



United Way of Greater Houston

CARE FOR ELDERS

2017-18 Senior Guidance **DIRECTORY**





NEED HELP?

Dial 2-1-1

A free helpline operated by
United Way of Greater Houston,
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
in many languages.

Basic needs assistance

Caregiver support

Veterans services

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assistance available

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2-1-1

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help@unitedwayhouston.org

Search online
referral.unitedwayhouston.org



CARE FOR ELDERS

2017-18 Senior Guidance **DIRECTORY**

Welcome and thank you for utilizing the Senior Guidance Directory.

This version covers the four counties that make up United Way's service region: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller Counties. The Directory is available in hard copy (see bottom of this introduction) and a digital PDF copy is also available at www.unitedwayhouston.org/news/publications/. The PDF has a search button and the sections are also hyperlinked for ease of finding and using the information you need.

First, we must thank Ellen MacDonald and members of the Board of Directors and Advisory Council of the Senior Guidance Directory for "keeping the flame" for so many years. Without their help and perseverance, the Directory may not have continued through the years. Thank you, Ellen, and so many others.

There are several new sections, ranging from Alzheimer's and other dementia care to categories of products and services that may be of benefit to some older adults. It is important to note that in these sections, and throughout the book, we are not endorsing any particular product or service, whether nonprofit, for-profit, or public entity; we are solely providing information on resources that are already available.

Resources that were able to be verified were included. Call 2-1-1 for additional needs. Information sources were not cited in the final publication for page length. Almost all of the information came from the website listed or from calling the number listed in the section. Thank you to the staff and interns of United Way of Greater Houston that contributed to this publication:

Thank you to Linda O'Black and Amy Corron for their leadership (and patience!) throughout this process.

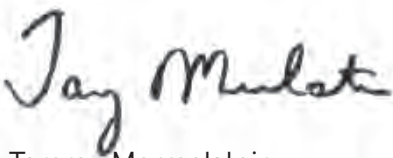
Thank you to the 2-1-1 team: Mary Vasquez, David Jobe, and especially Patricia Hall and her team for thoroughly vetting the community resources and providing support in many different ways.

Thank you to our fantastic interns: Sheila Wainwright, Katerina Vengoechea, Madia Daniel, Leslie Billington, Morgan Nattrass and Melissa Ramsey for calling resources, drafting sections, editing, and many other tasks without which this book would not been complete.

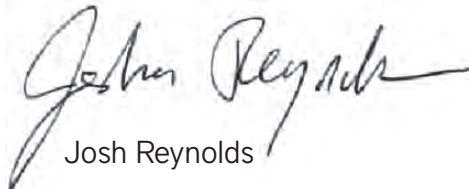
Thank you to our many colleagues and friends in the community who patiently answered questions, helped locate resources, found older adults in need, and even are helping distribute the Directory to folks in the community to ensure the widest reach possible.

Thank you last to the Care for Elders Leadership Council, listed on the next page, for the support and guidance through this process.

With Gratitude,
Tammy and Josh
United Way Care for Elders



Tammy Mermelstein



Josh Reynolds

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To order Senior Guidance Directories, call 713-685-2437 (voicemail only)
or email SGD@unitedwayhouston.org.

To report any changes in resources, email SGD@unitedwayhouston.org.

Thank you!

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Resources in the Senior Guidance Directory were verified in 2016 or January/February of 2017. It is a certainty **that some resources will change over the lifespan of this version of the Directory**, and likely that several will do so even before the book's Distribution Day of April 10, 2017. **Persons utilizing the Directory should verify all information when they contact a service or resource.**

To report changes, email:

✉ SGD@unitedwayhouston.org.

KEY COMMUNITY RESOURCES

2-1-1

Texas/United Way Helpline

☎ Dial 2-1-1

To access information for community services. Trained specialists are available 24 hours a day. If you are a senior or caregiver to a senior and need additional assistance, ask to speak to a Senior Specialist.

3-1-1

☎ Dial 3-1-1

To access most city services.

4-1-1

☎ Dial 4-1-1

To locate a phone number. There is a fee for this service.

7-1-1

☎ Dial 7-1-1

To access hearing services.

8-1-1

☎ Dial 8-1-1

To locate underground utilities.

9-1-1

☎ Dial 9-1-1

To report an emergency situation.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA)

The AAA provides benefits counseling, education for seniors regarding programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, and information/referral for legal assistance, community services and care coordination.

Harris County

☎ 832-393-4301

Houston-Galveston Area Council

☎ 281-633-0519 (Fort Bend) or

☎ 936-441-3200 (Montgomery and Waller)

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center(ADRC)

The ADRC specializes in locating both private and public services for older adults and individuals with disabilities of all ages.

☎ 1-855-937-2372

CRISIS/ABUSE HELP

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD

☎ 713-970-7000 or

☎ 866-970-4770

The Harris Center HelpLine is available 24 hours a day for anyone seeking mental health information or crisis support.

Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline

☎ 1-800-252-5400

The Department of Family and Protective Services hotline is available 24 hours a day to report concerns of abuse, neglect and exploitation of older adults and adults with disabilities.

SECTION 1 ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA

A person has **dementia** when his or her mental abilities no longer are where they used to be, and that decline interferes with daily life. Dementia usually is a progressive illness in that it gets worse over time. There are many types of dementia, and Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia.

Signs and Symptoms

There are 10 symptoms and early warning signs. If a person shows even one, he or she should be checked by a doctor. Alzheimer's disease is not a part of normal aging.

- Losing memories or thoughts, especially forgetting recently learned information or asking for the same information repeatedly
- Having a hard time following steps in a plan, such as following a recipe, or struggling with numbers
- Struggling to do normal, familiar daily tasks, whether at home, at work, or elsewhere
- Being confused about time, dates, or places; forgetting where the person is or how he or she got there
- Having trouble with seeing items, figuring out the distance between items, or seeing certain colors
- Struggling to find the right words, especially in the middle of a conversation, or having trouble remembering what something is called
- Losing things or putting them in odd places or not being able to retrace one's steps to find a lost item
- Making more bad decisions and paying less attention to personal grooming
- Withdrawing from social activities, projects, sports, or other work or fun activities
- Changing personality, such as being more confused, suspicious, or upset

For all of these things, a person can forget something or make a bad judgment, but that does not mean that person has dementia. If any of the 10 signs begin to happen more frequently, that person should be checked by a doctor. Alzheimer's disease is not a part of normal aging.

Diagnosis and Treatment

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, but there are medicines that slow down the disease. There are also other diseases that may cause some of these symptoms, so it is important to see a doctor as soon as possible. The Alzheimer's Association, Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter may be able to connect a person to community resources that assist with diagnosing and treating Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

How to Help a Loved One with Dementia

- Remember that there is more to the person than the disease. Treasure memories of who the person was.
- Let things go. Arguing about things he or she does not remember will cause everyone frustration.
- Make sure the home is safe inside and outside.
- Know the loved one's medication schedule.
- Remember that any not-so-good changes in mood or personality are because of the disease.

- Stick to routines and schedules to reduce confusion.
- Accept that the loved one will never be like he or she once was.
- Don't forget to have fun. With help or accommodations, a person with dementia can still do many things he or she used to do.
- Work with the loved one to make sure wills and other estate planning documents are done sooner rather than later. (See Section 15 for more information)
- Use different ways to communicate – sometimes music, reading, or even touching a person's hand can sometimes make an impact.
- Understand that the disease changes everything about how the loved one interacts with the world and that he or she may be feeling a loss of control, loss of friends, and other major life changes. Be patient and respectful.
- Being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease is not an automatic death sentence. While the person will decline, there still are many good memories to be made.

Creating a Safe Home

As the disease gets worse, there are many things a person can do to protect a loved one with dementia. Wandering is part of the disease, so protecting a person while at home becomes more important.

- Look at the home through the eyes of the loved one to find potentially unsafe areas.
- Hide the car keys or disable the person's car so that it cannot be driven.
- Do not leave the loved one at home alone.
- Consider adding a deadbolt lock higher up on the door frame.
- Watch food temperature as people with dementia often have a hard time separating hot and cold. Also, remove spoiled food quickly as the loved one may not have a strong sense of smell.

Medicare and Alzheimer's Disease

Starting in 2017, Medicare now pays for doctors to do cognitive impairment care assessment and planning. This means that a doctor can spend more time with a patient with dementia and his or her family talking about care options and doing assessments to determine if someone has a cognitive impairment.

Also, there are Special Medicare Plans (SMPs) for someone with dementia that offer special treatment benefits. Call Medicare for more information.

SECTION 1.1 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Alzheimer's Association Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter has a variety of resources for people suffering from dementia, their loved ones, and their caregivers. Some of the resources include tips, support groups, a helpline, and the latest information on Alzheimer's disease treatments. The Alzheimer's Association also offers care consultations where a trained professional can either sit down with a family or answer questions by phone and help the family create a plan for living with Alzheimer's. Additionally, they have a **Community Resource Finder** which can be used to find local support groups, housing choices, home-based care, medical services, and other community services.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and 33 other Southeast and East Texas Counties

☎ 713-314-1313 (Houston regional office)

💻 www.alz.org/texas

☎ 1-800-272-3900 (national 24/7 helpline)

💻 www.alz.org

💻 www.communityresourcefinder.org
(searchable database)

Amazing Place provides services to adults with mild to moderate memory loss and support to family members. It offers a monthly support group for those caring for a person with memory loss. The Powerful Tools for Caregivers training, which gives caregivers self-care tools, is also offered as well as and quarterly workshops with guest speakers.

☎ 713-552-0420

💻 www.amazingplacehouston.org

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center is the government's site with information for people with dementia, caregivers, and professionals about Alzheimer's and other dementias.

☎ 1-800-222-2225

💻 www.nia.nih.gov

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. CareConnection ADRC can connect people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

☎ 1-855-937-2372

💻 www.careconnection.org

The Houston Alliance to Address Dementia (HAAD) Program at BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) provides support and education for families facing dementia. The program also offers case management services to older adults facing dementia without a strong local support system in parts of Harris County.

☎ 713-685-6577

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) also provides many services for people with dementia and their families and caregivers. Services include: caregiver support services, such as one-on-one discussions in person or over the phone with someone who can provide information and community referrals, caregiver workshops, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, which gives caregivers self-care tools, and the Stress Busting for Family Caregivers program. Sheltering Arms also has a **Day Center** for adults with dementia that has a sliding scale fee and scholarships for lower income individuals.

☎ 713-685-6577 (CareLine)

☎ 713-667-2840 (Adult Day Center)

Medic Alert Foundation and Alzheimer's Association have a program and network to help families with a member that may wander to find the person and bring him or her home. The program has a monthly or yearly fee and comes with a medical alert ID, special phone number, and support.

☎ 1-888-572-8566

💻 www.medicalert.org/safereturn

Project Lifesaver uses special GPS trackers to help find a loved one who wanders away. The system allows a caregiver to place a hard to remove bracelet on a loved one and use a portable receiver to locate his or her loved one. There is a fee for this service.

☎ 772-446-1275

💻 www.projectlifesaver.org

Texas Center for the Missing offers caregiver trainings on how to reduce wandering episodes and may be able to support the family of a missing loved one.

☎ 713-599-0235

💻 www.centerforthemissing.org

SECTION 1.2 DEMENTIA DIAGNOSTIC CENTERS

The following places perform tests to determine whether someone has dementia. Some provide follow-up, while others connect people to other doctors.

Adult Neurology Clinic at UTHealth

provides a variety of cutting-edge testing and treatment options for people with dementia.

☎ 832-325-7080 (Medical Center and Bellaire locations)

💻 med.uth.edu/neurology

Alzheimer's Disease and Memory Disorders Center

at Baylor College of Medicine offers a four-part evaluation to figure out what is causing memory loss. The parts include a discussion with a neurologist about what the person and his or her family has noticed and the person's medical history, testing, a conversation with the neurologist about what the tests found and treatment options, and lastly, a conversation with a psychologist to talk about what the diagnosis means and how to manage life changes. This generally happens over a two-week period.

☎ 713-798-4734

💻 www.bcm.edu
(keyword: Alzheimer's Center)

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

provides testing and follow-up care for eligible veterans.

☎ 713-794-8985 (current patients)

☎ 1-800-639-5137, option 2 (current patients)

☎ 713-791-1414 (new patients/general information)

☎ 1-800-553-2278, option 2 (new patients/general information)

💻 www.houston.va.gov

Mischer Neuroscience Institute at Memorial Hermann offers testing and follow-up care.

☎ 832-325-7080

💻 neuro.memorialhermann.org

Nantz National Alzheimer's Center offers a multi-step process to figure out if someone has dementia and to create a plan with the person and his or her family. During the first visit, the person and family meet with a specialist who will answer questions and perform several tests. After all tests are done, the person and family will meet with the doctor again to answer questions and talk about what the tests showed. There is a treatment plan created and referrals and follow-ups made. Families are also provided a social worker to help with the process.

☎ 713-441-1150

☎ 1-877-790-3627 (outside of Houston)

💻 www.houstonmethodist.org
(keyword: Nantz center)

Park Plaza Senior Care Center provides a variety of services for older adults, including dementia screening.

☎ 713-527-5000

💻 www.parkplazahospital.com

Quentin Mease Hospital – Harris Health System

provides a variety of services for older adults, including dementia screening and treatment. It offers a sliding scale for Harris County residents with lower incomes or no health insurance. See Section 10.1 for information on how and where to apply for assistance.

☎ 713-566-6509 (enrollment centers)

☎ 713-526-4243 (appointments)

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: apply financial assistance)

SECTION 1.3 SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer's Association Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter coordinates a variety of support groups for individuals suffering from dementia and their families. Specialty groups include Spanish-speaking groups, Chinese- and Vietnamese-speaking groups, groups for people who are in early stages, men's support groups, Parkinson's and Lewy Body group, and groups for partners of people diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's. Call for the latest support group schedule.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and 33 other Southeast and East Texas Counties

☎ 713-314-1313 (Houston regional office)

💻 www.alz.org/texas

☎ 1-800-272-3900 (national 24/7 helpline)

💻 www.alz.org

💻 www.communityresourcefinder.org
(searchable database)

Amazing Place offers a monthly support group for those caring for a person with memory loss, caregiver support trainings, and quarterly workshops with guest speakers.

☎ 713-552-0420

💻 www.amazingplacehouston.org

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) provides many caregiver support services, such as one-on-one discussions in person or over the phone with someone who can provide information and community referrals, caregiver workshops, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, which gives caregivers self-care tools, and the Stress Busting for Family Caregivers program. Sheltering Arms also hosts an online MeetUp group, a dementia specific support group, and a family caregiver resource center.

☎ 713-685-6577 (CareLine)

☎ 713-667-2840 (Adult Day Center)

SECTION 1.4 FREE OR LOW-COST RESPITE AND DAY PROGRAMS

Below are programs that provide care both in-home and in facilities for little to no cost and are dementia specific. See Section 2.1 for Day Centers and Section 2.6 for respite providers that provide services to people with dementia.

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. CareConnection ADRC can connect people with government programs and community resources, including respite services. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

☎ 1-855-937-2372

💻 www.careconnection.org

Fort Bend Seniors Respite Program

offers special programming for people with dementia twice per week in order to give caregivers a break. Participants have different activities and a hot meal.

☎ 281-633-7719

💻 www.fortbendseniors.org

The Gathering Place is a program coordinated by Interfaith CarePartners and local faith based communities for people with memory loss and cognitive impairment. Volunteers from the faith based community, with the support of Interfaith CarePartners staff typically hold a 3.5 hour special workshop once per month that offers engaging programming to participants while allowing caregivers a break. Call Interfaith CarePartners to register for the program and find nearby dates and locations.

Serves: Parts of Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties

☎ 713-682-5995

💻 www.interfaithcarepartners.org
(keyword: Persons with Alzheimer's)

The **Mamie George Community Center** run by Catholic Charities offers a monthly Memory Café for people with memory loss and their care partners. Each month, the Café hosts a guest speaker talking about hot topics and providing demonstrations.

☎ 281-202-6200

💻 www.catholiccharities.org
(keyword: Mamie George center)

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) offers in-home care with a sliding-scale cost. This service can be used to provide respite to a caregiver. The Adult Day Center offers out-of-home respite care, specializing in memory loss.

