



## PASSENGER GUIDELINES

FORT BEND COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

APPROVED BY FORT BEND COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER'S COURT

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***A PASSENGER'S GUIDE FOR ACCESSING SERVICES AND  
OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES***

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# PASSENGER GUIDELINES

## AGENCY OVERVIEW

In June 2005, Fort Bend County officially formed a Public Transportation Department that is now commonly known as Fort Bend Transit (FBT). FBT is committed to operating a public transportation system that offers reliable, accessible and convenient services with safe vehicles and facilities. All residents and visitors of Fort Bend County are eligible for services offered by FBT.

***Demand Response Service*** is a curb-to-curb, shared-ride service that covers all of Fort Bend County. Passengers must register for the service over the phone and may start making their reservations at least one day in advance or up to thirty days in advance. Demand Response Service operates Monday through Friday, excluding County acknowledged holidays, from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm.

***Commuter Park and Ride Service*** provides weekday service to the Texas Medical Center, Greenway Plaza, and Galleria areas of Houston from three park and ride lot locations: Fort Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg, University of Houston – Sugar Land and the AMC Theatre in Sugar Land. Commuter service includes morning and evening schedules. Commuter Service operates Monday through Friday, excluding County acknowledged holidays, with routes starting as early as 4:30 am and ending as late as 9:00 pm.

All residents and visitors of Fort Bend County are eligible for services offered by the Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department.

Fort Bend County Public Transportation is a recipient of Federal funding to provide public transportation. In certain circumstances, statutes or funding sources may dictate passenger and scheduling limitations, including but not limited to, service type, service area, scheduling, and/or rider limitations (elderly, handicapped, etc.). When applicable, these restrictions will be posted on the County's website.

FBT services are not equipped to accommodate passengers needing specialized medical attention, reclined wheelchairs/beds, monitoring equipment, or procedures while traveling. Requests for these types of services will be referred to private providers of medical transportation services.

**OUR MISSION** - to provide safe and efficient public transportation services while maintaining service quality and customer satisfaction.

**OUR PURPOSE** - to provide seamless service between urban and rural communities; access rural transit funding and increase services to residents in Fort Bend County without increasing a financial burden to the taxpayers.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Physical Address 3737 Bamore Road  
Rosenberg, TX 77471

Mailing Address 301 Jackson Street  
Richmond, TX 77469

Office Number 281-633-RIDE (7433)  
Toll-Free 866-751-TRIP (8747)  
Fax Number 832-471-1843

Email Transit@fbctx.gov  
Website FBCTransit.org

### **TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE (TRS)**

Individuals with hearing impairments can make a reservation utilizing the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS). The individual may dial 711 which to connect him/her to TRS. Individuals with vision impairments may request printed materials in larger fonts.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday – Friday - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (excluding County Holidays)

### **SERVICE HOURS**

Demand Response - Operating hours vary according to trip requests. In most cases, first drop-offs are scheduled for 8:00 a.m. and last pick-ups are scheduled for 5:00 p.m. Please see Demand Response Services for specific hours.

Commuter Services - Services may begin as early as 4:30 a.m. and end as late as 9:00 p.m. Schedules for these services are posted on the County website and are available through our office.

Changes to operating hours due to emergency events (weather and other emergencies) will be published on the website, and/or announced via public media outlets (social media, radio, television, etc.), through Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management, when applicable, and any other sources deemed necessary and/or available.

### **FORT BEND COUNTY HOLIDAYS**

(Dates are available on the website and are subject to change)

New Year's Day

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day

Fort Bend County Fair Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving Day and Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

## **DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICES**

Shared-ride, curb-to-curb bus service that requires advance reservations. The trip must originate in Fort Bend County. Our service area includes all locations within Fort Bend County and locations up to one (1) mile outside the boundaries of Fort Bend County. Trips are reserved on a first-come-first-serve basis and are based upon availability. Operating hours vary according to trip requests. In most cases, first drop-offs are scheduled for 8:00 a.m. and last pick-ups are scheduled for 5:00 p.m.

Buses serve different locations and passengers each day depending on locations requested by passengers. Drivers are instructed to use a curbside location that provides a safe environment for boarding and alighting. Drivers do not notify the passenger upon arrival (i.e. door knock, horn blown).

