

Harris County Precinct 4  
Transportation Department

**MultiCare  
Trip Coordinator  
Handbook**



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**Harris County Precinct 4**  
Commissioner R. Jack Cagle

Dear New Trip Coordinator,

Congratulations on your new adventure as a trip coordinator! Precinct 4 Commissioner R. Jack Cagle is pleased to provide day trips and transportation services to Harris County Precinct 4 residents 50 and older.

Annually, Precinct 4 transports more than 400 senior adult groups on day trips to a variety of activities including festivals, museums, plays, concerts, theatrical and sporting venues, and special attractions that occur in and around Southeast Texas.

I wish you and your group many miles of happy traveling! Your comments, suggestions, and questions regarding this service are always welcome. Please feel free to contact me at 713-274-4050 if I may be of help in any way.

Sincerely,

*Kathryn Perez*

Director, Harris County Precinct 4  
Recreation Division & Community  
Centers

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Harris County Precinct 4 provides resource information, advocacy, volunteer opportunities, and educational and recreational group transportation to residents who are 50 years of age and older.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Harris County Precinct 4  
Transportation Department  
P. O. Box 1433  
Tomball, Texas 77377

**713-274-4050**  
Monday – Friday  
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**After hours, weekends, or in the event of an emergency,  
Call any of the following:**

Pam Beucler, Transportation Manager  
pbeucler@hcp4.net  
**832-712-0347**

Manuel Calderon, Administrative Assistant  
mcalderon@hcp4.net  
**832-405-8834**

Peggy Peyton, Administrative Assistant  
ppeyton@hcp4.net  
**713-703-4799**

## **PRECINCT 4 TRANSPORTATION MULTICARE & SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANCE POLICIES**

- Facility may travel up to 75 miles from the pickup location, with a maximum total of 6 hours and two stops.
- The maximum mobility devices for the 26 Passenger buses are:
  - One wheelchair tie-down
  - Any of the following:
    - Two wheelchair transfers and one walker
    - One wheelchair transfer and two walkers
    - Or three walkers
    - 22 seats are available for staff or residents.
- The maximum mobility devices for the 40 Passenger buses are:
  - Three wheelchair tie-downs, and six wheelchair transfers.
  - 30 seats are available for staff or residents.
  - The front seat behind the bus driver is reserved for the second bus driver.
- All mobility devices must be transported on the bus and not in another vehicle following the bus.
- All wheelchairs must be stored in a secure compartment and not in the bus seats.
- Address hygiene needs of residents prior to and during the trip.
- Provide incontinence protection on bus seats prior to loading the bus and change when needed.
- Ensure wheelchairs are clean prior to the trip.
- The purpose of wheelchair brakes is to hold the wheelchair stationary and keep the resident safe. Ensure the brakes on the wheelchairs are working properly. Precinct 4 is unable to transport wheelchairs with faulty brakes.

- Precinct 4 drivers reserve the right to refuse any wheelchair that cannot be safely secured to transport.
- Facility staff will bring residents to the bus and assist with the receiving of residents on and off the lift.
- Facility staff will provide assistance to passengers at the bus entrance.
- Only Precinct 4 drivers can operate the lift and will secure residents' tie-downs. Once completed the staff member will check that the resident is comfortably secured.
- All MultiCare trips in a large bus will have two bus drivers. Both bus drivers are to remain on each side of the lift, while the lift is in operation.
- Assist bus drivers with the storage of wheelchairs and walkers in storage compartments on the bus.
- All passengers must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- **DO NOT** plug any medical device into the charging ports by the driver on our buses. Those ports are for the driver's equipment.
- Any medical device that weighs over five pounds should be kept on the floor at the feet of the user (unless equipped with a should strap, in which case, they can hold it on their shoulder) – this prevents the medical device from becoming a projectile or blocking the aisle.
- All medical devices in use while the bus is in motion must be in the possession of the user and must have their own, stand-alone power source. Constituents may bring additional batteries, and these may be kept on the bus while at events.
- Not all motorized wheelchairs can be safely transported on Precinct 4 buses. Contact the transportation office if you have questions about a wheelchair.
- Precinct 4 bus drivers are unable to provide individual assistance to passengers.
- To keep our buses pristine, please advise your group that only water may be consumed on the bus. Eating, drinking (other than water), and chewing gum are not permitted.
- Precinct 4 travels Tuesday through Sunday with departures at 7 a.m. or later.

