

Pocket Guide

for purchasing a

Prison Bus



Creative Bus Sales

Consider This!

Prisoner transportation is a challenging process and can be made easier by your choice of transport vehicle. Safety of guards and prisoners is paramount, but you also need to ensure that the vehicle you purchase is secure. Roughly 40% of prisoner escapes happen during a transport, so you must have both iron-clad protocols for transport in place and a completely secured bus.

Most prisons are run by municipal, county and state governments, which means taxpayer dollars are funding the purchase of your bus. That means you must not only be budget conscious but make sure that the vehicle you buy has all the features you will need now and for a few years into the future. It also must be reliable and durable to run efficiently. Privately run prisoner transport companies also need to be aware of budget concerns and choose their next transport vehicle wisely. Here's what you need to consider.

- 1 Capacity**
- 2 Security Features**
- 3 Safety Features**
- 4 Durability**
- 5 Flexibility**
- 6 Fuel Options**
- 7 Financing**





▶ 1 - Capacity

In many cases, when a single prisoner is transported from, say, the jail to the courthouse, a law enforcement vehicle may be used. But for transporting multiple prisoners, a larger capacity vehicle is important. You may need to take low-risk offenders to off-site work opportunities or transport new inmates to jails where there is more space available.

In addition, there are instances where some of the prisoners being transported must be kept away from others or in an especially high security environment. If the van you purchase will need to be able to separate occupants, look for these options:



Two-Person Cells

Keep inmates more secure and apart from others in the bus or van.

Isolation Cells

If a prisoner is a risk to cause harm to others or otherwise cannot be around others, an isolation cell protects other occupants.



▶ 2 - Security Features

It's vital that both prisoners are secured and transporting officials are able to easily keep them safe. Look for security features that include:

Lack of Inside Door

No interior door handles prevents occupants from leaving the vehicle. Doors must be opened from the outside by transporting officials.

Protected Windows

Steel mesh or bars can prevent inmates from breaking the windows and gaining an exit.

Driver Partition

The driver needs to be protected from the other vehicle occupants and avoid being distracted. Look for a partition that includes a "spit guard" where a small window can be lowered or opened to aid communication with the back section of the van.



▶ 3 - Safety Features



Prison officials and law enforcement officers must be certain that each prisoner being transported is safe and afforded the same types of protections that any other occupant of a government vehicle would. Prisoners injured during transport may be able to claim what's called "special relationship" liability, as they were dependent on the transporting officers to keep them safe and unharmed. This means that prison transportation must be in top working order, with seat belts for each person in the vehicle and air bags where possible.



Rear emergency doors are a key safety feature and allow officers and prisoners to be accessed quickly if there has been an accident.

Other features like handrails and non-slip rubber at the entrance and exit of the bus are important to aid in keeping those transported safe and free from injury.



▶ 4 - Durability



Because prison buses and vans may be tasked with regular, long-distance trips, any vehicle you purchase must be reliable both mechanically and physically. Talk to our sales representatives for a breakdown of our available models and which will work best for the uses you intend.

The occupants of prison buses aren't always concerned about keeping the vehicle neat and clean. Besides mechanical reliability, it's important to be able to clean a prison bus or van thoroughly. The interior must also be difficult to tamper with or damage. Seats and the interior structure have to be able to last for several years.

Creative has vans available with these features:

Heavy Duty Passenger Seats

It's vital that seats be virtually indestructible, as they will endure a lot of wear and potential abuse over time. While it's great if the seats are comfortable as well, tough construction is most important.



Plastic Walls and Headliner

It's not just important to have easy clean-up. All van surfaces should be disinfected regularly. U.S. prisoners have higher rates of blood-borne diseases, including HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Being able to properly clean van surfaces helps minimize exposure to other prisoners and prison workers.

▶ 5 - Flexibility

Each facility that purchases a prison van may have different needs. You don't need to settle for a one-size-fits-all vehicle, as we can customize floor plans in many types of vans.

An adaptable floor plan means you can plan the number of seats, individual seating or cells, types of restraints, and more.

▶ 6 - Fuel Options

Prison buses don't have a set route; some trips will be short ones while others will be longer, highway journeys. While alternative fuels are excellent options for saving money on transportation costs, prison bus buyers need to ensure that their choice of vehicle is able to reliably travel where needed, no matter how long the route. Here are some options:



Hybrid Electric

A hybrid vehicle is ideal for a prison bus, as it can use electricity when it is best suited and other fuel when not, so it's a cost-effective choice. However, do note that the battery must be charged and battery maintenance, when and if needed, must be budgeted for.

Gasoline

Your existing prison buses may run on gas, so you already have a system in place for fueling. Gasoline engines are very common and relatively easy to maintain and the fuel is easy to get. However, gasoline can vary dramatically in price and can be hard to properly budget over time.



Diesel

Diesel engines are hard-working and often last for up to 500,000 miles. This is great for a prison bus that needs to have a long life. Diesel is also reliable in almost all climates and conditions. But, like gasoline, diesel can be expensive and gives off exhaust.

Other Alternative Fuels

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and propane are cleaner-burning options and are less flammable than gasoline or diesel. There is an extra cost to fit a gas or diesel vehicle with a CNG or propane kit.



Talk to our sales representatives for more information about the different fuel options Creative has available for prison buses and shuttles.

▶ 7 - Financing

Both government-run and private prisons need to keep a close eye on budget. Our in-house financing department gives you more flexibility as we can spread out payments over a period of 1 year to 5 years. If you'd prefer a lease with option to purchase, that can also be arranged.

As well, depending on the amount you wish to finance, we can often have credit approval for you in 1 business day.



When choosing a prison vehicle that will be used to transport prisoners, you need something that will work for your facility's needs. That means you can customize the features you need in a vehicle that will last for many years. Talk to us about your options for features, fuel, financing and more. Our sales staff are also happy to prepare a quote for you; contact us for more information.



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