



CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

CITATION FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE AND BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE

To: Paul J. Fretheim, an individual
doing business as East Side Sierra Shuttle



File: TCP 35385-P
Citation #: T.23-12-001
Case #: CSE-000004
Date: December 4, 2023

VIOLATIONS

You are hereby cited for having violated section(s) of the Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code, Commission General Order (G.O.), and Business and Profession (B&P) Code as described below. These violations occurred during the period of August 10, 2023 to November 16, 2023.

- (1) Operated during suspension of authority, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5379. [3 counts]
- (2) Operated without Public Liability and Property Damage Insurance in effect and on file, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5391 and G.O. 115. [3 counts]
- (3) Failed to maintain fitness and provide safe dependable service which promotes public safety, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Sections 5352(a) and 5374(a)(1). [2 counts]
- (4) Advertised as a charter-party carrier without a valid CPUC-issued operating authority in violation of Pub. Util. Code Sections 5414.5. [1 count]
- (5) Knowingly and willingly published untrue and misleading advertisements, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381, and B&P Code Sections 17200 and 17500. [1 count]

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The above violations are documented in the Investigation Report, which consists of carrier's records and substantiating documents obtained from other sources.

RESPONSE

TEB applied Resolution M-4846 and considered mitigating and exacerbating factors in setting the fine.

You are hereby called upon to answer this citation on or before January 2, 2024.

By way of such answer, you may either:

- (1) Pay a fine of **\$20,000** pursuant to Pub. Util. Code section 5378. (Submit a cashier's check or money order payable to California Public Utilities Commission using the provided *Citation Compliance Agreement*. Upon payment, the fine will be deposited in the State Treasury to the credit of the General Fund and the Commission staff will deem the matter closed.) or
- (2) Contact the Program and Project Supervisor, Maria Solis, to make payment arrangements, **or**
- (3) Contest this citation by filing an appeal. See the provided documents entitled
 - *How to File an Appeal* and
 - *Instructions for Filing a Notice of Appeal and Certificate of Service for a Citation Appeal*.

If you fail to respond by January 2, 2024, you will be in default and will have forfeited your right to appeal the Citation. In addition, your operating authority will be immediately suspended and may be subsequently revoked, pursuant to Resolution ALJ-187. The Commission may also act through a civil or criminal proceeding to recover any unpaid fine and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and Commission orders.

Maria C. Solis

Maria Solis
Program and Project Supervisor
Transportation Enforcement Branch
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
(916) 928-2534
e-mail: ms8@cpuc.ca.gov

INVESTIGATION REPORT

CARRIER: Paul J. Fretheim, an individual, dba East Side Sierra Shuttle

AUTHORITY: Charter-Party Carrier TCP 35385-P
Suspended: July 20, 2023 and August 26, 2023
Revoked: October 18, 2023 and November 26, 2023

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

PHONE / EMAIL: [REDACTED]

VEHICLES: 5

**EMPLOYEE
DRIVERS:** 2

PL&PD INSR: Canceled July 20, 2023
Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Company
Policy #: [REDACTED]
Effective: May 20, 2022 – July 20, 2023. Coverage \$750,000

WKCP INSR: None

DRUG CO.: New Era Drug Testing LLC
Enrollees: 1 - Mr. Fretheim

EPN: [REDACTED]
Enrollees: 1 - Mr. Fretheim

REVENUE:	<u>Year</u>	<u>Declared Revenue</u>
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

NARRATIVE

On November 3, 2023, I was assigned to investigate the business operations of Paul J. Fretheim, an individual, dba East Side Sierra Shuttle (hereinafter “Fretheim”). The investigation was initiated after Maria Solis, a Program and Project Manager with the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) received, on September 25, 2023, a customer complaint alleging unsafe driving.

PRIOR ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

Prior enforcement history records show that on July 31, 2023, Fretheim was administratively cited and fined \$16,000 [T.23-07-001] for violations of the Public Utilities Code, the Commission’s General Order 157, the California Vehicle Code, and the Business and Profession Code [**Attachment 1**]. Fretheim did not respond to the citation by the due date of August 26, 2023 and as a result his authority was suspended.

