

Department of Public Works & Transportation
**Procedures for Selecting Non-Public School Bus
Contractors**
St. Mary's County, Maryland

These procedures, with an effective date of **January 1, 2008**, provide standards and criteria for the selection of non-public school bus contractors who provide transportation of students to non-public schools within St. Mary's County, Maryland. If the Application is submitted on behalf of a business entity, a copy of all documents evidencing the formation of the entity and a list of all persons having a financial interest therein must be provided.

1. When a route/contract is available, it will be advertised for at least two (2) consecutive weeks as a legal public notice and in the classified ads section of the local newspaper(s). The process for obtaining and submitting an Application will be described similar to the Sample Notice shown below. Information on the availability of routes will also be forwarded to all existing Non-Public School Bus contractors on file with the Department to ensure all are afforded an opportunity to be responsive.

Sample Notice

The St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation, Transportation Office, is accepting Applications for a Non-Public School Bus Contract operating in St. Mary's County for the 2007 / 2008 school year. To obtain an Application, award criteria, and additional information, please contact the Transportation Office at 44829 St. Andrews Church Road, California, Maryland directly or by phone at (301) 866-5328. Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of advertisement. Applicants will be notified of all awards within the subsequent thirty (30) day period.

2. The recruiting, processing and screening of Applications for bus contractors of the non-public transportation system is the responsibility of the St. Mary's County Transportation Manager and his / her Supervisor.
3. Applications shall be made available with a copy of the selection procedures and screening criteria that will be used by the St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation in short-listing and selecting potential bus contractors. A sample [Contractor Application](#) is attached (Exhibit 1).
4. When a route/contract is available, all applications will be reviewed and evaluated. Consideration will be given to the applicants based on the following criterion and assigned weighted factors as further reflected in the [Application Evaluation Form](#) (Exhibit 2).
 - a. Qualifications and abilities to successfully operate a business (to include use of general computer/office machinery) and perform a bus contract if awarded.
 - b. Proximity of contractor(s) and / or driver(s) to the route(s).

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- c. Department of Motor Vehicle record. Contractor shall include a copy of all driving records for all drivers with the Application. All applicants may be required to be fingerprinted and submit to a background check at their own expense.
 - d. Responses from references listed on Application. A minimum of at least three (3) business or personal references who can verify fitness to operate a school bus contract. The references will be contacted by the evaluator(s).
 - e. Experience and adequacy of performance of any past and/or present transportation and business related contract(s) of applicants. Must not have had a student transportation contract terminated for cause in the past.
 - f. Ability to provide or obtain sufficient buses and drivers (specify quantities and years of experience), and information demonstrating the ability to store and maintain the buses.
 - g. Whether the Application is complete and was filed within the deadline established by the formal public notice.
5. The St. Mary's County Department of Public Works & Transportation Director shall have the final authority to appoint a bus contractor and shall do so without regard to race, creed, sex, color, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or disability in matters affecting employment, admission to, or treatment in providing access to programs. A sample [Contractor Services Agreement](#) is attached (Exhibit 3).
6. A contractor may return their Contractor Services Agreement, or may choose to terminate their Agreement due to the death or retirement of a contractor(s). Requests for a family member (spouse, children, or sibling) to continue a Services Agreement will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Transportation Manager and Supervisor. The Transportation Manager, DPW&T Director and other County support staff (i.e., County Attorney and Risk Manager) may determine that a particular route(s) is best served by a new Services Agreement, whether it be to another bus contractor pursuant to Paragraphs 4 and 9 of these procedures, or to the family member for the remaining life of the bus(s).
7. Contractors who have existing school bus transportation contract(s) with the St. Mary's County Transportation Division may be eligible for additional contract award(s) based on Paragraph 4 or as further described in Paragraph 6, above.
8. The contractor owns the bus and equipment, but will hold no negotiable rights for the bus route or contract.
9. Any contractor desiring to terminate his/her contract, or transfer his/her equipment to another contractor, must advise the St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation, Transportation Division, in writing. Contractor transfers usually require a new Services Agreement be signed by a duly authorized party (i.e., estate executor, parent company owner(s), managing partner(s) etc.), and are reviewed / awarded on a case-by-case basis in accordance with Paragraph 6, above.

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10. All equipment used to satisfy the requirements of a bus contract must meet State of Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation rules and regulations.
11. In accordance with Maryland State law, buses shall be retired from service after twelve (12) years of operation. The contract will be renewed with the existing contractor annually for twelve (12) years providing the contractor has provided acceptable contract performance to the St. Mary's County Government. Insurance coverage beyond the twelve (12) year period is currently the responsibility of the contractors.
12. In the event of any emergency or required exercise, the Director of Public Works and Transportation shall authorize the Transportation Manager to assign, on a temporary basis, such route(s) to another individual or business entity as necessary to ensure the safe and continuing transportation of students. (*Note: For St. John's School students, St. Mary's Ryken is the designated host School*).
13. Hourly rates, fringe percentage, fuel and maintenance factors, mileage, the Per Vehicle Allowance (PVA), medical, cellular phone stipend, insurance and other miscellaneous expenses are established annually by the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County based on recommendations from the Department of Public Works & Transportation.
14. Contractors agree to post the established Rules & Regulations and abide by the provisions in the [Parent / Student Handbook](#) for Non-Public School Bus Transportation Services, as amended from time to time. Contractors must also be familiar with procedures for reporting bus accidents, reporting disruptive student passengers via the [Bus Behavior Report](#) (Exhibit 4) Form and the [Recommendations for Responding to a Report of a Missing Child](#) (Exhibit 5).
15. Once a contract is offered, the contractor will have three (3) working days in which to accept the contract and fifteen (15) working days from the date of contract offering to demonstrate that the respective route(s) are covered with the appropriate number of insured buses and drivers in accordance with the terms of the contract. Otherwise, the contractor will be considered non-responsive. Contractors who request to withdraw a signed Agreement(s) must do so in writing and are subject to reimbursing the County for any reasonable costs incurred by the County to secure an alternative Contractor(s).
16. The above procedures supersede the June 15, 2007 documentation regarding the selection process and the prior Policy Memorandum No. 89-3.