

CITY OF BAYTOWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The City of Baytown Community Development Transportation Program (the "Program") is sponsored by the City of Baytown Community Development Block Grant Program in collaboration with the Harris County Office of Transit Services Division. Together the City of Baytown (the City) and Harris County provides two transportation options under the Rides Program (Rides) and Harris County Transit. A description of each is included as Articles I and II, respectively. The goal of the Program is to provide eligible citizens with non-emergency transportation services within the city limits of Baytown and to and from Houston for medical appointments.

GENERAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for participation in the Program, an applicant must:

1. Be:
 - A. 62 years of age or older and provide proof thereof, which may include one of the following:
 - State-issued photo Identification Card or
 - State-issued Drivers' License; or
 - B. Disabled as certified by either:
 - the applicant's doctor via the City of Baytown Doctor's Certification Form; or
 - a federal award letter for disability income, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI); or
 - C. A victim of domestic violence or sexual assault.
Note: Eligibility Option C is reserved for clients who have been given a written referral within the last 60 days through a designated program in place for victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse, such as the Baytown Police Department.
2. Be a resident of the City of Baytown and provide proof thereof, which may include one of the following*:
 - A current utility bill (water, electricity, gas, phone) indicating that service is provided in the applicant's name;
 - A rent receipt indicating that applicant resides at the premises for which rent is being paid; or

- A deed or lease indicating that the applicant owns/resides at the premises.

*A person seeking to qualify for the Program pursuant to paragraph 1C above shall be required to provide proof of residency in Baytown, proof of temporary shelter provisions, and will be reviewed on a monthly basis for eligibility.

3. Submit a completed Program application to the City of Baytown's Community Development Division located at 2401 Market Street, Baytown, Texas;
4. Satisfy the following income eligibility requirements:
 - A. Participants' annual gross income must not exceed the limits recalculated each year based on HUD guidelines and the median household income of the Houston Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area;
 - B. Documentation of the above-referenced income eligibility requirement shall include, but will not be limited to, all of the following that apply for all members of the household:
 - Social Security Award Letter;
 - Supplemental Social Security Income Award Letter;
 - Food Stamp Award Letter;
 - Retirement Verification;
 - Veteran's Administration Award Letter;
 - Bank Statements for the past two (2) months;
 - Investment Interest;
 - Verification of Employment/Self-Employment;
 - Welfare Verification;
 - Proof of any other source(s) of income; and
5. Fulfill the requirement that all members of applicant's household are legal residents of the United States.

ARTICLE I - HARRIS COUNTY RIDES

Description

Under the Rides Program, Participants have access to advanced reservations for ride-sharing with other passengers (Shared Rides) *and* metered fare provider or same-day service (Taxi Services).

1. **Shared Rides Reservations** (non-metered providers)
 - Shared Rides may be used outside the city limits, into the Houston Metro areas for medical appointments only. Wheelchair accessibility is available.
 - Shared Ride Providers do not accept cash. Reservations must be booked a minimum of 24 hours in advance, before 2:00 PM.
 - Service is available Monday through Friday but cancellation requests can be made to providers 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.
 - Participants may not make reservations with more than one Provider for any

given trip. Overbooking constitutes abuse of the program.

- Participants may make no more than two (2) cancellations in any 30-day period. Excessive cancellations constitute abuse of the program.

2. Taxi Services Reservations (metered providers)

- Transportation is available on a first-come, first-served basis within the City limits of Baytown, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Wheelchair accessibility is available.
- When scheduling a taxi trip, Participants should give the Provider at least 90 minutes advance notice. Taxi schedules are dependent upon many variables; the Providers may not arrive at exactly the time specified during the reservation process.
- Advance-scheduled trips will be accepted no earlier than 6 p.m. on the day before travel. Cancellations must be made at least 4 hours ahead of the requested trip time, or as soon as it is known that the trip will not be taken, whichever comes first.
- Participants may not make arrangements with more than one Provider for any given trip. Overbooking constitutes abuse of the program.
- For same-day trips, cancellations will be accepted up to one hour before the requested trip time. After that, cancellations will be regarded as no-shows. Participants may accumulate no more than two no-shows in a 30-day period. Excessive no shows constitutes abuse of the program.
- The cost of this metered same-day service is based on the rate of the meter fare box.
- Taxicabs are the **only** Providers that accept cash. Taxicabs will accept a combination of cash and Rides funds. All other Providers must be paid with Rides funds only.