The violations, which occurred during the period of July 1, 2022 to February 24, 2023, with a limited focus on the 2018 and 2021 renewal applications, were as follows:

1. Failed to maintain fitness and provide safe dependable service which promotes public safety [23 counts];
2. Failed to produce business records [8 counts];
3. Failed to enroll drivers in the Department of Motor Vehicles Employer Pull Notice Program, and/or obtain, sign and date current driver records [8 counts];
4. Failed to enroll drivers in a Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Certification Program [2 counts];
5. Engaged employee drivers without having Workers’ Compensation Insurance in effect and on file with the Commission [8 counts];
6. Failed to maintain a current equipment statement and list all utilized vehicles on his equipment statement [1 count];
7. Operated outside the scope of his authority [5 counts];
8. Failed to utilize and/or fully complete waybills [1 count]; and
9. Published untrue and misleading advertisements [2 counts].

PRIOR COMPLAINT HISTORY

Prior complaint records revealed that the Commission’s Consumer Intake Unit (CIU) received eight (8) complaints from 2015 to 2021 as shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Complaints from 2015 to 2021

CIU Complaint # / Receipt Date	Complaint Issue
CIU# 20150019 1/16/15	Operating without authority. Resulted in an investigation (Case # PSG 3914), wherein Fretheim obtained a P permit and was issued written warning.
CIU# 20180246 9/21/18	Operating with an expired permit. Resulted in an investigation (Case # PSG 4861), wherein Fretheim went into voluntary suspension and the case was closed.
CIU# 20210053 6/30/21	Driver safety and health issues.
CIU# 20210070 8/20/21	Seeking \$495.00. Consumer canceled the prearranged trip nine (9) days in advance and requested a refund
CIU# 20210076 9/2/21	Seeking \$320.00. Fretheim did not provide the prearranged transportation, citing a broken-down vehicle and not enough drivers.
CIU#20220054 7/14/22	Seeking \$115 refund. Fretheim canceled the night before arranged trip.
CIU#20220060 8/9/22	Seeking \$800 refund. Consumer canceled the prearranged transportation 20 days in advance after CPUC website noted that Fretheim’s authority was suspended.
CIU#20220076 9/30/22	Seeking \$200 refund. Fretheim did not provide the prearranged transportation and was a “no show”.

VIOLATIONS

The investigation for the period of August 10, 2023 to November 16, 2023, disclosed the following violations of the Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code, Commission’s General Orders (G.O.), and the Business and Profession (B&P) Code:

- **Operated during suspension of authority, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5379. (3 counts)**

A review of the Commission’s Transportation and Licensing Analysis Branch (TLAB) records revealed that Fretheim’s operating authority was suspended on July 20, 2023 and revoked on October 18, 2023 for failure to maintain Public Liability and Property Damage

Insurance (PLPD) [Attachment 2]. Fretheim’s operating authority was also suspended on August 26, 2023 and revoked on November 26, 2023 for failure to respond to Citation T.23-07-001 [Attachment 1].

On September 25, 2025, TEB received a consumer complaint regarding transportation provided by Fretheim on September 24, 2023. The consumer complaint, for a 7.5-hour trip from Lone Pine to Crescent Meadow, expressed concerns that Fretheim seemed unfit to drive [Attachment 3].

A social media search revealed two (2) additional unlawful trips conducted by Fretheim on August 10, 2023 and September 28, 2023, for a total of three (3) known trips conducted without a valid authority as shown in Table 2 below and Attachment 3.

Table 2: Trips conducted after July 20, 2023 suspension

TRIP DATE	SOURCE
August 10, 2023	Yelp Complaint
September 24, 2023	CPUC Complaint
September 28, 2023	Yelp Complaint

- **Operated without Public Liability and Property Damage Insurance in effect and on file, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5391 and G.O. 115. (3 counts)**

A review of TLAB’s records revealed that Fretheim’s PLPD was canceled on July 20, 2023 and a TLAB Notice of Suspension was generated that same day [Attachment 2]. A consumer complaint for a for a trip conducted on September 24, 2023 and two (2) Yelp reviews posted on August 10, 2023 and September 28, 2023 disclosed that Fretheim operated without PLPD on at least three (3) occasions [Attachment 3].

