

**GALVESTON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & SENIOR SERVICES
SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION
BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

THE PROGRAM

The Galveston County Senior Services Transportation Program aims to help groups of seniors enjoy the many activities, parks and scenic places available throughout Galveston County and surrounding areas. By the four senior centers (Bacliff, Dickinson, Galveston, and Johnson) making available the buses, vans and drivers for use by senior groups, we hope to add years of pleasure and adventure to the lives of our valued older citizens.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Groups of senior citizens 55 years and older are eligible to make reservations. An adult escort (under the age of 55) may accompany each group. Exception to the age rule will be made for sponsors of seniors. Trip coordinators, must insure every passenger is in compliance with Galveston County's age restriction of 55 years or older. Failure to adhere to these guidelines could result in termination of the groups' bus usage. Reservations priorities will be given to the following tiers;

Tier 1 - Galveston County Community Centers/ Eligibility of Program

Tier 2 - Non Profit Corporations – Municipality (Cities) Churches, retired organizations (AARP), senior clubs, senior public housing, educational institutes, etc.

Tier 3 – For Profit Organizations-Serving seniors 55+ or Persons of disability-assisted living, nursing homes, hospitals, etc.

FEES AND CHARGES

There is no charge for using the transportation for the Tier 1 Galveston County Senior Services program with the exception of the expenses for your, meal(s), tickets, entrance fees and parking for the bus, which your group must provide. For Tier 2 and 3 there will be a charge of \$300.00 per trip to include the maintenance, fuel and driver operations. Please treat your driver as your guest. Your driver is a county employee and therefore is not permitted to accept tips or gifts. Donations may be given to the program. (see How to Contribute pg.3)

STAFF AND DRIVERS

Our staff and drivers are here to serve you. Please understand they must operate under State of Texas laws and regulations for your safety. All those who operate our buses and vans have State of Texas Commercial Drivers Licenses. All Galveston County Senior Services Program drivers have received training in CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Rescue) and standard First Aid for minor emergencies.

WHERE AND WHEN WE GO

Our buses, vans and drivers are available to groups MONDAY through FRIDAY starting no earlier than 7:30 am. We presently will take a minimum number of weekend trips on a first-come, first-serve basis. Our destinations are all within a 125-radius of Galveston County. The buses and vans are not available for overnight trips or holidays observed by Galveston County. A list of suggested places to visit is available (including phone numbers) so your group may obtain information concerning cost and schedules. Special needs for your group, such as ramps, elevators, wheelchair and special assistance for participants, must be handled by the trip leader or coordinator in advance. Please contact your destination to arrange for any other special services required by participants.

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PARTICIPANTS

Important: We strongly recommend that any participant who use a wheelchair or require special attention have someone accompany them since our bus drivers are unable to assist.

Nursing home staff who assist their residents do not need to be 55 years or older. This policy includes assisted living and/or convalescent care staff. **IMPORTANT:** Galveston County requires that nursing homes and assisted living communities provide enough staff for the needs of individuals in the group. In the event that proper staffing is not sent on the trip, the driver is instructed to contact this office for further instruction.

Individuals who cannot board (climb the steps) of the bus without assistance, need to be transported on one of our two (2) wheelchair accessible buses. These vehicles can accommodate motorized wheelchairs or the folding type. However, on our other vehicles if the passenger can board the vehicle but requires a wheelchair for the trip, the chair can be taken but must be the folding type.

RESERVING A BUS OR VAN

To reserve your bus or van, please call (409) 934-8100 from 8:00am – 5:00pm

NO WALK INS

Buses and vans are reserved on a first call, first-serve basis. Groups are allowed to reserve one trip per month. Trips are scheduled no earlier than three months in advance and no later than one month prior to planned trip. We strongly recommend that you call on the first working day of each month to schedule your trip.

(see Reservation Procedures pg 5).

We will need the following information from you when making your reservation:

- Requesting Date
- Number of People in Group (Planning to go on trip)
- Destination
- Pick Up Time
- Pick Up Location (only ONE allowed) and telephone number at location
- How Long the Event Will Last
- Name, Telephone Number and Address of person responsible for the trip (plus

a number for someone who may be called on the day of the event). Detailed itineraries and plans for the group must be arranged and directed by the group's leader or coordinator, not the bus driver or Galveston County staff. Please have your planned itinerary available for the driver upon arrival of your pick up location. (Itinerary forms are sent with confirmation)

CONFIRMING

A confirmation letter will be sent to you one month prior to your trip. Please call us immediately if any information is incorrect or if there is a change.

IMPORTANT

Trip coordinators must call our office at (409) 934-8100 at least (3) to (5) days in advance of your trip to confirm the number of people planning to travel. Please take note to the minimum number of passengers required for usage of the bus is below:

A minimum of twenty (20) passengers is required for the 28 passenger bus.

CANCELLING

Should the weather become severe during a trip, it is up to the driver of the vehicle as to whether the trip should be cancelled. In the event that unsafe weather conditions prevail, the Program Director may cancel a trip in advance.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

The Galveston County Senior Services Transportation Program, gratefully appreciates any donations you or your group may wish to make. Contributions help fund 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 Galveston County Senior Services Program and Mail to:

**Galveston County Department of Parks & Senior Services
4102 Main Street (FM 519)
La Marque, TEXAS 77568
For Further Information, Call: (409) 934-8100**

RULES ON THE ROAD

To conform with safety laws and regulations, we ask for your cooperation in observing these rules for riding Galveston County buses and vans:

Mobile Phones in all vehicles are **only** for emergencies.

Smoking is prohibited on all vehicles.

No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the vehicles. We request that groups using our buses and vans do not serve nor use alcohol during their event.

No eating or drinking on vehicles. Please announce this to your group prior to the trip. (NOTE: Picnic lunches may be taken, but not eaten on the bus)

Please **DO NOT TIP** the bus driver.

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 Services Transportation Program director for review. Misconduct reports on any group could result in canceling future requests. If there are any complaints about your driver or the vehicles, please contact the Operations Manager at (409) 934-8101.