



ACCESS SERVICE: PASSENGER USER GUIDE

(Please read this guide before making your first reservation!)

What is RIDES?

RIDES provides transportation services for people who are elderly, disabled or meet low-income guidelines that reside in Harris County outside the METROLift Service Area and are unable to access alternate transportation. Transportation providers are contracted by Harris County RIDES to provide transportation service within Harris County.

Levels of Service

There are two levels of service available:

1. Advanced reservations for ride-sharing with other passengers.
2. Same-day service for taxi rides dispatched on the same day as the request.

Registration

To use the RIDES service, you must be registered as an eligible customer either directly with the program or with a sponsor agency and have an assigned Customer ID number. If you are registered with an agency, please contact them for specific information about registration requirements. Clients may be enrolled with a maximum of only one agency and/or through direct enrollment with the program. Registration with multiple agencies is not permitted. Clients may contact the program and fill out an eligibility form to participate. Once you are approved and registered, you are eligible to receive discount travel tickets that may be used with any of the designated transportation companies.

Service Availability

Service by taxicab is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Other transportation contractors provide service by advanced reservations, Monday through Friday, 6 am - 7 pm (See the [Transportation Providers List](#) for specific hours of operations)

Ticket Distribution

Tickets are used for trip payments and are distributed by your sponsoring agency or purchased at \$2.50 each by the passenger. The face value of the ticket is \$5.00 each. Please contact your sponsoring agency for detailed information on ticket distribution and policies on ticket use. (Passengers may use a combination of cash and tickets when using taxicabs.) Subsidized trips require 50% co-pay (\$2.50 per ticket) after eligibility is determined. A maximum of 8 coupons may be used for any one-way taxi trip. Customers are responsible for any taxi fare cost over \$40.00.

Service Guidelines

Advance reservations for ride-sharing with a group of passengers (Non-metered Providers) Reservations may be made a minimum of one day and up to four days ahead of the requested trip date. Call a transportation provider who offers service in your area. Service is Monday through Friday, but cancellation requests are accepted every day. Reservations are taken as follows:

- For Monday trips, reservations may be received Thursday through Friday by 2 pm
- For Tuesday trips, reservations may be received Friday through Monday
- For Wednesday trips, reservations may be received Saturday through Tuesday

- For Thursday trips, reservations may be received Monday through Wednesday
- For Friday trips, reservations may be received Tuesday through Thursday
- You may have up to 2 cancellations in any 30-day period. Upon the third cancellation in a 30-day period, a 30-day suspension from use of the program will follow. RIDES and your sponsoring agency reserve the right to remove customers from service who are found to be abusing the service by overbooking reservations.

Same-day dispatched service reservations by taxicabs

- Reservations may be made a minimum of 90 minutes in advance of the requested trip.
- Advance reservations will be accepted no earlier than 6 pm on the day before travel.
- For advance-scheduled trips, 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.
- For same-day trips, cancellations will be accepted up to one hour before the requested trip time. After that, cancellations will be regarded the same as no-shows. You want to avoid no-shows! (Please refer to "[No-shows](#)" in the "[Terms You Need To Know](#)" section of this guide)

Considerations Before Making Your Reservation

How many people will be traveling with you?

- If you have more than one person traveling with you, you might consider selecting a taxicab for your trip. Taxicabs will allow up to 4 passengers (including yourself) to ride for the price of one passenger, providing all passengers use the same pick-up and destination address.

How soon do you need service?

- If you need same-day service, call a taxicab
- If your trip can be scheduled in advance, call a non-metered provider in your service area

What type of passenger service do you want?

- If you can share a ride with a group of people, call a non-metered provider
- If you want single-passenger service, call a taxicab

How much do you want to spend?

- Fares are quoted for one-way trips. If you need a return trip, the cost is double that amount. For example, if you are quoted an estimated fare of \$20.00, and you need a return trip, then your total cost would be estimated at \$40.00 for the round-trip. (Taxi trip quotes are only estimates.)
- You may want to evaluate the level of service you select based on your needs and the cost involved.
- Taxicabs are the only providers that accept cash. All other providers must be paid with RIDES tickets with a value of \$5.00 each. Taxicabs will accept a combination of cash and tickets. No cash will be returned to you for fare payment in tickets where the fare amount is less than the total value of tickets paid.
- You may use a maximum of 8 tickets for a cab trip. Customers are responsible for any taxi fare cost over \$40.00.

