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**SB-614 Public transportation agencies: administrative penalties.** (2017-2018)

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**Senate Bill No. 614**

**CHAPTER 219**

An act to amend Section 640 of the Penal Code, and to amend Sections 99580 and 99581 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to public transit.

[ Approved by Governor September 01, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State September 01, 2017. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SB 614, Hertzberg. Public transportation agencies: administrative penalties.

Existing law makes it a crime, punishable as an infraction or misdemeanor, as applicable, for a person to commit certain acts on or in a facility or vehicle of a public transportation system. Existing law authorizes a public transportation agency to adopt and enforce an ordinance to impose and enforce civil administrative penalties for fare evasion and other passenger misconduct on or in a transit facility or vehicle in lieu of the criminal penalties otherwise applicable. In setting the amounts of administrative penalties for fare evasion and other passenger misconduct violations, existing law prohibits a public transportation agency from establishing penalty amounts that exceed the maximum penalty amount established for the criminal penalties. Existing law requires these administrative penalties to be deposited in the general fund of the county in which the citation is administered.

This bill would instead require the administrative penalties to be deposited with the public transportation agency that issued the citation. In setting the amount of administrative penalties for fare evasion and other passenger misconduct violations, the bill would instead prohibit a public transportation agency from establishing penalty amounts that exceed \$125 upon a first or 2nd violation and \$200 upon a 3rd or subsequent violation.

Existing law provides, following a determination by a hearing officer that a person has committed a fare evasion or passenger conduct violation, that the hearing officer may allow payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in installments or deferred payment if the person provides satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in full. Existing law also provides that if authorized by the issuing agency, the hearing officer may permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty.

This bill would make offering the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty mandatory to persons under 18 years of age and persons who provide satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in full. The bill would provide that the issuing agency is not required to permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment for a fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty if the person has had more than 3 fare evasion or passenger conduct penalties for which the person was permitted to perform community service and did not complete that community service, provided that the person was offered a community service placement and was given adequate time to comply with the community service requirement. The bill would make offering payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty or penalties in installments or deferred payment mandatory if the total amount of fines is \$200 or more and the person provides satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the penalty or penalties in full.

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

### **SECTION 1.** Section 640 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

**640.** (a) (1) Any of the acts described in paragraphs (1) to (6), inclusive, of subdivision (b) is an infraction punishable by a fine not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) and by community service for a total time not to exceed 48 hours over a period not to exceed 30 days, during a time other than during the violator's hours of school attendance or employment. Except as provided in subdivision (g), any of the acts described in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive, of subdivision (c), upon a first or second violation, is an infraction punishable by a fine not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) and by community service for a total time not to exceed 48 hours over a period not to exceed 30 days, during a time other than during the violator's hours of school attendance or employment. Except as provided in subdivision (g), a third or subsequent violation of any of the acts described in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive, of subdivision (c) is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than four hundred dollars (\$400) or by imprisonment in a county jail for a period of not more than 90 days, or by both that fine and imprisonment. Any of the acts described in subdivision (d) shall be punishable by a fine of not more than four hundred dollars (\$400), by imprisonment in a county jail for a period of not more than 90 days, or by both that fine and imprisonment.

(2) This section shall apply only to acts committed on or in a facility or vehicle of a public transportation system.

(b) (1) Eating or drinking in or on a system facility or vehicle in areas where those activities are prohibited by that system.

(2) Playing unreasonably loud sound equipment on or in a system facility or vehicle, or failing to comply with the warning of a transit official related to disturbing another person by loud or unreasonable noise.

(3) Smoking in or on a system facility or vehicle in areas where those activities are prohibited by that system.

(4) Expectorating upon a system facility or vehicle.

(5) Skateboarding, roller skating, bicycle riding, roller blading, or operating a motorized scooter or similar device, as defined in Section 407.5 of the Vehicle Code, in a system facility, vehicle, or parking structure. This paragraph does not apply to an activity that is necessary for utilization of the transit facility by a bicyclist, including, but not limited to, an activity that is necessary for parking a bicycle or transporting a bicycle aboard a transit vehicle, if that activity is conducted with the permission of the transit agency in a manner that does not interfere with the safety of the bicyclist or other patrons of the transit facility.

(6) Selling or peddling any goods, merchandise, property, or services of any kind whatsoever on the facilities, vehicles, or property of the public transportation system if the public transportation system has prohibited those acts and neither the public transportation system nor its duly authorized representatives have granted written consent to engage in those acts.