### **HOW TO RESERVE A RIDE**

Reservations are accepted one (1) business day and up to thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the need for transportation by telephone Monday through Friday, excluding County Holidays, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Reservations for next day trips must be requested by 4:00 p.m. the day before. Trips are scheduled for drop-offs accommodating first appointment times no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and last pick-up times no later than 5:00 p.m.

Reservations are **not** accepted by voicemail, telephone message, text, or facsimile. Passengers or their delegates must speak directly with a Reservationist to schedule a ride. "Will call" trips are not allowed as FBT does not offer same day service.

The Reservationist requires the same information for each call so please ensure you have the necessary information ready. This will ensure shorter wait times for each passenger making a reservation.

1. **ID number or First and Last name** Passengers are required to furnish their contact information at the time a reservation is made and/or when their information has changed.
2. **Number of Passengers** Passengers may reserve a ride for themselves and/or other passengers. All guests of the passenger must be listed at the time the primary reservation is made.
3. **Special needs accommodations** Special needs accommodations must be disclosed at the time of reservation. Examples include assistance to/from the door, use of a wheelchair, walker, cane, hearing or vision impairment accommodations, assistance with boarding/alighting vehicles, etc.
4. **Other accommodations** Other accommodations such as assistance with packages or use of bike rack must be disclosed at the time of reservation to ensure enough time is allotted for boarding and alighting.
5. **Pick-up and drop-off location(s) and time(s)** The exact location for pick up and drop off must be provided when making a reservation. All reservations are subject to space and time availability. Passengers may reserve a single ride or multiple rides. The passenger may also reserve multiple destinations for one day or multiple days.
6. **Multi-Day Requests** Passengers requesting multiple days may be asked to call back later to find out availability for the requested trips, and/or to get their scheduled pick-up times to allow time for the Reservationist to determine availability to book the reservation.

## RIDING WITH FORT BEND TRANSIT

1. **Pick-up Location** The passenger must be present and visible at the scheduled pick-up location for **15 minutes before to 15 minutes after** the scheduled pick-up time. Please note that the bus driver is unable to call you when they arrive and will only wait 5 minutes before they must move on to the next passenger.
2. **On-Board/Ride Time** Passengers should expect an on-board (ride) time of ten (10) minutes to an hour and a half. It is a violation of FBT's policy to be on a bus longer than 90 minutes.
3. **On-Board/Wait Time** Passengers should expect extended wait times to accommodate any special needs of other passengers when boarding and alighting.
4. **No Reservation** Passengers presenting themselves for boarding without a prior reservation may be turned away. Drivers do not determine additional, unscheduled passenger boarding and are required to contact dispatch for instruction.
5. **Day of Service** Please be advised that the "day of service" conditions can affect the ability to provide efficient service.
  - a. Passengers will only be picked up and dropped off at the addresses given at the time of booking.
  - b. Trips are considered "on-time" if the vehicle arrives within the thirty (30) minute **window** which is defined as fifteen (15) minutes before to fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.
  - c. In emergency situations, pick-up time may be altered without counting against you and violating the suspension policy.
  - d. **Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA)** For day of service info, please call Dispatch at 281-633-7433, option 1.
6. **US Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** The driver must assist individuals with disabilities with the use of ramps, lifts, and securement systems. The driver must ensure a passenger with a disability can take advantage of the vehicle accessibility and safety features provided.

## CANCELLATIONS

Passengers must notify FBT of all cancellations **no later than** 4:00 p.m. the business day before the scheduled trip. Passengers are encouraged to call in cancellations as far in advance as possible so that another passenger will be able to use the time allotted for your trip.

### ADVANCE CANCEL

An "Advance Cancel" occurs when the cancellation is received before 4:00 p.m. of the business day before the scheduled trip or as far in advance as possible. An Advance Cancel does not count against the passenger and is encouraged.

### LATE CANCEL

A "Late Cancel" occurs when the cancellation is received after 4:00 p.m. of the business day before the day of the scheduled trip or on the day of service. A Late Cancel is counted towards the Suspension Policy.

### CANCEL-AT-DOOR

A "Cancel-At-Door" occurs when a vehicle arrives at a scheduled pick-up location within the on-time window and the passenger, or someone at the location on the rider's behalf, declines the ride.

If a passenger Cancels-At-Door on his/her first leg trip (e.g. pickup/outbound) and has one or more trips scheduled on the same day (e.g. return trip), Fort Bend Transit will automatically cancel the subsequent trip(s). It is the passenger's responsibility to call Reservations if the return trip is needed.

