Bus trips are among the safest ways to travel — and most bus companies are responsible and law abiding. But some companies may not follow federal safety requirements — increasing the risk for breakdowns and crashes. It’s important not to choose a charter bus or bus company on price alone. Instead, take a few minutes to research bus safety before booking.

**RESEARCH BUS SAFETY**

You can research company safety records online www.fmcsa.dot.gov/lookbeforeyoubook — or download the convenient SaferBus mobile app. These tools let you quickly verify that the company is authorized to operate — and that it has required liability insurance. You can check the company’s safety rating. You can also learn whether the company has a history of safety problems, such as:

- **Unsafe driving**.
- **Using drivers who aren’t qualified or licensed** to operate a passenger bus,
- **Failing to perform required maintenance**, or
- **Not complying with regulations** that help prevent impaired driving due to fatigue, alcohol, illegal drugs or misuse of legal medications.

**EXPLORE DRIVER SAFETY**

If you’re planning to charter a bus, it’s also smart to verify driver qualifications with the bus company. It’s important to know if drivers have:

- A **current Commercial Driver’s License (CDL)** with a “Passenger Endorsement” — which requires knowledge and road testing relevant to operating a bus.
- Drivers should meet all medical qualifications.
- Significant **experience** and a **good safety history** in operating buses.

**QUICK SEARCH TIPS**

- **Ask the bus company for its DOT Number** — and search by number, since many companies have similar names.

- **If your search includes a safety rating,** **Satisfactory** is the highest rating — meaning the company complies with federal safety requirements. A **Conditional rating** means the company may not be complying with some requirements, but can still operate. Bus companies with **Unsatisfactory safety ratings** are generally not allowed to operate.

- **ONLINE OR IN THE SAFERBUS APP**
  - A **bold red alert** indicates a company is **“not allowed to operate”** — never book with a company that isn’t authorized to operate.
  - **Denotes this carrier exceeds the FMCSA intervention threshold relative to its safety event grouping based upon roadside data and/or has been cited with one or more Acute/Critical Violations within the past 12 months during an investigation. Therefore, this carrier may be prioritized for an intervention action and roadside inspection.**
Driving fatigued is dangerous. Drivers cannot drive for more than 10 consecutive hours - and cannot drive at all after 15 consecutive hours on duty.

For long trips, the bus company should provide a safe, backup driver. Trip planners and tour leaders should never ask a bus driver for “extra” or extended stops that could require on-duty hours that violate the law. And no one should ever ask a driver to speed to “make up” time.

If you see a company or driver operating unsafely, or failing to comply with Accessibility laws, report it through FMCSA’s toll-free hotline at 1-888-DOT-SAFT (1-888-368-7238) from 8 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., M-F Eastern Time or use FMCSA’s consumer complaint site anytime (http://nccdb.fmcsa.dot.gov).

If you believe you or others are in immediate danger due to unsafe operation, call 911.

www.fmcsa.dot.gov/lookbeforeyoubook

Get More Bus Safety Information – and Take Advantage of FMCSA Tools to Look Before You Book!