

AC gamblers upset with Greyhound's casino bus change

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ATLANTIC CITY — Casino commuters on Greyhound's Lucky Streak bus line are confused and frustrated over a new ticket policy implemented this month.

The bus company now requires round-trip passengers traveling between the resort's casinos and New York City to purchase a reserved ticket for an exact time on their return trip. Previously, the casino buses operated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The policy went into effect April 1.

Beatrice Robinson, of Richmond, Virginia, said she found the new policy inconvenient. As a frequent visitor to Atlantic City, Robinson, 70, said the Greyhound policy could affect how often she visits in the future.

"The whole idea of coming to Atlantic City is to be carefree and spontaneous," she said. "This is annoying."

A spokeswoman for Greyhound said the policy change was based on feedback from customers.

"Greyhound currently offers reserved seating for all other travel destinations," said Crystal Booker, communications specialist for Greyhound Lines Inc. "This change in Atlantic City brings consistency to the booking process and ensures a confident travel experience for all of our customers."

But some customers at the casino bus terminals said the policy is detrimental to gamblers, whose time in Atlantic City is often based on how well they are doing at the slots or tables.

Robinson said she had to rearrange her schedule to account for a set return time on the bus.

"Once you get here, (going home) depends on the social time you're having. It depends on, sometimes, the financial results," she said while waiting inside the Bally's Atlantic City bus terminal.

Passengers can still purchase one-way tickets at their convenience, but a round-trip ticket is cheaper.

Until June 3, Greyhound is allowing round-trip passengers to alter their return trip at no cost. After that date, a fee will be assessed for any alterations to purchased round-trip tickets.

Jackie Ramos, 52, of Manhattan, New York, said she has been using buses to get to Atlantic City for nearly 30 years. She characterized the new policy as restrictive. Ramos said when she attempted to purchase her tickets at the Port Authority in New York City, she could not buy them online or using a kiosk.

"I had to wait on line. I almost missed the 5 o'clock bus here, which is the last one," she said while waiting for her return bus outside Harrah's Resort Atlantic City. "It's frustrating. It's ridiculous."

Ramos was particularly confused by the timing of the policy change.

“You’re doing this as it’s turning to the summer season when it gets busy?” she said.

Greyhound buses to and from New York City are available at the Atlantic City Bus Terminal as well as at Bally’s, Caesars Atlantic City, Harrah’s, Resorts Casino Hotel and Tropicana Atlantic City.