

I have been a resident in the DC area for seven years. What I like about the area's transit system is that it gets me where I need to be, and lets me live a car-free life. What I don't like about WMATA's services is the constant harassment I've faced from male passengers as well as male Metro employees. Here are a few examples.

A few years ago, WMATA employees outside of Brookland Station pointed to me while saying, "T'mma get with that." I walked up to them to get their names from their name tags, and one of them said, "Peek-a-boo!" to me. I was offended and insulted and sent WMATA an e-mail to inform them of this, but I got a perfunctory response back saying that they didn't have enough information to take action. I had given them the first initial and last name of one of the employees, gave them a date, time, and location and they couldn't narrow it down?! Unbelievable.

Some bus drivers will beep at me if they see me walking solo down a street, and offer me free rides. "Hey, baby, need a lift?" Another time, as I waited for a bus while enjoying a snack, a bus driver (not the driver for the bus I was waiting for) opened the door and said, "Baby girl, you want to share that with me?" And yet another driver, ignoring every other passenger before me and after me, looked me up and down and said, "Ooh, you [sic] a pretty sista." These men do not take their jobs seriously and treat Metro as if it's a pick-up service, and their behavior makes me very uncomfortable.

While I feel that there are bus drivers and train operators who should be ashamed of the way they treat female passengers, there are male passengers who make the ride just as miserable. These men squeeze up close next to me on the train, even though there are plenty of empty seats available. One passenger on a DC-bound bus from Virginia cursed me out and told me I "suck white man's dick" because he sat next to me doing nothing but cursing under his breath and I chose to ignore him and move away from him. He then followed me to the front of the bus, and when I tried to tell the driver and asked him to call Transit Police, he yelled at BOTH of us and did nothing to help me. It was humiliating to endure that, while having the driver ignore me and the other passengers turn the other

cheek as well. All I want to do when boarding a train or a bus is to get to my destination, not be harassed or worry about my safety.

WMATA needs to enforce its sexual harassment policy if there is one, or it needs to create one. Too many male drivers and operators take advantage of their positions and don't know how to carry themselves with manners and tact. Since there seems to be no punishment for their actions, they continue this behavior unchecked. Please listen to my words and the words of the others who have spoken up. I need to have the assurance that WMATA will take these statements seriously and start taking action against harassment on public transportation. It is not in the drivers' job descriptions to harass women – it's in their job descriptions to either operate the bus or train. And passengers who harass need to be escorted off the bus or train and handled by Transit Police.

There is no reason for this behavior to continue in WMATA's system. Sexual harassment needs to be taken seriously and policies need to be enforced. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns.