RTC.
3. When an employee fails to submit a completed and satisfactory time sheet in sufficient time to permit preparation of his/her check, concurrent with the preparation of other paychecks. In such instances, delays of two weeks may occur prior to the issuance of the employee's check.

D. Payroll Deduction

Employees will experience regular deductions from their paychecks for some or all of the following purposes:

1. Federal Income Tax Withholding (mandatory)
2. Iowa State Income Tax Withholding (mandatory)

3. Health Insurance Premiums (optional)
4. Federal Insurance Contribution Act (mandatory)

E. Salary Advances

No salary advances will ever be made.

F. Work Schedule

Regular working hours for all personnel are determined by the Director.

Half hour lunch breaks will be an option for all employees. Office staff will have a scheduled lunch break. Drivers have the option of taking a lunch break whenever time permits between clients or have one scheduled. The driver should inform the Director whether he/she would like to have a scheduled lunch break or not. However, all lunch breaks must be accurately recorded.

The basic work week for all employees is Saturday through Sunday. All employees shall, upon request of their supervisor, ordinarily be expected to work after regular working hours. Such employees shall only be compelled to work after regular working hours, in instances which their supervisor has given a reasonable amount of advance notice of the need to work such extra hours. A reasonable amount of advance notice of the need to work such extra hours. A reasonable amount of advance notice shall be defined as five (5) hours in the case of after hours in the case of after hours work and forty-eight (48) hours in the case of weekend work.

G. Overtime

Overtime will not be paid unless the Director determines that it is an emergency. The Agency will neither expect, nor require continuous overtime.

No eligible employee shall accumulate overtime until the forty (40) hour work week has been exceeded. Overtime shall be at the rate of 1.5 times the regular pay rate.

All overtime that is claimed must be reported on the employee's time sheet and substantiated by written entries on the employee's time sheet by the Director.

H. Breaks

Formal break periods are not scheduled.

I. Lateness to Work

Employees unable to report to work with fifteen (15) minutes of the time

scheduled, must, as soon as possible, notify their supervisor or -- in the absence of their supervisor -- the Director, of the cause of their tardiness or absence. Failure to provide such notification will result in a loss of pay for the time absent.

VII. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. Annual Leave

Annual leave shall be used when employees wish to take vacations or to be away from work on an authorized basis for reasons that do not fall within this section's definitions of court leave, maternity leave, holidays, bereavement, military, or excused absences.

B. Annual Leave Policies

1. Annual leave may not be utilized in advance of being earned unless approved by the Director. Employees who have not year accumulated sufficient annual leave to cover an absence, which could ordinarily be covered by annual leave, shall not be paid for the period of their absence.
2. Ninety (90) days of employment is required prior to the granting of annual leave, unless approved by the Director.
3. Annual leave may not be utilized in increments of less than one-half as one-half day of annual leave. All annual leave related absences of more than four hours, but no more than eight hours shall be counted as a full day of annual leave.
4. Upon voluntary termination of one's employment, an employee shall be compensated at a rate of one hour's pay for each hour unused of annual leave, provided that the employee completes two consecutive weeks of employment subsequent to the receipt in writing of his/her notice of resignation.
5. An employee shall not be permitted to utilize any accumulated annual leave during his/her final two weeks of employment with the RTC, unless involuntarily terminated.
6. An employee shall not be permitted to utilize annual leave prior to his/her receipt of a completed Annual Leave Request Form bearing the written approval of his/her supervisor and the Director. Utilization of annual leave without the above authorization shall result in a loss of pay for the period absent and possible disciplinary action.
7. Request for annual leave, in excess of three days, shall be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the requested commencement date of such leave. Any failure to comply with the above submission requirements shall constitute grounds for the denial of annual leave.

8. Requests for annual leave shall only be granted in those instances, in which the employee's supervisor and the Director determine that the employee's absences will not impose a major hardship on the Commission.
9. No employee may lose annual leave if it is documented that requests had been made, but denied. Either permission will be given to accumulate leave, or the employees will be paid for leave days lost due to the denial.

C. Vacation

The Director shall grant vacation leave with pay to full-time office staff, in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Vacation is not to be granted until completion of ninety (90) days continuous employment.
2. Vacation leave shall be credit, for office staff on the basis of:
 - a. Two weeks for the first year.
 - b. Three weeks for years two through ten.
 - c. Four weeks after ten years of continuous employment.
3. Vacation leave shall be taken at such times as approved by the Director.
4. Upon separation, an employee shall be paid for the unused portion of accumulated vacation leave, provided ninety (90) consecutive days of service have been completed and timely notice of resignation has been given.
5. Vacation credit cannot be carried over to another fiscal year. Vacations must be taken by the end of the fiscal year (July 1).
6. Vacations must be scheduled and approved with the employee's supervisors a minimum of two weeks in advance. Approval may be denied because of business reasons. Seniority will be considered when determining conflicting schedules.

Supervisors must ensure supervisory back-up for themselves prior to taking vacation.

Vacation pay will be paid during the normal paydays of the vacation period. Vacation days occurring during a paid holiday will not be deducted. Due to the difference of duties performed, differing vacation leave amounts are required for drivers and office staff.

Drivers vacation leave shall be credited on the following basis of:

- a. One week per year for Class A drivers (those who work forty (40) hours per week).

Part-time employees and Class B and C drivers vacation credit will be prorated based on the average number of hours worked per week.

D. Holidays

1. The following days are holidays for employees of the RTC:

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Friday after Thanksgiving
New Year's Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Employee's Birthday
Labor Day	

When a holiday falls on Saturday, it shall be observed on the preceding Friday. When a holiday falls on Sunday, it shall be observed on the following Monday.

2. At the discretion of the Director, the RTC may be closed on single days intervening between a weekend and a holiday.
3. Part-time employees will receive credit for holidays prorated according to average number of hours worked per week.
4. Drivers will be credited for holidays by the following:

Class A drivers will be compensated for eight (8) hours of work.
Class B drivers will be compensated for six (6) hours of work.
Class C drivers will be compensated for four (4) hours of work.

E. Religious Holidays

The RTC respects the right of all employees to worship as they choose. For business reasons, however, only the stated paid holidays can be granted. Employees wishing to take other religious holidays may use accumulated annual leave and vacation days. Your supervisor must be notified two weeks in advance.

F. Maternity/Paternity Leave

A maternity leave without pay (but without loss of seniority) shall be granted to a pregnant employee. The employee's physician shall determine when such leave shall commence and when, after delivery, the employee is physically able to return to work.

Employees should inform their supervisor of their pregnancy as soon as it is confirmed. Six weeks prior to the due date of the pregnancy, the employee must indicate whether she desires a "leave of absence".

A leave of absence must be approved by the Director. Maternity leave of absence is normally granted for up to six (6) weeks. Unused annual and vacation leave may be used during this leave. Should earned leave be exhausted, the remaining time off will be without pay.

G. Bereavement

For bereavement of an employee's immediate family (parents, siblings, children, grandparents and step and in-law relations), five (5) days may be granted with pay, if approved by the employee's supervisor or the Director. Extensions may be granted with the approval of the Director. A regular full-time employee may also be granted time off with pay to attend the funeral of anyone, subject to permission being granted by the Director.

H. Military Leave

Within a fiscal year, any employee shall be granted a fifteen calendar day period of leave. Also necessary travel time be provided, with a maximum of four (4) calendar days. For the purpose of attending an annual training encampment with the U.S. Government or political subdivision thereof. In the event the time of such training is optional, the time shall be designated at the discretion of the Director. When, for the period of such leave, the total pay received for military training is greater than the pay that would be earned by the employee from RTC, such leave shall be without pay.

When the military pay received by the employee is less than the pay earned from RTC for the period of leave, RTC shall pay the employee the difference between the military pay and the RTC pay.

An employee ordered to extended active duty in the Armed Forces will retain reemployment rights at the same or comparable position upon release from active duty, provided the employee returns to RTC within forty-five (45) days of termination of active duty.

I. Court Leave

RTC employees shall not lose regular employment pay or time while serving on jury duty. If the dollar amount received by the employee for jury duty is less than the RTC pay, RTC will pay the difference between that amount paid and full salary on receipt of a voucher showing the amount received for jury duty.

J. Political Activity

Employees of the Commission, like all citizens, have constitutionally protected rights to vote, support political parties of their choice, and to freely express their political opinions. At the same time, both federal law and the choice of employment with the RTC suggest the need for moderation in the exercise of those rights.

As an agency which receives a large percent of it's funding from the federal government, the Commission is subject to the provisions of the Hatch Act which restricts the political activity of persons employed in connection with federally supported projects.

Employees shall not seek or attempt to use any political endorsement in connection with any appointment and seek preferment or advantage because of a position of employment with RTC.

An employee who becomes a candidate for any paid partisan political elective office shall automatically receive a leave of absence without pay commencing thirty (30) days prior to the date of the primary or general elections and continuing until such person is eliminated as a candidate.

No employee of the RTC may hold concurrent membership on the Board of Directors.

K. Pension

IPERS - Iowa Public Employees Retirement System.

All employees of the RTC are covered under IPERS. This is a contributory plan where the employee's contribution is 3.70 percent of his/her salary and the employer pays an amount equivalent to 5.75 percent of the employee's salary. You will be provided with a handbook explaining your benefits under IPERS. If you do not have a handbook or don't understand your retirement benefits, see the Regional Transit Director.