Rides Process

1. City of Baytown Process

City staff will issue eligible participants a fully-funded, permanent Rides Card along with details about the Providers. The Program funds will be administered on a monthly basis; each month shall be referred to as the “Program Period.”

Each Participant will be funded to a maximum amount determined by Harris County and the City of Baytown, via the Participant’s Rides Card at the beginning

of each Program Period. If the Participant uses all of the allotted funds, the Community Development Staff, in its sole discretion, may authorize additional funds for that Program Period. If the Participant does not use the allotted number of funds within the Program Period for which they are given, the unused funds will roll-over from month-to-month providing the Participant remains eligible for the Program. At the beginning of each Program Period, the participant will be allotted enough funds to bring his/her account back up to the agreed upon maximum monthly limit. Harris County Rides will maintain an online database detailing each trip and the total amount of funds used by each Participant during a Program Period.

2. Participant Process

In order to obtain transportation services, a Participant must call a Provider on the Transportation Providers List. The list and telephone numbers of participating Providers are updated regularly. A current copy of the Transportation Providers List may be obtained by contacting the Community Development Division.

Providers shall pick up a Participant at the origination point designated by the Participant within the city limits of Baytown, and take the Participant to the destination point designated by the Participant within the city limits of Baytown or in Houston for medical appointments. Neither the origination or destination point shall be an establishment primarily serving or selling alcoholic beverages (bars/liquor stores). The Providers have been notified of this restriction and shall not accept the responsibility to transport a Participant to such an establishment under the above-stated circumstances. The City will deny payment for such trips.

The Participant must be present and personally utilize the service for the trip to be accepted by the Provider. One person may accompany the Participant at no additional charge; provided that both persons have common origination and destination points. Rides funds issued by the City of Baytown cannot be used by any person(s) other than the Participant to whom it was issued, even if such other person(s) qualifies for the Program.

Providers do not accept cash. The Participant must have his/her Rides Cards available to pay for travel. Lost or stolen cards will be replaced one (1) time by the City at no cost. Thereafter, a card will be replaced at a \$5.00 charge to the Participant; any such charge will be deducted from funding for the following Program Period.

At the time of service, the Participant will present his/her Rides Card and photo identification to the Provider. The Provider will transport the Participant to his/her destination within the city limits of Baytown or to medical appointments in Houston. A Rides detail log will be updated on the Harris County Rides online database. The Provider will then submit the Rides detail log to Harris County for verification and payment in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Rides Program.

The City of Baytown will contract with Harris County to fund Participant Rides cards. Harris County will contract annually with Providers for the provision of transportation services pursuant to the Rides Program guidelines. Participants must comply with the current rules and guidelines established by Harris County for Rides, a copy of which may be obtained from the Community Development Office or the Rides website: www.harriscountyrides.com.

ARTICLE II - HARRIS COUNTY TRANSIT DESCRIPTION

Description

The Program will be administered on a monthly basis, each such period shall be referred to as the “Program Period”. The City of Baytown will contract with Harris County to provide bus passes. Participants will be given an unlimited number of bus trips at the beginning of each Program Period. The bus trips will be given to the Participant in the form of a quarterly bus pass, which only the participant named on the pass is authorized to use. By the tenth day of each month, the Harris County Office of Transit Services must provide documentation of total trips provided for the Baytown routes during the previous month.

Harris County Transit provides transportation on a fixed route within the Baytown city limits, and to surrounding areas such as Highlands, Crosby, La Porte and into Houston (based on availability by Harris County). When a Participant requires transportation, they will wait at a designated bus stop location at the appropriate time, and a regularly scheduled bus will arrive. Bus schedules and maps may be obtained by contacting Harris County Transit, at (713)-578-2216 or online at www.harriscountytransit.com.