☎ 713-685-6577 (CareLine)

☎ 713-667-2840 (Adult Day Center)

SECTION 1.5 RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES WITH MEMORY CARE SPECIALTIES

Alzheimer's Association Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter has a list of local residential facilities and what it does to serve clients with dementia. Call the Houston regional office for assistance in finding care.

The Alzheimer's Association National Organization has on its website checklists and information for choosing the right residential home for a loved one.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and 33 other Southeast and East Texas Counties

☎ 713-314-1313 (Houston regional office)

💻 www.alz.org/texas

☎ 1-800-272-3900 (national 24/7 helpline)

💻 www.alz.org
(keyword: residential care)

💻 www.communityresourcefinder.org
(searchable database)

Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS), has a searchable database of nursing homes, assisted living, and other out-of-home care options for older adults. The website shows the facility's latest rating but does not state whether the facility has a memory care unit. Facility information:

☎ 1-855-937-2372 (help identifying services)

💻 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

SECTION 1.6 **TEXAS SILVER ALERT PROGRAM**

The **Texas Silver Alert Program** lets people know when an older adult with cognitive challenges goes missing. Only law enforcement can request a Silver Alert, and in order to do so, all of the following conditions must be met:

- The missing person is age 65 or older
- The person has a diagnosed mental condition that impairs their ability to function
- There is a credible threat to the person's health or safety
- Families must provide documentation that the person has a diagnosed condition. The note may be from a doctor or mental health professional.
- When a person is diagnosed, it is recommended that the family get a letter from the doctor on letterhead that has the person's name, what condition the person has, the date of diagnosis, and the doctor's or professional's signature. This will allow law enforcement to act quickly instead of waiting on the letter in order to issue a Silver Alert.
- Law enforcement has investigated and decided that the person is missing because of mental issues and not for other reasons.
- The Silver Alert request is made within 72 hours of the person's disappearance
- There is enough information that can be shared with the public.
- If law enforcement finds that the person was driving when he or she disappeared and there is vehicle information available, highway signs may be used to share information with the public.
- Alerts last 24 hours but can be extended.

If a loved one goes missing, contact the law enforcement agency - like the Police Department - where the person lives.

SECTION 1.7 **SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY**

The Social Security Administration now considers early-onset Alzheimer's and some other dementias to be so severely disabling that a person is quickly approved for benefits. For more information about Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), see Section 9.4.

SECTION 2 CAREGIVING

SECTION 2.1 ADULT DAY CENTERS

Adult Day Centers offer activities for adults who need support because of mental or physical disabilities. Most centers provide up to 8 hours of care, five days a week. These services help with a person's social and health needs in a safe place so that the caregiver can go to work or take a break. For active older adults, these centers focus on group and individual activities; meals; and basic health and personal assistance. There are also centers that focus on people that have special health needs such as Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. Some centers accept Medicaid or Veteran's benefits for payment, but Medicare does not pay for this service. Strongly consider visiting a center and talking with participants and referrals provided by the center before enrolling a loved one.


When choosing an adult day center, consider these questions:


- What services does the person need? Some options are social activities, help with basic tasks such as walking or eating, or exercise programs?
- Does the caregiver need a place for his or her loved one to go from time to time or a place to go every day while the caregiver works?
- When visiting the center, how did it feel? Was it welcoming? Would a loved one feel safe?
- How long has the center been in business? Is it licensed? Does it offer all needed services?


What are the fees and what type of payment does the center accept?

FIND AN ADULT DAY CENTER


Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS), can help find short, intermediate, or long-term care for a loved one that helps with his or her physical, mental, medical, and social needs. To find the best fit, visit the place and talk with other clients before making a choice. For information on a facility,

 **1-855-937-2372 (help identifying services)**

 **1-800-458-9858 (to apply for services)**

 **General information:**

hhs.texas.gov

 **Facility information:**

facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

Licensed Adult Day Care Facilities

The following locations are licensed by the state to provide adult day centers. Some only serve older adults and some serve both older adults and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Some programs may offer additional services, such as transportation to and from the facility.

Organizations listed as taking "HMO" for payment often have contracts with multiple providers and/or STAR+ Managed Care Organizations. Check with providers to learn which insurances they accept.

There are no known state licensed adult day care centers in Waller County.

Name	County	Phone Number	Does the center serve people with dementia?
2nd Home Senior Lifestyle Center	Harris (Spring)	☎ 281-251-9293	Yes
A and M Senior Village	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-433-7317	No
A Better Quality of Life Adult Day Care	Harris (Northeast)	☎ 832-692-6766	
Adult Town Day Care	Harris (Southeast)	☎ 713-645-2300	No
Amazing Place	Harris (Central)	☎ 713-552-0420	Yes (mild to moderate)
Avenue 360 Community Services	Harris (Central)	☎ 713-341-3740	No
Better Care Senior Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-778-6000	No
Brightbridge Adult Day Center	Harris (Southeast)	☎ 713-495-9927	No
Brightway Adult Day Care Center	Harris (Northwest)	☎ 832-602-5114	Yes
Caring Place Adult Day Care Center	Harris (North Central)	☎ 713-692-6061	
Corporate Senior Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-777-5123	Yes
Cullen Adult Day Care	Harris (South Central)	☎ 832-577-4984	Yes
Elite MedServe	Harris (Southeast)	☎ 713-987-9000	Yes
Garden Oaks Adult Activity Center	Harris (North Central)	☎ 713-868-1515	Yes
Good Old Days Adult Daycare	Harris (Northeast)	☎ 281-227-0404	Yes
Horizon Adult Day Services	Harris (South Central)	☎ 713-741-4648	Yes
Johnson & Johnson Activities	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-723-2090	Yes
Lac Hong Adult Day Care Center	Harris (West)	☎ 281-776-9955	Yes (mild)
Love and Joy Rehab Adult Day Center	Harris (Northeast)	☎ 713-733-6900	Yes
Nixon Adult Day Center	Harris (Northeast)	☎ 713-633-4700	Yes
Northline Adult Day Care Center	Harris (North Central)	☎ 713-699-1580	No
Odyssey TLC Adult Day Center	Harris (North)	☎ 281-580-1009	Yes
Odyssey TLC Adult Day Center	Harris (North)	☎ 281-444-1101	Yes
Old Yale Adult Day Care	Harris (Northwest)	☎ 713-695-6100	Yes

Does the center offer respite care?	Population Served	Payment Methods
Yes, with registration	Older adults	Private pay & Medicaid
No	Older adults & IDD ages 25+	Private pay & Medicaid
No	IDD only	Medicaid
No	Older adults	Private pay & Long term care insurance
No	Older adults & HIV+ Adults	Medicaid
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	Older adults	Medicaid
Yes	Older Adults	Private pay, Medicaid & Long term care insurance
No	Older adults & IDD	Medicaid
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay, Medicaid, Long term care insurance & HMO
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
No	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & HMO
Yes	Older adults	
Yes	Older adults	Private pay & HMO
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & HMO
No	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & HMO
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & HMO
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & HMO
No	Older adults & IDD	Private pay & Some insurance

Name	County	Phone Number	Does the center serve people with dementia?
Paradise Lane Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 281-498-1554	No
Rejoice Adult Day Activity Center	Harris (East)	☎ 713-451-900	Yes
Restoration Place	Harris (South Central)	☎ 832-577-4984	Yes
Senior Social Center	Harris (West)	☎ 832-429-5178	
Sarah Care Adult Day Services	Harris/ Montgomery (Kingwood)	☎ 281-361-7000	Yes
Sheltering Arms Senior Services Adult Day Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-667-2840	Yes
South Texas Adult Day Activity Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-645-4900	
Sunnyside Adult Day Care	Harris (South)	☎ 713-748-7370	No
Sunrise Adult Activity & Health Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 832-379-3795	
Sunshine Community Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-988-2843	No
The Center Serving Persons with Mental Retardation	Harris (Central)	☎ 713-525-8306	Yes
The Hope Adult Daycare Center	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-284-8494	Yes
The Lighthouse for the Blind of Houston	Harris (Central)	☎ 713-284-8494	Yes
Vaughn Gage Healthy Aging Center	Harris (Northwest)	☎ 832-878-9333	
VN Day Care Center	Harris (Southeast)	☎ 713-941-2511	
World Senior Service	Harris (Southwest)	☎ 713-722-6611	No
Caring People	Ft. Bend (Rosenberg)	☎ 281-344-9911	Yes
It's Heaven	Ft. Bend (Stafford)	☎ 281-403-5200	Yes
The Caring Circle Adult Daycare Center	Ft. Bend (Stafford)	☎ 281-499-9922	Yes
Sarah Care Adult Day Services	Montgomery/ Harris	☎ 281-361-7000	Yes

Does the center offer respite care?	Population Served	Payment Methods
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay, Medicaid & Long term care insurance
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay, Medicaid, Long term care insurance & Some insurance
Yes	Older adults & IDD	Private pay, Medicaid & Long term care insurance
Yes	Older adults	Private pay & Veterans' benefits
Yes	Older adults	
No	IDD	Private pay, Medicaid & Long term care insurance
No	Older adults, IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
Yes	Older adults, IDD	Private pay & Medicaid
No	Older adults with visual impairment	Private pay, Medicaid & Veterans' benefits
No	Older adults	Medicaid
No	Older adults, IDD	Private pay, Medicaid, HMO & Veterans' Benefits
No	Older adults, IDD	Private pay, Medicaid, HMO & Veterans' Benefits
No	Older adults, IDD	Private pay & HMO
Yes	Older adults	Private pay & Veterans' benefits

SECTION 2.2 CASE AND CARE MANAGEMENT

Case Managers work at social service agencies, health care facilities, and other community service organizations. They help people who are facing life challenges or need help getting services. They work with the person to make a plan to deal with those challenges or make educated decisions about what they need to improve their life. People in a hospital or nursing facility can reach out to the case manager for assistance. For those not in a facility, the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE may be able to help connect a person to a case manager to assist with many issues. Some agencies may only serve certain zip codes.


INFORMATION & RESOURCES

2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE can provide updated information about which zip codes agencies serve.

 211


Alzheimer's Association, Houston and Southeast TX Chapter, can help a person and his or her family develop a plan for living life with dementia. The one-on-one sessions can help a family learn to better understand and cope with the disease and find resources that can help.

To request a care consultation: Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller and Montgomery Counties plus 33 other East and Southeast Texas counties.

 1-800-272-3900

 www.alz.org/texas/index.asp


Catholic Charities Senior Services
(Harris and Fort Bend Counties)

 713-874-6588 (Harris)

 281-202-6200 (Fort Bend)

 www.catholiccharities.org


Family Houston Senior Case Management (Harris and Waller Counties)


 713-861-4849

 www.familyservices.org

Harris County Area Agency on Aging

works with older adults and their families to plan, arrange, and coordinate services. Call for more information on related services.


 832-393-4301

 1-800-213-8471 (outside Harris County)


 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Houston-Galveston Area Agency on

Aging serves Ft. Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties as well as 9 other area counties. It provides many services, including benefits counseling and care coordination services.


 281-633-0519 (Ft. Bend County)

 936-441-3200 (Waller and Montgomery Counties)

 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/default.aspx

Interfaith of the Woodlands provides assessments for all older adults who enter the senior services programs and provides connections to community resources.

Serves individuals ages 62 and older in South Montgomery County zip codes 77380 through 77386, 77389, 77375 (Village of Creekside Park), 77354 (Village of Sterling Ridge).

 281-367-1230

 www.woodlandsinterfaith.org


Jewish Family Service Senior Services
(Harris County)

 713-667-9336

 www.jfshouston.org

Montrose Center Senior Programming

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer,
Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA)

 713-529-0037

 www.montrosecenter.org

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) (Harris County)

 713-685-6577


Geriatric Care Managers focus more on health needs and creating a plan to address them. They help older adults and their families find resources and make decisions when health care needs change. When someone needs a higher level of care or that person and his or her family has to make decisions about housing, in-home care or nursing home care, or other health-related items, Geriatric Care Managers perform assessments and develop care plans that fit that person's needs. They can also assist clients with handling medical bills and insurance claims, money management, and guardianship issues, and they provide assistance in helping the client take the next step. Many Geriatric Care Managers charge for their services, but some Medicare Advantage/health insurance plans also offer care management.

Important Questions to Ask When Choosing a Geriatric Care Manager:

- What are the person's professional certifications or degrees and is that person licensed?
- What services are offered?
- Is there a fee for the initial consultation and, if so, how much? How much will it cost to move forward? Information about fees should be given in writing before any work is started.
- How much experience does the person have?
- Will the person be available in case of emergency or if something happens outside of regular business hours?
- Does your company also provide home care services?

Also, ask for at least 2-3 references and contact them before agreeing to work with a geriatric care manager. The answers to these questions will help a person figure out if that Care Manager is a good match. Get all information in writing before making any decisions.

Aging Life Care Association allows a person to search for a certified care manager by zip code or city.

 520-881-8008

 www.aginglifecare.org

SECTION 2.3 CAREGIVER INFORMATION

There are three major types of caregivers, although there are a number of titles to describe each role. In-home care aides and home health care aides are sometimes also called direct care workers.

In-home care aides help older Americans and persons with disabilities. Their job is to help someone be able to stay in the home and/or be as independent as possible. They help clients with daily activities such as dressing, bathing, running errands, and light housekeeping. They may or may not be certified, but the agencies they work for are state licensed.

Home health care aides are professionally trained and certified by the state. They provide specific medical services and are supervised by the agency's nurse.

Informal caregivers are usually family members, friends, or neighbors. Independent paid caregivers who do not work through a state licensed agency may also be considered an informal caregiver.

Signs A Loved One May Need Help:

If a loved one has any of these signs, it may be time to seek professional help.

- Sudden weight loss without a good reason, poor appetite
- Hearing or vision problems
- Having little to no food at home or having food that is spoiled
- Living in a place which needs significant repairs or a dangerously unkempt home
- Increasing forgetfulness
- Having a hard time moving around, walking, losing balance when getting up or sitting down
- Changing personal appearance or declining personal hygiene (lack of showering, body odor)
- Unopened mail and bills piling up
- Less interest in activities, hobbies, being with friends or family, or leaving the home
- Changes in behavior or personality
- Unexplained or increased bruising
- Increasing accidents (dropping items or car accidents)
- Trouble keeping up with household chores

Paid Caregivers (in-home and home health care aides)

Sometimes, families or individuals may need to hire a paid caregiver to take care of their loved one. Services may be covered by private pay, long term care insurance, Medicaid, and Veteran benefits. Medicare only covers paid caregivers in limited circumstances.

Important Questions to Ask When Choosing a Paid Caregiver:

- What types of needs does the person have? Does he or she need help with daily activities (bathing, cooking, running errands) or medical needs (help with medications, health monitoring)?

- How much does care cost? What type of payment is accepted?
- What type of training or experience does the caregiver have? Has the person been background checked?
- Will there be a service plan? How are the wishes and needs of the client and family members put into that plan? How often is the plan looked at and adjusted?
- How frequently will the caregiver come? What is the backup plan if the caregiver is unavailable? Will the same person come each time?
- How many hours a day will care be provided? What types of tasks can the caregiver perform? What can't the caregiver perform?
- Will the caregiver provide references?

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also offers caregiver support coordination services where staff help caregivers to figure out their needs and match them with services, including respite and adult day care services. Talk with the local AAA to determine eligible services. Each AAA may offer different services.

The Harris County AAA serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

INFORMAL OR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Caregiving Best Practices

- Talk with your loved one about his or her wishes. Does he or she want to remain at home, move in with a loved one, or move to a housing community for older adults?
- Involve your loved one when developing a plan. Also, gather information from medical professionals about the person's current conditions and future needs that need to be considered.
- Encourage family members to have open, honest discussions about what role they can play in that person's care.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help and support from siblings, children, extended family, friends, or neighbors.
- Contact non-profit or government agencies, social workers, case manager, or geriatric care managers for community services.
- Find all important papers, such as insurance policies, accounts to be paid, bank information, medical and prescription information, and legal documents.
- Be an advocate, especially if the loved one cannot be one for her/himself.