L. Social Security

Your social security is paid for by equal contributions from you and the RTC. Your current percent of tax on your earnings can be obtained from the Regional Transit Director. This percent may change from year to year as the federal government amends the law.

Your benefits from social security will be in addition to benefits you will receive from the IPERS pension plan. Social security retirement benefits provide not only a valuable supplement to funds from IPERS pension plan, but also provide additional protection to you and your family in the following areas:

- Disability
- Medicare
- Dependents of disabled or retired workers
- Survivor's benefits
- Lump sum death payments

M. Worker's Compensation

If you have an accident or suffer an illness which is directly attributable to your work, you will be covered by worker's compensation insurance which is paid for by the RTC. Any injury resulting from work must be reported within four hours to your supervisor, no matter how minor or insignificant the injury or illness appears. Failure to do so could result in loss of insurance coverage for medical treatment.

N. Unemployment Compensation

As an RTC employee, you are subject to the same unemployment benefits as any other worker in the state of Iowa. Questions concerning unemployment benefits should be directed to the Iowa Department of Job Service or the Regional Transit Director.

O. Accident Insurance

Any accidents should be reported immediately to the Operations Manager and further described in written form which will be provided for the Director. The Director will notify the insurance company and assist in completing any necessary forms.

The Commission will provide adequate insurance on all vehicles owned by and operated for the Commission. Coverages provided will be bodily injury liability, property damage liability, and uninsured motor vehicle coverage. The Commission will also provide collision and comprehensive coverage on any Commission vehicles.

P. Hospitalization

All full-time employees will be entitled to receive hospitalization coverage for themselves, paid by the Commission. The cost of coverage for family members (if desired) must be paid for by the employee through payroll deductions. Insurance coverage becomes effective following the 90 day probationary period. Upon the termination of employment, the employee will be contacted by the insurance agency and offered the option of continuing uninterrupted coverage on an individual basis, at the appropriate rate.

Term life insurance will be paid for full-time employees.

VIII. DISCIPLINE

A. Policy

Disciplinary action serves two purposes: first, to correct an employee who has been inadequate in one or more respects to the end that he/she will become a satisfactory employee; second, as a warning or deterrent to other employees who may be in danger of becoming unsatisfactory.

It will be the practice of the RTC to put in writing its rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices. All new employees will be oriented to such at the time of employment.

The standards of employee conduct normally required in any place of employment (such as: no fighting, obscenities, use of alcoholic beverages on the premises or vehicles, theft or misuse of equipment or furnishings) will be the standards of employee conduct whether or not such are in writing.

B. Procedures

The following step-by-step procedure will permit the most judicious use of a disciplinary practice, with discharge as a measure of last resort:

1. Oral Reprimand - The employee is to be counseled as to the unsatisfactory areas of his/her work and is to be told how he/she can improve.
2. Written Reprimand - In cases where the oral reprimand has not been successful or where the infraction of the rules and regulations is of a serious nature, the written reprimand is to be employed. Its purpose is to call attention of the employee to serious defects in his/her work. It should include a detailed statement of the problem and a notation to the effect that the problem was discussed with the employee in question. A copy will be filed in the individual employee's personnel file. The written reprimand may also indicate that the employee has been placed on probation for a specified period. A report is to be submitted to the Director at the end of this period.
3. Disciplinary Probation -
 - a. Probation is in writing, signed by the employee, with a copy given to the employee and must contain both:
 1. The specifics of the conduct for which the employee is being placed on probation and;
 2. The specific criteria which must be met for the employee to get off probation.
 - b. Probation is for a period of not more than 60 days and may not be extended. If the employee is being terminated at the end of the probationary period, the employee must be informed in writing.
 - c. Any two disciplinary probations in any 12-month period and/or three such probations in any 24-month period is cause for termination.
 - d. Employees on probation are not eligible to take annual leave (go on vacation) during their probationary period.
 - e. The employee's immediate supervisor may initiate a probation. The Director's concurring signature is required.
 - f. Probations may be appealed to the level of Director and no higher, except when several such results in termination, the Commission may review those probations on appeal of the termination.

4. Suspension -

- a. All suspensions are without pay and result in either full reinstatement with back pay or termination.
- b. An employee is subject to suspension when there exists a question regarding either:
 1. His violation of written Commission policy; or
 2. Activity in opposition to the stated aims or goals of the Commission.
- c. An employee on suspension is to leave work and not report to work until instructed to do so in writing.
- d. All suspensions must be recommended to the Director; only he/she may suspend an employee.
- e. All suspensions may be appealed to the RTC Board.
- f. All suspensions must be in writing, with a copy given to the employee.

5. Involuntary Termination -

- a. All involuntary terminations are ordered by the Director upon the recommendation of his/her staff.
- b. All terminations are in writing with a copy for the employee.
- c. All involuntary terminations are for one of the three causes:
 1. Failure to abide by written RTC policies, or activity in opposition to the stated aims or goals of the agency. (This differs from suspension in that there is no question this occurred).
 2. Inappropriate behavior including but not limited to:
 - a. Use of alcoholic beverages on the premises of the RTC;
 - b. Appearing for work under the influence of alcoholic beverages, unprescribed habit-forming drugs or hallucinogenic materials;
 - c. Exhibiting sexual indiscretions;
 - d. Fighting or attempting to injure others; or
 - e. Falsifying or misusing records including applications.

3. Failure to meet the terms of probation (performance evaluation or discipline).
- d. All involuntary terminations receive credit for time already worked and accrued annual leave.

IX. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

A. Voluntary Termination

All employees will be required to give notice in writing of intent to leave not later than two weeks prior to their leaving except during probationary periods.

B. Agency Terminations

1. Termination of an employee's services by the RTC due to reduction of forces, budget cutbacks, reassignment of duties, extended illness, or as a result of probation will require the RTC to give notice in writing to the employee.

The RTC will give at least two weeks' prior notice to the employee whenever possible.

2. Involuntary termination is explained in Disciplinary B.5. of this Part. The Commission will give at least two days' prior notice of termination to the employee.
3. These terminations must be authorized by the Director and can be appealed to the RTC Board.

X. EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES

A. Purpose

To set forth policies and procedures for employee grievances that do not relate to discrimination cases under Equal Opportunity procedures.

B. Coverage

Any employee has the right to appeal any personnel action taken that affects him/her. That is, they may appeal such actions as:

1. Suspension
2. Involuntary terminations
3. Transfers to other positions (not other locations)
4. Change in working hours or classification
5. Change in salary, or
6. Authority terminations

C. Appeal Notice

All appeals must be made in writing to the Director within ten (10) working days of the action. After the appeal has been filed, the Director has ten (10) working days in which to take action. If, after proper hearing, the employee is not satisfied with the determination of the Director, he/she may take the matter to the Grievance Committee of the Board of Directors at the next regular Board meeting.

D. Initial Hearing

All appeals not finalized with the Director will have at least an initial hearing or review within ten (10) working days of the filing of an appeal. Such hearings will be conducted by the Grievance Committee of the Board of Directors.

E. Employee Rights

The employee will have the right to obtain RTC technical assistance in documenting evidence, the right to appear with legal counsel, the right to hear the charges, evidence, and witnesses against him/her, and the right to present his/her own evidence and witnesses in his/her behalf.

F. Appeal Process

The Grievance Committee shall make a report and recommendation to the full Board at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting and the Board shall make the final decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the Board shall be final and there shall be no other recourse within the RTC.

G. Violations

It will be a violation of the policies for any employee or member of the Board of Directors to interfere with, threaten, coerce, restrain, discharge, or otherwise discriminate against any employee or other person because he/she has filed a complaint, given testimony, or otherwise appeared before the Board or any of its committees in connection with a grievance or an appeal.

XI. EMPLOYEE TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Purpose

To set forth the policies and procedures prescribed by the Regional Transit Commission for the entitlement and payment of travel expenses for employees of the Commission.

B. Policies

1. When Commission vehicles are not available, reimbursement for travel by private automobile will be based on a rate determined by the state statute.
2. Normally, reimbursement other than mileage will not be authorized for travel within the area. If unusual circumstances arise, which appear to make reimbursement for travel within the area reasonable and prudent, the Director will make individual determinations.
3. When in continuous travel status for more than twenty-four (24) hours, or when in travel status through midnight when lodging is required, actual sustenance expenses reimbursement may be authorized.

C. Procedures

1. Authority for Out-of-Area Travel -
 - a. All out-of-area travel will be authorized or approved in advance by the Director or by the official to whom he/she has specifically delegated this authority.
 - b. The signature of the approval official on the travel voucher will constitute authority for out-of-town travel as well as approval of payment, except that the Director may, due to budgetary or other considerations, require all specific travel to be authorized in advance.
2. Authority for travel within Region VII must be approved by the supervisor or their designated representative.
3. Claim for Reimbursement -
 - a. The Travel Expense Voucher will be used to claim reimbursement for travel.
 - b. The Travel Voucher must be properly completed, showing name of employee, date of each trip, odometer readings, where visited and why visited. It must be signed by the person making the claim and approved by the proper official.
 - c. Claim vouchers for travel expenses shall be submitted to the Director at the end of the last pay period of the month. Receipts will be required for lodging expenses, taxi (if over \$5 one-way), air travel, and meals if such exceed the following amounts: breakfast, \$2.75; lunch, \$3.75; dinner, \$8.50; or a total of \$15 per day for out-of-area travel only. Employees are encouraged to limit expenses where feasible, such as sharing accommodations.