- Passengers traveling with oxygen tanks must place the tank and extra tank in a carry-on bag. The carry-on bag must always remain with the passenger.
- Transport chairs are not permitted on the bus lift.
- Passengers may not travel seated in a transport chair while the bus is in motion.
- Precinct 4 bus drivers are Harris County employees. Under the Texas Penal Code, Chapter 36-Bribery and Corrupt Influence section, governmental employees are not allowed to accept tips of any kind, especially cash, no matter how small the amount. It's the law!
  - However, Precinct 4 bus drivers are allowed to accept the following only when transporting a group:
    - Lunch or dinner when dining with a group. Refreshments at rest stop/s.
    - Tickets to events, e.g. Astros games, the theater, concerts, museums, movies, etc.
    - A nominal "cash advance" (\$20 maximum) for lunch/dinner expenses when the group's itinerary does not include a planned meal. For example, a cash advance can be given to a bus driver at baseball games/sporting events, the Kemah Boardwalk, shopping malls, The Strand in Galveston, etc. Drivers will return any change and a receipt.

**Please do not**

- Provide cash to Precinct 4 bus drivers when lunch/dinner is included in the trip.
- Provide cash to Precinct 4 bus drivers for expenses that did not occur. Please remember to ask for the change and a receipt for all cash advances. Drivers are required to return the change from cash advances to the trip coordinators since any amount of money they keep above the actual expenses is considered a tip.



## **NOTICE TO GUN HOLDERS**

- Weapons may not be left on transportation vehicles provided by Precinct 4
- Take into consideration the destination on your travel itinerary whereby weapons may be prohibited.

**It is the sole responsibility of the gun holder to be informed.**

**Call the Transportation Department several days prior to departure if there are any questions or concerns about transporting a resident or wheelchair.**

## **ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**

- Trip coordinators must be 18 years of age or older.
- Call the Transportation Department at **713-274-4050** if you have any questions about the policies or responsibilities of a trip coordinator.

### **Exceptions for passengers under the age of 50**

- Caregiver over the age of 18.
- An adult child with special needs over the age of 18 traveling with a parent.
- A religious leader and spouse, limit one couple per trip.
- A person who is the group leader or a spouse of someone over the age of 50.

## MOBILITY DEVICES



Transport chairs **CANNOT** be safely secured for transport, and they are **NOT** allowed on the lift.



Allowed on the lift.

However, the passenger must transfer to a bus seat if they are in a scooter with the handlebar in front.



These wheelchairs all have their **four securement points** and can safely be secured. However, the passenger must transfer to a bus seat if they are in the scooter with the handlebar in front.

## REGISTERING YOUR GROUP

Trip coordinators must submit a **Trip Coordinator and Group Information Form** when registering a new group, or any time there is a change.

- 1) To submit the form online, please go to:  
**<https://www.hcp4.net/daytrips/>**
- 2) Select the – **Trip Coordinator and Group Information Form** blue box (located mid-page - far right)
- 3) Fill out the form, click **REVIEW**, if the information is correct, then click **SUBMIT** to complete your request(s).
- 4) To print and mail, email, or fax the form, click on the Printable Forms link underneath the blue boxes. Click on Trip Coordinator and Group Information Form. Print the form, fill it out, and send it in.

## RESERVING THE BUSES

Beginning May 1, 2022, at 8 a.m., trip coordinators may reserve buses up to one year in advance. Groups are allotted buses on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Please go to <https://www.hcp4.net/daytrips/> to reserve your buses.

- 1) Select the - **Transportation Bus Reservation Form** blue box
- 2) Fill out the **Transportation Bus Reservation Form**, click review, if the information is correct, click **SUBMIT** to complete your request(s).
- 3) You will receive immediate confirmation that your reservation request has been submitted. You can expect confirmation of the dates reserved within 7 - 10 business days after submitting the online form. This will contain your confirmation number for the trip. Always use this confirmation number from the final email when contacting the transportation department.