- **Failed to maintain fitness and provide safe dependable service which promotes public safety in violation of the Pub. Util. Code Sections 5352(a) and 5374(a)(1). [2 counts]**

On July 31, 2023, Fretheim was issued Citation T.23-07-001. This Citation included twenty-three (23) counts for fitness and safety violations, including dangerous driving and failure to conduct the arranged transportation, thus leaving backpackers stranded in the Sierra. Two (2) recent customer interactions with Fretheim [Attachment 3] revealed that he has not addressed these issues.

On September 25, 2025, TEB received a consumer complaint regarding transportation provided by Fretheim on September 24, 2023. The consumer complaint, for a 7.5-hour trip from Lone Pine to Crescent Meadow, expressed concerns that Fretheim seemed unfit to drive **[Attachment 3]**.

On August 10, 2023, a Yelp review from a backpacker noted that Fretheim was paid a 50 percent deposit and on the day of the trip was a “no-show” and failed to conduct the transportation. Hikes such as this one are arranged by permit for specified dates and times in remote areas making safe dependable transportation essential.

- **Advertised as a charter-party carrier without a valid Commission-issued operating authority in violation of Pub. Util. Code Sections 5414.5. (1 count)**

A review of Fretheim’s website, <https://eastsidesierrashuttle.com>, revealed that despite having an invalid operating authority he continues to advertise for-hire transportation services on his website **[Attachment 4]**.

- **Knowingly and willingly published an untrue and misleading advertisement, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381, and the Business & Professions Code Sections 17200 and 17500. (1 count)**

Fretheim’s website, <https://eastsidesierrashuttle.com/>, falsely claims that he has valid operating authorities issued by the Commission and the Inyo National Forest **[Attachment 4]**. His website states in part: “*East Side Sierra Shuttle operates under permits from the California Public Utilities Commission, Inyo National Forest...CPUC #0035385*”.

Fretheim’s Commission-issued operating authority was suspended on July 20, 2023 and revoked on October 18, 2023 **[Attachment 2]**. His Inyo National Forest permit was repealed on December 7, 2022 **[Attachment 5]**.

This untrue advertising on the website that his services are authorized, endorsed, or permitted by Inyo National Forest and the Commission **[Attachment 4]** misleads consumers and undermines competitors. Fretheim was cited for his misrepresentation of his Inyo permit in Citation T.23-07-001 and yet continues to publish untrue, and misleading advertisements knowingly and willfully **[Attachment 1]**.

DECLARATION

I have read the foregoing and know the contents thereof, and I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, except as to those matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe to be true.

Executed on December 1, 2023
in Sacramento, California

Melanie Balfour
Melanie Balfour
Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst II

INDEX OF ATTACHMENTS

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Attachment 1

Citation T.23-07-001



CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**CITATION FOR VIOLATIONS
OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE, CALIFORNIA
VEHICLE CODE, AND BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE**

To: Paul J. Fretheim, an individual
doing business as East Side Sierra Shuttle
[REDACTED]

File: TCP 35385-P
Citation #: T.23-07-001
Case #: PSG-5781
Date: July 31, 2023

VIOLATIONS

You are hereby cited for having violated section(s) of the Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code, Commission General Order (G.O.) 157-E, CA Vehicle (CVC) Code, and Business and Profession (B&P) Code as described below. These violations occurred during the period of July 1, 2022 to February 24, 2023, with a limited focus on the 2018 and 2021 renewal applications.

- (1) Failed to maintain fitness and provide safe dependable service which promotes public safety, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Sections 5352(a) and 5374(a)(1). [23 counts]
- (2) Failed to produce business records, in violation of Pub. Util. Code section 5389 and G.O. 157-E, Part 6.02. [8 counts]
- (3) Failed to enroll drivers in the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Employer Pull Notice Program (EPN), and/or obtain, sign and date current driver records in violation of Pub. Util. Code sections 5374(a)(1)(D), 5381, G.O. 157-E Part 5.02, and CVC section 1808.1. [8 counts]
- (4) Failed to enroll drivers in a Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Certification Program, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5374(a)(1)(I), and G.O. 157-E, Part 10. [2 counts]
- (5) Engaged employee drivers without having Workers' Compensation Insurance in effect and on file with the Commission, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5378.1. [8 counts]
- (6) Failed to maintain a current equipment statement and list all utilized vehicles on his equipment statement, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381 and G.O. 157-E Part 4.01. [1 count]

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- (7) Operated outside the scope of his authority, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381 and G.O. 157-E Part 4.01. [5 counts]
- (8) Failed to utilize and/or fully complete waybills, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381.5 and G.O. 157-E, Part 3.01. [1 count]
- (9) Published untrue and misleading advertisements, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381, and B&P Code Sections 17200 and 17500. [2 counts]

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The above violations are documented in the Investigation Report, which consists of carrier's records and substantiating documents obtained from other sources.