(c) (1) Evasion of the payment of a fare of the system. For purposes of this section, fare evasion includes entering an enclosed area of a public transit facility beyond posted signs prohibiting entrance without obtaining valid fare, in addition to entering a transit vehicle without valid fare.

(2) Misuse of a transfer, pass, ticket, or token with the intent to evade the payment of a fare.

(3) (A) Unauthorized use of a discount ticket or failure to present, upon request from a transit system representative, acceptable proof of eligibility to use a discount ticket, in accordance with Section 99155 of the Public Utilities Code and posted system identification policies when entering or exiting a transit station or vehicle. Acceptable proof of eligibility must be clearly defined in the posting.

(B) If an eligible discount ticket user is not in possession of acceptable proof at the time of request, a citation issued shall be held for a period of 72 hours to allow the user to produce acceptable proof. If the proof is provided, the citation shall be voided. If the proof is not produced within that time period, the citation shall be processed.

(d) (1) Willfully disturbing others on or in a system facility or vehicle by engaging in boisterous or unruly behavior.

(2) Carrying an explosive, acid, or flammable liquid in a public transit facility or vehicle.

(3) Urinating or defecating in a system facility or vehicle, except in a lavatory. However, this paragraph shall not apply to a person who cannot comply with this paragraph as a result of a disability, age, or a medical condition.

(4) Willfully blocking the free movement of another person in a system facility or vehicle. This paragraph shall not be interpreted to affect any lawful activities permitted or First Amendment rights protected under the laws of this state or applicable federal law, including, but not limited to, laws related to collective bargaining, labor relations, or labor disputes.

(5) Willfully tampering with, removing, displacing, injuring, or destroying any part of a facility or vehicle of a public transportation system.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) or (g), a public transportation agency, as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (c) of Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code, may do either of the following:

(1) Enact and enforce an ordinance providing that a person who is the subject of a citation for any of the acts described in subdivision (b) of Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code on or in a facility or vehicle described in subdivision (a) for which the public transportation agency has jurisdiction shall, under the circumstances set forth by the ordinance, be afforded an opportunity to complete an administrative process that imposes only an administrative penalty enforced in a civil proceeding. The ordinance for imposing and enforcing the administrative penalty shall be governed by Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 99580) of Part 11 of Division 10 of the Public Utilities Code.

(2) Enforce as an infraction pursuant to subdivision (b) the act of failing to yield seating reserved for an elderly or disabled person in a facility or vehicle for which the public transportation agency has jurisdiction, provided that the governing board of the public transportation agency enacts an ordinance to that effect after a public hearing on the issue.

(f) For purposes of this section, "facility or vehicle of a public transportation system" means any of the following:

(1) A facility or vehicle of a public transportation system as defined by Section 99211 of the Public Utilities Code.

(2) A facility of, or vehicle operated by, an entity subsidized by, the Department of Transportation.

(3) A facility or vehicle of a rail authority, whether owned or leased, including, but not limited to, any part of a railroad, or track of a railroad, or any branch or branchway, switch, turnout, bridge, viaduct, culvert, embankment, station house, or other structure or fixture, or any part thereof, attached or connected to a railroad.

(4) A leased or rented facility or vehicle for which any of the entities described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) incurs costs of cleanup, repair, or replacement as a result of any of those acts.

(g) A minor shall not be charged with an infraction or a misdemeanor for violation of paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive, of subdivision (c). Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the ability of a public transportation agency to assess an administrative penalty as established in paragraph (1) of subdivision (e) and in Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code, not to exceed one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) upon a first or second violation and not to exceed two hundred dollars (\$200) upon a third or subsequent violation, to permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty pursuant to Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code, or to allow payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in installments or deferred payment pursuant to Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code.

**SEC. 2.** Section 99580 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

**99580.** (a) Pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 640 of the Penal Code, a public transportation agency may enact and enforce an ordinance to impose and enforce an administrative penalty for any of the acts described in subdivision (b).

(b) (1) Evasion of the payment of a fare of the system.

(2) Misuse of a transfer, pass, ticket, or token with the intent to evade the payment of a fare.

(3) Playing unreasonably loud sound equipment on or in a system facility or vehicle, or failing to comply with the warning of a transit official related to disturbing another person by loud or unreasonable noise.

(4) Smoking a tobacco product, eating, or drinking in or on a system facility or vehicle in those areas where those activities are prohibited by that system.

(5) Expectorating upon a system facility or vehicle.

(6) Willfully disturbing others on or in a system facility or vehicle by engaging in boisterous or unruly behavior.

(7) Carrying an explosive or acid, flammable liquid, or toxic or hazardous material in a system facility or vehicle.