**You can expect confirmation of the dates reserved within 7 - 10 business days after submitting the online form.**

## TRIP ITINERARY FORM

- Trip coordinators are required to submit a **Trip Itinerary Form (TIF) 30 days prior** to departure.
- Please go to <https://www.hcp4.net/daytrips/> to submit your Trip Itinerary Form.
- Click on the blue box that reads **Trip Itinerary Form** (located mid-page, far right).
  - 1) Fill out the form online.
  - 2) At the bottom you will click on **REVIEW**.
  - 3) After reviewing, click **SUBMIT**.

### Please note the following when planning your trip

- You **MUST** contact the transportation office **BEFORE** scheduling a Houston area driving tour with a tour guide.
- No overnight or out-of-state trips are permitted.
- Travel to racetracks, bingo halls, or gambling establishments are not permitted.
- The pick-up and return point must be the same location and located within Harris County Precinct 4's geographical boundaries.
- Transportation is provided as a round-trip service and all passengers must travel with the group for the duration of the trip.

## **SUBMITTING THE TRIP ITINERARY**

Once the TIF is complete, the trip coordinator can submit the form by any of the following:

- 1) Online – Input information, click **Review**, if correct then click **SUBMIT** located at the bottom of the TIF.
- 2) By mail to the Transportation Department at P.O. Box 1433, Tomball, Texas 77377
- 3) By fax to 713-437-8517
- 4) By e-mail to pbeucler@hcp4.net, ppeyton@hcp4.net and mcalderson@hcp4.net

**Failure to submit a TIF 30 days prior to the departure date may result in the trip being canceled.**

## CONFIRMATION EMAIL

After the Transportation Department receives the **Trip Itinerary Form (TIF)**, a confirmation letter will be e-mailed to the trip coordinator. Upon receipt of the confirmation letter, the trip coordinator should review all information included.

**Please, notify the Transportation Department immediately at 713-274-4050 if any of the trip information listed on the confirmation email is not correct.**

## CONFIRM THE PASSENGER COUNT

Three to five days prior to departure, the trip coordinator must confirm the maximum number of passengers traveling by calling the Transportation Department at **713-274-4050**.

- Do not exceed the number of passengers traveling after confirming the passenger count.
- Verify the assigned trip coordinator for the trip. Notify the Transportation Department of any changes prior to departure.



## TRIP CANCELLATIONS

If a trip must be canceled, call the Transportation Department immediately at **713-274-4050** during normal business hours. If you need to cancel the trip after normal business hours or on the weekends, contact one of the following:

- 1) Pam Beucler, 832-712-0347
- 2) Manuel Calderon, 832-405-8834
- 3) Peggy Peyton, 713-703-4799

## PASSENGER SIGN-IN SHEET

The passenger sign-in sheet will be emailed to you with your trip itinerary for your convenience. The form must be completed before the bus departs.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

- Should **NOT** be – someone on the trip.
- Should **BE** – someone who can travel out of town to pick you up if you are ill or injured and cannot complete the trip.

## BUS FLEET

All buses transporting Precinct 4 travel groups must meet the following minimum number of passengers. Our 26 and 40 passenger buses have lifts.

**Our 14 passenger buses can only travel a 60-mile radius from your pickup location**

- 14 Passenger Bus – Minimum 10 Passengers
- 26 Passenger Bus – Minimum 13 Passengers
- 40 Passenger Bus – Minimum 20 Passengers

## BUS DRIVER INTERACTIONS

- Drivers are responsible for the safe operation of the bus as well as the safe loading and unloading of passengers.
- Drivers have the sole discretion to decide whether to travel under a porte-cochere, to enter a parking lot or not, the best location to load and unload, and so forth – anything dealing with the safety of the bus and the passengers aboard.
- If confused as to why a driver makes a particular choice, please feel free to ask the driver to explain the rationale; however, **the driver's decision is final.**

## WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!

The Transportation office is always available here to assist with trip planning details. Please do not hesitate to call us!

**Wishing You Many Miles of Happy Traveling!**