



Baytown Resource & Assistance Center

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The Baytown Resource & Assistance Center (BRAC) 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 Baytown Resource & Assistance Center (BRAC) and Harris County can provide 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. 65 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 BRAC 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. File a completed Program application *in person* with the Baytown Resource & Assistance Center Office located at 5309 Decker Dr., 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 three (3) 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 may be made a minimum of one day ahead of the requested trip date.
 - Service is available Monday through Friday but cancellation requests are accepted on a daily basis.

- 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. Taxi cabs will accept a combination of cash and Rides funds. All other Providers must be paid with Rides funds only.

Rides Process

1. Baytown Resource & Assistance Center Process

BRAC 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 BRAC, via the Participant’s Rides Card at the beginning

of each Program Period. If the Participant uses all of the allotted funds, the BRAC 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 BRAC Office.

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. BRAC 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 BRAC 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 BRAC 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.

BRAC 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”. Participants must apply in person at the BRAC Office and, if eligible, will be issued a Customer ID Number. BRAC 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 monthly 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 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.harriscountyttransit.com.

The Participant will present his/her photo identification and the BRAC 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 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The service days are Monday through Friday, 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 sent **in writing with proof** to the Baytown Resource & Assistance Center Office, 5309 Decker Dr., Baytown, Texas 77520.
5. The BRAC Office will review Program files on a monthly basis. Participants who remain inactive for a period of six months will be terminated from the Program and re-application will be necessary. Funds from removed 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 BRAC. A Participant with infractions on his/her account will be verbally warned 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 Executive Director 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 BRAC. However, the Providers, bus drivers or Harris County may submit complaints regarding Participant's behavior to the Director or his/her designee for investigation. If the Director 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 BRAC Office. Any person wishing to appeal a decision of the Director 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 Executive Director or his/her designee; provided that the Participant gives notice of appeal in writing to the BRAC 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 Director or his/her designee shall be final and binding on the Participant, the Provider and BRAC. If the decision of the Director or his/her designee is not properly appealed, the decision of the Director his/her designee shall be final and binding on the same parties.

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

AUTHORIZATION TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM

The Executive Director 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.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Baytown Resource and Assistance Center recognizes its responsibility to listen to client, applicant, and other stakeholder suggestions, complaints or grievances, and attempt to resolve any such concerns. A grievance/complaint is defined as an expression of verbal or written dissatisfaction that can include, but is not limited to, services, manner of treatment, outcomes or experiences.

Clients (or a client's parent or legal guardian), applicants, and other stakeholders have the right to file a grievance. Individuals filing grievances are treated with dignity, understanding, and respect. In no case will a grievance result in any reprisal. Clients will not be denied service because of a grievance.

Grievances will be given prompt and careful attention and, when indicated, grievances will result in corrective action. BRAC staff are charged with the responsibility of providing assistance and services within the full intent of BRAC policies, and with making efforts to resolve conflicts.

Complaints regarding the Program should be made in writing and sent to the following address: BRAC Community Development Transportation Program, 5309 Decker Dr., Baytown, Texas 77520.

The following is the procedure by which clients and representatives of BRAC shall attempt to discuss and resolve grievances:

1. If the complainant(s) wishes to file a complaint, they must inform the staff member or staff member's supervisor of that intent *in writing* along with a description of the complaint. Such intent will be communicated by the appropriate personnel to the manager.
2. Within ten working days, the complainant, staff member, and manager will discuss the grievance and attempt resolution.
3. In the event the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at this point, the complainant may elect to submit the grievance to the Executive Director. The Executive Director reviews the case and responds within ten working days.
4. If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the matter to the chair of Baytown Resource and Assistance Center. When an appeal is made to the chair, the director compiles a complete report of the situation, including; action taken, reason, and other documentation gathered. The chair shall review an appeal within ten working days of its receipt. The complainant will be notified of the chair's decision in writing. The decision shall be final.

All written grievances, BRAC's response to them, and a summary of the action taken on each complaint, the results and findings will be kept and filed in office.