Long-Distance Caregiving

- Stay in regular contact with the person and those people caring for her or him.
- Get to know their paid and informal caregivers, friends, neighbors, and other people to reach in the event of an emergency.
- Find ways to share family events and holidays.
- Plan visits that include both time to help with physical, emotional, and financial issues as well as time just for relaxing and having fun.
- Look for community resources and support that can help.

- Consider hiring someone like a geriatric care manager who can oversee health-related decisions or a case manager who can connect the loved one with community resources.
- Show encouragement and support to both the loved one and the caregiver.
- When taking with the loved one, listen for any comments that may be out of character for that person. It may be a sign that the person needs additional help or may be suffering from abuse or self-neglect.

Caring for the Caregiver

- A caregiver must maintain his or her own physical and emotional health, stay socially engaged, and schedule personal time in order to be the best caregiver possible for a loved one.
- Look for respite services that give caregivers a break. It is not failing a loved one to seek professional help to provide care. Be realistic about what support family members can provide.
- Join a caregiver support group to learn how others manage the emotions, stress, and responsibilities of caregiving.
- For caregivers who still are working, an employer's Human Resources Department or Employee Assistance Plan may be able to provide assistance with caregiving problems that might affect work performance, health, or well-being. Check with an employer for flextime options, opportunities to work from home or other alternative solutions the company may offer.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The FMLA allows a qualified person to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period to care for a spouse, parent, son, or daughter with a serious health condition. When the person returns, the employee must be given either his or her job back or a job almost the same as what the employee had before going on leave. If the

employee has group insurance, it will be continued during the leave. Also, the leave does not have to be taken all at once. In some cases, an employee can, under FMLA, work fewer hours per week or take leave from time to time.

To be qualified, a person must work for:

- A local, state, or federal government agency
- A public or private school teacher (K-12)
- A business that has at least 50 employees

That person must also

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months (but not necessarily in a row)
- Worked at least 1,250 hours in the past 12 months

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

AARP has many resources for caregivers.

☎ 1-866-227-7443

💻 www.aarp.com
(keyword: caregiving)

Alzheimer's Association, Houston and Southeast TX Chapter, offers online and in-person caregiving resources, support groups, and care consultations.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties plus 33 other East and Southeast Texas counties

☎ 713-314-1313

☎ 1-800-272-3900

💻 www.alz.org/texas/index.asp

Amazing Place provides services to adults with mild to moderate memory loss and support to family members. For caregivers, it offers a monthly support group for those caring for a person with memory loss. The Powerful Tools for Caregivers training, which gives caregivers self-care tools, and quarterly workshops with guest speakers.

☎ 713-552-0420

💻 www.amazingplacehouston.org

American Cancer Society has a variety of resources for caregivers who are caring for someone with cancer. It also offers a free booklet that can be downloaded called Caring for the Patient with Cancer at Home.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties and the Greater Houston area

☎ 713-266-2877

☎ 1-800-227-2345

💻 www.cancer.org
(keyword: caregiving)

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also offers caregiver support coordination services where staff help caregivers to figure out their needs and match them with services, including respite and adult day care services. Talk with the local AAA to determine eligible services. Each AAA may offer different services.

The Harris County AAA serves Harris County while the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA) serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. It connects people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

☎ 1-855-937-2372

💻 www.careconnection.org

Caregiver Action Network is a free online support group and resource site. Caregivers can post questions and seek help from other caregivers and have a CAN volunteer help to find local resources.

💻 www.caregiveraction.org

Caregiving.com has free webinars on dealing with caregiver stress and the changing caregiver role as well as some pay courses. It also has free chat groups where caregivers can share advice with other caregivers.

💻 www.caregiving.com

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization has extensive online information about what a person should consider before becoming a caregiver, basic information on providing physical and emotional care, and how to care for the caregiver.

☎ 202-454-3970

💻 www.caringinfo.org

The Council for Health Education and Development has a free phone app training program for caregivers that covers technical skills like transferring a loved one from a bed to chair and feeding a person who needs help.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties plus 9 other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 281-286-4839

☎ 1-877-747-1542 (outside of Houston)

💻 www.caregivertraining.org

Family Caregiver Alliance provides online resources and support groups for family caregivers.

☎ 1-800-445-8106

💻 www.caregiver.org

Family Caregiver Council offers information on many caregiving topics, from how to talk with a loved one about needing help to exploring housing options and what caregiving means for one's own finances.

💻 www.familycaregivercouncil.org

Family Caregivers Online has free caregiver training on a variety of caregiving topics, from chronic disease and medication management to legal issues and long distance caregiving.

💻 www.familycaregiversonline.net

Gateway to Care Caring for the Caregiver program holds free seminars or group discussions for Harris County caregivers on many topics, including conflict management, depression, talking with service providers, legal issues, and healthy eating. Call to schedule a talk or to find out where one is happening.

☎ 713-783-4616

💻 www.gatewaytocare.org

Interfaith of the Woodlands hosts workshops and a caregiver conference and resource fair.

☎ 281-367-1230

💻 www.woodlandsinterfaith.org

Lotsa Helping Hands is a free online scheduling tool that allows a person to reach out to friends and family to make sure that needs are met for someone who needs caregiving. It also lets people share updates and well wishes.

💻 www.lotsahelpinghands.com

Medicare.gov has information for caregivers about what Medicare will cover, how to access resources, and how to care for the caregiver.

☎ 1-800-633-4227


💻 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: caregiver)

The Montrose Center provides counseling services for caregivers. It specializes in the LGBTQIA population.


☎ 713-529-0037

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

National Institute on Aging has several free publications that caregivers can download. Some of the topics include caring for someone with Alzheimer's, talking about driving, and long distance caregiving.



 www.nia.nih.gov
(keyword: caregiving)

Womenshealth.gov has information about how caregiving impacts a woman's health and tips to lower caregiving stress.



 www.womenshealth.gov
(keyword: caregiving)

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) provides many caregiver support services, such as one-on-one discussions in

person or over the phone with someone who can provide information and community referrals, caregiver workshops, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, which gives caregivers self-care tools, and the Stress Busting for Family Caregivers program. Sheltering Arms also hosts an online MeetUp group, a dementia specific support group, and a family caregiver resource center.

 713-685-6577 (CareLine)
 713-667-2840 (Adult Day Center)



U.S. Department of Labor has fact sheets on the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and handles complaints against employers for violating the FMLA.

 1-866-487-9243
 www.dol.gov
(keyword: FMLA)

SECTION 2.4 VOLUNTEER CAREGIVER PROGRAMS



Volunteer caregiver programs have trained volunteers that can provide respite care, transportation assistance, companionship, help running errands, and other services. Some programs provide volunteers a few times per month and others on a more regular basis.

Chinese Community Center Wan Yuan Program volunteers meet with someone at least twice a month over a year. To request a volunteer, an older adult must be at least age 70 and in reasonably good health.

 713-271-6100
 www.ccchouston.org/wanyuan/



Helping Elderly Residents Out (HERO) helps people age 65 or older who live in the Spring Branch and Memorial areas. HERO volunteers can help bring someone to a doctor's appointment or grocery store.

Serves residents in zip codes: 77024, 77043, 77055, 77079, and 77080



 713-932-3996
 www.herohouston.org

Interfaith CarePartners works with congregations to form Care Teams. Care Teams may work with people with Alzheimer's or other dementias (Alzheimer's Care Team) or with older adults with physical challenges or disabilities (Second Family Care Team).

Serves: Parts of Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties

 713-682-5995
 www.interfaithcarepartners.org

The Senior Companion Program at the Evelyn R. Rubinstein Jewish Community Center matches volunteers ages 55 or older with older adults who need companionship, help with basic errands, or light household chores.

 713-595-8183
 www.erjcchouston.org
(keyword: Senior Companion)

SECTION 2.5 RESPITE/CAREGIVER BREAK SERVICES

Caregivers need occasional breaks from caregiving duties. Through respite care, caregivers can have someone come into the home to care for their seriously ill or disabled loved one or have their loved one stay in a licensed adult day center, assisted living facility, or nursing home. Respite care can last for a few hours to a few days. Most services charge a fee, but some people may qualify for help paying for respite care from government programs. These services are not for emergencies – they need to be contacted in advance.

Medicare may pay for 95% of respite care costs if the person receiving Medicare has a life-threatening illness and is qualified for hospice care. Medicare will cover up to 5 days of care at a time, and a caregiver can get respite care whenever he or she needs. Even if the person has a Medicare Advantage plan, original Medicare will cover this benefit.

Texas's Medicaid program, STAR+PLUS will pay for some respite care for people over age 65. Contact the STAR+PLUS provider for more information.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also offers caregiver support coordination services where staff help caregivers to figure out their needs and match them with services, including respite and adult day care services. Talk with the local AAA to determine eligible services. Each AAA may offer different services.

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center offers many services for older adults and their caregivers. One of them, the Lifespan Respite Program, provides a voucher for up to 80 hours of respite care to be used over a two-month period. To get a voucher, the caregiver must attend a Home Caregiver Training and not be receiving a respite voucher from another agency. Call for eligibility information.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties plus 9 other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 1-855-937-2372

















💻 www.careconnection.org

Medicare provides information on what respite services are covered.














☎ 1-800-633-4227

💻 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: respite care)

















Respite Services Listed on Take Time Texas

Name	Phone number	Where they serve (County/part of county)	In home or facility?
AIDE in AID	 713-554-3105	Houston, Sugarland, Katy, Richmond, Rosenberg	In Home / As needed
Allenbrook Healthcare Center	 281-422-3546	Baytown	Out of Home/ As needed
Ambassadors Caregivers	 713-521-2221	Harris and Fort Bend Counties	In Home/ As needed
Assisting Hands of North Houston	 832-699-6920	Spring, Tomball, Magnolia, Wood	In Home/ As needed
Assisting Hands of West Houston	 281-369-5858	Katy, Bear Creek, Spring Branch, Westchase	In Home/ As needed
Beechnut Manor	 281-879-8040	On Location	Out of Home/ 5 days
Bridgewood Farms, Inc.	 936-856-6460	Montgomery County	Out of Home
C&S Healthcare Services, Inc.	 281-550-3665	Harris County	In Home
Cameo Caregiver	 713-682-7272	Harris County	In Home/ 1-24hr
Care Temps Companion	 713-263-9440	Inner Loop	In Home or Out of Home
Care Works	 832-237-2273	NW Houston	In Home
CareBuilders at Home	 832-900-9416	Harris	In Home or Out of Home
CareTemps	 713-263-9440	Inner Loop	In Home
Caring Senior Service of Houston	 281-893-6699	Harris and Montgomery Counties	In Home or Out of Home
Comfort Keepers	 936-588-2211	Montgomery County	In Home/ 1 hr- 1 week
Comfort Keepers	 281-218-7400	Southeast Houston	In Home/ 1 hr- 1 week

Respite Services Listed on Take Time Texas (con't)

Name	Phone number	Where they serve (County/part of county)	In home or facility?
Compassia Assisted Living	 281-601-6811	On Location	Out of Home
Elderly Home Health Care	 713-956-8183	Harris County	In Home/ As needed
Elite Healthcare	 713-776-9399	Harris County	In Home
Elmcroft of Rivershire	 936-788-2626	Montgomery County	Out of Home
GC Health Services, Inc.	 713-776-3309	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In Home/ As needed
Girling Health Care, Inc.	 713-780-1248	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In Home/ Up 720 hours
GraceFaith Healthcare Services, Inc.	 713-461-8898	Harris and Fort Bend Counties	In Home
Home Health Care Network	 713-783-8049	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In Home/ As needed
Home Instead Senior Care	 832-379-4700	SW and West Houston	In Home
Home Instead Senior Care	 281-484-0200	Southeast Harris	In Home
Home Instead Senior Care	 936-441-3223	Montgomery County	In Home/Hosp. As needed
Humble Healthcare Center	 281-446-7159	Humble	Out of Home
Interfaith CarePartners	 713-682-5995	Parts of Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties	In Home or Out of Home
Just Real Kare, Inc.	 713-266-2604	Harris County	In Home
Life Foundation Home Care	 832-612-0472	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In Home/ 4-24 hour
National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Lone Star Chapter	 713-394-2900	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In or Out of Home/ Limited

Respite Services Listed on Take Time Texas (con't)

Name	Phone number	Where they serve (County/part of county)	In home or facility?
Nations Pioneer Health Services, Inc	 281-498-6203	Harris County	In Home or Out of Home
Nixon Adult Day Center	 713-631-9100	Harris County	Out of Home
Parker Place POA, Inc.	 832-272-5800	NE Harris County	In Home or Out of Home
Sheltering Arms Senior Services	 713-956-1888	Harris County	In Home or Out of Home
Silverado at Home	 281-377-8650	Harris County	In Home or Out of Home
Silverado-Kingwood	 281-973-0538	Greater Kingwood	In Home or Out of Home
Sullivan Development and Activity Center	 832-549-1364	Montgomery County	Out of Home
Synergy HomeCare	 713-868-6112	Harris County	In Home/ As needed
Synergy HomeCare (Northeast)	 936-441-7760	Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties	In Home
Texas Choice Healthcare Services, Inc.	 281-969-8378	Greater Missouri City	In Home
The Arc of Greater Houston	 713-957-1600	Harris County	Out of Home
The Caring Place Adult Day Care Center	 713-692-6061	Harris County	Out of Home
The Woodlands Healthcare Center	 281-363-3535	Montgomery County	Out of Home
Treasures of JOY	 281-468-6716	NW Harris/Champions	Out of Home
Ultimate Personal Care Homes	 281-530-5795	Fort Bend	Out of Home
Woodland Park Care & Rehabilitation	 936-628-3388	The Woodlands	Out of Home

SECTION 2.6 GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

There are resources available to help grandparents or other relatives who are raising grandchildren. Some, but not all, of these resources require that the grandparent have legal custody of the grandchild. While the term “grandparent” is used, most of the information below also applies to great grandparents, aunts, and uncles.

Grandparent Visitation Rights

While Texas, like every other state, has some type of law about a grandparent’s ability to visit with a grandchild, the law also recognizes a parent’s right to decide who can interact with his or her child. There are times, however, when a grandparent can ask a court to allow him or her to visit a grandchild. For a court to get involved, the grandparent must:

- Be related to the child by blood or adoption
- Prove to the court that the parent is not acting in the best interest of the child and not being able to visit is hurting the child physically or emotionally, AND
- Show the court that the child’s parent has:
 - Been in jail for at least three months,
 - Passed away,
 - Been determined by a court to be incompetent and unable to make decisions for him- or herself, or
- No actual or court-ordered access to the child

If the child is or is being adopted by someone other than a step-parent, a grandparent may not have the right to see the grandchildren.

Custody of a Grandchild

If a grandparent is taking care of a grandchild, it may be in the best interest to file for legal custody. It is not easy to do, many times, because the courts generally favor the parents. It is not enough

for the grandparent to show that he or she would do a better job. The courts are more likely to give custody to a grandparent if:

- It is in the best interest of the child because staying with the parent would hurt the child physically or emotionally
- There is a history of family violence
- The parent voluntarily gave up custody of the child for at least a year, including at least part of the previous 90 days before filing

Authorization Agreements

Grandparents taking care of a grandchild without custody given by a court may run into problems giving the child permission like a parent would to do things, such as permission for medical care or school-related activities. They may also have a hard time applying for public benefits for the child. A parent can give an authorization agreement to the child’s grandparent, a sibling over the age of 18, or an adult aunt or uncle.

Grandparent Scam or emergency Scam includes telephone calls, emails or social media (Facebook and other) messages from a person claiming to be a relative or friend. The person calling usually says they are in some kind of emergency, and they ask you to wire money to help them. Always confirm an emergency with a family member before doing anything. Money that is wired is almost never retrievable. If someone is contacted about a grandparent scam or has been scammed, it should be reported to the Better Business Bureau Education Foundation and/or the Federal Trade Commission. See Section 16.3 for contact information.

SECTION 3 **DISABILITY SUPPORT**

This section focuses on programs and resources specifically for people with disabilities. Other sections include resources for all people without eligibility criteria other than age (unless otherwise stated).

