

## Urban Legends in Public Transit



**Test your knowledge by clicking “True” or “False”  
To each of the following Urban Legends**



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## 1 *The legend*

I know the difference between being questioned and being arrested, and it's very simple. When I commit a minor offence and an inspector lets me go with a warning, that's being questioned. However, when I've received several warnings, or when the offence is more serious, I'm arrested, and I have to accompany the inspectors to the station.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 1 **THE REALITY**

### **What are the consequences of being questioned?**

A person who commits an offence in the public transit system under by-laws R-036<sup>1</sup> or R-036<sup>2</sup> can be detained for questioning by an inspector of the law. The inspector may ask that person for identification in order to serve a statement of offence. The person may enter a plea of not guilty or pay the fine, which will be considered as having entered a plea of guilty.

Here are a few examples of offences under by-laws R-036 or R-036:

- Getting on the bus or metro without paying (\$150 plus costs);
- Not having the STM's reduced fare ID card (carte d'accès au tarif réduit) when paying a reduced fare (\$150 plus costs);
- Riding a bicycle in a metro station (\$75 plus costs);
- Using roller skates in a metro station (\$75 plus costs);
- Using a laser pointer (\$75 plus costs);
- Holding open the doors of a metro car (\$150 plus costs);
- Delaying a train's departure (\$150 plus costs);
- Hanging on to the exterior of an STM vehicle (\$150 plus costs);
- Walking on the tracks in a tunnel (\$500 plus costs);
- Damaging an STM vehicle or building or defacing it with graffiti (\$200 plus costs);
- Throwing, spilling or disposing of any object anywhere other than in the containers provided for this purpose (\$100 plus costs).

## 2 *The legend*

Whether I'm a person under 18, or 18 and over, if I commit an offence under a by-law or law, I can refuse at any time to identify myself to the inspector questioning me.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 2 **THE REALITY**

When a person commits an offence and an inspector asks that person for identification, the person must provide their names, address and date of birth. Anyone refusing to do so can also be accused of obstructing the work of an inspector as stated in section 146 of the ACT RESPECTING PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITIES R.S.Q., chapter S-30.01, Section 144 (\$250 + costs).

[Laws and By-laws](#) > [Questioning and arrest](#) > [Arrest](#)

## 3 *The legend*

When I've received several warnings, or when the offence is more serious, I'm arrested, and I must accompany the inspector to the station.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 3 **THE REALITY**

### **Consequences of an arrest**

Persons who commit a criminal act or an offence that could jeopardize the life or safety of people, or the safety of equipment, can be arrested by an inspector. Offenders will then be informed of their rights and usually released following identification. They will have to appear before a judge and, if necessary, go through a trial. If they are found guilty, they will then receive a sentence. They will be subject to a fine, and even imprisonment, if the offence is serious enough.

Here are a few examples of offences under the criminal code, which could result in an arrest:

- Extortion (theft from a person using threat or intimidation);
- Theft in a building;
- Theft in a vehicle;

- Damaging an object or property (e.g. graffiti);
- Attacking a person;
- Being in possession of a prohibited weapon;
- Committing any type of offence that could jeopardize the safety of equipment, or the life or safety of people;
- Refusing to identify oneself to an inspector following an offence;
- Attempting to avoid questioning;
- Interfering between an inspector and a person being questioned;
- Identifying oneself by a false name to an inspector after committing an offence.

#### 4 *The legend*

I'm 13 years old. If I commit an offence under the criminal code I can't be arrested or prosecuted because I'm too young.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

#### 4 **THE REALITY**

A person aged 12 or over who commits an offence sanctioned under the criminal code can be arrested and must appear in the Court of Québec, Youth Division.

### Laws and By-laws > By-laws R-036 and R-037

#### 5 *The legend*

I'm under 18. If I commit an offence under the STM's By-law R-036<sup>1</sup> or R-037<sup>2</sup>, I can't receive a statement of offence because I'm too young.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

#### 5 **THE REALITY**

For this type of offence, any person aged 14 or over can receive a statement of offence. However, the maximum fine will be \$100 plus costs (for those under 18 years old). The parents or guardian will also be informed of the offence.

## 6 *The legend*

I'm under 14, and if I commit an offence under a law or a by-law, there will be no consequences.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 6 **THE REALITY**

For these types of offences, a person under 14 can be questioned, but no statement of offence will be issued. However, the Court of Québec, Youth Division and the parents or guardian will be informed of this offence.

## 7 *The legend*

If I'm 14 or over, and I've committed an offence, and I've paid my statement of offence, I'm released from any responsibility for any damages or injuries I caused.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 7 **THE REALITY**

I can be held responsible, as well as my parents or guardian, for any damages or injuries I caused, even after paying the fine related to the statement of offence.

## 8 *The legend*

I can carry a knife on public transit at any time as long as the length of the blade doesn't exceed the width of my hand.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 8 **THE REALITY**

By-law R-036<sup>1</sup> forbids the carrying of a knife, a sword, a machete or other similar object without reasonable cause. The fine for this offence is \$300 plus costs. The inspector can also seize the knife.

## 9 *The legend*

I can carry a knife to protect myself in public places.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

## 9 **THE REALITY**

When a person carries a knife or similar object on public transit claiming it's for protection, this is not reasonable cause in the eyes of the law. Violence leads to violence! A person carrying a knife only increases the level of violence in the event of altercations.