#### NO-SHOW

A "No-Show" occurs when a vehicle arrives at a scheduled pick-up location within the on-time window, waits five (5) minutes and the passenger is not at the location of the scheduled pick-up or refuses the trip.

If a passenger No-Shows his/her first leg trip (e.g. outbound/pickup) and has one or more trips scheduled on the same day (e.g. return trip), Fort Bend Transit will automatically cancel the subsequent trip(s). It is the passenger's responsibility to call Dispatch if the return trip is needed.

#### HAND TO HAND

Assisting the passenger on and off the vehicle to be received by an individual in the proximity of the vehicle. Driver or Ambassador can provide this service. *i.e. Passenger will be assisted off the vehicle and handed to his/her caregiver within 6 feet of the vehicle.*

#### DOOR TO DOOR

Escorting the passenger to and from the vehicle to a building exterior doorway, and cannot cross the threshold. Ambassador ONLY. *Passenger drop-off does not require anyone to be present.*

#### CURB TO CURB

Assistance shall be provided between the vehicle and the curb. At a minimum, assistance to and from the vehicle and over or off the curb, into and out of vehicles, on and off-lift equipment, and assistance with mobility devices will be required. Driver ONLY.

## **COMMUTER SERVICES**

Shared-ride bus service which operates on a set schedule to and from set parking lot locations in Fort Bend County with scheduled drop-offs and pick-ups within business districts including the Texas Medical Center, Greenway Plaza, and the Galleria area in Houston.

Services may begin as early as 4:30 a.m. and end as late as 9:00 p.m. Schedules for these services are posted on the County website and are available through our office. This service is designed primarily to accommodate employment trips but open for general trip purposes. There are no reservations required for the Commuter services. Park and Ride locations include:

Fort Bend County Fairgrounds  
4310 State HWY 36 South  
Rosenberg, Texas 77471

University of Houston Sugar Land  
14000 University Blvd  
Sugar Land, Texas 77479

AMC Theater First Colony  
3301 Town Centre Blvd  
Sugar Land, Texas 77479

## TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, VETERANS HOSPITAL, METRO, OR OTHER PROVIDER SERVICES

Services to the Texas Medical Center and the Veterans Hospital in Houston may be provided via transfer to FBT Commuter Services into the Texas Medical Center. Transfers to Houston Metro or services provided by other public operators servicing areas adjacent to Fort Bend County may also be provided by the Demand Response services. A transfer point to the service may be made at any of the FBT Park and Ride locations or other transfer locations designated by the County. The transfer point location must be made in advance by calling and speaking to a reservationist.

## GUARANTEED RIDE HOME (GRH) PROGRAM

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) is a complimentary service that provides commuter service passengers a way home in the event of a midday emergency such as a personal illness or an unexpected event. GRH is not provided for weather related emergencies. To register or for more information, please check our website.

You must register for the program in advance to be eligible for service. Registration is simple – complete a registration form and return the form to FBT. The GRH service can be utilized up to 3 times per calendar year. After 3 free rides are used, passengers may request additional trips at their own expense.

Once a staff member verifies enrollment in the program, a service provider will pick you up from your place of employment and take you to your designated park and ride lot.

## COMMUTER SERVICE REMINDERS

1. **Morning Pickup Locations.** Drivers must hold at a stop until the scheduled park and ride departure time and all passengers have boarded or alighted. Drivers will NOT allow passenger to board the bus once it pulls away from the stop.
2. **Morning Drop-off Location.** Drivers may perform drop-off stops up to **5 minutes** before the scheduled time and continue onto the next stop location.
  - a. Trips are considered “on-time” if the vehicle arrives at the scheduled pick-up time or within 5 (five) minutes after the scheduled time.
3. **Reverse and Noon Commuters.** Please ensure you are at the stop a minimum of **5 to 10 minutes** before the scheduled departure time to ensure you do not miss the bus.
4. **Routes and Schedules.** Drivers must follow designated schedules and routes. Drivers are not allowed to change the order of pick-up and drop-offs, nor are they allowed to change the route taken by the vehicle without prior approval from the Dispatcher or Operations Supervisor.
5. **Stop Announcements.** Under the Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations, commuter stop announcements by a transit provider must be announced (by personnel or a recording system) at transfer points, major intersections, and destination points. While riding on a route, sufficient notification must be given to individuals with visual impairments or other disabilities to be oriented to their location. Furthermore, the transit personnel must announce any stop upon request.
6. **Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA).** For day of service info, please call Dispatch at 281-633-7433, option 1.
7. **US Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).** The driver must assist individuals with disabilities with the use of ramps, lifts, and securement systems. The driver must ensure a passenger with a disability can take advantage of the vehicle accessibility and safety features provided.