SECTION 3.1 **DISABILITY AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY PROGRAMS

The **Social Security Administration** has two programs that provide financial support to people with disabilities. The Social Security Administration considers an adult to be disabled when that person:

- Cannot work, even only part time, because of that condition and
- Has a disability is expected to cause the person's death or
- Has a condition that has lasted or is expected to last for at least a year

For adults applying for disability assistance, the Social Security Administration looks at five major questions:

1. Is the person working?

- a. YES and the person earns at least \$1,170 per month (2017) – the person generally will not be considered disabled
- b. YES but the person earns less than \$1,170 per month (2017) – the application will be sent to the Disability Determination Services office to be processed. In Texas, claims are processed by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. A team of independent doctors and disability experts determine whether a person is disabled. While the team considers information

from a person's doctors or other medical professionals, someone's personal doctor is not asked to decide whether a person is disabled

2. Is the condition considered severe?

- a. YES – the condition interferes with basic work-related activities
- b. NO – the claim is denied

3. Is the condition on the list of disabling conditions considered so severe that a person is automatically considered disabled?

- a. YES – the claim is approved
- b. NO – the claim is investigated further to see whether the person's condition is as bad as similar conditions on the list

4. For someone whose disabilities are not on the list - can the person still do the work he or she did before?

- a. YES (the disability does not keep someone from doing what he or she did before) – the claim is denied. The Social Security Administration will look at the type of jobs a person did for up to 15 years before the claim was filed
- b. NO (the person cannot do what he or she did before) – the claim is investigated more

to see whether the person can do any other type of work

5. For someone whose claim continues – can the person do any other type of work?

- a. YES (the person can adjust to another type of work) – the claim is denied. The Social Security administration will look at a person's education, age, and previous work experience in order to make this decision
- b. NO (the person cannot adjust to another job) – the claim is approved

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is for people who are ages 65 and older, blind, or disabled and have limited income and resources. There are citizenship requirements, but certain non-citizens may also be eligible. See below for Social Security contact information. People must apply for SSI in person, and the decision can take three to four months. Providing all of the necessary information up front may speed up the process. To apply for SSI, a person should bring the following information:

- Proof of age and citizenship or residency status, such as a birth certificate, passport, or religious record of birth
- Proof of income, such as most recent tax return or detailed bank statements showing deposits
- Proof of resources, including bank statements for all checking and savings accounts, information on investments, burial contract or plan information, life or disability insurance information, registration information for any vehicles, and for property owners, something that shows the value of any property owned besides a lived-in home
- Proof of living arrangements and expenses, such as something to prove where a person lives, the names, dates of birth, and Social Security numbers for everyone living in the household, and information about general household expenses such as rent, food, and utilities
- Proof of medical condition, such as medical and test reports, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of doctors seen for the

condition, estimated dates of when they were seen, a list of prescriptions currently being taken

- Work history, including job titles, what type of job was done, employer names, information about when the person worked there, how many hours per day and per week the person worked, how many days per week the person worked, and a description of what the duties were. A person should bring information on the last 15 years he or she worked
- Any documents that the person feels is important to demonstrate that he or she cannot work and does not have resources to take care of living expenses

Documents should be originals or certified copies where applicable.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

To qualify for SSDI, a person must be considered disabled and meet the requirements for number of years worked and money earned. Someone applying for SSDI can apply online or to set up an in-person or telephone appointment. See below for Social Security contact information. To apply for SSDI, a person needs the following information:

- Social security number
- A birth or baptismal certificate
- Information related to the medical condition, including medical and test reports, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of doctors, hospitals, clinics, or caseworkers seen for the condition, estimated dates of when they provided care, a list of prescriptions currently being taken
- A work history that listed where and what type of work was done in the past
- A recent W-2 or federal tax return if someone is self-employed

The team of specialists will review medical records and talk to a person's treating medical professionals for information on the condition and

how it affects basic work duties such as standing, lifting, walking, etc. A person may be asked to submit to a special medical exam if more information is needed.

If a person is denied assistance, he or she can file an appeal online or in person at a


Social Security office. The Social Security Administration will send information on how to appeal in the denial letter. It is important to follow deadlines in the appeals process.

Comparing SSI and SSDI:

	SSI	SSDI
People who are qualified	Meet the definition of disabled and have a low income and little resources	Meet the definition of disabled and have worked a certain number of years and earned a certain amount of money
Health insurance provided	Medicaid	Medicare Parts A, B, and C with the ability to opt into Part D
How benefits are calculated	Maximum benefits are \$735 (2017); benefits are then reduced based on certain types and amounts of income	Based on lifetime average earnings; income and resources do not count

If someone has issues managing their benefit money, the Social Security Administration has a **Representative Payment Program** that may be able to help. This program assigns a family member, friend, or organization to manage the person's funds and make sure his or her basic needs are met.

Social Security Administration has a hotline for questions and to reach a local office.

 1-800-772-1213


 www.ssa.gov

SECTION 3.2 GENERAL INFORMATION & REFERRAL


Several places can screen a person for benefits and connect them to resources.

The **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with health and human service programs in the community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.


 2-1-1

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

The Arc is a national organization with state and local chapters. Each organization can provide information on local disability services offered by the chapter and other community programs.

 1-800-252-9279 (state chapter)


 www.thearcoftexas.org

 713-957-1600 (Greater Houston)

 www.aogh.org

 281-494-5959 (Fort Bend)

 www.arcoffortbend.org

 832-754-9802 (Katy)

 www.thearcofkaty.org

The **Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST)** from the Social Security Administration is an online tool that helps a person figure out what Social Security programs he or she may qualify for.


 www.ssabest.benefits.gov/

Benefits.gov is an online tool that helps a person figure out what government benefits he or she may be able to apply and gives information about how to apply for those programs.

 www.benefits.gov


CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. It connects people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

 1-855-937-2372

 www.careconnection.org

Disability Rights Texas advocates and provides legal representation for people with disabilities who have faced discrimination. They can also connect people to additional services. Due to limited capacity, Disability Rights Texas currently takes cases in limited subject areas. Call to discuss a situation.


 1-800-252-9108

 www.disabilityrightstx.org


Disability.gov has information on disability programs and services.

 www.disability.gov

The Houston and Fort Bend Centers for Independent Living help people with disabilities through information and referral to community organizations, peer support, independent living training, and advocacy to promote independence and self-sufficiency. They offer a variety of services, such as help finding accessible housing and how to apply for benefits.


 713-974-4621 (voice) or 713-974-2703 (TTY) – Harris/Houston

 281-980-2219 – Fort Bend

 1-877-877-7802 – outside of Harris and Fort Bend Counties

 www.hcil.cc

The **City of Houston Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD)** connects City of Houston residents to needed services, including city services.

 832-394-0814

 www.houstontx.gov/disabilities


SECTION 3.3 EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Ready Houston has emergency preparation tips and special information related to disasters, including training videos. People can also sign up for emergency alerts from participating cities, counties, schools.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, and Galveston Counties, as well as the cities of Houston, LaPorte, Pasadena, and Galveston

 www.readyhoustontx.gov

State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) allows someone with a disability to register for special evacuation assistance in the event of a disaster. Registration must be done yearly.


 Call 2-1-1 to register and refer to the back inside cover of this Directory for more information.

SECTION 3.4 EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Abilityjobs.com is an online job search tool for people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. People can post their resume on the site for exposure to companies looking to reach talented workers.

 www.abilityjobs.com

Career and Recovery Resources provides job assistance for people with disabilities.

 713-754-7000

 www.careerandrecovery.org

Houston Center for Independent Living has Community Work Incentives Coordinators who can explain Social Security's work incentive programs for people receiving SSI and/or SSDI. The Community Work Incentives Coordinator can also give information about federal, state, and local programs that help someone get back to work and how working may change SSI or SSDI payments and benefits.


Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller County as well as 7 other area counties

 713-974-4621 (voice) or

 713-974-2703 (TTY) – Houston


 281-980-2219 – Fort Bend

 1-877-877-7802 – outside of Harris and Fort Bend Counties

 www.hcil.cc
(keyword: WIPA)


The **Ticket to Work Program**, run by **Social Security**, provides supports to someone with a disability who would like to try and return to the workforce.


 1-866-968-7842 or

 1-866-833-2967 (TTY)

 www.chooseworkttw.net

Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services (formerly the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, or DARS,) provides work-related services for people with disabilities, including physical, intellectual, or mental disabilities as well as the visually impaired and people recovering from addiction.

 1-800-628-5115 (for questions and to find a local office)

 www.twc.state.tx.us
(keyword: Vocational Rehabilitation Services)

SECTION 3.5 HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR WORKING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Qualified Disabled Working Individual (QDWI) program is for qualified people who have been receiving SSDI and who return to work but still have a disability. The Social Security Administration will send a notice to people who may be eligible for this program. To qualify, a person must:

- Be under 65 years of age
- Be entitled to benefits under Medicare Part A
- Not be covered by any Medicaid-funded programs
- Have an income equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty level (\$32,040 for a family of 2 in 2016)
- Have less than \$8,000 in resources for a single person or \$12,000 for a couple (2016)
 - The home where someone lives, one car, money set aside for burial expenses, the value of a pre-bought burial plot, household items such as furniture and appliances, and personal items such as clothing or jewelry do not count toward the resource limit

The **Medicaid Buy-in Program** allows certain people who do not qualify for Medicaid to be a part of the program for a low monthly premium.


To be eligible for this program, a person must be considered disabled under Social Security's definition (but does not have to be receiving any benefits) and:


- Earn less than \$2,453 a month (2016)
- Have less than \$2,000 in counted assets, such as bank or retirement accounts

How much a person has to pay for care is based on income.


PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION


Social Security Administration (QDWI Program)


 1-800-772-1213

 www.ssa.gov
(keyword: QDWI)

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (Medicaid Buy-In)

 2-1-1 (to request form H1200 be mailed)

 1-877-541-7905 (to pick up form from a local office)

 www.hhs.texas.gov
(keyword: Medicaid Buy-In) (to download form)


SECTION 3.6 BASIC NEEDS

The **Harris County Office of Social Services** helps disabled adults, veterans, and low-income families who meet income and residency eligibility requirements. The County provides emergency utility assistance, case management to apply for benefits and resources, and burial services.

 713-696-7900

 www.csd.hctx.net

Meals on Wheels providers deliver hot meals to older adults ages 60 and older and in a few cases, adults homebound because of disability.

 Call 2-1-1 to find the agency that serves the zip code.

On-property trash pickup is offered by many companies that pick up trash. Many will pick up trash from somewhere other than the curb if a person has a disability and cannot get their containers to the curb. Call the city or the trash provider that services the neighborhood for more information.

 3-1-1 (City of Houston)


Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS)

has many services to help a person with disabilities live as independently as possible. Services include help preparing for and finding jobs, getting necessary medical equipment and assistive technology, and caregiver support services. The agency also handles disability determinations for Social Security and a program that gives healthcare services to people with disabilities who work.

Some of the programs run by the HHSC include:

- Personal care services
- Medical services
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Caregiver services
- Adult day programs/adult day care
- Help paying for assisted living

 1-855-937-2372 (help identifying services)

 www.hhs.texas.gov
(Keyword: disability)

SECTION 3.7 HOUSING AND HOME REPAIR

FAIR HOUSING

A person with disabilities has certain rights when it comes to housing. The **Fair Housing Act** covers renters, homeowners, and people looking to buy a home. Under the Act, a housing provider cannot keep a person from renting or buying based on having a disability or because he or she needs a reasonable accommodation related to that disability. Under the Act, a person is considered disabled if he or she:

- Has a physical or mental issue that has a major effect on a major life activity, such as seeing, hearing, walking, breathing, or caring for oneself

- Is considered to have a disability, or
- Has a history or record of being disabled

No one may refuse to rent or sell a home or set different terms or conditions, including charging extra deposits or fees, on the basis of many factors, including disability. When someone is buying a home, a lender cannot refuse to make a loan or set different terms and conditions because of disability, among other factors.

For rental properties, a person with disabilities may request accommodations related to

that disability, such as asking for an assigned parking space to make it easier to get into the building or for grab bars. Additionally, a landlord cannot stop a person from making reasonable accommodations at his or her expense in order to use the housing. A landlord may be able to say that the change cannot be made unless the tenant agrees to change the property back when he or she leaves. If a person believes that he or she has been discriminated against, that person should contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a lawyer, or one of the fair housing agencies below.

Filing a Complaint

To file a complaint with HUD, a person has one year from when the incident happened to file a complaint. A person can complete a form on the HUD website, write a letter, or call the local HUD office. To start the process, HUD needs to have:

- The name and address of the person making the complaint
- The name and address of the person who is believed to have discriminated against someone
- The address or some other way to identify the housing involved
- A short description of what happened
- The date that it happened

Home Repair and Homebuyer Assistance Programs


Many cities and counties offer home repair programs to residents that meet income, residency, and asset guidelines. To be eligible, a homeowner usually must also be current on property taxes or be on a payment plan. Most have long waiting lists for assistance but can help with repairs that will make it easier for a person to remain in his or her home. Additionally, many areas also have down payment assistance programs that provide upfront cash for a person buying his or her first home (or first home in several years). While the programs are open to all

residents that meet income, residency, and asset guidelines, some give special consideration or additional funds to a person with disabilities. See Section 11.3 for other home repair programs.

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. It connects people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

 1-855-937-2372


 www.careconnection.org

Easter Seals of Greater Houston Home of Your Own Program (HOYO)

provides financial education and down payment assistance for qualified families where at least one member has a disability. Funding is limited for this program, and areas served may change based on current funding.

Serves: Montgomery County and Harris County (when funding is available)

 713-838-9050

 www.eastersealshouston.org
(Keyword: housing initiative)

The **Geezer Squad** is a group of retired men that build ramps for Montgomery County residents in need. There is no cost for this program.

Serves: Montgomery County, including Conroe, Willis, Magnolia, Splendora, New Caney, The Woodlands, and up to 10 miles South of the Woodlands

 info@geezersquad.org (email)

 www.geezersquad.org

The **Greater Houston Fair Housing Center** takes complaints of discrimination that may violate local, state, or federal laws and investigates them. They also assist people filing complaints with agencies that handle fair housing complaints and answer questions about fair housing issues and accommodations. The complaint process can be started online or over the phone.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties and four other area counties

☎ 713-641-3247

💻 www.houstonfairhousing.org

Harris County Area Agency on Aging helps with home modification. Healthy Homes assists with grab bars, elevated toilets, rails, and ramps to reduce someone's risk of falling in the home. Funding is limited. Call for eligibility and wait list information.

☎ 832-393-4301

☎ 1-800-213-8471 (outside Harris County)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Harris County Housing and Community Resource Center has a website helps people find affordable housing. It has a man specialty searches, including disability-friendly apartments and Section 8 apartments.

Serves: 19 communities within Harris County, including Houston

☎ 1-877-428-8844

💻 www.harriscountytphousing.org

The Houston and Fort Bend Centers for Independent Living (HCIL and FBCIL) have two programs related to housing. Staff members can help people with disabilities to find accessible housing in their area. Also, HCIL and FBCIL also have the MyHome MyChoice program that assists disabled individuals living in nursing homes and who receive Medicaid move into their homes with supported services.

Serves: Harris, Fort. Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in addition to 7 other area counties.

☎ 713-974-4621 (voice) or

☎ 713-974-2703 (TTY) – Harris/Houston

☎ 281-980-2219 – Fort Bend

☎ 1-877-877-7802 – outside of Harris and Fort Bend Counties

💻 www.hcil.cc

Houston-Galveston Area Agency on

Aging has funding to assist people who need modifications to their homes, including bathroom updates, such as grab bars and shower handrails, assistance creating a pathway into the home, and ramps and brighter outside lights. Call for eligibility and waitlist information.

☎ 281-633-0519 (Ft. Bend County)

☎ 936-441-3200
(Waller and Montgomery Counties)

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/default.aspx

The **National Association of Home Builders** offers a directory of **Certified Aging in Place Specialists (CAPS)** who have received special training in how to design or modify a home so that it is friendly to someone with limited mobility or other health challenges.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in addition to other areas of the state





💻 www.nahb.org (keyword: CAPS directory)

Rebuilding Together Houston provides ramps, grab bars, and other such repairs to make a person's home safer and more accessible. The program usually has a waiting list, but sometimes it has special funding to do more work in a selected Houston neighborhood. To be eligible, a homeowner must be age 62 or older, a veteran or spouse of a veteran, or a person with a disability currently on a government disability program, and own a one-story home in Harris County or the City of Houston. The homeowner must also meet income guidelines and be current on property taxes or have a payment plan. Call for more information.