RESPONSE

TEB applied Resolution M-4846 and considered mitigating and exacerbating factors in setting the fine.

You are hereby called upon to answer this citation on or before August 26, 2023.

By way of such answer, you may either:

- (1) Pay a fine of \$16,000 pursuant to Pub. Util. Code section 5378. (Submit a cashier's check or money order payable to California Public Utilities Commission using the provided *Citation Compliance Agreement*. Upon payment, the fine will be deposited in the State Treasury to the credit of the General Fund and the Commission staff will deem the matter closed.) or
- (2) Contact the Enforcement Analyst to make payment arrangements, or
- (3) Contest this citation by filing an appeal. See the provided documents entitled
 - *How to File an Appeal* and
 - *Instructions for Filing a Notice of Appeal and Certificate of Service for a Citation Appeal*.

If you fail to respond by August 26, 2023, you will be in default and will have forfeited your right to appeal the Citation. In addition, your operating authority will be immediately suspended and may be subsequently revoked, pursuant to Resolution ALJ-187. The Commission may also act through a civil or criminal proceeding to recover any unpaid fine and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and Commission orders.

Maria C. Solis

Maria Solis
Program and Project Supervisor
Transportation Enforcement Branch
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
(916) 928-2534
e-mail: ms8@cpuc.ca.gov

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Attachment 2

TLAB's PLPD Suspension and Revocation Notices

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PG00035385

ATTN: PAUL J. FRETHEIM



TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 90 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Jul 20, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PS00035385

ATTN: PAUL J FRETHEIM
[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 90 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Sep 23, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3288



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PSG0035385

ATTN: PAUL J FRETHEIM

[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 90 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Sep 25, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
525 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PSG0035385

ATTN: PAUL J FRETHEIM
[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

Order of Revocation

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is revoked effective October 18, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

There is a ninety (90) day period in which a revoked carrier may apply to reinstate the revoked operating authority unless it was permanently revoked.

Date: Oct 18, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

Attachment 3

Consumer Complaint and Yelp Reviews

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2023 5:19 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Paul Fretheim - East Side Sierra Shuttle

⌵
CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ⌵

⌵
Hi Maria, ⌵

⌵
My partner, [REDACTED], pulled your name from the CPUC citation for Paul Fretheim. ⌵

⌵
Unaware of this information, we booked a ride with him yesterday. Fortunately, he arrived when he said he would and delivered us from Lone Pine to Crescent Meadow for the agreed fare, so we do not have a financial claim against Paul. However we specifically hired him because he claimed to have a permit to drive into the National Parks and that he was a "licensed" shuttle driver. On the drive he admitted that he does not have a permit from Sequoia, and it looks like his CPUC "license" is suspended? I am not familiar with his licensing requirements, but I assume it's different from his DMV license? ⌵

⌵
Primarily we were very concerned for our safety and feel compelled for the sake of future riders to alert the appropriate authorities before someone gets injured or killed. Specifically, during our 7-1/2 hour drive: ⌵

⌵
1. Paul repeatedly failed to stay within his lane, frequently crossing the center line and edge lines. At one point on 395 he made a complete lane change, which seemed unintended. His sudden correction (ie, return to slow lane) almost caused an accident. [REDACTED], who was sitting behind him, noted that his eyes would close from time to time throughout the ride, and she would cough loudly to get him to pay attention to the road. ⌵

⌵
2. Paul was unable to maintain a safe speed: on level road he maintained the speed limit, but through the Tehachapi Pass, his speed ranged from 45 to almost 90 on curving, steep sections of the road where it was extremely unsafe to do so. ⌵

⌵
3. He exhibited serious breathing issues which he claims are chronic. Frequently he had trouble speaking due to breathing difficulty. We did NOT feel that he was close to fainting, but we were concerned that his condition may contribute to his unsafe driving or suddenly deteriorate leading to an accident. ⌵

⌵
It looks like Paul has other legal issues as you outline in your report, but our concern is that he seems unfit to drive, and although we recognize that this is his livelihood, we want to make sure no one is injured or killed because we did not speak up. Are you the appropriate person to bring this issue to? Should we report this to the DMV? ⌵

⌵
[REDACTED] ⌵
[REDACTED] ⌵



Jono H.