Making Your Reservation

1. Call a provider based on your travel needs.
2. Identify yourself as a RIDES customer and give your name, Customer ID number, Agency Code (from your tickets), and specify if the trip is medical or essential. Tell the reservation agent your appointment time and pick-up address.
3. Tell the reservation agent your drop-off location.
4. Tell the reservation agent when you would like to return (if a return trip is needed).
5. If you require a companion, please advise the reservation agent.
6. If you require wheel chair accessibility, please advise the reservation agent.

7. The reservation agent will give you a pick-up time, a fare amount, and a confirmation number. (Please be aware of your sponsor agency's criteria for use of ticket.)

How to change the time of a scheduled ride

- For scheduled service with a non-metered provider, reservation changes should be made at least 4 hours ahead of your original travel time or as soon as you know you need to change your schedule.
- If you change your shared ride reservation on the same day that you are traveling, please be aware that the provider may not be able to accommodate your request, due to space availability.
- For taxicab service, please notify the provider as soon as you know you need to change your pick-up time.

How to cancel a scheduled trip

- Cancellation calls can be made to providers 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. (See [Service Guidelines](#) for cancellation restrictions)

When Your Ride Arrives

- Bring your ticket(s).
- Present your ticket(s) to the driver at the beginning of your trip (or ticket/cash combination for taxi rides). The driver will request that you present a Picture ID for identification. Drivers do not expect any tips. Repeat the same procedures for your return trip.
- If the driver arrives and you do not have tickets for payment, you will be charged with a no-show. (Please see "[Terms You Need To Know](#)" of this guide)

Emergency Procedures

If you have an emergency not related to transportation, dial 9-1-1

- In the event of an accident or emergency while onboard the vehicle, please remain calm and follow the instructions of the driver.
- If you should become ill or notice another passenger who may be ill, please immediately inform the driver.
- It is your responsibility to have access to your destination and/or home, or to have someone meet you when you are dropped off.
- There are instances when a trip may take longer than expected. Bring any medication you need. If you have a medical need, you may want to carry a small snack.

Rider Courtesy

We ask that riders observe the following Rules of Conduct:

- No smoking in the vehicles
- No eating or drinking on-board (unless required for health reasons)
- No riding with containers of alcohol or with illegal drugs
- No abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions
- No defacing or abuse of vehicles or equipment on vehicles
- No deliberate fare evasion
- No physical abuse of another customer or of the driver
- No petting of guide dogs or service animals without the permission of the owner
- No playing of radios, cassette tapes, compact disks (without headphones), or other noisy equipment while on-board
- No operating or tampering with any vehicle equipment while on-board

Causes for Suspension and/or Removal from Program

- Passengers engaging in physical abuse or causing physical injury to another passenger or driver, or

who engage in other illegal activities may be subject to immediate and permanent removal from service.

- Passengers engaging in activity which seriously disrupts operations may also be subject to a suspension of service.
- Deliberately evading fare payment may result in suspension or removal from the program.
- A passenger may be suspended from using the service for no-show and cancellation offenses as determined by your sponsoring agency or RIDES.
- Any passenger who is suspended from service will be notified in writing and will be given an opportunity to appeal the suspension.
- Providers will be immediately alerted of all customer suspensions.

Appeals Process

- Customers will be notified by telephone initially, but will also receive written notice of any suspensions and removals from the program by the sponsoring agency or the RIDES program.
- Any time a customer is removed or suspended from service, the customer has the opportunity to appeal the decision. All appeals must be in writing and submitted to the RIDES office at:

RIDES
1001 Preston, Suite 410
Houston, Texas 77002

- An independent panel will review your appeal within 30 days of receipt.
- You will continue to receive service until the review panel has made a determination.
- You will be notified in writing of the appeal decision.

Suggestions, Comments, and Complaints

If you have questions or comments about a particular trip, please call the transportation provider. If you would like to provide a suggestion, comment or complaint about the RIDES program, please call 713.313.7433. All formal complaints should be provided in writing to:

RIDES
1001 Preston, Suite 410
Houston, Texas 77002

All complaints will be acknowledged within a maximum of 3 business days of receipt.

Customer Information Changes

Please notify RIDES of any changes to your address or telephone number immediately. Failure to do so will result in deactivation from the program.

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