



Senior Transportation Program
200 South Lamar
Austin, TX 78704
Phone: (512) 974-1464
Web: www.austintexas.gov/seniors



Senior Transportation Program Riders' Guide

Overview of Service

Senior Transportation Program operated by the City of Austin Parks and Recreation (PAR), Centralized Programs Division, Senior Programs. PAR has operated the Senior Transportation Program for over 30 years through the City of Austin general fund and grant funding provided by the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG).

Goal: To provide a special system of transportation to enhance the quality of life and promote independence for persons 60 years or older residing within Austin city limits.

Contact Information and Service Operation

Phone: 512-974-1464

Mailing address:

Austin Parks and Recreation Department
ATTN: Senior Transportation Program
200 South Lamar Blvd
Austin, TX 78704

Service Area:

Regular Routes and Reserve-a-Ride - departure and destination location within Austin city limits

Group Travel – departure and destination location within Austin city limits

Service Hours: Monday through Friday 8:30AM (1st available pick-up) through 3:00PM (last available pick up)

Senior Transportation will be closed in observance of the following City of Austin holidays:

If a holiday falls on Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday; if a holiday falls on Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday.

New Year's Day - January 1

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - Third Monday in January

Washington's Birthday - Third Monday in February
Memorial Day - Last Monday in May
Independence Day - July 4
Labor Day - First Monday in September
Veteran's Day - November 11
Thanksgiving Day - Fourth Thursday in November
Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve* - December 24
Christmas Day* - December 25

** If December 24 falls on a Sunday and December 25 falls on a Monday, then the Christmas Eve holiday will be observed on Monday, December 25 and the Christmas Day holiday will be observed on Tuesday, December 26.*

Eligibility and Registration

Eligibility: Residents residing within the Austin city limit age 60 and older

Registration: Submit completed Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area (AAACAP) Client Intake Form and Clients Rights and Responsibilities of Older Americans Act Program by mail for review to:

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Eligibility Confirmation: Approval of eligibility and registration guidelines are set by the Older Americans Act and confirmed by CAPGOC under the Department of Aging and Disability Services.

CAPGOC takes up to three (3) weeks to approve eligibility. Senior Transportation Staff contact resident via phone to inform of eligibility approval and begin transportation scheduling.

Types of Services and Fees

- **Medical Appointments (non-emergency/routine appointment):** Destinations include general/specialty doctor, dentist, etc.; surgical procedures are classified as an emergency.
FEE: FREE / \$1.00 donation optional
- **Regular Routes / Lunch Program:** Service from your door to the nearest PARD Senior Congregate Meal (partnered by Meals on Wheels Central Texas) location and back home.
FEE: FREE / \$1.00 donation optional

PARD Senior Congregate Meal (partnered by Meals on Wheels Central Texas) locations:

- Alamo Recreation Center, 2100 Alamo Street, 512-974-5680
- Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center, 808 Nile Street, 512-978-2660

- Dove Springs Recreation Center, 5801 Ainez Dr, 512-974-3840
 - Gus Garcia Recreation Center, 1201 East Rundberg, 512-978-2525
 - Metz Recreation Center, 2407 Canterbury Street, 512-978-2399
 - South Austin Neighborhood Center-Durwood, 2508 Durwood, 512-972-6891
 - South Austin Senior Activity Center, 3911 Manchaca Road, 512-978-2400
 - Virginia Brown Recreation Center, 7500 Blessing Avenue, 512-974-7865
- **Reserve-a-Ride:** Door-to-door service to /from requested destination within the Austin city limits.
FEE: \$3.00 each destination

Reserve-a-Ride Types:

- **Errands (non-medical):** Destinations include grocery store, shopping centers, bank, hair salon, etc.
- **Group Travel:** Group excursion/field trip travel to destinations within Austin city limits. Groups must have minimum of 7 riders.
FEE: \$6.00 per rider per rider

Trip Reservations

Riders may start using Senior Transportation Program service immediately upon approval of eligibility for service.

Eligibility belongs to the rider and only the rider or assistant/caregiver may make reservations. If anyone other than the rider or assistant/caregiver wants to reserve a trip on behalf of a rider, Senior Transportation Staff may ask the name and title of the person making the reservation.

Riders should allow plenty of time to travel to and from their destination and between trips. Senior Transportation Program services are not comparable to a taxi or private vehicle. Senior Transportation Program is a shared-ride service.

