

HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT ONE

Senior Citizens Bus Transportation

Policies and Regulations

Commissioner El Franco Lee is pleased to provide this service to Harris County Precinct One residents 55 years of age and over. The program aims to help groups of seniors enjoy the many activities, parks and scenic places available throughout Precinct One and surrounding areas. By making available this recreational transportation for use by senior citizen groups, we hope to assist in adding years of pleasure and adventure to the lives of our valued older citizens.

The Precinct One Staff and Drivers are here to serve you and are not permitted to accept tips or gifts. Please understand that we must operate under the State of Texas laws and regulations for your safety. All those who operate our vehicles have State of Texas Commercial Drivers Licenses. Drivers are trained in CPR (Cardiac-Pulmonary Rescue) and standard First Aid for minor emergencies.

Participants must be 55 years of age and older. One adult escort under the age of 55 may accompany each group; this individual must be at least 18 years of age. Exception to the age rule will be made for spouses of seniors. Trip coordinators must insure every passenger is in compliance with Harris County's age restriction of 55 years or older. Failure to adhere to this guideline could result in termination of the group's bus usage.

Important: If a participant requires special attention or uses a wheelchair, it is necessary that someone accompany them, since the bus driver is unable to provide individual assistance. Individuals who cannot board (climb the steps) the bus without assistance need to be transported on one of the wheelchair accessible buses; individuals who use walkers or have difficulty with steps can also board the bus using the lift. Only wheelchairs can be accommodated. Unfortunately, "scooter" type vehicles cannot be transported, since they cannot be adequately secured. Handicapped-accessible buses can accommodate up to four (4) standard size wheelchairs motorized or folding. However, non-wheelchair lift equipped vehicles can accommodate collapsible wheelchairs in the undercarriage and rear storage areas.

Special needs for your group, such as ramps, elevators, wheelchair and/or special assistance, must be handled by the trip leader or coordinator in advance. Please contact the destination to arrange for special service required by participants.

Nursing home staff who assist residents must be 18 years of age or older. This policy includes assisted living and/or convalescent care staff. Precinct One requires that nursing homes and assisted living communities provide enough staff for the needs of the individuals in the group. In the event that proper staffing is not available for the trip the driver is instructed to contact the office for further instruction. (See Nursing Home Policies)

Reservations/Confirmations/Cancellations

Trips may be scheduled for any date up to three (3) months in advance, with the exception of Holidays observed by Harris County. To reserve your bus, please call 713-733-3717 from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. The buses are reserved on a first-call, first-served basis. Groups are allowed to reserve one trip per month. Trips are scheduled no earlier than three months in advance. We strongly recommend that you call on the first working day of each month to schedule your trip. (See Transportation Reservation Procedures)

There is a 150 mile radius limit, there are no overnight trips. Detailed itineraries and plans for the group must be arranged by the group's trip coordinator. Unfortunately Precinct One staff, including the bus drivers cannot plan trips. The trip must be planned by the trip coordinator and listed on the required Trip Reservation Form. For example, rest stops, restaurants, picnic areas, etc. must be planned prior to the trip by the trip coordinator form. The Trip Reservation Form must be submitted to the transportation department by the fifteenth (15) day of the prior month to departure.

Located on our website (www.co.harris.tx.us/comm_lee) is Places to Go, a trip planning aid that will assist you with the necessary details for your trip, you can acquire addresses, telephone numbers along with suggested places to visit within the 150 mile radius. Please limit your trip to an 8-hour day. Slightly longer on some destinations will be allowed, although we reserve the right to discuss the itinerary on any trip before departure for modification. The pick-up and return point must be the same location and in Precinct One. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

A confirmation letter will be sent to you after we have received your Trip Reservation Form. The Trip Reservation Form needs to be received by the fifteenth day of the month prior to departure. If the form is not received by the fifteenth day prior to departure, your trip can be automatically cancelled.

IMPORTANT! If fewer people sign up for your event than anticipated, with proper notice we will assist you in sending the appropriate vehicle. Trip coordinators must call our office at 713-733-3717, at least three (3) to five (5) days in advance of your trip for this assistance. At the time of pick up, if you have fewer people than the required minimum and have not given minimum prior notice your trip may be cancelled. All Trips should depart no longer than 30 minutes after scheduled pickup time. Any groups requesting additional time must get approval from the transportation department at 713.733.3717. Please take note to the minimum number of passengers required for usage of the buses below.

- A minimum of 10 passengers is required for the 27 passenger buses.
- A minimum of 20 passengers is required for the 39 passenger buses.

With proper notice, mentioned above, we will do our best to accommodate the size of your group. Although if you do not have the required number of passengers upon arrival of the bus or 30 minutes after the arrival, your driver is instructed to call the office, after which the coordinator will be notified of the trips cancellation. **Your trip cannot be automatically cancelled by the driver!**

Should the weather become severe during a trip, it will be up to the Transportation Supervisor to determine whether the trip should be cancelled. In the event that unsafe weather conditions prevail, the Program Director may cancel a trip in advance of departure.

There is not a charge for use of the programs transportation, with the exception of the expenses for your driver(s), i.e., meal(s), tickets, entrance fees and parking for the bus, which your group must provide, although when making arrangements for your groups trip, please ask is the driver meal/fee is covered most but not all establishments will comp the driver.

The Harris County Precinct One Senior Citizens' Transportation Program gratefully appreciates any donations you or your group may wish to make. Contributions help pay the cost of the program and allow us to present special events to seniors' groups. To make certain your donation is credited to your group, make donations payable to the Precinct One Senior Citizens' Program and Mail to:

PRECINCT ONE SENIOR CITIZENS' PROGRAM
1001 PRESTON, SUITE 950
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77002

For Further Information, Call: 713-733-3717

RULES ON THE ROAD: To conform to safety laws and regulations, we ask for your groups' cooperation in observing these rules for riding Harris County Precinct One buses:

- **Participants must be 55 years of age and older. One adult escort under the age of 55 may accompany the group individual must be at least 18 years of age. NO CHILDREN, NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- **All passengers must sign the sign in sheet provided by the Driver.**
- **All passengers must remain seated while bus is in route.**
- **All passengers must EXIT the bus at the groups planned destination. Seniors are not permitted to be on the buses alone during a planned stop, nor is driver required to stay on the bus during this time.**
- **No EATING or DRINKING on vehicles. NO EXCEPTIONS! Only, water is allowed. Please announce this to your group prior to the trip and departure. (Note: Picnic lunches may be taken but not eaten on the buses.)**
- **No SMOKING, smoking is prohibited on all vehicles at all time.**
- **No ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are allowed on the vehicles. We request that groups using our buses do not serve nor use alcohol during their event.**
- **Please do not tip the driver. Donations to the program are greatly appreciated. (See How to Contribute)**

If any rider gets unruly, the driver will notify the group leader and ask that he or she solve the problem. If the group leader is unable to solve unruly behavior by any rider, the driver is instructed to leave the event or discontinue the trip. The driver will then make a written report to the Senior Citizens' Transportation Program, to be reviewed by the Program Director. Misconduct reports on any group could result in canceling future requests. The mobile phones in all vehicles are ONLY for use in emergency situations.

If there are any complaints about your driver or the vehicles, please contact Delsie Stoute, the Precinct One Seniors Program Director at 713-733-3717.