

ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago has a compelling interest in ensuring that the Chicago Transit Authority (“CTA”) system—including CTA trains and buses, CTA stations, platforms, mezzanines, entrances, and bus stops, and areas immediately adjacent thereto—is safe, accessible, and free from harassment, intimidation, and violence for all riders and CTA employees; and

WHEREAS, the CTA serves millions of riders each year and is a critical component of economic opportunity, mobility, and community connection throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, reported incidents occurring on CTA vehicles and within CTA stations, platforms, and surrounding areas—including harassment, threats, assault, stalking, and non-consensual recording—undermine public safety and deter residents and visitors from utilizing public transportation; and

WHEREAS, women, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and other vulnerable riders experience a disproportionate share of harassment and intimidation on or near public transit and may be less able to avoid or report such conduct due to fear of retaliation, barriers to reporting, or other circumstances; and

WHEREAS, existing enhanced-penalty provisions that apply within “public transportation safety zones” primarily focus on weapons-related offenses and do not fully address the range of non-weapons conduct occurring within public transportation settings; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that strengthening penalties for certain offenses committed within public transportation safety zones is intended to deter misconduct—particularly repeat or intentional misconduct directed at vulnerable riders—protect public safety, and promote confidence in the CTA system; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that enhancing penalties for specified offenses committed on or near public transportation is necessary to provide greater protection for riders most impacted by harassment, intimidation, and violence, including women, seniors, and individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, data collection, transparency, and intergovernmental collaboration are necessary to support the enforcement of enhanced penalties and to develop effective prevention, enforcement, and response strategies to address harassment and violence on and near public transit; and

WHEREAS, effectively addressing harassment and violence affecting riders on CTA vehicles and within CTA facilities requires coordination among the City’s departments, the CTA, the Chicago Police Department, prosecutors, and relevant community and governmental partners; now, therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. Section 8-4-350 of the Municipal Code of Chicago is hereby amended by inserting the language underscored, as follows:

8-4-350 Enhanced penalties for offenses committed in public transportation safety zones.

(a) *Definition.* For purposes of this section, "public transportation safety zone" means:

(1) any bus, train, or other form of transportation operated by a transportation authority that is funded, in whole or in part, with public funds;

(2) in, or within 100 feet of, any building, real property, or parking area under the control of a public transportation authority that is funded, in whole or in part, with public funds; and

(3) within 100 feet of any bus shelter or sign designating the location of a bus stop utilized by a transportation authority that is funded, in whole or in part, with public funds.

(b) *Penalties.*

(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)

(4) The following enhanced penalties shall apply to violations of Sections 8-4-026, 8-4-075, 8-4-076, 8-4-077, 8-4-080, 8-4-084, 8-4-085, 8-4-126, or 8-4-127 of this Code that occur in public transportation safety zones:

(A) the penalty for a first offense shall be a fine of not less than \$1,000.00 nor more than \$5,000.00, and incarceration for a term not less than 120 days nor more than six months;

(B) the penalty for a second offense shall be a fine of not less than \$5,000.00 nor more than \$15,000.00, and incarceration for a term not less than 150 days nor more than six months; and

(C) the penalty for a third or subsequent offense shall be a fine of not less than \$10,000.00 nor more than \$20,000.00, and incarceration for a term of six months.

SECTION 2. The Chicago Police Department, in consultation with representatives of the Gender-Based Violence Task Force, the Department of Family and Support Services, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, Chicago Transit Authority, Cook County States Attorney's Office, and any other applicable City, Sister Agency, State, or federal agencies or departments, shall study the causes of the disproportionate levels of harassment and violence affecting vulnerable transit users, including women, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, and formulate strategies to: (1) increase capacity and expertise within City departments and Sister Agencies to address harassment and violence against vulnerable transit users on public transit; (2) enhance coordination of prevention and intervention efforts among City departments to address harassment and violence against vulnerable transit users; (3) improve law enforcement responses to harassment and violence against vulnerable transit users; (4) collect, analyze, and use data and research to enhance efforts to combat harassment and violence against vulnerable transit users; and (5) identify and recommend to the City Council proposed legislation, plans, policies, or other procedures to address harassment and violence against vulnerable transit users, including any recommendations for an intergovernmental agreement between the City and any Sister Agency, Cook County, the State, or any other applicable State or federal agencies or departments.

SECTION 3. On or before June 1, 2026,, the Chicago Police Department, in consultation with representatives of the Gender-Based Violence Task Force, the Department of Family and Support Services, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, shall prepare a report outlining the findings of the study and recommended strategies under Section 2 of this ordinance and submit such report to the Mayor and the Committee on Public Safety.

SECTION 4. Section 1 of this ordinance takes effect 10 days after passage and publication. Sections 2 and 3 of this ordinance take effect upon passage and approval.



JAMES M. GARDINER
Alderman, 45th Ward