- d. Any expense voucher under \$10 will be carried over to the next month.
4. Payment - Mileage reimbursements will normally be made at the last pay period of each month. However, to preclude hardship on any employee, travel vouchers may be honored and paid upon presentation regardless of relationship to the pay period.
5. Advance of funds - The Director or his/her designated representative may authorize the advance of funds to any person entitled to travel allowances depending on the character and probable duration of travel to be performed. As a general rule, advances will be held to a minimum and allowed only when it is indicated that an advance is necessary.
6. Recovery of advances - If the amount of the advance is less than the amount of the voucher on which the advance is deducted, the traveler will be paid the net amount. In the event the advance exceeds the reimbursable amount, the traveler will refund the excess. Outstanding advances which have not been fully recovered by deductions from reimbursement vouchers or voluntary refunds by the traveler will be recovered from salary due or by such other legal method of recovery as may be necessary. In no event will an additional advance be made to an employee when there is an outstanding advance which has not been fully recovered.

D. Responsibilities

1. All employees are responsible for the judicious utilization of travel in the performance of their duties.
2. Supervisors are responsible for coordination with other sections and scheduling travel for dual purposes whenever possible.
3. The Director is responsible for verifying computation and payment of travel reimbursement.

XII. OFFICE POLICIES

A. Automobile Usage

Authority automobiles, or other vehicles, are not intended for personal use and should not be used for such.

Use of personal vehicles is explained under Employee Travel Expenses.

B. Out-of-Area Activities

Staff may only work out of the area when such activities are part of the regular program work responsibilities or with specific authorization of the Director.

C. Office Equipment Usage

Office equipment is not to be removed from the office unless authorized by the Director. Any usage of office equipment by staff for personal reasons, or by other organizations or individuals must be approved by the Director.

D. Illicit Appropriation

Any debts, charges or other encumbrances incurred by staff without prior approval through the appropriate office procedures will be the responsibility of that individual.

E. Office Supply Procurement

The Office Manager is responsible for maintaining an adequate inventory of general office supplies. Only this person may make purchases of general supplies after having a purchase order for such materials signed by the Director, unless the Director has authorized such purchases by other staff.

F. Telephone Usage

Long distance calls must be kept to a minimum number and duration. Records must be retained of each long distance call. The records will be regularly reviewed by the Director, and justification of specific calls or usage patterns may be required of individuals.

G. Office Form Requirements

Each employee must maintain all required Commission or program documents. Failure to comply will necessitate disciplinary action.

XIII. GENERAL RULES

A. Information Regarding Former RTC Employees

All reference checks regarding former RTC employees shall be referred to the Director. It is the policy of RTC that only the following information, if requested, may be provided regarding former RTC employees: dates of employment, titles of jobs held; if readily available, position descriptions of the jobs held; and, final salary information. Other information may be provided upon receipt by RTC of a request and waiver of liability signed by the employee.

B. Public Statements

1. The INRCOG Policy Board is responsible for setting all policies.

2. The Director is responsible for interpreting this policy on an ongoing basis.
3. All inquiries from the press concerning RTC activities shall be referred to the Director. No employee shall speak or transmit information to any representative of the press concerning RTC activities without receipt of prior approval by the Director.
4. No staff person is authorized to formulate policy, intent, or commitment on behalf of the RTC.
5. No employee of the RTC shall be permitted to accept any gift, service, favor or advantage from any party having a significant interest in any of the RTC's past, current, or anticipated affairs or activities. This is not intended to mean service awards, recognition plaques or other accolades of good work and service.

C. Confidentiality

All information of a potentially controversial nature, concerning past, current, or future RTC activities, which has not previously been made public either through an RTC publication or a public RTC meeting, shall be considered confidential information.

As an agency which receives a large percent of its funding from the federal government, the Commission is subject to the provisions of the Hatch Act, which restricts the political activity of persons employed in connection with federally supported projects.

Employees shall not seek or attempt to use any political endorsement in connection with any appointment and seek preferment or advantage because of a position of employment with RTC.

An employee who becomes a candidate for any paid partisan political elective office shall automatically receive a leave of absence without pay. Leave will commence thirty (30) days prior to the date of the primary or general election and continue until such person is eliminated as a candidate.

No employee of the RTC may hold concurrent membership on the Board of Directors.

D. Drug-Free Workplace

As a condition of your employment with RTC, you shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use a controlled substance, as defined by federal law and regulation, in RTC's workplace or while performing any work for RTC. Information on controlled substances may be obtained from the Director.

You must notify the Director if you are charged with or convicted of a violation, in the workplace or while performing any work for RTC, of any criminal drug statute. Such notice must be given no later than five (5) days after such charge or conviction.

All employees of RTC must participate in drug-free awareness programs as from time to time sponsored by RTC.

Required elements of an anti-drug program are:

- Policy and procedure development
- Employee and supervisor education and training
- Specimen collection and drug testing
- Required records and reports

The employee within the following position are subject to drug testing before employment is secured. Upon employment, these employees are also subject to annual and random drug testing.

Employees included:

1. Operating a revenue service vehicle;
2. Controlling dispatch or movement of a revenue service vehicle;
3. Maintaining a revenue service vehicle;
4. Maintaining equipment used in revenue service;
5. Supervising the above functions.

E. Personal Conduct

Due to the work performed by the Commission and its daily contact with and exposure to public scrutiny, comment and criticism, employees must be mindful of their appearance and actions, as these may reflect on the Commission. Each employee has an important public relations role in presenting the Commission in a favorable light. Supervisors are responsible for the maintenance of required standards among their employees.

F. Personal Attire

Customary business attire shall be worn by Commission employees during working hours or whenever representing the Commission. Casual attire shall not be worn during such times. Precise standards may vary, depending on the degree of public exposure of a particular employee. All driver's will be issued and required to wear a uniform. All uniforms will be provided at the expense of RTC. All uniforms must be kept clean and in good condition. Upon leaving RTC, whether voluntary or not, uniforms must be returned.

G. Intoxicants

Being under the influence, possession, or use of intoxicating liquors or controlled substances while on the job is prohibited. Any operator taking medication of any kind shall inform the supervisor immediately. A doctor's statement indicating that the use of such medication will not affect the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle will be required.

H. Authority - Obey those in

- a. Employees will hold themselves at all times to promptly obey all job related order of those in authority.
- b. Disrespect of officials, either in manner, speech, or otherwise, will not be tolerated.
- c. Any orders of dispatchers or supervisors relating to the operation of the coaches must be obeyed by operators as coming from a supervisor.

I. Open Door Policy

The Regional Transit Director is in charge of overall operations. The Director's door is always open to any employee who needs information or wishes to offer suggestions for the improvement of the RTC's service or working conditions.

IVX. ADDITIONAL DRIVER RULES

The following section pertains mainly to drivers. However, all employees should read and be aware of all RTC policies.

A. Physical Conditions of Drivers

1. At a minimum, all drivers must have vision which is corrected to 20/30. Any driver who has prescribed lenses must wear them at all times, regardless whether or not the operator has a formal restriction on his or her operator's license.
2. Annual physical exams are required of all drivers. These exams will be paid in full by RTC.
3. Any illness which impairs the driver's ability to safely handle a vehicle will prohibit anyone from driving. These illnesses include, but are not limited to: epilepsy, fits, fainting spells or periods of unconsciousness, high blood pressure, and paralysis.
4. Heart Disease - If you have heart disease, do not drive. Also, if you are aware of any driver who has a weak heart, notify the supervisor. You will not be hurting him in any way. By following this rule you could be saving his/her life, yours, or some other person's who may be present at the time a heart attack occurs.

Any illness which impairs the driver's ability to safely handle a vehicle will prohibit anyone from driving.

B. Driver Qualifications

Generally before any person is authorized to drive a vehicle he/she shall have passed a driver qualification examination.

A physical examination, certifying the physical fitness of a bus driver, should be completed prior to the driver being allowed to transport passengers.

U.S. Department of Transportation rules will be followed to determine driver eligibility. Exams are required for all drivers and must be renewed for each driver on an annual basis, at the expense of RTC.

C. Driving Record

No person who has accumulated three or more incidents on his/her driving record in the five years preceding employment shall be hired as an RTC driver. A driver who has accumulated three or more incidents or is under suspension or revocation by the Iowa DOT shall not be allowed to continue driving for RTC. Any accumulation of four or more violations will result in dismissal.

D. Reporting for Duty

Operators assigned to work runs must report at the scheduled report time and must report in person unless scheduled to relieve at points other than the garage, in which case the report may be made by telephone. No operator will be allowed to absent himself or to enlist another operator to work for him or to exchange duties with another operator without permission of the dispatcher. If you know you are going to be late, you must call dispatcher at least fifteen minutes prior to report time.

XV. OPERATOR/PASSENGER RELATIONSHIP

A. General

The bus driver is a major factor in the creation of a good public image of the Regional Transit Commission. To most passengers, the bus driver is the sole representative of RTC that they will have contact with. Therefore, genuine courtesy and a friendly, helpful attitude toward our passengers will help build a good public relations image for RTC, and will make your job easier.