The STM inspectors and officers of the City of Montreal police department (SPVM) are there to ensure your safety and to provide help if needed. In addition, the STM personnel can help you by calling for emergency services.

## 10 *The legend*

When I deface STM property with graffiti, I can be questioned and fined without having to pay for damages.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**



## 10 THE REALITY

In addition to being subject to a fine of \$200 plus costs, I could be held legally responsible since the STM is entitled to claim for damages done to its property. If I'm under 18, my parents and I would have to share this responsibility.

### Laws and By-laws > Aboard the bus

## 11 *The legend*

If the bus is full and I have a monthly pass (CAM), I can get on by the back door of the bus.

TRUE

FALSE

## 11 THE REALITY

With the exception of access to wheelchair users on low-floor buses, no one is authorized to get on a bus by the back door, even CAM transit pass holders. Every user must pay their fare; transit pass holders must show their pass to the driver when boarding the bus. Moreover, those entitled to reduced fare<sup>3</sup> or *Privilège étudiant 18-25*<sup>4</sup>, must show their ID card when paying their fare. Not doing so is an offence subject to a fine of \$150 for non payment of fare, and of \$75 for entering in a bus by the rear door.



## Laws and By-laws > By-law R-037

### 12 *The legend*

An STM representative can't ask to see my transit pass or my STM reduced fare ID card.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

### 12 **THE REALITY**

The passenger must, on request, allow an attendant<sup>5</sup> of the STM to verify the validity of a transit pass and of the reduced-fare identity card recognized by the STM, if applicable.

## Laws and By-laws > In the métro

### 13 *The legend*

It doesn't really cause a problem if I hold open the doors of a metro car after school to let my friends get on. I'm simply delaying the train I'm on, so I can take the time to hold the train for my buddies.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

### 13 **THE REALITY**

When a person delays a train, particularly during "after-school" rush hour, it's very inconvenient for both the STM and its passengers. During rush hour, the trains run very close together. For safety reasons, those responsible for the operation of the trains must slow down the whole metro system. It should be noted that a person acting in this way is committing two offences – holding open the doors and delaying a train in a metro station - involving fines of \$150 each plus costs.

## Electricity

### 14 *The legend*

When I'm on the metro platform and I drop my school bag on the tracks, I can go down onto the tracks by going through the gate at the end of the platform, as long as there's no train in the station. I can then walk on the metro track without any danger of being electrocuted.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

### 14 **THE REALITY**

Even if there is no train in the station, the metro rails always carry a DEADLY electrical current of 750 volts. Access to the tracks and in the tunnel is forbidden to the public; Only specially trained STM employees or authorized personnel have the right to walk on the track to perform system maintenance or intervene in urgent situations. If there is an urgent situation, you must use the red emergency telephone at an assistance area<sup>6</sup> (point d'assistance) located on the metro platform.

### 15 *The legend*

A person who touches one of the four large bars covered with yellow insulation located on the track level, but doesn't touch a metal rail, cannot be electrocuted.

**TRUE**

**FALSE**

### 15 **THE REALITY**

Even a person who touches one of these guide bars, and who has a foot on the cement track, can suffer a fatal shock, as the damp cement becomes a conductor of electricity. In addition, running shoes and other footwear are often damp inside due to natural body perspiration and don't provide protection from electric shocks.

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## **Code of Behaviour**

This Code of Behaviour is intended for Montreal students travelling on the STM network and using an STM Reduced Fare ID Card to pay their fare.

- I show respect for others in the way I act and talk.
- I respect laws and by-laws in effect.
- I respect public property; I am aware that graffiti and vandalism are damage done to property.
- I adopt a cautious behaviour so I don't endanger safety of myself and others.
- I behave in a way that doesn't disturb or delay transit service.
- I pay the required fare.
- I always show my reduced fare ID card to bus drivers and station fare collectors, as well as to inspectors upon request.
- I assist people in distress by calling for help with the red phones located in the "Points d'assistance" (assistance areas), or by informing an STM employee of the situation.
- I commit myself to respect this Code of Behaviour. Otherwise, I could lose my privilege to use the reduced fare, in accordance with by-law R-037.

## Notes

1. **By-law R-036** from the *Act respecting public transit authorities* (R.S.Q., chapter S-30.01, Section 144). By-law prescribing standards of safety and conduct to be observed by passengers in the rolling stock and immovable properties operated by or for the Société de transport de Montréal.
2. **By-law R-037** from the *Act respecting public transit authorities* (R.S.Q., chapter S-30.01, Section 144). By-law prescribing conditions regarding the possession and use of any transportation ticket issued under the authority of the Société de transport de Montréal.
3. **The STM reduced fare ID card** (Carte d'accès au tarif réduit). Cards issued by the AMT, the STL (Laval), the RTL (Longueuil) are also accepted.
4. **The Privilège étudiant 18-25** is for full-time students aged between 18 and 25 who reside on the island of Montreal. This card is issued by the STM only.
5. **Attendant:** an employee, representative of the STM or person authorized to act as an inspector, in accordance with the *Act respecting public transit authorities* (R.S.Q., chapter S-30.01, Section 144).
6. **Assistance Area** (Point d'assistance) : There is an assistance area on every métro platform. In these areas you will find:
  - A red emergency telephone directly connected to the métro's Control Centre;
  - A switch for track current
  - A fire extinguisher

All Assistance stations are clearly identified with the hand logo and word **ASSISTANCE**.

**In case of an emergency,  
do not hesitate to use this equipment!**