☎ 713-659-2511

💻 www.rebuildinghouston.org

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) takes complaints from people who feel their rights under the Fair Housing Act have been violated. It also offers information on a person's rights under Fair Housing laws.

 1-800-669-9777 (all of Texas) or
 1-800-927-9275 (TTY)
 713-718-3199 (Houston regional office)
 www.hud.gov
(keyword: Discrimination complaint)

SECTION 3.8 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL

This section covers legal issues directly related to disability. For information and resources on advance directives, guardianship, and other legal topics, see Section 15.

SPECIAL NEEDS AND SUPPLEMENTAL NEEDS TRUSTS

Many government programs that assist people with disabilities have special eligibility rules about how much a person can earn or have. Something like a lawsuit settlement or inheritance may make a person ineligible.

A **Special Needs** or **Supplemental Needs Trust** is a legal tool that protects a person's money so that it does not keep someone from qualifying for benefits because of too many personal resources. The money is used to pay for things that benefits programs do not cover, such as dental care, computers, education, additional care beyond what Medicaid covers, or a vacation. There are special rules that must be followed in order to set up a trust, so it is important to talk with a qualified attorney.

Instead of having an individual trust, some people find a pooled special needs trust to be a good fit for their needs. A pooled special needs trust is run by a nonprofit and combines the trust fund money for many people. Once enrolled in the trust, the person benefitting from the trust can access a portion of the money based on what he or she (or a representative) put into the trust. Some

types of trusts must be set up before the person benefitting from it turns 65. Others have no age limits. An attorney that specializes in elder law issues can help someone determine what the best arrangement is.

DISABILITY HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS AND TAX DEFERMENT

A homeowner with disabilities may be able to get a special homestead exemption. A homestead exemption is the part of a home's value that cannot be taxed. This amount is in addition to the homestead exemption every homeowner receives.

To qualify, a person must meet Social Security's definition of disabled. A person does not have to be receiving benefits to qualify, but if that person is receiving SSDI, he or she will qualify automatically. There is a special form to complete.

Additionally, a person with disabilities can postpone paying property taxes for as long as he or she lives in the home and is disabled. There is a form to complete, and even though taxes are not paid, they continue to be billed with an 8% interest rate added to the amount. Once the person is no longer disabled or no longer lives in the home, all past due taxes must be paid within 180 days.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Each county has an **Appraisal District** where residents with disabilities can request homestead exemptions and tax deferments. Forms are available on the website.

☎ 713-957-7899 (Harris)

💻 www.hcad.org

☎ 281-344-8623 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.fbcad.org

☎ 936-756-3354 (Montgomery)

💻 www.mcad-tx.org

☎ 979-921-0060 (Waller)

💻 www.waller-cad.org

Arc of Texas Master Pooled Trust is Texas's only pooled special needs trust. A person under the age of 65 who meets Social Security's disability criteria is eligible to contribute to and benefit from the trust.

☎ 1-800-252-9729

💻 www.thearcoftexas.org

Academy of Elder Law Attorneys has a searchable list of attorneys who specialize in elder law and special needs issues. They can help with issues such as figuring out if a trust and what type is best for someone, completing documents that cover health and end-of-life decisions, and planning for long term care needs.

💻 www.naela.org

National Elder Law Foundation has a list of attorneys with a special certification in elder and special needs law. Someone with this certification will have CELA after his or her name. A CELA has a lot of experience in issues such as estate planning, wills, end-of-life decision-making, and planning for the future.

☎ 520-881-1076

💻 www.nelf.org

SECTION 3.9 SAFETY

Many **County District Clerk's Offices** offer online or in person background checks. Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties offer online searches of county criminal records. Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties also offer certified results for a small fee if a person asks for a background check in person.

☎ 713-755-7300 press 2, then 0 (Harris)

💻 www.hcdistrictclerk.com

(keyword: background checks)

☎ 281-341-4704 (Fort Bend Sheriff's Office)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov

(keyword: court records research)

☎ 936-539-7855 (Montgomery County)

💻 www.mctx.org

(keyword: district clerk inquiry index)

☎ 979-826-7735 (Waller County)

💻 www.co.waller.tx.us

(keyword: district clerk court records)

Run by the **Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**, Houston's Safe Sidewalk Program allows people to apply for the city to build safe sidewalks and ramps so someone can get to places most people visit. Examples include the grocery store, pharmacy, bank, bus stop, or place of worship. A person with a disability or his or her representative can submit a request.

☎ 832-394-0814

The **Texas Department of Public Safety** has a public criminal records search that covers all of Texas. Searches generally are online, and a person must set up an account and purchase search credits. Searching just the sex offender registry is free

☎ 1-855-481-7070

💻 www.records.txdps.state.tx.us

SECTION 3.10 VEHICLE MODIFICATION

There are special programs to help people with disabilities modify their vehicles. For other transportation resources see Section 20.

BUYING OR MODIFYING A CAR

There is a special tax exemption for a person who has an orthopedic disability, or a disability that impacts bones, joints, or muscles to the point where the person cannot move easily (including cerebral palsy) and needs to buy and then modify a vehicle in order to be able to get around. No sales or use taxes will be charged on the vehicle or any changes made to it so that the disabled person can use or ride in the vehicle. The person buying the vehicle has to fill out TX Comptroller's Form 14-318: (see below).

Most major car manufacturers offer a small automobile rebate or special programs for a person with disabilities that needs to modify a vehicle. Call a local dealership and ask to be connected to the national mobility program or do a web search for the manufacturer and "mobility" to find the website. The phone number will also be available on the manufacturer's website. Rebates or programs typically offer around \$1,000 or the equivalent in value.

Adaptive Driving Access sells new and used wheelchair accessible vehicles. It also rents vehicles and adds mobility products to cars.

☎ 713-874-9100 (Northwest Houston)

☎ 281-487-1969 (Pasadena)

💻 www.adaptivedriving.com

The **Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists** has a list of certified driving rehabilitation specialists who can work with an individual to figure out what type of modifications a person with disabilities needs in order to stay mobile.

☎ 1-866-672-9466

💻 www.aded.site-ym.com

(keyword: CDRS provider search)

Mobility Plus offers a variety of solutions to help a person with disabilities have the freedom to move around. It sells vehicles and after-market vehicle modifications.

☎ 713-468-4683

☎ 1-888-558-4683

💻 www.mobilityplustx.com

The **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** has a brochure on its website which can also be ordered for free. The brochure is called "Adapting Motor Vehicles for People with Disabilities" and has information about how to take advantage of driver mobility programs and services.

☎ 1-888-327-4236 (voice) or

☎ 1-800-424-9153 (TTY)

💻 www.nhtsa.gov
(keyword: 810733)

Texas Motor Vehicle Orthopedically Handicapped Exemption Certificate is the form that needs to be completed in order to buy and modify a vehicle for eligible individuals without having to pay state sales and use taxes. The form lists additional information about how to qualify. The Texas Comptroller's Office handles the exemption.


☎ 1-800-252-1382

💻 www.comptroller.texas.gov
(keyword: 14-318)

SECTION 3.11 SAFETY

Bay Area Rehabilitation Center provides outpatient physical, occupational, and speech therapy to adults with disabilities caused by injury or disease.


Serves: Residents of Baytown and surrounding Eastern Harris County communities


 281-838-4477

 www.bayarearehab.org


Houston Parks & Recreation Department

offers adaptive sports for wheelchair-bound adults, adults with spinal injuries, and amputees. The wheelchair accessible fitness room is designed for adults who are physically disabled, including those with visual impairment and blindness.

 832-395-7333

 www.houstontx.gov
(keyword: adaptive sports)

National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD) has information on how to remain active with a disability and a directory of Texas-based physical activity programs for the individuals that are disabled by city. Please see website to find locations closest to you.

 1-800-900-8086


 www.nchpad.org

SECTION 3.12 ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Assistive Technology and durable medical equipment helps older adults or disabled people to do things they may have been able to do on their own before. Some examples are tools such as magnifying glasses, hearing aids, and walkers. Others types offer support through the internet or smartphone. A medical doctor can help figure out what devices are needed. Medicare Part B will cover up to 80% of the costs for items used for medical reasons. While some businesses do offer subsidies to get people to try their products, others collect a person's information and use it for fraud or identity theft. Older adults should be cautious when companies offer assistive technology or durable medical equipment for free.


INFORMATION & RESOURCES


AbleData provides objective information on assistive technology and rehabilitation equipment.

 1-800-227-0216

 www.abledata.com

Adaptive cellular telephones are available for people with vision problems. These phone have large buttons and screens. Telephones cost up to \$200 and require a monthly service agreement. Many providers also offer special features such as medication reminders, wellness checks, and other services.

 1-800-733-6622 (Jitterbug)

 1-800-937-1532 (Snapfon)

 www.snapfon.com

 www.dorousea.us (Doro Phones)


Center for Visual Rehabilitation has a specially designed space where people with low vision can improve hand-eye coordination and learn how to cook as well as a place to find tools such as talking watches, telephones with larger buttons.

 713-559-5200

 www.cizikeye.org

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. CareConnection ADRC can connect people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties


 1-855-937-2372

 www.careconnection.org

Disability.gov is a government site where a person can search for assistive technology information nationally and by state.

 www.disability.gov

Eldercare Locator is a national information and referral service that helps older adults, their families, and caregivers find trusted local resources and provides basic information on a variety of topics.

 1-800-677-1116


 www.eldercare.gov

(Click on Resources, Factsheets, Assistive Technology)

The Houston and Fort Bend Centers for Independent Living (HCIL and FBCIL)

provide some independent living services on behalf of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Among those services, HCIL and FBIL may be able to help people who need assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and vehicle modifications.

Serves: Harris, Fort. Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in addition to 7 other area counties.

 713-974-4621 (voice) or 713-974-2703 (TTY) – Harris/Houston


 281-980-2219 – Fort Bend

 1-877-877-7802 – outside of Harris and Fort Bend Counties

 www.hcil.cc


Interfaith of the Woodlands provides gently used durable medical equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs when items are available.

Serves individuals ages 62 and older in South Montgomery County zip codes 77380 through 77386, 77389, 77375 (Village of Creekside Park), 77354 (Village of Sterling Ridge).

 281-367-1230


 www.woodlandsinterfaith.org

Lighthouse of Houston sells new items (Reflection Store) and gently used items (Second Sight Store) to assist Houstonians with visual impairments. Staff can also demonstrate new technologies. Call for eligibility information.

 713-284-8466

 www.houstonlighthouse.org


Medicare.gov has information about what the program covers. People who have a Medicare Advantage plan should contact their provider.

 1-800-633-4227

 www.medicare.gov


(search term: durable medical equipment)

Rehabilitation Services Volunteer Project (RSVP) provides gently used durable medical equipment to people who cannot afford it. They have an open house once a month where people can pick up equipment from their warehouse. Call ahead to see if they have needed equipment and to find out when the next open house is.


 1-855-825-7787

 www.rsvptexas.org

Second Blessings at Bering United Methodist Church, a resale shop, will give, for free, gently used durable medical equipment to people who need it. Someone must be able to pick up the equipment. Call for hours and to see what items are on hand.

 281-435-1665


Texas Workforce Commission (formerly DARS) offers many services to older adults with disabilities. Services may be able to help find and sometimes pay for items a disabled older adult needs to make his or her life easier. If the disability means that the person cannot use his or her car, TWC may provide services or referrals to services if the disability means that the person cannot use his or her vehicle.

 1-800-628-5115 (TWC Vocational and Blind Services)

 www.twc.state.tx.us

(keyword: vocational rehabilitation)


The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs offers information about what assistive technology may be covered by VA benefits. For health care benefit information, call:

 1-877-222-8387


DONATING GENTLY USED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

These organizations accept donations of gently used equipment to give to people who need items and cannot afford them.


Interfaith of the Woodlands (The Woodlands)

 281-367-1230

Rehabilitation Services Volunteer Project (RSVP) (Houston)


 1-855-825-7787


Second Blessings at Bering United Methodist Church (Houston)

 281-435-1665

REPORTING FRAUD OR SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

Texas Senior Medicare Patrol, administered by the Better Business Bureau Education Foundation, takes reports of suspected abuse or fraud involving Medicare benefits, such as paying for services not received. It also educates Medicare recipients about Medicare fraud and abuse.

 713-341-618

 1-888-341-6187

 www.texassmp.org

SECTION 4 DISEASE AND CHRONIC ILLNESS

SECTION 4.1 EVIDENCE BASED PROGRAMS

Evidence Based Programs are programs that have been researched, studied, and found to be effective in helping improve an older adult's outcomes. These programs usually are taught over a several week period and are offered for free throughout the Greater Houston region. The Harris County Area Agency on Aging manages these programs for Harris County, and the CareConnections ADRC covers the remaining counties in the region. Not all programs may be offered in all counties.

A Matter of Balance and the Tai-Chi Program have been shown to improve a person's balance and decrease fall risk. Arthritis, Diabetes, and Chronic Disease Self-Management Trainings help a person take better control over their health. The trainings cover such topics as managing frustration, appropriate exercises, and improving communication with family and doctors about the disease.

Lastly, the HomeMeds Program is a medication review and intervention to look for duplications, counteractions, and other medicine problems.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Care Connection Aging and Disability Resource Center (Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller)

☎ 1-855-937-2372

💻 www.careconnection.org

Harris County Area Agency on Aging

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

SECTION 4.2 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Substance abuse happens when someone becomes hooked on an addictive substance, such as alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription drugs, and misuses that substance constantly or over a long period of time. Sometimes, it is easy to tell that someone is misusing a substance; other times, it is harder to recognize. If someone seems drunk or high on a regular basis, cannot stop using on his or her own, and using the substance is impacting his or her social or work functioning, that person likely is a substance abuser.

Medicare covers substance abuse treatment for both inpatient and outpatient settings, as medically necessary. To learn more about Medicare coverage, go to www.medicare.gov or refer to Section 9.3. Some signs that a person may be abusing a substance are:


- Confusion, depressed mood, memory loss
- Drinking alone or drinking even though medicines say not to

- Getting the same medication(s) prescribed by different doctors
- Falls, weakness, sleep disturbance
- Extreme hyper behavior

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Operated by United Way of Greater Houston, the **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

 2-1-1

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

Al-Anon has information on how to deal with a loved one who is a substance abuser. It also has information about where to find support groups.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston Counties

 713-683-7227

 www.houstonalanon.org

Alcoholics Anonymous offers information and support groups for individuals recovering from alcohol misuse. Local groups can be found by city or zip code.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other greater Houston Counties

 713-686-6300

 www.aahouston.org

Bay Area Council on Drugs and Alcohol (BACODA) offers counseling, assessment, support services, coaching, and education services for those affected by or who are suffering from substance abuse or misuse. It also offers a crisis hotline for people with immediate needs.

Serves: Southeast Harris County and surrounding counties

 1-800-777-8829

 bayareacouncilondrugsandalcohol.homestead.com

Cocaine Anonymous offers support to people who want to stop using cocaine and similar drugs. It has in-person and online support groups as well as a 24-hour hotline. Cocaine Anonymous also has information about dealing with addiction.


Serves: Greater Houston area


 713-668-6822

 www.ca-texas.org

The **Council on Recovery** provides several services to support a person and his or her family on the road to recovery such as information on intervention and detox programs. There are two programs for people ages 50 and older. The first is a specialized outpatient treatment track which addresses some of the issues that lead to substance abuse. Second, the Wellderly Program provides information and resources for people over the age of 60, caregivers, and professionals about substance abuse issues. The **Wellderly program** also can help with screening and case management for older adult, and staff members provide free community education programs on substance abuse issues and older adults.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston counties.

 713-914-0556 (outpatient services)

 281-200-9109 (Wellderly program)

 www.councilonrecovery.org

Family Houston provides counseling for children, adults, individuals, and families on a variety of issues, including identifying substance abuse issues. It takes most insurance and also has a sliding scale fee.