Before Scheduling a Reservation

Prior to making a reservation, rider should gather the following information about their trips:

- Complete street addresses of pickup and drop off locations
- Date(s) of travel
- A requested pickup or drop off (appointment) time (please leave enough time to reach the final destination after the rider is dropped off)
- Information about assistant/caregiver who will be traveling with the rider
- Information regarding mobility devices (including service animals) the rider will be using
- Additional information about the pickup and drop off location (business name, building number, gate code, apartment complex name, grocery store, etc.)
- Any other information that will help the driver locate the rider

Requesting a Ride – Regular Route and Reserve-a-Ride

After receiving eligibility confirmation, ride request may be scheduled by calling **512-974-1464**. Transportation is available Monday through Friday between 8:30AM and 4:30PM (Observed City Holidays excluded).

Since traffic conditions and service interruptions may prohibit Senior Transportation Program from meeting precise pickup times, the rider's trip will be scheduled to include a thirty (30) minute time frame (Pickup Window) to accommodate unexpected or minor interruptions to the schedule.

Ride request will be confirmed at least one (1) business day prior to the day of travel. Ride request may schedule up to 30 days in advance.

Regular Route/Lunch Route is a subscription service allowing riders to reserve a ride on the route without the need to call and request each trip.

Scheduling a Group Travel Reservation

Riders participating in the Group Travel service must submit reservation request at least one (1) month prior to the anticipated travel date. Group Travel approval is based on vehicle availability and subject to capacity limitations.

Cancelling a Requested Ride

To cancel a requested ride, call **512-974-1464**. Rides must be canceled at least one (1) day prior to the scheduled trip time. Late cancellations are considered no-show.

Regular Route/Lunch Route riders must cancel at least one (1) day in advance.

Taking a Trip

Please wait in a location where you can see and/or hear your ride arrive. The driver will wait up to five (5) minutes for rider to board. If a rider has not boarded within five (5) minutes, the driver will leave and the rider will be considered a no-show. At time of pickup the driver will park in front of pickup site, knock on the door or ring bell. If no answer, driver will ask dispatch to call rider. If after five (5) minutes the rider does not board the vehicle, the rider will be considered a no-show.

Pickup/Drop Off Locations

Senior Transportation Drivers are only authorized to pickup or drop off riders at the location which the ride was scheduled. Drivers are not permitted to lose sight of the vehicle or use stairs (indoor or outdoor) beyond the 1st floor of a building when assisting a rider. Senior Transportation does not allow Drivers to enter a rider's home or lock/unlock the door.

Some locations within the service area may present a significant safety risk to rider(s), driver, vehicles or property. In these rare cases, Senior Transportation might not be able to provide services beyond curb-to-curb; however, Senior Transportation will work with the rider to find safe alternatives that will allow service to remain accessible to everyone.

Waiting for Pick Up

Below is a list to help determine the best place to wait for Senior Transportation vehicle when there is not a predetermined loading area:

- Single family home – At the front door
- Apartment complex – At a visible location where the driver can find them
- Office building (high rise, hospital, etc.) – Ground level at the main designated entrance/foyer

Transporting Rider Items

Senior Transportation drivers are required to assist in carrying up to four (4) personal items with a combined weight of no more than 20 pounds. Any items exceeding this limit will be the responsibility of the participant to transport to and from the vehicle without assistance.

The carrying of bags by the Staff between the origin/destination and the vehicle must be done in one trip. Drivers are not permitted to make multiple trips to and from the vehicle. Participants must be able to maintain control of all packages or see that they have been secured properly while on the vehicle during transport. Participants needing additional assistance are encouraged to bring a Personal Care Attendant or a companion for these trips. Any large, oversized items (i.e. large boxes, bags, etc.) that cannot be held by the rider or properly secured will not be transported. All bags, luggage, large boxes, etc. must have handles for the Drivers to hold.

Mobility Devices

Senior Transportation vehicles are able to safely accommodate a wide range of mobility devices. Mobility devices are noted on all rider registrations and riders must notify Senior Transportation of any change and/or addition of a mobility device.

Senior Transportation vehicles accommodate wheelchairs no more than 30 inches wide, 48 inches long and weighing no more than 600 pounds total while occupied. Wheelchairs that fall outside of these guidelines might still be accommodated, but will need to be evaluated on an individual basis to ensure vehicles and lifts will be able to transport safely.

Mobility devices must be secured every time – wheelchairs must be secured facing forward. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that mobility devices are secured properly.

Equipment that is not permitted on any Senior Transportation vehicle includes, but is not limited to: hospital beds, stretchers, Hoyer lifts, large shopping carts and any other device that poses a safety risk.

Service Animals

Service animals are defined as any guide or signal dog or other animal trained to perform task directly related to assisting an individual with a disability. Animals that are not individually trained to perform such tasks, including animals used purely for emotional purposes, are not considered service animals.

