



Guide to Hiring Bus Companies for Student Extracurricular Activities

Using a list of prequalified bus companies for transporting students to and from extracurricular activities is the simplest way to assure uniformity throughout a State, county, or school.

A. If no list of prequalified bus companies is available, request the bus company's USDOT number and log on to www.safersys.org for information, including:

- the bus company's current USDOT safety rating, if issued, and the date of the company's last compliance review (on-site inspection by motor carrier safety authorities);
- whether the company is authorized to transport passengers for hire;
- whether the company has current insurance in force;
- the company's record of regulatory violations and roadside out-of-service violations, with a comparison to national averages; and
- the company's highway crash history.

B. Whether or not you are working from a list of prequalified bus companies, ask the following questions:

- Does the driver have a current commercial driver's license (CDL) with a passenger endorsement?
- Does the driver possess a valid medical certificate?
- Does the company have a driver drug and alcohol testing program that complies with U.S. DOT regulations?
- Will your trip be completed within the legal limit of 10 driving hours? If not, will there be a second driver or overnight rest stop scheduled to legally complete the trip?
- Does the company have its buses inspected annually? By whom?
- Does the company have the required \$5 million of public liability insurance?
- Does the company subcontract with others for equipment and/or drivers? If so, what is the name of the second bus company and its USDOT number?
- Does the company have notification procedures for roadside emergencies and breakdowns? Is the driver equipped with a wireless communications device?

The best defense against a life-endangering incident is a well-qualified, healthy, and rested driver. Take the time to check out the company and driver you hire. For more information on ensuring a safe trip, visit www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyprogs/bus.htm. Your students, and their parents, will greatly appreciate it.