 713-861-4849

 www.familyhouston.org

Fort Bend Regional Council offers education and outpatient treatment for people and their families affected by substance abuse.

 713-942-4100 (Rosenberg)

 281-207-2400 (Stafford)

 www.fortbendcouncil.org

The **Montrose Center's WAY OUT** program is for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA) or HIV+ people who are interested in or are ready to enter recovery. The program offers an 8-week intensive outpatient program followed by a 12 week relapse prevention program. For those not yet ready to quit, coaches can work with them to reduce usage and achieve other life goals. The program accepts insurance and offers a sliding scale.

☎ 713-529-0037

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

Narcotics Anonymous offers information, group meetings, and support to people overcoming a drug addiction.

☎ 713-661-4200 (Harris, Montgomery, Waller, and Greater Houston Counties)

💻 hascona.com

☎ 1-888-955-8822 (Webster and Fort Bend, Brazoria, and Galveston Counties)

💻 ttcana.net

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence has information about substance abuse warning signs, including information on substance abuse among older adults.

☎ 1-800-622-2255

💻 www.ncadd.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is the federal agency dedicated to substance abuse and mental health needs. It has information on how and where people who need help can get it.

☎ 1-800-662-4357 (hotline to find treatment)

☎ 1-800-273-8255 (suicide prevention line)

💻 www.samhsa.gov/find-help
(searchable database for prescription drug and heroin treatment programs and doctors)

Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare provides intense outpatient services and mental health counseling for people wanting to become sober. For people who also have mental health issues, extra counseling is provided. For those without insurance, there is a sliding scale fee.

Serves: Montgomery, Walker, and Liberty Counties

☎ 1-800-659-6994 (24-hour crisis line)

☎ 936-521-6300

💻 www.tricountyservices.org

Career and Recovery Resources Alternative Drug and Alcohol Program

works with recovering addicts and services to help them stay sober, such as counseling and support groups, GED classes, and job placement assistance.

Serves: Harris and Waller Counties

☎ 713-754-7000

💻 www.careerandrecovery.org

Recenter is a program that focuses on homeless people with drug or alcohol abuse problems. It offers programs that range from weekly meetings to a residential program. Participants in the program also receive services to help them stay sober and get their life back on track.

☎ 713-524-3682

💻 recenterhouston.com


Find an Inpatient or Outpatient Program


Operated by United Way of Greater Houston, the **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

☎ 2-1-1

💻 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)


Bay Area Council on Drugs and Alcohol (BACODA) has resources to find treatment and support centers.

 1-800-777-8829

 bayadrugreacouncilondrugsandalcohol.homestead.com/

The **Council on Recovery** provides several services to support a person and his or her family on the road to recovery such as information on intervention and detox programs.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties as well as other Greater Houston counties

 713-970-7000

 www.councilonrecovery.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has a searchable list for programs and doctors who work with people with substance abuse problems.

 1-800-662-4357 (hotline to find treatment)

 www.samhsa.gov/find-help

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has an online searchable directory of substance abuse treatment providers. In order to get help through one of the programs, a person must first contact an Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral Center. For the Greater Houston area, that is the Council on Recovery (see above).

 713-970-7000 (Council on Recovery Helpline)


 www.dshs.texas.gov/mhsa-sa-help/


SECTION 4.3 ARTHRITIS

Arthritis is any one of hundreds of different medical problems that impact a person's joints. Often, arthritis causes swelling, pain, and trouble moving affected joints. Many times, taking medication and changing one's lifestyle can ease the pain. Doctors are still learning about arthritis and what causes it. In addition to medicines, exercise can help with arthritis symptoms, including aquatic therapy. Many physical therapy providers and rehabilitation centers offer this service.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES


Arthritis Foundation has a helpline which can help people find a doctor, help with paying for medicine, and support groups. Social workers at the helpline can also address other issues such as in-home care and services, transportation help, and disability questions.

 713-942-9063 (Houston area office)


 1-844-571-4357 (national help and information line)

 www.arthritis.org

Mayo Clinic provides information on Arthritis, common medications, and tips on how to walk with a cane or walker, when needed.

 www.mayoclinic.org
(keyword: arthritis overview)

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases has information on a number of diseases, including arthritis. The institute also works to match people with arthritis with research studies around the country.

 1-877-226-4267 (general health and research study information)

 www.niams.nih.gov

SECTION 4.4 **CANCER**

When cells in a part of the body begin to divide, do not stop, and then spread to other parts of the body, the disease is called cancer. Cancer can either be malignant, meaning that it spreads to different parts of the body and causes new unstoppable growth, or benign, which means that the problem stays in one place. Except for tumors in the brain, most benign tumors are not life-threatening. Almost any part of the body can be affected by cancer, though some are more common than others. Skin cancer is the most common. Besides skin cancer, the most common forms of cancer are breast, lung, prostate, and colorectal cancer.

MEDICARE COVERAGE FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Original Medicare covers in part or in full many tests that are designed to find problems before they become big. For treatment, Medicare coverage depends on whether the doctor is a participating doctor. If the doctor is “participating,” standard Medicare rates apply. If the doctor is considered “non-participating,” that means that he or she does not normally take Medicare but will in some circumstances. In that case, the patient may have to pay out of pocket and submit a claim to Medicare. Medicare will reimburse the patient based on Medicare rates. If a doctor has “opted-out” of Medicare, the patient must pay for treatment out of pocket. Contact Medicare for questions on cost and coverage.

If the person has a Medicare Advantage, the plan determines what is and is not covered. Contact the plan provider for more information. If a person has had cancer or is receiving treatment when he or she becomes Medicare eligible, that disease does not impact Medicare enrollment. A person can still enroll in Medicare, a Medicare Advantage Plan, or a Medigap policy, and companies cannot charge that person more because of his or her condition or refuse to sell a policy.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

American Cancer Society (ACS) has a variety of resources for people with cancer and their caregivers, including general information on different types of cancer, information on treatments and their side effects, and information on living life with cancer.

ACS also has a national helpline to help answer questions and connect people to local resources.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery Counties and the Greater Houston area

☎ 713-266-2877

☎ 1-800-227-2345

💻 www.cancer.org
(live chat available on the website)

American Cancer Society I Can Cope is an online program for people facing cancer, their family, and their friends. I Can Cope has many online classes a person can take to learn more about treatment, nutrition, managing pain, and other topics.

💻 www.cancer.org
(keyword: I Can Cope)

Cancer Legal Resource Center provides information about laws and resources for cancer survivors and their families on issues such as employment laws, insurance, and many other topics. It can also provide referrals to people needing legal help.

☎ 1-866-843-2572

💻 cancerlegalresources.org

American Institute for Cancer Research offers information on preventing and fighting cancer.

☎ 1-800-843-8114

💻 www.aicr.org

National Cancer Institute is the government's website with information on different types of cancer.

☎ 1-800-422-6237

💻 www.cancer.gov

OncoLink has on its website information about many different types of cancer, treatment and prevention, and other issues related to having cancer

💻 www.oncolink.com

HOUSING NEAR MEDICAL CENTER

Aishel House provides housing and supportive services, including help with grocery shopping, transportation, and other daily tasks. It provides Kosher and Shabbat meals to Jewish patients and their families in the hospital or in Aishel House housing. Call for availability and wait list information.

☎ 713-522-2004

💻 www.aishelhouse.org

Amschwand Sarcoma Cancer Foundation provides free housing for up to 4 weeks for families who come to Houston for sarcoma treatment. A deposit is required, and applications are required. Apartments come fully furnished with necessary cooking and eating utensils and other necessary living items.

☎ 713-256-4250

💻 www.sarcomacancer.org

Angel House at St. Dominic's Village provides low-cost rooms for people needing treatment or loved ones who need to be close to a loved one. The community is adult only.

☎ 713-440-3413

💻 www.stdominicvillage.org/angelhouse.html

Church Apartment Ministry has more than 60 apartments for people needing treatment in the Medical Center. Apartments are fully furnished and are available for a low daily cost.

☎ 713-524-2640

💻 www.churchapartmentministry.org

Joe's House has a database of free or low-cost housing for people undergoing long-term medical treatment that need a place to stay.

💻 www.joeshouse.org

TRANSPORTATION

This subsection lists resources that help people get to cancer appointments. For more general transportation options, including those that help people to get to any type of doctor's appointment, see Section 20.

American Cancer Society – Houston has limited cab rides available to area residents who need help getting to a medical appointment related to their cancer. Call for availability and information.

Serves residents of: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area Counties

☎ 713-266-2877 (local office)

☎ 1-800-227-2345 (national helpline)

💻 www.cancer.org
(keyword: find support programs)

American Red Cross provides free non-emergency medical transportation for people who need help. It is a shared-ride program that provides door to door service.

Serves: Harris and Fort Bend Counties

☎ 1-866-526-8300 (Texas Gulf Coast Region)

💻 www.redcross.org/local/texas/gulf-coast

Corporate Angel Network helps people with cancer get to recognized cancer treatment centers around the country by giving them free seats on corporate jets. The flight can be for treatment, a consultation, or a check-up. Call within three weeks for eligibility and availability. Rides are not guaranteed.

☎ 914-328-1313

💻 www.corporateangelnetwork.org

National Patient Travel Center provides referrals to organizations that help with air or ground travel for people who need help getting to medical appointments.

☎ 1-800-296-1217

💻 www.patienttravel.org

BEAUTY, COSMETIC, AND WIG SERVICES

Awesome Breastforms are made by volunteers and are given to women who have had breast surgeries. Each woman receives a custom item that she can wear discretely. Orders are taken online only and a volunteer will contact the person with questions.

💻 awesomebreastforms.org

Beauty Beyond Breast Cancer is a program offered by Salon Meyerland where women undergoing cancer treatment can receive a free wig, salon services, and makeup tips. The program also accepts wig donations to provide to women.

☎ 832-372-4247

Breast Cancer Charities of America

Feeling Better Again program sends women being treated for breast cancer a beauty basket with makeup and tips to improve self-esteem.

☎ 936-231-8460

💻 www.thebreastcancercharities.org

Good Wishes Scarves sends a free scarf or wrap to women whose hair is thinning or hair loss due to illness or treatment. Scarves are custom made for each person.

☎ 1-800-778-5998

💻 www.goodwishesscarves.org

Great Clips Clips of Kindness provides free clipper cuts to people facing hair loss because of cancer treatment. Some salons provide discounts to friends and family who want their hair clipped in support of a loved one. Visit the website to find a location.

💻 www.greatclips.com

EBeauty Community has a free pay-it-forward wig program. Using the website, women who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment can choose a color, style, and length and EBeauty will send a wig matching their choices to them. When they no longer need the wig, women can mail it back for it to be cleaned and given to another woman who needs it.

💻 www.ebeauty.org

Friends Are By Your Side donates hair replacement and styling services to women undergoing cancer treatment. Visit the website to find a participating salon. The salon will provide a free consultation, order the selected wig, and give a free fitting. If no salon exists, contact Friends Are By Your Side.

☎ 856-582-6600

💻 www.friendsarebyyourside.com

M.D. Anderson Beauty Shop provides free salon and barber services to M.D. Anderson patients. It also provides free wigs and head coverings.

☎ 713-792-6039

💻 www.mdanderson.org
(keyword: beauty shop)

Look Good Feel Better is a free program that helps people deal with some of the physical side effects of cancer treatment that impact looks. Program locations serve only women but the website has tips for men. Looking better helps participants feel better and impact the process. Participants must pre-register for the workshop.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties (Waller residents may need to travel to a nearby county)

☎ 888-277-6333 (for information and registration)

💻 lookgoodfeelbetter.org

HEALTHY TEXAS WOMEN FREE SCREENINGS

Under the **Healthy Texas Women** initiative, low-income adult women up to age 64 who do not have health insurance may receive free breast and cervical cancer screening, follow-up, and assistance applying for Medicaid benefits if cancer is found. Make an appointment with a participating clinic to determine if eligible.

Harris Health Clinics in most locations offer free Healthy Texas Women screenings. Call to find a nearby clinic.

☎ 713-566-6509 (for all enrollment centers)

☎ 713-526-4243 (appointments/locations)

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: apply financial assistance)

Ibn Sina Community Medical Center

offers services at its Wilcrest location in Southwest Houston.

☎ 281-977-7471

💻 ibnsinafoundation.org

UTMB Regional Maternal and Child Health Program

offers services at its Pasadena, Sugar Land, Katy, New Caney, and Conroe locations.

☎ 409-266-1888 (Pasadena, Sugar Land, Katy)

☎ 281-577-8966 (New Caney)

☎ 936-525-2800 (Conroe)

💻 www.utmbhealth.com
(keyword: maternal child)

Lone Star Community Health Program

offers services in Conroe.

☎ 936-539-4004

💻 www.lonestarfamily.org

FREE/REDUCED COST SCREENINGS

HOPE Clinic provides services to uninsured or underinsured people of all backgrounds with special emphasis on serving the Asian community. Services are provided in Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Burmese, Arabic, and Spanish, among other languages. Free or low-cost cancer screenings include breast cancer, hepatitis B (liver cancer prevention), and cervical cancer. Patients must register before their appointment. HOPE Clinic locations are in Southwest Houston, West Houston, and Alief.

☎ 713-773-0803

💻 hopechc.org

Hope through Grace helps low-income, uninsured, or underinsured individuals pay for a colonoscopy by covering about 90% of the procedure costs. To be considered for assistance, a person must call for a telephone interview and then attend an educational seminar. This program is open to Harris County residents who are citizens.

☎ 713-668-4673

💻 www.hopethroughgrace.org

Interfaith Community Clinic provides mammograms and cervical cancer testing, among other services, on a sliding scale for Montgomery County residents who have no insurance. Before becoming a patient, a person must first have an eligibility appointment where he or she must bring valid identification, proof of income, and proof of address.

☎ 281-364-7889

💻 interfaithcommunityclinic.org

M.D. Anderson's Project Derm provides free skin cancer screenings, typically during the month of May at its Medical Center and partner locations.


☎ 1-877-632-6789 (option 2) (information and registration)


FREE COLON CANCER SCREENING

M.D. Anderson's FIT-Flu program is for people ages 50 to 75 who have not had a positive stool test in the past year and have not had a colonoscopy or similar procedure in the last five years. Those who are low-income and uninsured or eligible for Medicaid or Medicare receive a take-home stool testing kit when they receive a flu shot. For a positive test, the individual























will receive a free colonoscopy screening test. If cancer is found, staff will help to find other programs that help with treatment. This program is at participating locations in Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller Counties.

M.D. Anderson's FIT Flu Project

 1-888-512-7249

 www.mdanderson.org
(keyword: fit flu)

FIT Flu Clinics

Clinic	Location	Phone Number
Central Care Community Health Center	77033/South Houston	 713-734-4580
Christus St. Mary's	77023/SE Houston	 713-803-1840
Denver Harbor	77020/East Houston	 713-674-3326
El Centro de Corazon – Eastwood	77023/SE Houston	 713-660-1880
El Centro de Corazon – Magnolia	77011/East Houston	 713-660-1880
El Centro de Corazon – Dunn Health Center	77012/SE Houston	 713-660-1880
Good Neighbor Health Clinic	77007/Central Houston	 713-529-3597
Good Neighbor North	77093/North Houston	 713-387-7171
Hillendahl Clinic – Spring Branch Community Health Center	77055/West Houston	 713-462-6565 (option 3)
Houston Area Community Services	77008/Central Houston	 713-526-0555
HOPE Community Health Clinic	77036/SW Houston	 713-773-0803
Legacy Community Health Clinic – Montrose	77006/Central Houston	 832-548-5000
Pitner Clinic - Spring Branch Community Health Center	77080/West Houston	 713-462-6565 (option 3)
Shalom Health Clinic	77061/SE Houston	 713-900-2750
Pasadena Health Center	77502/Pasadena	 713-554-1091
Christ Clinic	77493/Katy	 281-391-0190
AccessHealth – Missouri City	77489/Missouri Citi	 281-969-1800
AccessHealth - Richmond	77469/Richmond	 281-342-4530
Shifa Clinic	77498/Sugar Land	 281-561-5767
Lone Star Community Health Program	77304/Conroe	 936-539-4004
AccessHealth – Brookshire	77423/Brookshire	 281-822-4235 or  1-866-719-4012

FREE MAMMOGRAMS

M.D. Anderson's Project Valet provides free mammogram screenings to women ages 40 to 69 who are uninsured, not receiving county assistance, and who are patients at one of the following clinics. If a woman needs follow-up, Project Valet will arrange and pay for the testing. Project Valet will also bring a mobile unit to communities where eligible women live. To access the service, call one of the following clinics:

M.D. Anderson's Project VALET

☎ 1-888-512-7249

💻 www.mdanderson.org
(keyword: project valet)

PROJECT VALET PARTICIPATING CLINICS

City of Houston Department of Health and Human Services offers services at La Nueva Casa de Amigos, Northside, and Sunnyside Health Centers.