Los Angeles, CA

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★★★★★ Sep 28, 2023

📷 1 photo

I used East Side Sierra Shuttle on September 21, 2023 to travel from the Whitney Portal to Horseshoe Meadows. Paul was waiting at the Portal when I arrived. It was easy to book it - and Paul confirmed the pick up the day of. Use the phone number to call (better than email). And call back rather than leaving a voicemail.

I have read all of the negative comments. This was not my experience with Paul. It was the opposite. I received great service which was on time and allowed me to pursue my adventure. And he let us pick up a hitchhiker heading up to Horseshoe Meadows - so we were also able to help out a fellow backpacker.

Also worth noting that Paul was driving an electric car - so we used zero gasoline to pull this off. I liked that.



Paul C.

Germantown, TN

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★☆☆☆☆ Aug 10, 2023

If you're considering using a shuttle service anywhere in the High Sierras, then you absolutely **MUST AVOID EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE**. We arranged a shuttle with this outfit in the area. He insisted we pre-pay 50% in advance. I called him several days before the trip to confirm. He assured me in no uncertain terms that we were on his schedule for pick up. The day comes, and he's a complete no-show. He doesn't answer his phone, he doesn't return messages. So, Day 1 of our trip was a total disaster. I called him after the trip, and he said that I somehow "disappeared" off his Google calendar. Then he said that this was the third time that happened to him this year!! He said he'd refund my money, but he never did. So, unless you want to be stranded, do **NOT** use East Side Sierra Shuttle.

Attachment 4

Fretheim's Website

11/16/23 website excerpt showing untrue misleading permit language.

11/16/23, 11:50 AM

East Side Sierra Shuttle - The Most Reasonably Priced Trailhead Rides in the Eastern Sierra

[Home](#) | [Air Connections](#) | [Trail Info and Images](#) | [Payments Page](#)



East Side Sierra Shuttle

East Side Sierra Shuttle operates under permits from the California Public Utilities Commission, Inyo National Forest, and Yosemite National Park, CPUC #0035385

Your best value in trailhead rides.
We take you where you want to go for less!
We can take you anywhere in the
Sierra Nevada or the Death Valley country.



East Side Sierra Shuttle Chevy
Bolt EV below Independence Peak

Attachment 5

Inyo National Forest's Permit Repeal Letter



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Inyo
National
Forest

Supervisor's Office,
351 Pace Lane
Bishop, CA 93514
760-873-2400

File Code: 2720

Date: December 7, 2022

Paul Frotheim
East Side Sierra Shuttle
[REDACTED]

Mr. Frotheim,

It has come to my attention that you are conducting business as East Side Sierra Shuttle on the Inyo National Forest.

You have been granted neither a special use permit, nor a permit waiver, on the Inyo National Forest since 2021 and have not been authorized to provide shuttle services since that time. There is evidence of your continued operation in the many complaints that have been alleged regarding your service, amongst these are behavior unacceptable of an individual offering services on National Forest System lands. The allegations state that you have accepted payment, not provided the shuttle services, and refused refunds. Furthermore, your webpage, <http://www.eastside.sierrashuttle.com/index.html>, indicates that you are permitted to operate on Inyo National Forest which is inaccurate. You are not permitted to operate on the Inyo National Forest and are immediately requested to remove any advertising of your services on Inyo National Forest lands. The advertisement is attached to this letter.

Commercial outfitting and guiding on the National Forest requires a special-use permit (36 CFR 251). Conducting these activities without a permit is a violation of federal law (36 CFR 261.10C). As of this date we have no record of your intent to obtain a permit for this activity for the years 2022 or 2023.

Commercial activity is defined as any use or activity on National Forest System lands (a) where an entry or participation fee is charged or (b) where the primary purpose is the sale of a good or service and, in either case, regardless of whether the use or activity is intended you produce a profit (36 CFR 251.51).