## **AMBASSADOR SERVICES**

As grant funding is available, Ambassador Services may be provided by FBT. An Ambassador is an individual who works directly with passengers providing extra assistance from the passenger's door to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the destination, not passing an exterior door's threshold.

This personalized service assists with the safe passage for those who need additional help with boarding and alighting vehicles, and passengers with agitation, behavioral and cognitive issues. Ambassadors may be assigned to bus stop locations and/or transit vehicles. An Ambassador's duties are stated below and may assist with the following:

1. "Gentle Support" such as opening doors and providing verbal guidance.
2. Physical support such as assisting passengers with balance, climbing steps, handling packages, or other similar functions.
3. Assistance at bus stops will be limited to ensuring passenger boards the correct vehicle and are advised not to wander into the street or unsafe locations while waiting for vehicle or transfer.
4. Assistance from door-to-door will be limited to escorting the passenger to or from a building exterior doorway to the vehicle.
5. Assisting the passenger on and off the vehicle, to be received by an individual in the proximity of the vehicle. Passenger will be assisted off the vehicle and handed to his/her caregiver within 6 feet of the vehicle.
6. Ambassadors are authorized to open and close building doors as a courtesy but are not authorized to cross the threshold.

Ambassadors will not be drivers, will not attach passenger securements (seat belts, wheelchair tie-down, etc.), or operate mechanical lifts or ramps. Drivers and/or Ambassadors are not authorized to cross the threshold of building doorways or responsible for locking building doors. Drivers and/or Ambassadors are not responsible for signing any passenger in or out of a facility.

## **TRANSIT FARES**

A one-way fare must be paid each time you board the bus by exact change, a paper ticket, or a mobile pass. Ticket books may be purchased online, by mail, or in person at the Transit Facility.

Mobile passes may be purchased using our mobile ticketing app, Token Transit.

Acceptable methods of payment are cash, major credit cards, or checks made out to Fort Bend Transit. Visit our website for the exact fare structure.

1. Passengers may pay with cash; however, exact change is required because drivers **cannot** make change.
2. Tickets and/or exact cash only must be put in the farebox located at the front of the vehicle.
3. Mobile passes, passengers are required to show the driver an "active" pass upon boarding the bus. All Demand Response passes are active for 30 minutes. After the 30 minutes, the pass will expire and will no longer be valid. All Commuter passes are active for one hour. After one hour, the pass will expire and no longer be valid. It is highly encouraged for riders to NOT "Start My Trip" or "activate" their pass until their bus has arrived to ensure their pass does not expire.
4. Once a pass is expired it can no longer be accepted as fare.
5. All passengers including children over the age of 5 are required to pay the full fare.
6. Purchases of ticket books are **non-refundable** and have no expiration date.

7. Passengers can be suspended for non-payment (see Suspension Policy).
  - a. Passengers refusing to provide their name and contact information may be denied service.
  - b. The County may take legal action against passengers who refuse to pay fares, are involved in altercations or incidents regarding fares, and/or who utilize fraudulent or counterfeit fare media.
  - c. The County and/or its contracted service provider reserve the right to request police intervention should any type of altercation or disagreement occur regarding fare payments in/or around vehicles or county facilities.

## **PASSENGER GUIDELINES AND RULES**

Please help us keep our services as safe as possible for you and all our passengers by following these rules at all times:

