

Cruise Ship Tour Bus and Tour Vehicle Policy

Town of Bar Harbor

In order to address traffic and congestion problems in the vicinity of the Town Pier, the following policy is hereby adopted:

1. These rules shall be enforced by officers and/or designated employees of the Bar Harbor Police Department (BHPD). It is understood that the BHPD may apply alternative rules to address unique conditions at their discretion.
2. Cruise ship tour buses may utilize the parking areas and the travel portion of West Street between Agamont Lane and Main Street. This area will be referred to as the "Loading Area". Cruise ship tour buses with no passengers aboard should not stage in the Loading Area for more than fifteen minutes prior to loading passengers at any time unless special circumstances arise.
3. On days where cruise ships tendering to One West Street floats with a lower berth capacity of 2000 passengers or less, the Loading Area and street closure will be maintained as follows:
 - A. Cruise ship tour buses shall be loaded on the North side of the Loading Area with a maximum of two buses at any one time.
 - B. The East side of Main Street from Newport Drive to West Street may be used until 11AM, for loading cruise ship tour buses holding no more than 30 passengers each. Parking spaces may be opened to the public at or before 11AM.
 - C. The Loading Area may remain open to one-way traffic all day, but can be closed at the discretion of the duty Officer.
4. On days where cruise ships tendering to One West Street floats with a lower berth capacity of 2000 passenger or more, the Loading Area and street closure will be maintained as follows:
 - A. The Loading Area shall be blocked using stanchions, queuing lines or other suitable devices at 7AM until 11AM and closed to all traffic unrelated to cruise ship operations. The duty Officer shall reserve the right to continue road closure after 11AM.
 - B. Cruise ship tour buses shall load passengers on the North side of the Loading Area and may load a maximum of four buses at any time. The South side of the loading area shall remain free of parked vehicles to allow for emergency vehicles and other circumstances when vehicles may need to access the pier through the Loading Area.
 - C. After 11AM the Loading Area may be opened to one-way traffic and a maximum of two cruise ship tour buses may be loaded at any time on the North side of the loading area.
 - D. The East side of Main Street from Newport Drive to West Street may be used until 11AM for loading cruise ship tour buses holding no more than 30 passengers each. Parking spaces may be opened to the public at or before 11AM.

5. Cruise ship tour companies not actively loading passengers may only stage a maximum of two busses in the four spaces designated by the duty Officer at the Newport Drive Parking Lot. Additional bus staging space is available in the open area owned by the Town at the corner of Cromwell Harbor Road and Great Meadow Drive (former Highway Garage location).
6. Cruise ship tour companies utilizing vehicles designed to carry 15 or fewer passengers shall utilize the last four regular parking spaces on the right as you exit the Town Pier Lot.
7. On days where a cruise ship is tendering passengers to the Harborside Pier, a maximum of four public parking spaces may be utilized for one (1) cruise ship tour bus on the North side of West Street beginning at the entrance to the Harborside Hotel.
8. Cruise ship tour buses shall turn off their engines at all times except when underway. Exceptions shall be permitted to accommodate special circumstances such as wheel chair lift operation.
9. When cruise ships are in port and the Loading Area is in use, all commercial delivery vehicles shall park along the curb of Agamont Park just outside the East side of the Loading Area, near the public boat launch. The delivery vehicles should position themselves between the crosswalks when possible.
10. When utilizing the drop-off area on the South side of Mt. Desert Street motor coaches shall park within areas designated by BHPD.
11. No more than one motor coach at a time shall be allowed at the drop-off area on the south side of Mt. Desert Street.
12. Motor coach drop-off areas shall not be used unless drop-off personnel are present and wearing identifying clothing.
13. Drop-off coning and signage shall be stored out of view from the public way when not in use.
14. Prior to the first Cruise Ship visit of each season, staff shall ensure that a mandatory meeting of the Bar Harbor Police, Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, tour operators, and motor coach companies is held to ensure that all parties are aware of policies and procedures regarding Cruise Ship Motor Coach tour operations.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

3/18/03 Adopted by Town Council
3/7/11 Cruise Ship Committee recommended amendment
4/11/11 Town Manager suggested non-substantive edits
10/24/11 Cruise Ship Committee recommended amendment
12/20/11 Council adopted Cruise Ship Committee draft
1/16/18 Cruise Ship Committee recommended amendment
1/16/18 Council adopted Cruise Ship Committee draft
03/12/20 Cruise Ship Committee recommended amendment
04/21/20 Amended by Council