Guiding is defined as providing services or assistance (such as supervision, protection, education, training, packing, touring, subsistence, transporting people, or interpretation) for pecuniary remuneration or other gain to individuals or groups on National Forest System lands. The term "guide" includes the holder's employees and agents (36 CFR 251.51).

If you have any questions please reach out to permit administrator [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Sarah
Clawson

Digitally signed by Sarah
Clawson
Date: 2022.12.07
12:58:24 -0800

Sarah Clawson
Acting Forest Supervisor

Attached: Webpage advertisement.

CC: Julie Hall, Philip DeSenna, Winfred Wong, Stephanie Heller.



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Printed on Recycled Paper

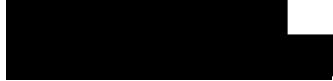
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94012



December 4, 2023

TCP: 35385 – Revoked
Case: CSE-000004

Paul J. Fretheim
dba East Side Sierra Shuttle



NOTICE TO CEASE AND DESIST

Dear Mr. Fretheim,

On June 20, 2023 and October 18, 2023, your charter-party carrier of passengers (TCP) operating authority was suspended and subsequently revoked for failure to maintain Public Liability and Property Damage insurance coverage. On August 26, 2023 and November 26, 2023 your operating authority was suspended and subsequently revoked for failure to respond to Administrative Citation T.23-07-001.

This letter places you on notice to cease and desist immediately all advertisements and operations as a charter-party carrier of passengers without valid authority in force with the Commission. Continued violations may result in criminal prosecutions and termination of telephone service.

The Commission regulates and licenses charter-party carriers of passengers within California pursuant to the California Constitution. Public Utilities Code (P.U. Code) Sections 5411, 5414.5 and 5415 state that any carrier which operates and/or advertises without authority is guilty of a misdemeanor which is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 or by imprisonment in the county jail for up to three months, or both. Each day of continued violations is a separate and distinct offense.

P.U. Code Section 5379 states that it is unlawful for any carrier to operate after suspension, revocation, or expiration of its operating authority. This letter places Paul Fretheim, dba as East Side Sierra Shuttle on notice that continued violations of law without the required permit may result in criminal prosecutions and possible termination of telephone service. There will be no further warnings.

Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Melanie Balfour

Melanie Balfour
Public Utility Regulatory Analyst
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
Tel. (916)-823-4753

Attachments:

- Transportation and Licensing Analysis Branch generated Notices of Suspension and Revocation, issued 7/20/23, 9/23/23, and 9/25/23,
- Transportation and Licensing Analysis Branch generated Notice of Revocation, issued 10/18/23,
- Notice of Suspension and Revocation activated by page 2 of Citation T.23-07-001.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PSG0035385

ATTN: PAUL J. FRETHEIM
[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 90 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1046, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Jul 20, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3295



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PG00035385

ATTN: PAUL J. FRETHERM
[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 30 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5379.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Sep 23, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3228



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PSG0035385

ATTN: PAUL J. FRETHEIM

TCP P PERMIT

CPUC Order of Suspension

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is suspended effective July 20, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

Unless the suspension was requested voluntarily, if the reason(s) for the suspension are not resolved within 90 days, on October 18, 2023, the operating authority will be revoked. Voluntary suspensions may stay in effect without becoming revoked until the operating authority expires.

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

A carrier whose certificate or permit is suspended due to failing to pass a vehicle inspection by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5, Commission Resolution TL-18336) may obtain a reinspection of its terminal and vehicles by the CHP by submitting a written request for reinstatement to CPUC and paying a reinstatement fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). (California Public Utilities Code § 5378.5(b)). Upon receipt of a written recommendation from CHP to suspend a carrier's operating authority, a carrier may request a hearing of the suspension by making a written request to CPUC and the CHP showing cause why the suspension should not be continued.

If your suspension is due to failing to maintain adequate insurance, you must contact your insurance provider to reinstate your policy on-file with the CPUC.

Date: Sep 25, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

licensing@cpuc.ca.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3295



DBA: EAST SIDE SIERRA SHUTTLE

PSG0035385

ATTN:PAUL J FRETHEIM
[REDACTED]

TCP P PERMIT

Order of Revocation

This is notice from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) that the operating authority listed on this letter is revoked effective October 18, 2023.