1. Do not wait in the street as the bus approaches.
2. Passengers shall follow the driver's and/or ambassador's instructions.
3. Do not stand or sit in the aisle or stairwell.
4. NEVER try to retrieve something that rolls under the bus.
5. All passengers must wear seat restraints including shoulder harness, when available.
6. Passengers thirteen (13) years or under must be accompanied by a guardian or parent at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.
7. Passengers must provide seat restraints for children forty (40) pounds or less.
8. Passengers should not move from their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
9. Immediately notify the driver if a beverage or food is spilled or if any trash or personal items are dropped or not secured inside the vehicle. Upon notification of a hazard, the driver will notify the dispatch of the need to stop the vehicle. The driver will locate a safe location to stop the vehicle. The route will resume as soon as the spill is cleaned and/or the items are secured.
10. Speaking to the driver while the vehicle is in motion unless it is an emergency is prohibited.
11. Drivers shall secure all wheelchairs tie-downs for passengers utilizing wheelchairs. All wheelchairs must have their wheels locked and properly secured while in the vehicle. Drivers shall ensure lap and shoulder belts for passengers utilizing wheelchairs are secured.
  - a. If a seat or wheelchair tie-down location has a seat belt that is not working or missing the seat or tie-down location it cannot be used for seating passengers or securing passengers in wheelchairs.
  - b. Drivers are authorized to maneuver a wheelchair up or down a single-step curb.
  - c. Drivers are authorized to maneuver a wheelchair up or down one single stair step. Drivers are not authorized to maneuver wheelchairs up or down multiple steps.
  - d. Drivers are authorized to provide necessary assistance in boarding and alighting vehicles. Assistance includes opening and closing the vehicle doors, hand support on the vehicle stairwell or lift, assistance with bags meeting the bag restrictions contained in these guidelines, and assistance securing seatbelts.
12. Individuals who are unable to travel independently, safely, and securely on their own accord, whether due to physical or cognitive disabilities and regardless of age, MUST be accompanied by a personal care assistant (PCA). If it becomes apparent that a PCA is necessary, an FBT employee

- will contact the passenger or his/her caregiver for notification. PCAs may ride free of charge.
13. Each individual passenger and mobility devices must not exceed 600 total combined pounds to safely board the vehicle.

### ALLOWABLE ITEMS

All items brought onboard vehicles shall be secured from movement while on the vehicle. Items must not block entrances, exits, aisles, take up seating space, or passageways at stops or in facilities. Items shall not be left unattended and are to be removed when you exit the vehicle.

1. Consumption of non-alcoholic beverages, small snacks (e.g. candy, chips, and fruit) is allowed. Please ensure drinks are in a covered non-spill container.
2. Personal medical equipment and supplies must be properly secured while in transit.
3. Passengers will only be allowed to board vehicles with the number of carry-on items they can effectively handle independently. Carryon items include but are not limited to shopping bags, handbags, briefcases, backpacks, suitcases, and umbrellas.
  - a. Shopping bags, similar to those provided in grocery stores, are limited to no more than six (6) bags per passenger with each bag weighing less than ten (10) pounds.
  - b. Larger shopping bags are limited to no more than two (2) per passenger weighing less than thirty (30) pounds.
  - c. Briefcases and backpacks are limited to one (1) weighing no more than 30 pounds.
  - d. Suitcases are limited to two (2) small suitcases weighing no more than thirty (30) pounds each.
4. Walkers, canes, and other mobility devices are allowed on vehicles.

### PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are not allowed while utilizing transit services or within County facilities. Violation of prohibited items may result in immediate suspension of service and/or removal from the vehicle/facility or in additional legal action.

1. Prohibited weapons under Texas Penal Code Section 46.05
2. Motor-powered bicycles, tandem bicycles, tricycles, and bicycles with training wheels
3. Portable speakers
4. Illegal drugs

Persons who are not otherwise prohibited by state or federal law from possessing a firearm may carry a handgun that is either concealed or carried openly in a holster in compliance with Texas Penal Code Chapter 46. Violation of Texas Penal Code Chapter 46 may result in immediate suspension of service and/or removal from the vehicle/facility or in additional legal action. All open-carry handguns must be in a holster.

### PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The following activities are not allowed while utilizing transit services or within County facilities. Violation of prohibited activities may result in immediate suspension of service and/or removal from the vehicle/facility or in additional legal action.