B. Assisting Passengers

Some passengers such as the elderly, blind or handicapped may need help in boarding or unloading. When a passenger asks for assistance in boarding, unloading or being seated, do so pleasantly and in a manner so as not to draw attention to the passenger.

Operators should offer their assistance to any passenger who appears to be in need of help. However, drivers should not insist on aiding a passenger if the passenger does not wish to be assisted.

Be especially courteous and helpful to senior citizens. They are naturally slower in their movements and are more easily confused and frightened. They are also more susceptible to injury from unexpected movements of the bus. Remember, the ride on your bus may be the only bright spot in their day for the elderly. Be pleasant, extend your courtesy, and make that ride with you a real pleasure for them.

Drivers are required to wait five minutes for each client. So, please be patient.

C. Courtesy

Courtesy to other drivers, pedestrians and passengers is a requirement of your job. A kind word, a pleasant smile, a helping hand will make for a better relationship and win a host of friends. Establishing a good rapport with your passengers contributes to creating a cooperative atmosphere and pleasant experience for all concerned.

Although you want to be pleasant, try to avoid too much conversation with the passengers. This is sometimes hard to do, but too much conversation can distract you and create a safety problem.

D. Smoking Policy

The allowance of smoking while on the coach is left to the discretion of the driver. At any time, the driver may classify his/her vehicle as smoking or non, unless clients are harmed or offended.

E. Use of Vehicles

Remember that you are in the public eye. The vehicle is purchased with tax dollars and is not to be used for personal business. Drivers will be allowed the convenience of stopping at any location which does not deviate from his/her direct route. Disciplinary action will be taken on reports received that vehicles are being used for personal business.

Routes may have a starting point of the RTC or the driver's home. Only routine route drivers authorized to begin their route from their home will be allowed to have a vehicle at their residence overnight. Other drivers will drive their personal car to the route's starting point at no cost to the RTC.

XVI. DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

1. Violations which will subject employee to discipline procedure shall include, but not be limited to the following:
 - Valid customer complaints
 - Improper operation
 - Absent without leave
 - Voluntary neglect to collect fares
 - Excessive absenteeism
 - Failure to make proper reports other than accident reports
 - Taking wrong coach on pull out
 - Failure to initiate relief as scheduled
 - Exchanging work without authorization
 - Failure to turn in lost articles
 - Failure to give correct information to the public
 - Neglect to take security measures when parking bus
 - Failure to notify dispatcher in case of accident or breakdown or street blockage
 - Running late on schedule for no valid reason
 - Making out trip sheet while driving
 - Driving bus with door open
 - Failure to make complete stop before proceeding over railroad crossing
 - Neglect to put on interior bodylights when needed
 - Failure to bring bus to curb when possible
 - Littering
 - Failure for not keeping unit clean

2. Severe violations requiring special discipline, including probation, suspension or discharge:
 - Preventable accident
 - Insubordination (Such as failure to accept valid work order or threatening a supervisor)
 - Conduct unbecoming an RTC employee
 - Failure to make accident report in prescribed time
 - Stealing fares
 - Padding time sheet/Fare records
 - Willful damage to RTC property
 - Physical aggression toward public
 - Allowing unauthorized person to drive an RTC vehicle
 - Driving RTC vehicle with a suspended or expired license
 - Sleeping while on duty
 - Making traffic violation in which you as an operator are cited/corrected
 - Off route or personal business

3. Nothing in paragraphs one or two above shall be construed to limit or prescribe the required disciplinary action for any act. The degree of seriousness of each violation, the operator's past work record, and years of service will have an effect on disciplinary action.

XVII. OPERATIONS POLICIES

A. General Operation

1. Each operator shall have a working watch in his/her possession while driving.
2. It is the duty of the operator to notify RTC of all accidents, defective vehicles and unsafe street conditions. Reports can be made to the dispatcher by radio or by calling 233-5213.
3. No personal business will be conducted by an operator while operating his/her schedule.
4. Upon parking vehicle in storage area, operators will set hand brake, place transmission in park position, shut engine down, turn off lights and close all windows. Operators will remove all schedules, gas receipts, and other daily material and return them to the dispatcher. Operators shall also make out defects or accident damage reports incurred during the day's operation of the vehicle and post approximately.
5. Operators will check their vehicles for lost articles at the end of each day. Any article found in the vehicle will be turned in at the RTC office at the first opportunity. If unclaimed for thirty days, items with a value of less than five dollars will be returned to the finder on request. Upon request, the Regional Transit Director shall advise concerning the legal procedures required for the finder to claim property valued over five dollars. Refer all inquires for lost articles to the RTC office.
6. Fact sheets will be carried by each operator and will be issued to the passenger upon request.
7. Full attention will be given to collection of tickets or fares while passengers are boarding to insure that all passengers pay proper fare or present valid tickets.

All fares will be deposited in the farebox by the passenger except where governed by special order. Fares will not be deposited for passengers unless they refuse to do so or are unable to reach the farebox. In such cases, the operator will collect and insert the fare in the box in the presence of the passenger.

Operators must not allow members of their families or acquaintances to ride back and forth with them on the vehicle. To do so will subject the operator to possible termination. The exhibit of a pass regularly issued by the Company is the same as the payment of a fare. Failure to collect the proper fare from any individual constitutes a violation of these rules and will be dealt with accordingly.

8. When it is necessary to charge a passenger an additional fare and that passenger protests your decision, proceed as you have been instructed and politely tell the passenger to contact your immediate supervisor at the RTC office for any refund consideration.
9. If a passenger becomes seriously ill while on the bus, immediately call the dispatcher to get medical attention.
10. Operators should willingly leave their seats to aid elderly or handicapped passengers, blind people, women with small children or arms loaded with packages. Passengers requiring aid should be assisted to or from the sidewalk when necessary.
11. No change will be made by the operators. The farebox shall be secured with the driver and cleared with dispatcher at the end of the day or directed otherwise by supervisor.
12. Operators must not allow children to stand on seats or passengers to place feet on seats.
13. Operators will not allow the posting or distributing of advertising or soliciting on buses except by orders from the Regional Transit Director.
14. Baby strollers will be permitted if they are folded and out of the aisle. Very long, bulky or dangerous articles which are likely to cause accidents or seriously inconvenience the passengers will not be carried upon the coaches. Under no circumstances will gasoline, kerosene, explosives of any kind, unprotected motion picture film, panes of glass, saws, etc. which might injure passengers be allowed on the vehicles.
15. Passengers will be asked to leave the vehicle for only two reasons:
 - a. Refusal to pay fare
 - b. Dangerous, disorderly, or offensive conduct
16. If an operator has any questions at any time regarding any instance he/she is not sure of, call the dispatcher for clarification.
17. All operators are required to complete daily log sheets and other supportive material as directed by the Regional Transit Director.

B. Safety Procedures

1. The first rule for the guidance of all vehicle operators is to DRIVE SAFELY -- regardless of all other requirements; to be on time is never as important as to arrive safely.
2. Operators are required to maintain schedules and routes under normal conditions. Schedules will be disregarded in favor of safety when adverse weather, traffic delays, or the condition of the vehicle makes it necessary. Any excessive delays should be reported to the dispatcher.
3. Operators shall yield the right-of-way to all emergency vehicles such as fire, police, and ambulance and will never interfere with any funeral procession or parade, except on orders from a police officer. NEVER block an emergency vehicle entrance or exit.
4. Operators will check brake lights, clearance lights, tires, and headlights before pulling out. In addition, each operator will make all other instrument checks necessary to operate a safe vehicle. Operators shall report all defects on Work Order Forms in order that unsafe vehicles may be changed and/or inspected and repaired by maintenance.
5. When it is necessary for an operator to leave the vehicle, he/she must put the vehicle in park, set the emergency brake and turn on flasher lights. If the operator is going to be out of the bus for five (5) minutes or more, he/she must close the doors.
6. Operators are to be absolutely sure that all passengers, either boarding or alighting, are completely clear of doors before closing them. All doors are to remain closed while the bus is in motion and passengers are aboard.
7. The operator must use his/her own best judgement in determining safe areas to pick-up and discharge passengers - passengers will not be discharged in the traveled portion of the road.
8. Operators will never pull away from the curb until they can give undivided attention to their driving. Whenever possible, complete your fare collections before pulling away. Be sure you clear and close all doors and clear all traffic before pulling away from the stop. Making out daily log sheets is not permitted while vehicle is in motion.
9. Where it is necessary to change lanes to make a left or right turn, make absolutely sure that traffic lanes are clear of vehicles and/or pedestrians. USE SIGNAL LIGHTS.

10. Approach all yield signs or blind intersections with caution -- be prepared to stop. Automatic signal lights should be approached with caution at all times to avoid running the amber or to avoid a sudden stop. Be sure any intersection is clear even though you have the right-of-way.
11. According to state law, vehicles must come to a complete stop at all railroad crossings. You should make a positive stop not less than fifteen (15) feet from the crossing and use your flashers.