Failure to maintain PLPD Insurance

After the cancellation or revocation of a permit or certificate, or during the period of its suspension, or after the expiration of its permit or certificate, it is unlawful for a Passenger Stage Corporation (PSC) or a Transportation Charter-Party carrier (TCP) of passengers to conduct any operations as a carrier. (California Public Utilities Code §§ 1045, 5379). Unlawful operations are subject to fines and penalties as set forth in the California Public Utilities Code and may include permanent revocation of your operating authority or being permanently barred from receiving an operating authority.

There is a ninety (90) day period in which a revoked carrier may apply to reinstate the revoked operating authority unless it was permanently revoked.

Date: Oct 18, 2023

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

licensing@cpuc.ca.gov



CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**CITATION FOR VIOLATIONS
OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE, CALIFORNIA
VEHICLE CODE, AND BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE**

To: Paul J. Fretheim, an individual
doing business as East Side Sierra Shuttle

File: TCP 35385-P
Citation #: T.23-07-001
Case #: PSG-5781
Date: July 31, 2023

VIOLATIONS

You are hereby cited for having violated section(s) of the Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code, Commission General Order (G.O.) 157-E, CA Vehicle (CVC) Code, and Business and Profession (B&P) Code as described below. These violations occurred during the period of July 1, 2022 to February 24, 2023, with a limited focus on the 2018 and 2021 renewal applications.

- (1) Failed to maintain fitness and provide safe dependable service which promotes public safety, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Sections 5352(a) and 5374(a)(1). [23 counts]
- (2) Failed to produce business records, in violation of Pub. Util. Code section 5389 and G.O. 157-E, Part 6.02. [8 counts]
- (3) Failed to enroll drivers in the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Employer Pull Notice Program (EPN), and/or obtain, sign and date current driver records in violation of Pub. Util. Code sections 5374(a)(1)(D), 5381, G.O. 157-E Part 5.02, and CVC section 1808.1. [8 counts]
- (4) Failed to enroll drivers in a Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing Certification Program, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5374(a)(1)(I), and G.O. 157-E, Part 10. [2 counts]
- (5) Engaged employee drivers without having Workers' Compensation Insurance in effect and on file with the Commission, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5378.1. [8 counts]
- (6) Failed to maintain a current equipment statement and list all utilized vehicles on his equipment statement, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381 and G.O. 157-E Part 4.01. [1 count]

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- (7) Operated outside the scope of his authority, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381 and G.O. 157-E Part 4.01. [5 counts]
- (8) Failed to utilize and/or fully complete waybills, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381.5 and G.O. 157-E, Part 3.01. [1 count]
- (9) Published untrue and misleading advertisements, in violation of Pub. Util. Code Section 5381, and B&P Code Sections 17200 and 17500. [2 counts]

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The above violations are documented in the Investigation Report, which consists of carrier's records and substantiating documents obtained from other sources.

RESPONSE

TEB applied Resolution M-4846 and considered mitigating and exacerbating factors in setting the fine.

You are hereby called upon to answer this citation on or before August 26, 2023.
By way of such answer, you may either:

- (1) Pay a fine of \$16,000 pursuant to Pub. Util. Code section 5378. (Submit a cashier's check or money order payable to California Public Utilities Commission using the provided *Citation Compliance Agreement*. Upon payment, the fine will be deposited in the State Treasury to the credit of the General Fund and the Commission staff will deem the matter closed.) or
- (2) Contact the Enforcement Analyst to make payment arrangements, or
- (3) Contest this citation by filing an appeal. See the provided documents entitled
 - *How to File an Appeal and*
 - *Instructions for Filing a Notice of Appeal and Certificate of Service for a Citation Appeal.*

If you fail to respond by August 26, 2023, you will be in default and will have forfeited your right to appeal the Citation. In addition, your operating authority will be immediately suspended and may be subsequently revoked, pursuant to Resolution ALJ-187. The Commission may also act through a civil or criminal proceeding to recover any unpaid fine and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and Commission orders.

Maria C. Solis

Maria Solis
Program and Project Supervisor
Transportation Enforcement Branch
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
(916) 928-2534
e-mail: ms8@cpuc.ca.gov