When scheduling a reservation, rider should inform Senior Transportation staff that a service animal will be traveling with the rider.

Rider Rules

Riding Rules and Tips

- Smoking (e-cigarettes included) is not permitted
- Eating and drinking in the vehicle is not permitted
- Riders must remain seated until the vehicle comes to a complete stop and the driver has indicated it is safe to prepare to exit the vehicle
- Riders who fall asleep on board the bus are at risk of being injured from unexpected movements or stops. Please stay alert for the best possible experience
- Playing a radio or musical instrument is not appropriate on the vehicle
- Please be considerate of fellow riders with chemical sensitivities by limiting use of colognes and perfumes
- Riders with disabilities who have health-related open sores and wounds need to ensure that all sores and wounds are properly covered
- Any rider may be refused access to transportation whose personal conduct or physical condition is disruptive to transportation services. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior may include but not be limited to the following:
 - Verbal or physical abusive behavior
 - Use of language that is obscene, threatening or derogatory
 - Being in possession of weapons of any kind
 - Deteriorating personal hygiene presents a health or safety hazard to others, including open sores/wounds not properly covered and visible body fluid leakage or dripping

Disruptive/Inappropriate Behavior and Rule Violations

Service disruptions, rule violations or dangerous behavior while traveling on a Senior Transportation vehicle may result in suspension of service. When a rule violation occurs, Senior Transportation shall make every effort to work toward resolution by identifying the problem and, if appropriate, working with the rider to find an alternative solution to suspension. Suspension notification letters are sent to all riders in violation of the Policy clearly identifying the date(s) and nature of the violation.

No Show and Late Cancellation Policy

Riders who frequently fail to properly cancel a reservation, do not show up in time for scheduled reservation, or are not ready at time of departure, will be subject to a progressive penalty that may lead to service suspension.

A no-show will be counted when a rider is not at the designated location ready for departure at the scheduled pickup time or cancels a reservation less than one (1) day prior to the scheduled trip time.

If the rider is not at the designated location ready for departure at the scheduled pickup time, the Driver will wait 5 (five) minutes before marking the rider a no-show.

Riders with three (3) consecutive “no-show” or 5 total “no-show” in a month may be suspended from the Senior Transportation Service for a month.

Each rider's no show occurrences are reviewed at the end of each calendar month for excessive no-show violations. Suspension notification letters are sent to all riders in violation of the policy. Each letter clearly identifies the dates of each violation from the previous month, as well as the future dates when the rider's service will be suspended.

Service Suspension

Service Suspension Appeal/Review Process

Prior service suspension, Senior Transportation will notify the rider by mail of the intention to suspend service. This notification shall inform the rider of the reason(s) for the proposed service suspension and shall state that the rider has the right to appeal/review.

Riders must request a service suspension appeal/review by postal mail postmarked within fifteen (15) calendar days after receiving the Service Suspension Letter to:

Austin Parks and Recreation Department
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Vehicle Driver Responsibilities

Riders Can Expect Drivers to:

- Operate the vehicle safely under all circumstances
- Wear proper uniform, including identification
- Get out of the vehicle and announce arrival
- Verify identity of rider
- Offer assistance to rider, including pushing manual wheelchair, offering an arm for guidance or help with assistive devices.
- Collect proper fee (if required)
- Transport rider only to the pre-scheduled locations, unless otherwise from a supervisor/coordinator or dispatch
- Be courteous and respectful at all times

Drivers are Prohibited from:

- Entering past the front entrance of a public building
- Entering a rider's residence
- Leaving vulnerable riders unattended in a vehicle
- Losing sight of their vehicle
- Maneuvering a wheelchair up more than one (1) step
- Manually lifting or carrying riders
- Taking trip reservations or cancellations from riders
- Using a personal cell phone while operating a vehicle or providing rider assistance
- Accepting monetary tips or gifts
- Locking/unlocking building doors
- Operating the controls of an electronically operated mobility device.

- Maneuvering an inoperable wheelchair
- Transporting riders who have uncovered health-related open sores and wounds or who are displaying visible body fluid leakage

Customer Feedback

For compliments, concerns, complaints, general questions and/or suggestions regarding the Senior Transportation Program please contact Senior Transportation Program by:

Telephone: 512-974-1461

Postal Mail: Austin Parks and Recreation Department

ATTN: Senior Transportation Program

200 South Lamar

Austin, TX 78704

Please Note: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department Policies and Procedures are subject to change. Participants/Riders will be notified of changes through notices and/or public announcements. Please make sure the Senior Transportation Program always has the rider's current address, telephone number and email address (if applicable).

A digital version of this guide may be viewed and downloaded at www.austintexas.org/seniors.