C. Accident Procedures

1. Report all accidents to the dispatcher immediately by radio or by calling 233-5213.
2. An accident is any happening or occurrence on or near a transit vehicle involving a passenger, another vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, domestic animal, or a stationary object which might result in a claim against the RTC or result in a claim made by the RTC.
3. Operators must secure names and addresses of persons injured in an accident, involved in an accident, and all other witnesses. All names secured should be identified as to whether they were injured, involved or just witnesses. In case of a collision with another vehicle, the operator must obtain as many names and addresses as possible of passengers in the other vehicle, the license plate number, driver's license number, and name of the insurance company of the other party involved, together with the make and model of the other vehicle involved. The name and address of the other driver must be taken from his/her driver's license. The law requires that he/she show his/her license to you for that purpose; and in turn, if you are asked for your driver's license, you must show it to the other driver.
4. The following actions should be taken when another vehicle or a pedestrian causes you to make an emergency stop due to their negligence, endangering the safety of your passengers:
 - a. In case a vehicle runs a stop sign or light or cuts in front of you, or makes an unnecessary sudden stop in front of you, you must try to secure his/her license number immediately even though contact was not made. Make report to the dispatcher.
 - b. In case a pedestrian negligently steps out in front of the vehicle, causing you to make an emergency stop, try to get that person's name even though contact was not made.

The purpose of this rule is to properly place the responsibility and liability for injuries to our passengers who might have been thrown from their seats to the floor due to the sudden stop beyond the operator's control.

5. Notify the dispatcher immediately if your vehicle is involved in an accident where there is any property damage or any injury to any person or animal. That includes damage to persons or property other than your passengers and your vehicle.

If the combined property damage exceeds two hundred fifty (\$250) dollars or any person has been injured, an accident report must be filed with the Iowa Department of Transportation. Do not move your vehicle from the point where you stopped unless the police authorize you to do so.

6. Operators are forbidden to give any information except their name and address concerning any accident to any person except properly authorized representatives of the RTC, the Police Department, or the City. In any case, do not admit liability to police or anyone else at the scene. The police are to gather facts only and then establish liability in their opinion. If the other party involved in the accident insists on making any complaint or claim, refer them to the Regional Transit Manager.
7. Operators are never to promote medical attention to any injured person whether a bus passenger or other. If an injured person wants medical attention, you are to tell the dispatcher in order that he/she may inform the police.
8. An operator must not write, telephone, or visit any person involved or injured in an accident in or by his/her transit vehicle, or by the transit vehicle of another operator, unless specifically given permission to do so by the Regional Transit Manager.
9. The operator of a transit vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury or death of any person, or total property damage to an apparent extent of two hundred fifty (\$250) dollars or more, is required by state law to make a written report of such accident within 24 hours after its occurrence.
10. Failure to report an accident or an attempt to conceal or to misrepresent the facts of an accident may be considered sufficient cause for dismissal of an employee.
11. If any operator for RTC is injured while driving a bus and this injury is caused by the other party or parties' negligence and that employee feels he/she should have restitution made for his/her injuries, loss of time or mental anguish, the operator shall advise the Regional Transit Director before settling any claim or bringing any law suit to recover for his or her damages.

D. Driving Records

1. Operators involved in accidents while on duty and who are cited for moving violation will be immediately suspended from their position until final disposition of said citation. If disposition is in favor of

driver, they will be returned to their position. If disposition is not in driver's favor, the last day of employment will be the day of the accident in question.

2. Operator's individual driving records will be reviewed annually. Any operator who is convicted of two (2) moving violations within a twelve (12) month period of time shall be terminated from employment immediately. Any operator who is convicted of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated shall be terminated from employment immediately. Violations include all violations either on or off duty.

XVIII. DEFENSIVE DRIVING

A. Introduction

"Defensive driving" is the name for a style of driving that places safety above all else. The National Safety Council promotes defensive driving because it is a fact that defensive drivers do have fewer accidents.

Many of the accidents operators are having today are not accidents in which they are primarily at fault, but rather they are of the type where the major blame rests with the other party. Therefore, if we are to improve our safety record to any appreciable degree, it is this type of accident we must eliminate. The majority of these accidents can be prevented through the exercise of "Defensive Driving" principles.

Learn to recognize danger in its various forms. Know it when you see it. Know of the danger that lies in the simple act of passing another vehicle.

- Did the driver of such vehicle hear your horn? Make sure they know you are there.
- Will he/she make a left turn into an intersection without a signal? Don't trust him/her.
- Will he/she swing left making that right hand turn? Slow down.
- Will that oncoming care be upon you before you pass the vehicle ahead of you; or, will the second oncoming car pass him first and close the gap? Don't take the chance - be sure.
- Will that car to your left (or right), approaching on that side street, heed the stop signal placed at the intersection of the street upon which you are traveling? Always expect the unexpected.
- Do the blinding lights of the approaching vehicle conceal a pedestrian, parked vehicle, or any other danger? SLOW DOWN; SEE; AND THEN PROCEED.

- Will the oncoming vehicle which is crowding the center line return to it's side of the road? Slow down, move to the right, leave yourself an out.

These are just some of the things that a good (safe) defensive operator will face during a normal day. There are countless others, yet they are simple and the answers should be known to each operator if coaches are to be driven the safest manner possible. So, "learn to recognize danger in it's various forms". Be a defensive driver.

The first and most important factor in all driving is the acquired ability of being a defensive driver. This is not just guessing what the other driver is going to do, it is the ability to know and to "SENSE" events in the making. A defensive driver can tell there is trouble ahead and avoid it.

Many operators who have an occasional accident which they felt was not their fault -- and who think they are just unlucky -- or just having their share of the accidents -- have not learned defensive driving.

There are too many who drive all the time, all types of equipment and under all conditions, who never have an accident -- and the reason they don't is that they can "SENSE" trouble and stay clear.

There are not a set of rules that can be given or be followed that will help a driver learn defensive driving. It is an art that is learned through training and experience. It has been said that every driver has to drive five vehicles when he/she is on the road -- (1) his/her own, (2) the one ahead, (3) the one behind, (4) the one coming from his/her right, and (5) the one coming from his/her left. This is true in respect to always being on the alert for trouble, and being able to "SENSE" ahead of time any development that is likely to occur.

The defensive operator "THINKS AHEAD" and takes no chances. He/she keeps his/her proper distance from the vehicle ahead; he/she does not over-drive his/her headlights at night; he/she slows down before reaching the curves; and, if the way ahead is not clear or does not seem right, he/she starts slowing down ahead of time. The defensive driver takes nothing for granted. The vehicle ahead of him/her which is going so slow might turn in front of him/her without signaling. Before he/she starts to pull out to pass this vehicle, he/she will give a short blast on his/her horn and watch closely for any signs of the vehicle starting to turn. Then he/she drives along side of parked cars at the curb, he/she watches ahead for exhaust smoke and for drivers at the wheel who might pull out in front of him/her. This is defensive driving. It is alertness and the ability to "THINK AHEAD" that prevents accidents!

In cities and towns, most accidents occur at street intersections. The reason for this is that two drivers have only one thought in mind - to get where they are going as fast as they can - try to occupy the same space at the same time. These are not defensive drivers in that they do not try to think ahead to what can happen.

B. Study Objectives

After reading this unit you will understand the concept of defensive driving and what it can do to make you a safe driver. Defensive driving does, in fact, really work! This unit will give you the ability to:

1. Recognize the definition of a "preventable accident".
2. List the three causes of accidents that a defensive driver must be aware of.
3. Recognize the Standard Accident Prevention Formula.
4. Recognize any of the six ways that you can have an accident with another vehicle.
5. List at least one way to reduce your chances of having an accident for each of the six ways you can have an accident with another vehicle.
6. Recognize any of the six conditions that can make accidents more likely to occur.
7. State what you can do to compensate for each of the above six conditions.
8. Give the three phases that a passenger goes through to ride the bus.
9. Give one example of how to reduce the chance of having a passenger accident during each of these three phases.

These study objectives indicate to you what you should know after reading this unit. When you have completed reading this unit, come back to these study objectives. When you can answer these study objectives, you can answer any question on the test. The test is given to all new operators.

When they are approaching an intersection, they do not consider the possibility that there might be another vehicle coming at the same speed or faster, with the result that, by the time they see each other, it is too late and the distance too short to stop.

On the other hand, the defensive driver approaching an intersection will "THINK" ahead of the possibility of another vehicle coming and will slow down by placing his/her foot upon the brake pedal to reduce reaction time he/she can stop safely.

The six principle conditions that play some role in all accidents are: light, weather, road/street, traffic, vehicle, and driver.

Building a defensive driving technique involves improving your habits of observation, communication, coordination, navigation, and consideration. It will increase your ability to predict the outcome of traffic situations earlier and more accurately and thus, to a degree, control that outcome so no collision will result.

After all, defensive driving is largely a matter of attitude - the determination of your part to do everything reasonably possible to avoid being involved in a preventable accident, regardless of what the law says, what the other driver does, or the adverse conditions you encounter.

Knowledge - Alertness - Foresight - Judgement - Skill: Attitudes that characterize the defensive driver.

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL DEFINITION OF A PREVENTABLE ACCIDENT:

"A PREVENTABLE ACCIDENT IS ANY OCCURRENCE INVOLVING A COMPANY-OWNED OR OPERATED VEHICLE WHICH RESULTS IN PROPERTY DAMAGE AND, OR PERSONAL INJURY, REGARDLESS OF WHO WAS INJURED, WHAT PROPERTY WAS DAMAGED, TO WHAT EXTENT, OR WHERE IT OCCURRED: IN WHICH THE DRIVER IN QUESTION FAILED TO DO EVERYTHING HE/SHE REASONABLY COULD HAVE DONE TO PREVENT THE OCCURENCE."