☎ 832-393-5428 (all locations)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/HealthCenters

Spring Branch Community Health Center offers services at its Hillendahl, Pitner, and West Houston locations.

☎ 713-462-6565 (option 3)

💻 sbchc.net

Other program locations include:

Harris

El Centro de Corazon (77011/East Houston)

☎ 713-660-1880

💻 www.elcentrodecorazon.org

Christus St. Mary's (77023/SE Houston)

☎ 713-803-1840

💻 www.christusfoundation.org
(keyword: St. Mary's Clinic)

VCare Clinic (77061/SE Houston)

☎ 713-640-2273

💻 www.vcareclinics.org

Legacy Health Clinic (77020/East Houston)

☎ 832-548-5400

💻 www.legacycommunityhealth.org

Fort Bend

Christ Clinic

☎ 281-391-0190

💻 christclinickaty.org

Shifa Clinic

☎ 281-561-5767

💻 shifausahouston.org

AccessHealth

☎ 281-342-4530

💻 www.myaccesshealth.org

County Low-Cost Health Programs:

See Section 10.1 for more information.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Alliance in Reconstructive Surgery

Foundation provides grants to low-income people who need breast reconstructive surgery because of cancer. Household income must be at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$16,020 for a family of 2 in 2016).

☎ 1-888-373-7065

💻 airsfoundation.org

Breast Cancer Charities of America helps women who are being treated for breast cancer or who are newly diagnosed with basic living expenses. Women can apply for monthly grants, up to \$1,000 per calendar year. Applications are accepted online from the 1st to the 5th each month.

☎ 936-231-8460

💻 www.thebreastcancercharities.org

Cancer Recovery Foundation

International has programs to support someone going through cancer treatment. For women facing breast, cervical, endometrial, ovarian, or uterine cancer, the Women's **Cancer Fund** accepts quarterly applications for assistance. Women must actively be receiving cancer treatment to be eligible, and if the application is approved, the woman can receive up to \$250 toward rent or utility bills.

💻 www.cancerrecovery.org/women-cancer-fund/

Good Days provides financial assistance to people suffering from many chronic diseases, including cancer. Programs may help pay for medications when people cannot afford them, help people with chronic illnesses reduce insurance costs and provide travel and housing assistance when someone has to travel for treatment. Some diseases have waiting lists; visit the website for availability.

☎ 1-877-968-7233

💻 www.mygooddays.org

HealthWell Foundation provides financial assistance to people who have insurance that pays for medication when they cannot afford it. To qualify, a person must have a disease and/or medicine that is covered by the foundation and be under 500% of the Federal Poverty Limit (\$80,100 for a family of 2 in 2016).

☎ 1-800-675-8416

💻 www.healthwellfoundation.org

Help for a Family offers financial assistance when a person applying or an immediate family member has been diagnosed with a terminal illness in the past 90 days.

💻 www.helpforafamily.org

Mission4Maureen provides financial support to individuals with brain tumors. The amount is based on the person or family's specific situation and available funding.

☎ 440-840-6497

💻 mission4maureen.org

National Pancreatic Cancer Foundation

provides up to six months of financial assistance for people receiving pancreatic cancer treatment. Assistance is for basic living expenses only. To be eligible, a person must be a U.S. Citizen, have an income below 200% poverty (\$31,860 for a family of 2 in 2016), and have less than \$5,000 in their bank account.

✉ assistance@npcf.us (no phone calls)

💻 www.npcf.us

OstoGroup offers unused ostomy products for almost free to uninsured people in need. People requesting items pay only shipping charges.

☎ 1-877-678-6690

💻 www.ostogroup.org

Ovarcome's Ovarcare program gives financial help to women in active ovarian cancer treatment. The help includes a small grant, gas card, and grocery card. To receive help, a person must meet income qualifications.

☎ 713-800-2976

💻 www.ovarcome.org

Project Purple assists people dealing with pancreatic cancer with living, medical, or travel expenses, based on funding ability.

💻 www.projectpurple.org

The Roses's Empower Her program wants every woman to be able to access breast cancer screening, diagnostic tests, and care. Financial assistance is based on the person's circumstances and need. The program may be able to help uninsured women get screened and treated. If a woman needs a service not provided by the Rose, staff connect the patient to a physician who has agreed to donate services. The Rose has locations in Southeast Houston and Bellaire.

☎ 281-484-4708

💻 www.therose.org/services/uninsured-programs/

Sisters Network focuses on breast cancer information and support for the African American community. It also provides financial help with co-pays, medical related housing, office visits, or prostheses for women facing breast cancer.

☎ 713-781-0255

☎ 1-866-781-1808

💻 www.sistersnetworkinc.org

VN Teamwork helps pay for mammogram screenings for women over age 40 who are low income, uninsured, or underinsured.

☎ 281-495-8936

☎ 936-522-4000

💻 www.vnteamwork.org

CANCER-SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS

Amschwand Sarcoma Cancer Foundation provides support to people diagnosed with a sarcoma.

☎ 713-256-4250

💻 www.sarcomacancer.org

The **American Brain Tumor Association** provides information and support to people who have been diagnosed with a brain tumor. ABTA can also match people with a mentor to help them through the process and has both in-person (Houston only) and online support groups.

☎ 1-800-866-2282

💻 www.abta.org

The **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society** has an information and referral line with oncology social workers, nurses, and health educators available to answer questions. The Society also has a program that helps pay insurance or Medicare premiums or co-pays. The program is open to insured U.S. citizens or permanent residents who have a covered diagnosis and a household income at or below 500% of the federal poverty guidelines (\$80,100 for a family of 2 in 2016). Call or visit the website for which diseases are covered and the amount of assistance available.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston Counties

☎ 713-840-0483 (Texas Gulf Coast Chapter)

☎ 1-800-955-4572 (national information line)

💻 www.lls.org

Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer

Foundation maintains a resource library on topics about dealing with breast cancer.

☎ 713-783-9188


💻 www.komen-houston.org

Testicular Cancer Awareness Foundation

provides information about testicular cancer and questions to ask a person finds out he has testicular cancer.

 www.testicularcancerawarenessfoundation.org

Tex US TOO has information and support for people with prostate cancer. The national organization, **US TOO**, has a helpline and offers information and help finding support groups.

 713-623-4772

 www.texustoo.org

 1-800-808-7866 (national helpline)

 www.ustoo.org

SUPPORT GROUPS/NETWORKS

4th Angel matches adults with cancer and/or caregivers of people with cancer to someone who has had a similar experience. All meetings are by phone.

 4thangel.org

American Cancer Society Cancer Survivors Network is an online information sharing page where members can chat with others and post questions. Membership is free.

 csn.cancer.org

CanCare of Houston provides emotional support and resources by connecting people facing cancer and their families with other cancer survivors. Volunteers also make visits to patients at many area hospitals.

 713-461-0028

 www.cancare.org

Card Care Connection sends free homemade cards and care packages (when available and requested) to anyone who has cancer. The cards have messages of hope and encouragement. Anyone, including an agency or the person with cancer, can request a card.

 314-477-0084

 cardcareconnection.com


Light and Salt Association – Houston

provides support services to the community with special emphasis on the local Chinese community. The group hosts support meetings and provides follow-up care, a helpline, hospital visits, medical transportation, and translation.

 713-988-4724

 www.light-salt.org

M.D. Anderson Circle of Hope is open to people who have experienced a loved one's death in the past two years. Pre-registration is required, and the loved one did not have to be an M.D. Anderson patient.

 713-792-6195

National LGBT Cancer Network runs online support groups for LGBT people with any type of cancer.

 212-675-2633

 www.cancer-network.org

Project Purple will send a Blanket of Hope Care Bag to people battling pancreatic cancer.


 www.projectpurple.org

The Rose has patient navigators to help someone diagnosed with breast cancer navigate the process and to provide support. It also has support groups for breast cancer survivors.

 281-484-4708

 www.therose.org/services/breast-cancer-support-groups/

Stronghold Ministry has a prayer line for cancer patients who need spiritual support and will send a spiritual gift basket free of charge.

 1-877-230-7674

 www.myststronghold.org

QUITTING SMOKING/TOBACCO

If someone is a smoker, Medicare will pay for up to 8 visits per 12 months with a specialist to help that person quit smoking.

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** has tips and resources for someone who wants to quit smoking.

☎ 1-800-784-8669

💻 www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/

Smokefree.gov has information for people who are considering quitting tobacco through helping someone remain smoke free. There also is live chat and a support hotline.

☎ 1-877-448-7848

💻 www.smokefree.gov

Texas Quitline provides free support by phone, online chat, or doctor referral to help someone stop smoking or using other types of tobacco products.

☎ 1-877-937-7848

💻 www.yesquit.org

OTHER SERVICES

Cleaning for a Reason matches women who are being treated for cancer with maid services that will donate one general house cleaning per month for four months.

Serves Most of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery Counties and parts of Waller County

☎ 1-877-337-3348

💻 www.cleaningforareason.org

Pet Patrol assists low-income older adults and people with chronic illness care for their pets. If someone has income less than \$1,200 per month (\$1,700 for couples), Pet Patrol can give help for up to two animals. Help includes food, veterinarian care, foster care when a person is hospitalized, and other benefits.

☎ 281-733-7696

💻 thepetpatrol.org

Pets are Wonderful Support (PAWS)

Houston helps pet owners with terminal or chronic illnesses see their pets while they are in the hospital, hospice, nursing home, or rehabilitation center.

☎ 713-840-7297 (office)

☎ 713-305-4887 (request a visit)

💻 pawshouston.ejoinme.org

SUPPORT GROUPS

American Cancer Society provides information on cancer, ways to stay healthy and help finding local support and treatment.

☎ 713-266-2877

☎ 1-800-227-2345

💻 www.cancer.org

CanCare of Houston provides emotional support and resources by connecting people with other cancer survivors. (English/Spanish)

☎ 713-461-0028

💻 www.cancare.org

Cancercare (English/Spanish) is a national organization that provides counseling, support groups, education, publications and co-payment assistance.

☎ 1-800-813-4673

💻 www.cancercare.org

The Cancer Hope Network provides support over the phone for individuals during cancer treatments.

☎ 1-877-467-3638

💻 www.cancerhopenetwork.org

Houston Northwest Medical Center Care, Share, and Be Aware Breast Cancer Support Group provides a place to share experiences and offer emotional support for those who have had or have had breast cancer.

☎ 281-440-2545

💻 breastcenterhoustonnorthwest.com/support-group

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has online chat rooms and local support groups for survivors and caregivers.

☎ 713-840-0483 (Texas Gulf Coast Chapter)

☎ 1-800-955-4572 (national information line)

💻 www.lls.org

LIVESTRONG SurvivorCare is a plan template for cancer survivors. Created with one's oncology team, the SurvivorCare plan can be shared with primary care physicians and other health care professionals who are not cancer specialists in order to maximize care.

☎ 1-855-220-7777

💻 www.livestrong.org

SECTION 4.5 DIABETES

Undiagnosed diabetes can cause cardiovascular disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, nervous system disorders, and other serious medical problems. The following are some of the symptoms of diabetes:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Sudden vision changes
- Tingling/numbness in hands or feet
- Feeling unusually weak or tired
- Very dry skin
- Sores that are slow to heal
- Frequent and recurring infections

Medicare covers 100% of up to 2 diabetes screening tests each year for people with risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or being obese. Medicare may also cover the tests for people who are overweight and have a family history of diabetes. If someone has a Medicare Advantage Plan, check with that plan about coverage.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Diabetes Association has information about the risk factors and living life with diabetes.

Serves: Greater Houston

☎ 713-977-7706


💻 www.diabetes.org


Gateway to Care Chronic Disease Self-Management Program is a 6-week program that teaches participants how to manage chronic diseases and how to play a bigger role in managing their disease.

☎ 713-783-4616

💻 gatewaytocare.org


Harris County Area Agency on Aging (HCAAA) provides information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs. One program the HCAAA has is a diabetes self-care program.


 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471

 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Medicare has information about what tests and supplies are covered for people who have or who are at risk for diabetes.

 1-800-633-4227

 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: diabetes)

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has information about diabetes, kidney disease, and weight management, among other topics.

 www.niddk.nih.gov

Texas Diabetes Council has information about best practices as well as a resource list for people with diabetes.

 512-776-7490

 www.dshs.texas.gov/diabetes

Prescription and Testing Supply Assistance

See Section 10.5 for additional prescription assistance information and programs.

Partnership for Prescription Assistance

has programs in its database that help with testing supplies, insulin, and syringes.

 www.pparx.org

DIABETIC EYE CARE SPECIALISTS

Eye diseases related to diabetes are covered under Medicare. Use medicare.gov or for those on a Medicare Advantage Plan, contact the plan to find a specialist. For low-cost vision services, see Section 10.8.

Screening and Treatment

To find a doctor who can screen and treat diabetes, use medicare.gov or for those on a Medicare Advantage Plan, contact the plan to find a specialist.

SECTION 4.6 HEART DISEASE

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the US and is also a major cause of disability. To help reduce the risk of heart disease:

- Control blood pressure
- Lower cholesterol
- Exercise regularly
- Eat right and maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- If applicable, control diabetes

Heart Attack Warning Signs

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you or your loved one experiences any of these symptoms:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away, then comes back.

- Pain spreading to the shoulders, neck, arms, or jaw.
- Chest discomfort with light-headedness, fainting, sweating, nausea, and shortness of breath.

Women often experience different, milder symptoms, sometimes without any chest pain:

- Pain in the upper abdomen with severe indigestion
- Waves of dizziness, weakness or nausea
- Shortness of breath and difficulty breathing without chest pain
- Unexplained anxiety, weakness, or extreme fatigue
- Sudden onset of extreme weakness or flu- like symptoms

To find a doctor who can screen and treat heart disease, use medicare.gov or for those on a Medicare Advantage Plan, contact the plan to find a specialist.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Heart Association (AHA) has information and online support groups for people with heart disease and for their caregivers. AHA also offers CPR and other lifesaving trainings.

Serves: Greater Houston area

☎ 832-918-4030

💻 www.heart.org
(keyword: local info)

American Red Cross provides training courses in CPR, first aid, and other safety topics. There are in-person and web-based courses, and most have a fee.

☎ 1-866-526-8300 (Texas Gulf Coast Region)

💻 www.redcross.org/local/texas/gulf-coast

💻 www.redcross.org/ux/take-a-class

QUITTING SMOKING/TOBACCO

If someone is a smoker, Medicare will pay for up to 8 visits per 12 months with a specialist to help that person quit smoking.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has tips and resources for someone who wants to quit smoking.

☎ 1-800-784-8669

💻 www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/

Smokefree.gov has information for people who are considering quitting tobacco through helping someone remain smoke free. There also is live chat and a support hotline.

☎ 1-877-448-7848

💻 www.smokefree.gov

Texas Quitline provides free support by phone, online chat, or doctor referral to help someone stop smoking or using other types of tobacco products.

☎ 1-877-937-7848

💻 www.yesquit.org

SECTION 4.7 HIV/AIDS

Older adults may have unprotected sex because pregnancy is not an issue. Not using protection leaves them at risk for contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs), one of which is HIV/AIDS. Often, older people mistake the symptoms of HIV/AIDS for the aches and pains of normal aging, so they are less likely to talk to their doctor and get tested. While testing and treatment has improved dramatically over the years, because older adults often are not diagnosed until later in the disease's progression, treatment often is not as successful as it would be for younger people.