1. Lack of shoes, shirts, or wearing inappropriate attire
2. Consumption of alcohol or illegal substances

3. Smoking
4. Use of abusive language or gestures
5. Spitting
6. Loitering
7. Unlawful carrying of a dangerous or prohibited weapon under Texas Penal Code Chapter 46
8. Aggressive behaviors or inappropriate physical contact or displays of body parts
9. Terroristic threats
10. Assault or threat of assault
11. Aggressive panhandling, selling, or soliciting for donation
12. Littering
13. Use of transit vehicles without paying
14. Impairing or interrupting public transportation operations including talking to the operator when the vehicle is in motion
15. Urinating, defecating, public nudity, or indecent exposure
16. Passengers should not chase after a bus, run across parking lot/parking aisles and through-ways, run in front of/behind or alongside buses while they are stationary and in motion, or wait in areas where there is no sidewalk or medium.
17. Defacing property or equipment.
18. Unreasonably loud, disturbing, or unnecessary noise such as a radio or musical instrument.
19. Sleeping at passenger waiting areas (e.g. park and ride lot, benches, seating areas).
20. Disturbing, threatening, or prank telephone calls.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety of the passengers, employees, and contractors is a primary concern for FBT.

Passengers, employees, and contractors are encouraged to increase their awareness of safety and security concerns and to immediately report **ANY** concern to FBT's Chief Safety Officer by calling 281-633-7433, Option 9. Concerns include but are not limited to suspicious behavior by an individual or group, suspicious bags or packages, or substances. Matters of safety and security are taken seriously, and violations will result in service suspension and/or prosecution. FBT or its contracted service provider(s) will contact appropriate law enforcement or medical services to respond to events where and when it is deemed necessary.

FBT or its contracted service provider(s) will request law enforcement or medical officials to remove individuals from vehicles or facilities who are violating laws, presenting a danger to themselves or other passengers, disrupting services, and/or have physical or mental symptoms requiring medical attention.

## EMERGENCY EVENTS

Passengers onboard vehicles and/or in or around facilities during an emergency event must follow directions given by Fort Bend County staff, its contractors, and/or law enforcement officials. This includes following instructions for evacuating vehicles and facilities and/or sheltering in place.

## BICYCLES AND BIKE RACKS

Most FBT vehicles feature complimentary exterior bike racks attached to the front of the bus. Each bike rack can hold two bicycles with 20" wheels. Spaces are on a first-come-first-serve basis. Violation of this policy may result in the removal of the bike from the bus.

1. Bicyclists **MUST** notify the driver before loading or unloading their bicycles.
2. Bicyclists are responsible for securing and removing their bikes to/from the bike rack.
3. The bus operator cannot assist with securing or removing the bike; however, they can provide verbal instructions.
4. After unloading your bike, never cross in front of the bus. Wait until the bus has left the stop.
5. Bicycles are **NOT** allowed on the bus.
6. Bicyclists must provide a lock and assume responsibility for their bicycles.
7. Bicycles left on the bus bike rack or at a County Transportation facility for ten days or longer are considered abandoned and will be removed by the County.

Passengers use the bus racks at their own risk and FBT is not responsible for personal injury, property damage, or property loss arising from the use of the bike racks.

## SERVICE ANIMALS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), businesses and organizations which serve the public, must allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the facility where passengers are allowed. Service animals are also permitted to ride onboard vehicles and accompany individuals in any County Transit facility where the public is normally allowed or where an individual has been invited by a staff member to a location not normally open to the public.

The following definition describes the service animals permitted. Service animals are animals individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities including assisting people who have visual or auditory impairments, assisting with wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. Passengers who use service animals will not be charged extra fees, isolated from other patrons, or treated less favorably than other patrons. For example, a person with diabetes may have a dog that is trained to alert when blood sugar reaches high or low levels; or a person who has epilepsy may have a dog that is trained to detect the onset of a seizure and help the person remain safe during the seizure.

In situations where it is not obvious that the animal is a service animal, the staff may ask the questions below. Information obtained will be used to determine access to Transit facilities and vehicles.

1. Is the service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the service animal been trained to perform?

Passengers are responsible for service animals in transit facilities and vehicles, including any damage incurred.

1. A service animal must always be under the control of the owner or handler.
2. The owner or handler is responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal.
3. All service animals must be current with their vaccinations.

A passenger may be refused access or be asked to remove his/her service animal (e.g. bus or Transit facility) when:

1. The service animal is out of control, and the animal owner does not take effective action to control it.
2. The service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

3. The service animal is not housebroken.

Emotional support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals are not considered service animals and are not allowed in vehicles or transit facilities.

## LOST AND FOUND

FBT is not responsible for articles left on vehicles or at our facilities. However, FBT will attempt to identify and ensure a prompt, safe return of any recovered articles. Passengers wishing to inquire about a lost article should contact our office as soon as possible.

