



PERMANENT CITIZENS
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MTA Board Testimony
New Rules of Conduct without the Riders
Sheila Binesh, Transportation Planner
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Hello My name is Sheila Binesh and I am the Transportation Planner at PCAC. At last month's Board meeting, the MTA announced that it was [amending its rules of conduct](#) to codify emergency rules that were put in place on April 29th. On May 20th – the day of the MTA's Board meeting – notice of a 60-day public comment period to make the new rules permanent was published in the New York State Register.

Why weren't Riders or Board members notified of the proposed rules either at the May or the July Board meeting, when they were renewed? There are numerous channels that the MTA could have used to notify riders. Unfortunately, none were used. Therefore, it shouldn't be a surprise that no public comments were received. It's important to engage riders on rules that will directly impact them. The lack of transparency in this process contributes to rider distrust of the MTA.

The amended rules of conduct include prohibiting "any wheeled cart greater than 30 inches in either length or width". However, not all New Yorkers have access to affordable fresh produce within walking distance and rely on transit to do their grocery shopping. Many use a cart to transport their items. When shopping for a family, a 30-inch cart is not that big. Many New Yorkers do not have access to cars or cannot afford car services. Prohibiting this option drives riders away from transit at exactly the time the MTA should be encouraging riders to use it.

Another amended rule is limiting the time riders can be in a station. For the railroads, there is a 90-minute time limit a person can use shelters, train platforms, or furniture in any area of any station. If you miss your train and it's a 90-minute wait until the next train or if a service disruption can easily lead to a 90-minute gap in service, where are riders supposed to go? Further making it inconvenient for riders does not encourage them to take the train.

The MTA should be building public trust and engaging riders, especially when it directly affects them and their everyday needs. They might have gotten some good ideas about how to adjust the rules to reflect New Yorkers' way of life and reliance on public transportation. Thank you.