

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE
FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULES**

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: TE-180367
PENALTY AMOUNT: \$100

SYMBOLIC COACH LINES, INC.
4732 Southcenter Boulevard, Apt. A103
Tukwila, WA 98188

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) believes that Symbolic Coach Lines, Inc. (Symbolic or company) has committed one violation of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-30-221, Vehicle and Driver Safety Requirements, which adopts Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 393 – Parts and Accessories Necessary for Safe Operation.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.04.405 allows penalties of one hundred dollars for each violation. In the case of an ongoing violation, every day's continuance is considered a separate and distinct violation.

On April 25, 2018, Commission Motor Carrier Investigator Francine Gagne completed a vehicle inspection of one Symbolic vehicle¹ during a destination check and documented the following violation:

- **One violation of Title 49 CFR Part 393.62(a) – No or defective emergency exits.** Staff found one passenger side emergency exit missing a latch, two driver side emergency exits inoperable, and both roof hatches failing to latch shut.

The Commission considered the following factors in determining the appropriate penalty for the violation:

1. **How serious or harmful the violation is to the public.** The violation noted is serious and potentially harmful to the public. Companies that fail to maintain critical safety equipment increase the potential for a failure to occur during an emergency. This could present serious safety concerns to its passengers.
2. **Whether the violation is intentional.** Considerations include:
 - Whether the company ignored Commission staff's previous technical assistance; and
 - Whether there is clear evidence through documentation or other means that shows the company knew of and failed to correct the violation.

On April 20, 2017, the Commission received the company's application for charter and excursion service authority. Leon Li, owner of Symbolic, acknowledged the company's

¹ Fleet number 5301.

responsibility to understand and comply with applicable motor carrier safety rules in the application.

On May 3, 2017, Commission Motor Carrier Investigator Jason Sharp provided technical assistance to Leon Li during Symbolic's new entrant examination, and Mr. Li verified that training was provided.

The company knew, or should have known about these requirements.

3. **Whether the company self-reported the violation.** The company did not self-report this violation.
4. **Whether the company was cooperative and responsive.** The driver was cooperative and responsive throughout the vehicle inspection.
5. **Whether the company promptly corrected the violations and remedied the impacts.** Symbolic corrected the violation and provided staff with proof of repairs made to the emergency exits.
6. **The number of violations.** Staff identified two violation types with a total of two occurrences.
7. **The number of customers affected.** The company reported 60,000 miles traveled in 2017. Many passengers were potentially affected by this safety violation.
8. **The likelihood of recurrence.** The Commission does not know if Symbolic is likely to repeat this safety violation.
9. **The company's past performance regarding compliance, violations, and penalties.** Symbolic has no history of previous violations or penalties.
10. **The company's existing compliance program.** Leon Li is listed as the Safety Director for Symbolic in the company's 2017 annual report.
11. **The size of the company.** Symbolic is a small company with two commercial motor vehicles.

The Commission's Enforcement Policy provides that some Commission requirements are so fundamental to safe operations that the Commission will issue mandatory penalties for each occurrence of a first-time violation.² The Commission generally will assess penalties per type of violation, rather than per occurrence, for first-time violations of those critical regulations that do not meet the requirements for mandatory penalties. The Commission will assess penalties for any equipment violation meeting the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's "out-of-service"

² Docket A-120061 – Enforcement Policy of the Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission – Section V.

criteria and also for repeat violations of critical regulations, including each occurrence of a repeat violation.

The Commission has considered these factors and determined that it should penalize Symbolic \$100 for one violation of WAC 480-30-221, Vehicle and Driver Safety Requirements, calculated as follows:

- One violation of Title 49 CFR Part 393.62(a) – No or defective emergency exits. This is a first-time violation of a fundamental safety requirement. The Commission assesses a penalty of \$100 per occurrence, for a total of \$100.

This information, if proven at a hearing and not rebutted or explained, is sufficient to support the penalty assessment.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe any or all of the violations did not occur, you may deny committing the violation(s) and contest the penalty assessment through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for hearing only if material issues of law or fact concerning the violation(s) require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any contest of the penalty assessment must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that contest. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the contest.

If there is a reason for any or all of the violations that you believe should excuse you from the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of this penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for hearing only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any request for mitigation must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. See RCW 81.04.405.

If you properly present your request for a hearing and the Commission grants that request, the Commission will review the evidence supporting your dispute of the violation(s) or application for mitigation in a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge will consider the evidence and will notify you of his or her decision.

You must act within 15 days after receiving this notice to do one of the following:

- Pay the amount due.
- Contest the occurrence of the violations.
- Request mitigation to contest the amount of the penalty.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and submit it electronically through the Commission's web portal **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this notice. If you are unable to use the web portal, you may submit it via email to records@utc.wa.gov. If you are unable to submit the form electronically, you may send a paper copy to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, PO Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250.

If you do not act within 15 days, the Commission may take additional enforcement action, including but not necessarily limited to suspending or revoking your certificate to provide

regulated service, assessing additional penalties, or referring this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective May 11, 2018.

/s/ Rayne Pearson
RAYNE PEARSON
Director, Administrative Law Division

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
PENALTY ASSESSMENT TE-180367

PLEASE NOTE: You must complete and sign this document, and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the penalty assessment. Use additional paper if needed. I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, am competent to testify to the matters set forth below and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements.

1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violations occurred and enclose \$100 in payment of the penalty.

2. **Contest the violations.** I believe that some or all of the alleged violations did not occur for the reasons I describe below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your contest here, your request will be denied**):

a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision

OR b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your application here, your request will be denied**):

a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision

OR b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: _____ [month/day/year], at _____ [city, state]

Name of Respondent (Company) – please print

Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020:

“Perjury in the first degree. (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he makes a materially false statement which he knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law. (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor’s mistaken belief that his statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section. (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.”