C. What is Defensive Driving?

Let us begin this unit by looking at accidents. There are two basic types of accidents that you might have. They are:

1. Unpreventable
2. Preventable

An unpreventable accident happens when there is nothing that you can do to avoid the accident. For example, you are legally parked and another driver runs into you. As far as you are concerned, the accident was unpreventable because you could not have prevented it.

A preventable accident is one where you could have prevented the accident from happening regardless of who was at fault. For example, you start-up into an intersection and the car on your left fails to stop at the stop sign and runs into the side of you. This accident was preventable by you. You could have avoided it even though the other driver was at fault. If you had looked to the left before entering the intersection, then you would have seen the car approaching and you would have known that it wasn't stopping.

The National Safety Council strongly believes that as more drivers become "defensive drivers", there will be fewer accidents. Statistics show that "defensive drivers" do have fewer accidents. What exactly is "defensive driving"?

Defensive driving is driving to prevent accidents caused by:

1. the incorrect actions of others
2. adverse (bad) conditions
3. your mistakes

1. The incorrect actions of other drivers cause accidents. Statistics show that very few accidents are caused by mechanical problems. The majority of accidents are caused by driver carelessness. We will look at some of these incorrect actions in the next section.
2. Adverse conditions are conditions that make it easier for you to have an accident. For example, if it were raining, the pavement would be slippery. That is an adverse condition and it can cause you to have an accident if you don't adjust your driving to existing conditions.
3. Your mistakes can cause accidents. However, a defensive driver avoids his or her own mistakes by obeying traffic laws and driving with common sense and courtesy.

Review -

I. Accidents Are:

- a. Unpreventable - There isn't anything that you can do to prevent them. Don't forget - there are very few occasions in which you could not have done something to prevent an accident.
- b. Preventable - You can avoid this type of accident regardless of who was at fault by "defensive driving". Most accidents are preventable.

II. Defensive driving is driving to prevent accidents caused by:

1. the incorrect actions of others
2. adverse conditions
3. your mistakes

D. Accidents and Prevention

In this section, we look at some of the common types of accidents that you as a bus operator might have. We also look at what you can do to avoid each type of accident. All of the information given in this section is based on the Standard Accident Prevention Formula.

The Standard Accident Prevention Formula is: "See the hazard, understand the defense, and act in time".

For each type of accident that we will cover, we will look at the hazard and list several defenses. Only you can act in time.

There are six ways that you may have an accident with another vehicle. They are:

1. With vehicle ahead
2. With vehicle behind
3. Head-on
4. At an intersection
5. While passing
6. While being passed

1. WITH VEHICLE AHEAD - This type of accident happens when you can't brake fast enough to keep from hitting the car in front of you. There are two ways to avoid this type of accident.

- a. Maintaining enough stopping distance.

Keep one vehicle length from the car in front of you for every ten (10) MPH you are going.

Example: You are going 30 MPH - keep three vehicle lengths between you and the car in front of you. The faster you are travelling, the more following distance you must maintain.

- b. Look ahead.

Look ahead of the car in front of you. That way you will see what is going on with the traffic ahead of you and if you have to stop, you will know a few moments sooner than if you were looking only at the vehicle in front of you.

2. WITH THE VEHICLE BEHIND - Most likely someone is following close behind you and you have to stop suddenly. The result is that this vehicle following you will run into you. There is a way to avoid this type of accident.

- a. Give plenty of warning when you stop.

Well ahead of where you are going to stop, begin braking and stop slowly. You can do this if you leave enough room between you and the vehicle in front of you. This gives the car behind you sooner warning that you are braking (by seeing your brake lights sooner) and you can take more time to stop.

- b. Look ahead.

Look ahead so that you will know that you may have to stop. Then you can warn the vehicle behind you by displaying your brake lights much sooner.

3. HEAD-ON - This is the most serious type of accident. Two vehicles hitting head-on at 30 MPH is like one vehicle hitting a steel wall at 60 MPH. What can you do?

- a. Slow and steer to the right.

Should a vehicle start to come at you head-on, flash your lights, honk your horn, slow and steer to right. Hitting something that isn't moving toward you is not as serious as hitting head-on. Don't steer to the left. The other vehicle may be able to get out of your way, but if you steer left you will most likely hit that vehicle.

- b. Look ahead.

The sooner you see a vehicle heading toward you, the more chance you will have to get out of the way.

4. AT INTERSECTION - 40 percent of all accidents that happen in the city happen at intersections. Know who has the right-of-way. Pedestrians always have the right-of-way as far as you are concerned. At an unmarked intersection, you must yield to the vehicle to the right. You may legally go through an intersection without paying attention to the traffic control devices only at the direction of a uniformed police officer. Here's how to avoid intersection accidents:

- a. Slow down when approaching an intersection.

Be prepared to stop to avoid accident regardless of who has the right-of-way. Always keep your foot over the brake when approaching an intersection. Just by doing that, you can stop 33 feet sooner at 30 MPH than if you had your foot over the accelerator.

- b. Show what you intend to do.

Signal so that no one has to guess what you are going to do. Signaling your stops and turns is a legal requirement. When it's your time to move into an intersection, go without hesitation. Too much caution can cause problems the same as not enough caution.

5. WHILE PASSING - The bus operator spends most of his/her time in the right lane, often passing a line of parked cars. There is always a danger that someone will pull out from the line of parked cars without looking. To help avoid this type of accident, you should:

a. Look along the line of parked cars.

Look along the line of parked cars to see if some one is in the driver's seat in one of the cars. Look for brake lights or exhaust coming from one of the cars. This lets you know that someone may be ready to pull out. You may then slow, tap your horn, and be more alert. You should look to see if the lane to the left of you is clear so that you can swerve left if you have to. Maintain a normal running distance of three feet from the line of parked cars.

b. Signal your intention.

It is not only a legal requirement, but a smart idea to let other drivers know when you intend to change lanes. Play it safe. Always signal when changing lanes.

6. WHILE BEING PASSED - You will find that most drivers would rather be in front of a bus than behind it. Therefore you can count on many drivers taking the opportunity to get in front of your whenever they can. they will try to pass you on either side to get around you. Here's how to prevent this common type of bus/vehicle accident.

a. Making a right turn.

Block the right land - set up your right turn and don't leave room for a vehicle to get between you and the curb. This will prevent any vehicle from passing you on the right. Watch out for vehicles passing on your left. You may swerve over and strike one of them when setting up your right turn if you don't look first. The vehicle on your left may also try to make a quick right turn in front of you, causing you to have to brake suddenly. Anticipate and be aware of these possible actions. Look out your driver's window to the lane beside you and use the mirror to look behind you.

b. Look before pulling out from a service stop.

When pulling out from a service stop, you can keep from hitting a car passing on the left by using your left signal, looking into the left outside mirror, looking into the left land beside you, and waiting for a break in traffic before pulling out.

Here is a summary of the types of accidents and how they can be prevented:

1. With vehicle ahead -
 - a. Maintain enough stopping distance
 - b. Look ahead
2. With vehicle behind -
 - a. Give adequate warning to the vehicle behind you when stopping and keep space between you and the car in front of you
 - b. Look ahead
3. Head-On -
 - a. Slow and steer right
 - b. Look ahead
4. At intersections -
 - a. Slow when approaching intersection
 - b. Signal your intention
5. While passing -
 - a. Look along the line of parked cars
 - b. Signal your intentions
6. While being passed -
 - a. Block the right land when turning right
 - b. Look before pulling out when there is a break in traffic and signal

E. Adverse Conditions

Often the conditions we have to drive in make it much easier to have an accident. Defensive driving means that you have to be aware of adverse conditions. There are six conditions which increase your chances of having an accident if you don't make adjustments. They are:

1. Light
2. Weather
3. Traffic
4. Vehicle
5. Driver
6. Road

1. Light -

Effect

sun glare

What To Do

Use adequate sunglasses and/or sun visor

headlight glare

Don't look at opposing headlights, look at the righthand portion of your lane

darkness

Keep your headlights clean, don't overdrive your headlights*

* Your headlights shine about three hundred fifty (350) feet. This means that you must be able to stop within three hundred fifty (350) feet after you see an object in the road or you will strike that object.

2. Weather -

Effect

What To Do

rain, fog, sleet, snow

Slow down. It takes a bus 50 percent more distance to stop than a car. When the road is wet, it takes even more distance. Your legal speed limit is "reasonable and prudent" speed for the conditions.

3. Traffic -

Effect

What To Do

rush hour

Be patient. Most accidents involving RTC buses occur around 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Maintain the tempo of the traffic and be constantly aware of the traffic around you.

4. Vehicle -

Effect

What To Do

tires, brakes, wiper, defroster, exhaust, horn,

Don't take out a bus that doesn't pass your inspection. Contact the mirror dispatcher. If your brake fails while in service, try the emergency brake and rub the curb if possible. Report all vehicle defects.