(8) Urinating or defecating in a system facility or vehicle, except in a lavatory. However, this paragraph shall not apply to a person who cannot comply with this paragraph as a result of a disability, age, or a medical condition.

(9) (A) Willfully blocking the free movement of another person in a system facility or vehicle.

(B) This paragraph shall not be interpreted to affect any lawful activities permitted or First Amendment rights protected under the laws of this state or applicable federal law, including, but not limited to, laws related to collective bargaining, labor

relations, or labor disputes.

(10) Skateboarding, roller skating, bicycle riding, or roller blading in a system facility, including a parking structure, or in a system vehicle. This paragraph does not apply to an activity that is necessary for utilization of a system facility by a bicyclist, including, but not limited to, an activity that is necessary for parking a bicycle or transporting a bicycle aboard a system vehicle, if that activity is conducted with the permission of the agency of the system in a manner that does not interfere with the safety of the bicyclist or other patrons of the system facility.

(11) (A) Unauthorized use of a discount ticket or failure to present, upon request from a system representative, acceptable proof of eligibility to use a discount ticket, in accordance with Section 99155, and posted system identification policies when entering or exiting a system station or vehicle. Acceptable proof of eligibility must be clearly defined in the posting.

(B) If an eligible discount ticket user is not in possession of acceptable proof at the time of request, an issued notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation shall be held for a period of 72 hours to allow the user to produce acceptable proof. If the proof is provided, that notice shall be voided. If the proof is not produced within that time period, that notice shall be processed.

(12) Selling or peddling any goods, merchandise, property, or services of any kind whatsoever on the facilities, vehicles, or property of the public transportation system without the express written consent of the public transportation system or its duly authorized representatives.

(13) Failing to yield seating reserved for an elderly or disabled person.

(c) (1) The public transportation agency may contract with a private vendor or governmental agency for the processing of notices of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation, and notices of delinquent fare evasion or passenger conduct violation pursuant to Section 99581.

(2) For the purpose of this chapter, "processing agency" means either of the following:

(A) The agency issuing the notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation and the notice of delinquent fare evasion or passenger conduct violation.

(B) The party responsible for processing the notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation and the notice of delinquent violation, if a contract is entered into pursuant to paragraph (1).

(3) For the purpose of this chapter, "fare evasion or passenger conduct violation penalty" includes, but is not limited to, a late payment penalty, administrative fee, fine, assessment, and costs of collection as provided for in the ordinance.

(4) For the purpose of this chapter, "public transportation agency" shall mean a public agency that provides public transportation as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (f) of Section 1 of Article XIX A of the California Constitution.

(5) All fare evasion and passenger conduct violation penalties collected pursuant to this chapter shall be deposited with the public transportation agency that issued the citation.

(d) (1) If a fare evasion or passenger conduct violation is observed by a person authorized to enforce the ordinance, a notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation shall be issued. The notice shall set forth the violation, including reference to the ordinance setting forth the administrative penalty, the date of the violation, the approximate time, and the location where the violation occurred. The notice shall include a printed statement indicating the date payment is required to be made, and the procedure for contesting the notice. The notice shall be served by personal service upon the violator. The notice, or copy of the notice, shall be considered a record kept in the ordinary course of business of the issuing agency and the processing agency, and shall be prima facie evidence of the facts contained in the notice establishing a rebuttable presumption affecting the burden of producing evidence.

(2) When a notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation has been served, the person issuing the notice shall file the notice with the processing agency.

(3) If, after a notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation is issued pursuant to this section, the issuing officer determines that there is incorrect data on the notice, including, but not limited to, the date or time, the issuing officer may indicate in writing on a form attached to the original notice the necessary correction to allow for the timely entry of the corrected notice on the processing agency's data system. A copy of the correction shall be mailed to the address provided by the person cited at the time the original notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation was served.

(4) If a person contests a notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation, the issuing agency shall proceed in accordance with Section 99581.

(e) In setting the amounts of administrative penalties for the violations listed in subdivision (b), the public transportation agency shall not establish penalty amounts that exceed one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) upon a first or second violation and two hundred dollars (\$200) upon a third or subsequent violation.

(f) The issuing agency shall allow payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty or penalties in installments or deferred payment if the total amount of the fines is two hundred dollars (\$200) or more and the person provides satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the penalty or penalties in full.

(g) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the issuing agency shall permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty if the person is under 18 years of age or if the person provides satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in full. The issuing agency may require the performance of community service at transit facilities, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 640 of the Penal Code.

(2) The issuing agency is not required to permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment for a fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty if the person has had more than three fare evasion or passenger conduct penalties for which he or she was permitted to perform community service pursuant to paragraph (1), and did not complete any community service, provided that the person was offered a community service placement and was given adequate time to comply with the community service requirement.