The Participant will present his/her photo identification and the City issued bus pass to the bus driver. The bus will transport the Participant to the bus stop location nearest their destination on the fixed route. Lost or stolen bus passes will not be replaced until the following Program Period.

Fixed Route Service is available Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM and Saturday 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, with unlimited transfers (*note: Harris County reserves the right to modify the routes and times of service*). One person may accompany the Participant at no additional charge; provided that both persons have common origination and destination points. Carry-on items must be limited to four bags and no open containers will be allowed.

GENERAL PARTICIPANT RULES

1. No weapons, explosives, flammable liquids or hazardous chemicals will be transported.
2. No person may smoke, use alcohol or drugs in a Provider’s vehicle or bus, or at a bus stop.

3. Participants must be courteous to the reservation agent as well as to the Providers and bus drivers. Obscene or threatening language or disrespectful behavior with a reservation agent, Rides Provider, bus driver, or member of City staff will not be tolerated and may result in the Participant's removal from the Program.
4. Participants must report a change of address within ten (10) calendar days of his/her new address to maintain eligibility. Address changes should be submitted, **with proof**, to the Community Development Division, 2401 Market Street, Baytown, Texas 77520.
5. The Community Development Division will review Program files on a quarterly basis. Participants who remain inactive for a period of three months will be suspended from the Program and recertification will be necessary. Funds from suspended clients will be used for regular Program funding.
6. This list is not exhaustive. Additional rules and regulations as required by Harris County must be followed, and will be provided to Participants at the time of approval in the Program.

GENERAL PARTICIPANT INFRACTIONS POLICY

Participants shall comply with the rules and guidelines set forth by all Providers, Harris County, and the City of Baytown. A Participant with infractions on his/her account will receive a written warning and instructed on proper behavior and the related regulations. If infractions continue, the Participant will be placed on a 60-day probation during which time any additional infractions will result in a 30-day suspension from the Program. Following any suspension, a Participant will be placed on 60 days probation. In the event of continued infractions, the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee reserves the right to permanently remove the Participant from the Program.

Neither the Provider, bus driver nor any of their employees or subcontractors is authorized to make a determination regarding a Participant's noncompliance with the terms and conditions of these guidelines, and therefore, may not refuse service on this basis unless such noncompliance relates to the rules and guidelines set forth by the Providers, Harris County, or the City of Baytown. However, the Providers, bus drivers or Harris County may submit complaints regarding Participant's behavior to the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee for investigation. If the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee determines that a participant should be placed on probation, suspension, or be permanently removed from the Program, the Participant shall be notified of such decision in writing. Such written notice will be mailed to the Participant at the address on file in the Community Development Office. Any person wishing to appeal a decision of the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee, on the grounds that the decision misconstrues or wrongly interprets these guidelines may, within thirty (30) days after the decision, appeal the decision to the City Manager or his/her designee; provided that the Participant gives notice of appeal in writing to the Community Development Office no less than ten (10) days following the receipt of written notice of the decision which the Participant is

appealing. The written appeal must clearly state the reason for the appeal and must include verifiable support for a request to reconsider the probation, suspension or permanent removal from the Program. The decision of the City Manager or his/her designee shall be final and binding on the Participant, the Provider and the City of Baytown. If the decision of the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee is not properly appealed, the decision of the Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee shall be final and binding on the same parties.

The Director of Planning and Development Services or his/her designee reserves the right to enact the Infractions Policy if Participants are found to be abusing the Program in any manner.

Complaints regarding the Program should be made in writing and sent to the following address: City of Baytown Community Development Transportation Program, Community Development Division, 2401 Market Street, Baytown, Texas 77520 or via email at CDBG@baytown.org.

AUTHORIZATION TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM

The City Manager or his/her designee has the authority to review these Program Guidelines and make revisions as necessary due to changes in the format in which services are distributed to Participants; provided that the purpose and intent of the guidelines are not altered.