5. Driver -

Effect

What To Do

fatigue, alcohol, anger, worry, fear, eyesight,

Be mentally and physically prepared to drive. Your condition does affect your relationship with your passengers

as well as your ability to drive. Remember, hundreds of passengers put their faith in you and your abilities. They hope that you will be prepared.

6. Road -

Effect

curves, hills, poor marking, soft shoulders

What To Do

On curves, slow before entering the curve and gradually accelerate after entering the curve. Very simply, adjust your speed to the condition of the road. Remember, your goal is to avoid accidents.

F. Passenger Accidents

RTC records show that passenger accidents, although less frequent than traffic accidents, cost the RTC more money. The defensive drive may avoid most passenger accidents by remembering a few simple things.

Passengers go through three phases when they ride with RTC. Simply, they are:

1. Boarding
2. Riding
3. Departing or Alighting

1. BOARDING - Stops should be made within 12" of the curb. When this is not possible, due to illegally parked vehicles in zones, buses shall be parked parallel with parked vehicles. If, for any reason the bus cannot be positioned 12" or less from the curb, the bus should be OUT FAR ENOUGH from the curb so that passengers may take one step and board from the hard pavement onto the first step of the bus safely.
2. ALIGHTING - Operators must select the safest place at which to board or alight passengers. Doors must be positioned parallel with curbs within 12" or shall be out far enough from the curb so passengers will have to step onto the hard pavement before attempting to step onto the sidewalk, where obstructions or vehicles prevent proper curbing.

In outlying areas, where curbs are not available, operators shall alight or board passengers of the hard pavement, WHERE THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT CREATING A HAZARD TO THE BUS AND PASSENGERS.

Buses shall be stopped so as not to block intersections.

3. RUNNING TO BOARD - Close doors, make passengers stop before attempting to board.
4. DOOR ACCIDENTS - These accidents can be prevented by careful observance of doors. Vision should be directed to the stepwell when operating door lever. Operators shall never attempt to close doors while vision is obstructed or when passengers are in the stepwell. Use rear outside rearview mirrors to be sure that a passenger has not come up from behind the bus along the right side at the last moment.
5. ON-BOARD ACCIDENTS - They may result from: sudden stops; pulling from parked position into traffic; pulling up to a traffic light; due to vehicles cutting off bus; due to vehicles stopping suddenly ahead; backing vehicles into traffic; avoiding collisions; doors opening into traffic; dogs and pedestrians; improper pulling into zone; improper acceleration or improper and delayed braking.

Operators must be alert to the following:

1. Condition of passenger: example - age, handicapped, etc.
2. Packages; bundles in aisle.
3. Passenger's feet stuck out in aisle.
4. Defective seats, flooring, etc.
5. Late buzzer or signal from passenger.
6. Passengers changing seats.
7. Passengers leaving seats before bus is stopped.
8. Passengers walking back after paying fare.

These accidents can be prevented by smooth, cautious operation, by awareness that passengers do not have the same advantage the operator has in positioning himself for a sudden stop or turn. Reliance on other motorists to do what is proper, reliance on traffic lights not to change suddenly, reliance on passengers looking out for themselves -- all may result in on-board accidents. Reliance is a word which should not be found in the defensive operator's vocabulary -- except, of course, self-reliance.

THE THIRD CHOICE - Real professionals will tell you that operators have a third choice other than deciding to hit a car or throw a passenger. The third choice is that of not letting themselves get into a position where the first two choices are their only recourse. This means looking ahead and recognizing that if you sneak through a light, get yourself in a tight squeeze, or violate a traffic rule, you have eliminated the third choice which will keep you out of an accident.

Apply the third choice, by:

1. Alertness to all traffic conditions.
2. Awareness of conditions leading to accidents.
3. Allowance for others' mistakes or lack of knowledge.
4. Anticipation that the unexpected will occur.
6. INCIDENT REPORTS - Incidents arise aboard buses occasionally which must be reported in the same manner as traffic and passenger accidents. These incidents do not always result in injuries to passengers or damage to property. However, failure to report these incidents could involve us in claims, just as other accidents could.

Following are some of the miscellaneous incidents which operators should report immediately:

1. Torn, damaged, or soiled clothing caused by defective equipment or acts of others.
2. Fight or disturbance on-board bus, whether or not our operator is involved.
3. Passenger becoming ill on-board bus.
4. Object thrown at bus.
5. Bus runs over object or depression in street, damaging parts of bus.
6. Unusual circumstances involving bus or passengers, known to operator or brought to his/her attention.
7. Witness to an accident, in which the bus is not involved.
7. UNREPORTED ACCIDENTS (BLIND REPORTS) - All accidents or incidents which are not reported by operators and which result in claims from passengers are listed as Unreported Accidents. Most complaints list the bus number, the time of day, and the location - and most often can be followed through to a particular operator. In some cases the operator had knowledge of an unusual circumstances and failed to report the incident. It is almost impossible to protect the RTC and the operator in such claims. The Law requires more than a denial on our part that the accident did not occur and the burden of proof is on the RTC to prove that we were not involved. Without a report from the operator, it is obvious that our position is difficult.

SAFETY AND EQUIPMENT CHECK - A major factor in preventing an accident or a breakdown is to be aware of hazards or unsafe conditions. This should start immediately before going to work each trip, by checking the equipment assigned to you in the pre-trip inspection. It will take only a few minutes, but it could save you hours and RTC dollars by spotting the problem before it arises.

A SIMPLE CHECK-LIST GUIDE IS RECOMMENDED AS FOLLOWS: (This does not take the place of daily vehicle inspection sheet.)

1. Walk around the bus and look for unmarked body damage; broken windshield, windows, mirrors or marker lights; and, low or damaged tires.
2. Set hand brake (or make sure it is set), put gear in neutral, and start engine.
3. Walk back through the bus and check for cleanliness, inside damage, hazards, check step-wells and floors.
4. Adjust all mirrors and destination sign.
5. Set the climate controls necessary.
6. Get out and check all tell-tale lights, turn signals, flashers, horn, and be sure the windshield is clean.
7. Check the headlights, brake lights, I.D. and clearance lamps.
8. Check inside lighting.
9. Check air-pressure, operation of doors, door lever.
10. Check brakes: first gently from slow movement, and again with a little more acceleration before leaving the lot. Check again on the road to see road condition.
11. Finally see that the speedometer is working, steering, and transmission.

Report any defects of malfunctions on the Bad Order form. If found an corrected, this can save a road call later, resulting in disruption of service and delay, both of which are time-consuming and costly to RTC. Sometimes a minor defect can be noted later, not requiring a road call. The operator should write up on the Bad Order form to be turned into the Dispatcher later in the day the defect for correction. Be sure to tell a relieving operator of the defect before letting him/her have the bus.

SPECIAL SAFETY RULES -

1. Slow on RTC and MET property. Be on the look out for the other buses. Speed 5 MPH.

2. During rain and bad weather conditions, slow down; lengthen your following distance; make sure you have good vision, and watch out for others who don't.
3. Stop and take a good look at all railroad crossings; minimum of 15 feet!
4. Slow at bridges or restricted areas to 10 MPH.
5. Always maintain safe following distance according to conditions. Keep a space suchion around you.
6. Never rely on others to do the right thing. Always expect them to do the unexpected.
7. Slow on turns. Maximum of 5 MPH.
8. Keep both hands on the steering wheel with palms up. Do not lock fingers or thumb around the wheel or spokes. Keep good posture with both feet on the floor.
9. Intersections: slow down before you get to them. This way you can stop if you have to. Even at a green light slow down and at least cover the brake with your foot in case another vehicle runs the traffic control. Remember at 20 MPH you have you have 22 feet, at 25 MPH you have 28 feet, and 30 MPH you have 33 feet sooner to stop because you are not having to account for the reaction time of 3/4 of a second.
10. Look out for passenger safety: the young, the old, and the ungainly or handicapped. Keep your operation from contributing to their being injured. Watch all doors. Make all stops properly. Give them a chance.

ACCIDENT REPORTING -

When you drive defensively, you prevent accidents. However, if an accident does occur, your responsibility is to insure the safety and comfort of your passengers and to continue to perform your required duties in a professional manner. If possible, be sure to obtain name of the insurance company and the policy number of the other party.

This section provides a step by step procedure which you should ALWAYS follow when involved in any accident. By following this procedure, you will:

1. Help bring order to an otherwise confused situation.
2. Have a logical starting place for performing your required duties.
3. Perform your duties more efficiently.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES -

You will of course stop your bus, set the handbrake, turn on the emergency flashers, and not move the bus from the scene. You can only move the bus if you are commanded to do so by police, fire, or supervisory personnel. If your bus is in danger of burning-up an engine, shut it down.

- A. DETERMINE INJURIES. Check to see if anyone on your bus is hurt, and get out and check to see if anyone on the other vehicle is hurt. Ask the questions in a very positive manner, i.e. "Is everyone OK?" Never ask "Is anyone Hurt?" In the event of personal injury to either a passenger or someone outside the bus, take immediate steps to secure any necessary medical help.

Do not ignore anyone's claim, even if you personally disagree with them.

Do not attempt to move anyone who appears to be seriously injured, or the injury could become more serious.

Protected injured persons from further injury such as from broken glass or a passing vehicle.

Evacuate the bus only if necessary to prevent injury, as in the case of a fire.