(h) A person who receives a notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation pursuant to this section shall not be subject to citation for a violation of Section 640 of the Penal Code.

(i) If an entity enacts an ordinance pursuant to this section it shall, both two years and five years after enactment of the ordinance, report all of the following information to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing and the Assembly Committee on Transportation:

(1) A description of the ordinance, including the circumstances under which an alleged violator is afforded the opportunity to complete the administrative process.

(2) The amount of the administrative penalties.

(3) The number and types of citations administered pursuant to the ordinance.

(4) To the extent available, a comparison of the number and types of citations administered pursuant to the ordinance with the number and types of citations issued for similar offenses and administered through the courts both in the two years prior to the ordinance and, if any, since enactment of the ordinance.

(5) A discussion of the effect of the ordinance on passenger behavior.

(6) A discussion of the effect of the ordinance on revenues to the entity described in subdivision (a) and, in consultation with the superior courts, the cost savings to the county courts. The superior courts are encouraged to collaborate on and provide data for this report.

(j) For purposes of this section, "smoking" has the same meaning as in subdivision (c) of Section 22950.5 of the Business and Professions Code.

(k) For purposes of this section, "tobacco product" means a product or device as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 22950.5 of the Business and Professions Code.

**SEC. 3.** Section 99581 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

**99581.** (a) For a period of 21 calendar days from the issuance to a person of the notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation, the person may request an initial review of the violation by the issuing agency. The request may be made by telephone, in writing, or in person. There shall be no charge for this review. If, following the initial review, the issuing agency is satisfied that the violation did not occur or that extenuating circumstances make dismissal of the administrative penalty appropriate in the interest of justice, the issuing agency shall cancel the notice. The issuing agency shall advise the processing agency, if any, of the cancellation. The issuing agency or the processing agency shall mail the results of the initial review to the person contesting the notice and if following that review, cancellation of the notice does not occur, the agency shall include a reason for that denial, notification of the ability to request an administrative hearing, and notice of the procedure adopted pursuant to subdivision (b) for waiving prepayment of the penalty based upon inability to pay.

(b) If the person is dissatisfied with the results of the initial review, the person may request an administrative hearing of the violation no later than 21 calendar days following the mailing of the results of the issuing agency's initial review. The request may be made by telephone, in writing, or in person. The person requesting an administrative hearing shall deposit with the processing agency the amount due under the notice for which the administrative hearing is requested. The issuing agency shall adopt a

written procedure to allow a person to request an administrative hearing without payment of the amount due upon satisfactory proof of an inability to pay the amount due. An administrative hearing shall be held within 90 calendar days following the receipt of a request for an administrative hearing, excluding time tolled pursuant to this chapter. The person requesting the hearing may request one continuance, not to exceed 21 calendar days.

(c) The administrative hearing process shall include all of the following:

(1) The person requesting a hearing shall have the choice of a hearing by mail or in person. An in-person hearing shall be conducted within the jurisdiction of the issuing agency. If an issuing agency contracts with a private vendor pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 99580, hearings shall be held within the jurisdiction of the issuing agency.

(2) The administrative hearing shall be conducted in accordance with written procedures established by the issuing agency and approved by the governing body or chief executive officer of the issuing agency. The hearing shall provide an independent, objective, fair, and impartial review of contested violations.

(3) The administrative review shall be conducted before a hearing officer designated to conduct the review by the issuing agency's governing body or chief executive officer. In addition to any other requirements of employment, a hearing officer shall demonstrate those qualifications, training, and objectivity prescribed by the issuing agency's governing body or chief executive as are necessary and which are consistent with the duties and responsibilities set forth in this chapter. The hearing officer's continued employment, performance evaluation, compensation, and benefits shall not be directly or indirectly linked to the amount of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation penalties imposed by the hearing officer.

(4) The person who issued the notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation shall not be required to participate in an administrative hearing. The issuing agency shall not be required to produce any evidence other than the notice of fare evasion or passenger conduct violation. The documentation in proper form shall be prima facie evidence of the violation pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 99580.

(5) The hearing officer's decision following the administrative hearing may be personally delivered to the person by the hearing officer or sent by first-class mail.

(6) Following a determination by the hearing officer that a person committed the violation, the hearing officer may, and consistent with subdivision (f) of Section 99580, shall, allow payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in installments or deferred payment if the person provides satisfactory evidence of an inability to pay the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty in full. The hearing officer may, and consistent with subdivision (g) of Section 99580, shall, permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the fare evasion or passenger conduct penalty.