Any unclaimed personal property (i.e. bicycle) removed by Fort Bend Transit will be held for 14 calendar days unless it is deemed a safety risk. At the expiration of two weeks, any unclaimed personal property will be deemed “abandoned” and turned over to the County Purchasing Agent for disposition.

## SUSPENSION POLICY

### VIOLATIONS

A combined total of six (6) or more violations as defined under the Cancellations section of this document, within a ninety (90) day period will result in a thirty (30) day suspension of service. A cancellation will not count against the passenger when it is an error on FBT’s part. For instance, if the bus arrives outside the window of the scheduled pickup time and/or the bus does not wait five minutes after arriving for a pickup.

Passengers will not be immediately refused for non-payment of fares; however, service will be suspended for a minimum of 30 days upon three (3) non-payment of fares in a ninety (90) day period.

No more than two (2) suspensions per year are permitted.

The third suspension within one year will result in a six (6) month suspension from service. The one year period begins with the date of the first suspension.

### SUSPENSIONS PROCESS

#### WARNING LETTER

A warning letter will be sent to violators informing them of their policy violations. The warning letter will define the number of violations or non-payment of fares.

#### SUSPENSION LETTER

If the passenger meets the criteria for suspension as defined above, a suspension letter will be sent. The suspension letter will define the number of violations or non-payment of fares and the dates of the violation.

#### SUSPENSION APPEALS

Passengers receiving a Suspension Letter may appeal the decision with a written request to FBT. The request must be postmarked within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Suspension Letter or may also be emailed to [transit@fbctx.gov](mailto:transit@fbctx.gov). Supporting documentation, if applicable, should be included.

1. Upon receipt of the appeal, the passenger will be contacted to schedule a hearing.
2. The Advisory Committee will conduct all hearings via phone unless otherwise requested by the

- passenger.
3. Passengers should be prepared to provide a detailed description of why they believe the violations should be excused.
  4. No suspension will take effect if the passenger has filed an appeal in accordance with the Suspension Policy.
  5. The decision of the Advisory Committee is final.
  6. The passenger will be advised in writing within ten (10) days of the hearing.
    - a. If the Advisory Committee upholds the suspension, the notice of decision will include the beginning and end date of the suspension period.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Fort Bend Transit Advisory Committee is to challenge the department to be more sensitive to the consumers and become more aware of service improvements the department may want to consider for minority, low-income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations as well as older adults and persons with limited mobility.

Representatives shall be based on the representation of the entire county (each precinct) and representation of our consumer group (i.e. general public, senior citizens, low-income, LEP populations, people with disabilities, etc.). The committee consists of 13 members. Each member serves a 2-year term with an option to continue to serve for consecutive terms. Once a seat becomes vacant, FBT will accept applications and/or nominations to serve on the Advisory Committee. Notices indicating vacant committee seats will be advertised on the FBT's website and on transit buses.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Fort Bend County Commissioners Court has established a means of providing the public with an opportunity to express opinions and concerns regarding a major service change or fare increase.

For more details, refer to the Public Participation Plan which can be found on the FBT website.

## CIVIL RIGHTS

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a Civil Rights law that prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, in programs & activities receiving federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d). Fort Bend County is committed to ensuring that no individual who uses our services is excluded from participation, denied benefits, or discriminated against. Fort Bend County is committed to taking affirmative action to assure that no person shall be excluded with regard to the routing, scheduling, or quality of service of transportation service on the grounds of race, color, or national origin.

If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination you may file a complaint either via email ([transit@fbctx.gov](mailto:transit@fbctx.gov)) or mail.

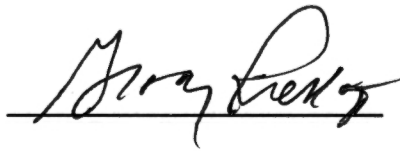
Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department  
ATTN: Civil Rights Officer  
301 Jackson Street

Richmond, TX 77469

Complaints may also be filed with the following organization no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination:

Federal Transit Administration's Office of Civil Rights  
ATTN: Title VI Program Coordinator  
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

APPROVED BY:



Grady Prestage, Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Presiding Officer, Commissioners Court,  
November 21, 2023

REVIEWED BY:



Perri D'Armond  
Public Transportation Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ATTEST:



Laura Richard  
Fort Bend County Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