- B. REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE DISPATCHER. Tell him/her who you are, where you are, what has happened, and that you will or will not need an ambulance due to injuries which you have already checked for, and for police.

- C. OBTAIN INFORMATION. Observe everything that you can. Make notes of everything that you notice. Note and report any statement of a person claiming to be injured. This is very important, since half of all injury claims are either false or greatly exaggerated. In the Drivers Manual there is a form - Accident/Incident Report - that should be filled out with the information you need to fill out the regular accident report forms. This form will assist you in making out the state report. The police will be summoned to all accidents of two hundred fifty (\$250) dollars damage or more. He/she will get much information as well. He/she will give you a form with information on it, including his/her badge number. Be sure to get the license number of the other vehicle and the other driver's license number as well as the information on his/her insurance company.

IN OTHER WORDS, GET ALL THE INFORMATION YOU CAN TO AID YOU IN MAKING OUT A COMPLETE AND CONCISE REPORT.

- D. WAIT FOR HELP TO COME. Wait for the police and ambulance if one is called. Remember, don't you call an ambulance. Leave that up to the Dispatcher. While you are waiting, get as much information as you can from everyone around you. Don't talk or volunteer any information. Say as little as you can and observe while you wait.
- E. MAKING OUT YOUR REPORT. Use the information gathered on your accident report form to fill out the required reports. Reports are required as soon as possible after an accident so that the details will be fresh in your memory. The following is a list of basic tips for proper accident reporting.

Accidents don't "just happen", they are caused. There is a definite underlying basic reason to every accident. Most accidents are blamed on the wrong cause. Example: When a driver skids on ice and has an accident, the slippery road or the weather gets the blame, yet, the underlying cause is the fact that the driver was driving too fast for the existing conditions and beneath that is the basic reason of why or what made him drive too fast. It might have been one of his/her attitudes, such as; over-confidence, recklessness, or even the lack of knowing the right thing to do when the vehicle started to skid.

A lot of research has been made over the years in the true cause of accidents, and all accidents can be blamed on one of three things:

1. human failures
2. mechanical failure
3. Acts of God

HUMAN FAILURES - are responsible for 97 percent of all accidents. It becomes quite obvious that preventative work in this area must be accomplished if we are to reduce accidents.

TRUE MECHANICAL FAILURES - are very rare. An accident cannot be blamed on mechanical failure if the driver knew of the defect before the accident. It then became a human failure.

ACTS OF GOD - are occurrences which are caused by natural causes over which humans have no control such as storms, high wind, flood, etc. These types of accidents are so rare that they add up to less than one percent of all accidents.

In order for an operator to more easily understand the importance of certain human failures that can cause accidents, let's go over the most hazardous ones:

1. MENTAL DEFECTS -

- a. Disease: Mental illness is very common and depends on the type and severity of the case as to its importance regarding accidents. Some cases can be very mild and yet be very serious

in the cause of accidents. It is unfortunate that very few of the persons afflicted know they have anything wrong with them mentally.

- b. Attitudes: Due to their extremely high importance in the cause of accidents, we will discuss them.
- c. Personality: Certain personality traits, especially if they are to the extreme, are known to cause accidents. Persons who have high neurotic tendencies, who are emotionally unstable are poor accident risks. Temper, fears, worries, and moods all play a big part in being the underlying causes of accidents. Whenever you, as a driver, lose control over you emotions or let any of the things mentioned above take hold, they can become a dominating factor and will cause accidents.
- d. Intelligence: Some people do not have the intelligence or the ability to learn or ever become a good driver, and if you are inclined to let your mind wander to other problems while driving, and so become careless, then you do not meet the standards of a good driver.
- e. Agility: This is the speed in which a driver's mind will work when sudden emergencies arise. When your mind works too slow, you will have accidents which could have been avoided had you been able to think and act a little faster. At the speeds vehicles travel today, a fraction of a second could mean the difference in the occurrence of an accident.

2. PHYSICAL DEFECTS -

- a. Disease: There are certain diseases which prohibit anyone from driving; epilepsy, fits, fainting spells or period of unconsciousness, high blood pressure, paralysis, or any disease which will impair your ability to hand a vehicle safely.*
- b. Organic Failures: Heart attacks are the most common of this type of failure and they are the most difficult to prevent. If you have heart disease, do not drive yourself, and likewise if you know of any driver who has a weak heart, notify a responsible person of his/her identity. You will not be hurting him/her in any way. By following this advice you could be saving his/her life, yours, some other person's who just might be at the place at the time he/she has a heart attack.

* See appropriate Section Physical Condition of Employee.

3. DRIVING DEFECTS -

- a. Experience: Skill in driving can only be obtained from experience. This problem faces every driver, new or old. Operators with a few years of driving experience are not expert

in the field of driving, and they should not believe that they are the best. Like the new operator, the old operator must go through the same period of experience when he/she changes to different equipment. If a vehicle is new to you, never attempt to take it out until you have become fully acquainted with it. Practice in the lot or on little traveled streets; become fully familiar with all the controls. Braking and stopping distance, turning radius, how the wheel handles, shifting, and backing. You, as the operator, must know how the vehicle handles and operates, loaded and empty. Taking time to learn will prevent accidents.

- b. Lack of Knowledge: Operators in learning how to drive may have been instructed wrong or received wrong ideas. Sometimes it takes a costly experience to change a wrong bit of knowledge. Many of the defects given are correctable or can be made harmless, as far as being a driving hazard, by the operating compensating for the defect. You must first know the defect before you can compensate for it. That is the reason for the physical examination and why it is so important.

Some operators, when coming to a training class, have the wrong idea about the different tests and physicals that are given. They are afraid that they may not be able to qualify. In some cases, that might be true, but most cases it is not so. Training is established for the purpose of helping you. It is an educational program as well as a defect-finding examination. The only way accident can be prevented is to discover the defects that can be the underlying cause and either cure them or compensate for them.

You, as an operator, should welcome the chance to be examined and to find out if you have any defects; and, if so, what they are and what can be done about them. It is very rare that a driver is not permitted to drive. This will only happen when a major defect is found which is not correctable or cannot be compensated for, and is a definite hazard, such as certain mental diseases, epilepsy, use of narcotics, extremely high blood pressure, fainting spells, poor vision (which cannot be corrected by glasses) and last, heart disease.*

In every accident there is an underlying factor and beneath that a basic reason of why or what caused the accident. Go over these facts, and if you have any of these defects, cure them, or compensate for them.

SAFETY FIRST! AT ALL TIMES, NOT SOMETIMES.

* See appropriate Section Physical Condition of Employee.

G. What Not To Do In Case Of Accident

It may be just as important to you what not to do after an accident as it is to know what to do. This is especially true in giving aid since many a person has been killed by some well-meaning person doing the wrong thing. Many a law suite over an accident has been lost by companies because their operator did the wrong thing after the accident. The following is a list of DON'Ts that are most important to yourself and the company:

DON'T get excited. An excited person cannot think straight.

DON'T move an injured person. Give aid and comfort and get help immediately.

DON'T move your vehicle until directed to do so by police.

DON'T talk to people about how the accident happened. Save it for the the police and try to talk to them alone. Only answer their questions; do not volunteer information. Many a driver has lost the case for his/her Company at the scene of the accident because he/she has talked too much.

DON'T think because the accident happened to be minor, and the other persons involved say that they are not injured, that everything is okay and you won't need witnesses. Get names, addresses, phone numbers, and any other information that might be important in the accident from everyone who MIGHT HAVE SEEN the accident.

DON'T fail to report the accident to your Company as soon as possible so that proper action can be taken by the proper persons.

DON'T get into arguments. It's not your job to settle the accident, because it cannot be settled at the scene. Calmly tell the other party involved to contact your Company.

DON'T fail to writ all the necessary information down as you will need it for your accident report.

DON'T think that you can get by and not report the accident (minor or not) to your company. It will invariably catch up with you. Then the matter becomes very serious.

DON'T give the police a list of your witnesses unless they ask for, or demand it. Police reports are in most cases public information and the other side can get your witnesses through the report.

DON'T haul injured persons in your vehicle. Leave that job for the ambulance or police. You may mean well, but by such action you could be making yourself and your Company subject to a law suit.

CONCLUSION -

There really are only two types of accidents: non-preventable and preventable. Even if you have the right of way and the other driver was at fault, in most cases you have the chance to avoid the accident by driving defensively. For example, when the light turns green, look left and right to see that all the traffic is stopped before proceeding into the intersection. Should someone run the light, you have prevented an accident by your defensive driving. Be safe above all else!

Safe, defensive driving means operating your bus in a RELIABLE, EXPERT, AND COURTEOUS manner. Always look before you pull away from a stop. Always check the inside of the bus for standing or moving passengers. Drive your bus smooth and safely. Your job is not to get your passengers to their destination. Your job is to get them to their destination SAFELY!

Remember: near misses are only warning. Too many of them mean you are headed for an accident. Should you have an accident do these things:

1. Look for injury.
2. Radio the Dispatcher - he/she will call police and ambulance if necessary.
3. Obtain witnesses names, addresses, and phone numbers.
4. Exchange driver information - traffic accidents only.
5. Make out proper reports.

Your role as bus operator makes you a leader. Take pride in your ability to operate the bus safely. Although passengers seldom compliment you for your safe driving, they do respect you for it!

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