Medicare covers services related to HIV/AIDS and related diseases, from treatment until end of life care. Antiretroviral medications are covered by prescription plans.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The **Houston Area HIV Services Ryan White Council** publishes the Blue Book, Houston's comprehensive guide to services for people with HIV/AIDS. The book can be downloaded, or someone can request that a copy be mailed.

☎ 713-572-3724

💻 www.rwpchouston.org

Medicare has information about what tests and supplies are covered for people who have or who are at risk for HIV/AIDS.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

💻 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: HIV)

National Institutes of Health has information on clinical trials, staying healthy, and treatment.

☎ 1-800-448-0440

💻 aidsinfo.nih.gov

Social Security Administration can provide information about disability benefits for people with HIV/AIDS who can no longer work.

☎ 1-800-772-1213

💻 www.ssa.gov

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

AIDS Foundation Houston has information and resources for people living with or at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. It also has a food pantry specially designed for people living with HIV, support groups, case management, housing, and some financial assistance.

☎ 713-623-6796

💻 www.aidshelp.org

Avenue 360 (formerly Bering Omega) has Omega House, a residential hospice program for people with HIV/AIDS who are at the end of their life. It also offers an adult day center and housing assistance for people with the disease.

☎ 713-341-3783

💻 beringomega.org

Catholic Charities has an HIV/AIDS ministry where people with HIV/AIDS can receive case management, spiritual support, education, and one-time financial assistance.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and six other counties that are part of the Houston-Galveston Archdiocese

☎ 713-874-6590

💻 catholiccharities.org
(keyword: HIV)

Family Houston helps people in crisis to develop a plan to become more self-sufficient. Through case management, people are matched with appropriate community and government resources.

☎ 713-861-4849

💻 www.familyhouston.org

Goodwill Houston Job Connection in the Heights specializes in helping people who have HIV/AIDS find jobs.

☎ 713-699-6305

💻 www.goodwillhouston.org

Interfaith CarePartners works with care teams at local faith based communities who provide social, emotional, and practical support to people living with HIV/AIDS and to their caregivers. Contact Interfaith CarePartners to find a local AIDS care team.

Serves: Parts of Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties

☎ 713-682-5995

💻 www.interfaithcarepartners.org
(keyword: HIV)

Legacy Community Health has patient navigation services where trained staff help clients navigate health and social resources.

☎ 281-628-2002 (patient navigation)

💻 www.legacycommunityhealth.org
(keyword: patient navigation)

Montrose Center has a variety of counseling services, some specifically for the LGBTQIA population and others for the general public. Montrose Center works with most insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid. For those without insurance, there are sliding scale fees and grants to help. Montrose Center also has case management services and a hotline, the LGBT Switchboard, which is available 24 hours a day. For the hotline, information is provided throughout the day and the line handles crisis calls in the evening.

☎ 713-529-0037 (Montrose Center)

☎ 713-529-3211 (LGBT Switchboard)

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation is provided by **St. Hope Foundation** for HIV+ clients to adult day centers, physician, dental, and psychiatric appointments in Austin, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, Wharton Counties.

☎ 713-778-1300 ext. 225

💻 offeringhope.org

Thomas Street Clinic, part of **Harris Health**, is a freestanding HIV/AIDS clinic. In addition to medical services, it also has case management services for clinic patients. To receive care, a person must have an HIV/AIDS diagnosis.

☎ 713-873-4000

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: Thomas Street)

LOW-COST MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND VISION SERVICES

Ask My Nurse is a free service provided by Harris Health. Nurses are available 7 days a week to answer questions and provide guidance about whether emergency medical care is needed. Calls are answered in English and Spanish.

☎ 713-634-1110

Avenue 360 (formerly Bering Omega) has a dental clinic for people with HIV/AIDS.

☎ 713-341-3790

💻 beringomega.org

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** has **GetTested**, a website where people can find places to get tested for HIV and other STIs, including where tests are given for free.

💻 gettested.cdc.gov

Legacy Community Health provides medical, dental, vision, and related services. It also provides HIV testing and treatment.

☎ 832-548-5000

💻 www.legacycommunityhealth.org
(keyword: patient navigation)

Thomas Street Clinic, part of **Harris Health**, is a freestanding HIV/AIDS clinic. It provides medical care, eye care, and psychological services, and it has case management and an on-site pharmacy. To receive care, a person must have an HIV/AIDS diagnosis.

☎ 713-873-4000

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: Thomas Street)

Prescription Drug Assistance

See Section 10.5 for additional prescription assistance information and programs.

Texas HIV Medication Program helps low-income people with HIV get their medicine. To be eligible, family income must be under 200% of the federal poverty level (\$32,040 for a family of 2 in 2016) and an application must be completed.

☎ 1-800-255-1090

💻 www.dshs.texas.gov/hivstd/meds/

Walgreens has HIV specialty pharmacies with specially trained pharmacists and private consultation rooms. It also has a hotline where someone can consult with a pharmacist.

☎ 1-800-573-3602

💻 hiv.walgreens.com

Hospice

For additional hospice resources, see Section 5.5.

Avenue 360 (formerly Bering Omega House) provides residential hospice care and supportive services. It specializes in people with HIV/AIDS.

☎ 713-341-3783

💻 beringomega.org

The Texas New Mexico Hospice Organization has a tool to find nearby hospice organizations.

☎ 1-800-580-9270

💻 www.txnmhospice.org

SECTION 4.8 KIDNEY DISEASE

Most people with kidney disease do not know that they have it. Kidney disease symptoms are the same as many other illnesses, making it hard to diagnose. Being tested regularly is important.

Early warning signs:

- More tired, having less energy, and trouble concentrating
- Trouble sleeping
- Dry and itchy skin
- Frequent urination, usually at night, or blood or foam in the urine
- Persistent puffiness around the eyes
- Poor appetite
- Muscle cramping

For those with Stage IV Kidney Disease, six sessions of kidney disease education will be covered by Medicare, subject to copays or deductibles. If someone has a Medicare Advantage Plan, contact the plan provider.

End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)


Kidney failure, also called End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), is the last chronic kidney disease stage. When someone has ESRD, his or her kidneys have stopped working well enough to function without dialysis or a kidney transplant. Medicare covers dialysis, including self-dialysis, subject to copays and deductibles. Those with a Medicare Advantage Plan should contact their plan provider.

In some cases, if a person with ESRD is on dialysis and needs ambulance transportation to his or her dialysis appointment, Medicare will cover the transportation. Some Medicare Advantage plans will cover regular, non-ambulance trips to dialysis, but Medicare will not.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Association of Kidney Patients

has information on kidney disease, treatment options, and healthy living.

 1-800-749-2257

 aakp.org


American Kidney Fund has information on kidney disease and prevention. It also offers several types of financial assistance for people with kidney failure, including help with premiums and co-pays, basic needs, and prescription drug assistance. Hotline assistance is provided in English and Spanish.

 1-866-300-2900 (information and referral)

 www.kidneyfund.org


American Red Cross provides free non-emergency medical transportation for people who need help. It is a shared-ride program that provides door to door service.


Serves: Harris and Fort Bend Counties

 1-866-526-8300 (Texas Gulf Coast Region)

 www.redcross.org/local/texas/gulf-coast

Medicare has an online tool to find and compare dialysis facilities. It also has information on what related services are covered.

 1-800-633-4227

 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: ESRD)

 www.medicare.gov/dialysisfacilitycompare/

The **National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases** has information about diabetes, kidney disease, and weight management, among other topics.

 www.niddk.nih.gov

National Kidney Foundation provides information on prevention of and treatment for kidney disease.

☎ 713-360-6784 (Houston office)

☎ 1-855-653-2273 (national helpline)

💻 www.kidney.org

Texas Department of State Health Services' Kidney Health Care Program helps people with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) get medical care. Texas residents with ESRD, whose income is less than \$60,000 per year and who cannot qualify for Medicaid, may be able to get assistance with medical treatment, medicine, and travel to appointments.

☎ 1-800-222-3986

💻 www.dshs.texas.gov/kidney/

DIALYSIS FACILITY COMPLAINTS

If someone has a problem with his or her treatment at a dialysis clinic or transplant center, there are several places where that person can file a complaint to have someone else review the situation and get involved, if necessary.

End Stage Renal Disease Network

☎ 1-877-886-4435

💻 www.esrdnetwork.org

Texas Department of State Health Services

☎ 1-888-973-0022

💻 www.dshs.texas.gov/facilities/complaints.aspx

SECTION 4.9 OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis thins and weakens bones. If not prevented, or if left untreated, it can progress painlessly until a bone breaks. The bones can become so brittle that even a simple movement like a cough or bending over could cause something to break. Any bone can be affected, but hip and spinal fractures are of special concern. A doctor can make an early diagnosis by measuring bone-mineral density using a variety of noninvasive tests. While osteoporosis is often thought of as a disease that disproportionally impacts women, it can affect both men and women.

To ensure strong bones:

- Follow a healthy lifestyle
- Eat a diet rich in calcium/vitamin D
- Limit alcohol use
- Do not smoke
- Include regular weight-bearing exercise
- Take medications that can help prevent bone loss

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

The **National Institute on Aging** has information about osteoporosis and injuries related to falling.

☎ 1-800-222-2225

💻 www.nia.nih.gov
(keyword: osteoporosis)

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases has information on a number of diseases, including osteoporosis. The site has special information for people of color.

☎ 1-877-226-4267 (general health and research study information)

💻 www.niams.nih.gov

National Osteoporosis Foundation has information on the disease, exercise, and preventing bone breaks. It also has an online support group.

☎ 1-877-226-4267 (general health and research study information)

💻 www.nof.org

SECTION 4.10 PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Parkinson's Disease is a progressive that affects the nervous system. Its cause is unknown. When someone has Parkinson's, nerve cells in the brain stop working and die. As they die, the brain cannot make dopamine, a chemical that helps send messages to the part of the brain that controls movement.

Symptoms may include:

- Resting tremor
- Generalized slowness of movement
- Stiffness or rigidity of limbs
- Gait or balance problems
- Small, cramped handwriting
- Speech and swallowing difficulties
- Loss of facial expression
- Feelings of depression or anxiety
- Problems rising from chairs, turning in bed, dressing/normal hygiene
- "Freezing" or feeling "stuck in place"

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Parkinson Disease Association

has information for people with Parkinson's Disease and their caregivers. It also has an Ask the Doctor forum where people can ask medical experts general questions.

 1-800-223-2732 (information line)

 www.apdaparkinson.org


The **Davis Phinney Foundation for Parkinson's** has information about staying healthy and living well with Parkinson's Disease.

 1-866-358-0285

 www.davisphinneyfoundation.org

Houston Area Parkinson Society (HAPS)

provides information and support to people with Parkinson's Disease, their family and caregivers, and to the community at large. It runs exercise, speech, and music therapy programs and provides case management services to help clients remain independent for as long as possible. HAPS also provides transportation assistance, respite, and emergency financial aid for clients and can help people find a support group.

 713-626-7114


 www.hapsonline.org

The **National Parkinson Foundation** has an information help line, an "ask the doctor" page, toolkits to use during hospital stays, and other resources.

 1-800-473-4636


 www.parkinson.org


The **Parkinson's Disease Foundation** has online webinars, a helpline for questions, medication management assistance, a support group directory, and other resources.

 1-800-457-6676

 www.pdf.org

Veterans Administration has special **Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Centers (PADRECC)** to work with veterans who develop Parkinson's Disease. Houston has one of six centers nationwide. Veterans who are receiving healthcare can be referred to the PADRECC by their primary doctor. Call the 800 number if assistance is needed in navigating the referral process. The Houston PADRECC also hosts a monthly support group.

 713-794-7841 (Houston PADRECC)

 1-800-949-1001 ext. 5769 (referral assistance)

 www.parkinsons.va.gov

SECTION 4.11 STROKE

When a person has a stroke, blood flow to the brain is cut off and brain cells begin to die. A stroke is a medical emergency, and a person needs medical care as soon as possible.

Remembering **FAST** can save someone's life by recognizing the signs of a stroke:

- **Face:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face drop?
- **Arms:** Ask the person to lift both arms. Does one drift downward?
- **Speech:** Ask the person to repeat a phrase. Is the speech normal or is it slurred?
- **Time:** Call 911 immediately if any of these signs are visible.

Make sure to note when the symptoms first started as that information will be helpful to medical professionals.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES


The **American Stroke Association** has information about life after a stroke and tips for caregivers. It also has an online support group for survivors and another for caregivers.

Serves: Greater Houston

 1-888-478-7653

 www.strokeassociation.org

Houston Aphasia Recovery Center works with people who have speaking difficulties following a stroke. The Center has different conversation groups and activities to give people a chance to practice talking in a supportive environment. There are also caregiver support services. Programs are offered at the office in West Houston and at other locations throughout Greater Houston.


 713-781-7100

 harctx.org

Lotsa Helping Hands is a free online scheduling tool that allows a person to reach out to friends and family to make sure that needs are met for someone who needs caregiving. It also lets people share updates and well wishes.

 stroke.lotsahelpinghands.com


National Stroke Association has information for people who recently suffered a stroke and for caregivers. It also has a directly of online and in-person support groups.

 1-800-787-6537

 www.stroke.org

The **University of Houston Speech and Language Clinic** offers speech therapy for people recovering from a stroke or another illness that has affected speech. It also offers a communication group just for stroke survivors. Services are offered on a sliding scale.

 713-743-0915

 www.uh.edu
(keyword: USLHC)


SECTION 4.12 URINARY INCONTINENCE

Urinary incontinence is when a person has unplanned, involuntary urination. It may take different forms, from a small leakage when sneezing or coughing to a sudden, strong urge where the person cannot reach a bathroom in time. Often, urinary incontinence has a significant negative impact on quality of life. It can lead to hygiene problems, cause groin irritation, and more frequent urinary tract infections. It can also affect a person's social interactions, which can lead to social isolation and depression.


Though women suffer from urinary incontinence at a rate twice that of men, it is an issue that both are often too embarrassed to talk to their doctors about. It can usually be treated medically, surgically, or with behavioral methods. If urinary incontinence affects your day-to-day activities, talk to your doctor.


INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Ask My Nurse is a free service provided by Harris Health. Nurses are available 7 days a week to answer questions and provide guidance about whether emergency medical care is needed. Calls are answered in English and Spanish.

 713-634-1110


Harris County Area Agency on Aging (HCAAA) provides information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs. HCAAA offers limited assistance with incontinence supplies.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471


 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Medline Plus has basic information on the causes and treatment for urinary incontinence.

 713-634-1110


 medlineplus.gov/urinaryincontinence.html


National Association for Continence has information about the various forms of urinary incontinence, tips for caregivers, and message boards for people who need support.

 1-800-252-3337


 www.nafc.org


National Institute on Aging provides information on the causes, treatment, and management of urinary incontinence. It also has information on male incontinence

 1-800-222-2225

 www.nia.nih.gov
(keyword: incontinence)

The **Simon Foundation for Continence** provides ways to afford incontinence supplies.

 1-800-237-4666

 www.continencecentral.org
(keyword: ways to afford)

 simonfoundation.org

SECTION 5 END OF LIFE CARE

SECTION 5.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Everyone has the right to make end of life decisions while they have the mental ability to do so. When a person can no longer make those decisions, family members may not know or agree on what their loved one wanted and may have to guess at the best options. This can lead to disagreements within the family. To prevent this, a person can make his or wishes and orders be known. There are several types of forms that can be used to say what a person does or does not want in the event that he or she no longer is able to communicate. A lawyer can be helpful in filling out the forms, and many of them can be found online. If a person does not use an attorney, he or she should make sure the forms are filled out completely and have them either witnessed or have the signature notarized. These forms can be changed at any time.

In Texas, there are four forms related to medical care and one that is not related to medical care. The forms are:

1. Medical Power of Attorney

With a medical power of attorney, a person names an “agent,” or an adult to make medical-related decisions. When a doctor finds that a person can no longer make medical decision for him- or herself, the agent follows the person’s wishes about medical care, taking into account the person’s religious and moral beliefs. A Medical Power of Attorney covers treatment, medical service, or medical procedure that helps to maintain a person’s health, diagnose, or treat physical or mental conditions. It can also include decisions about life-saving treatment. The agent can make almost any health-related decision, but the

person signing a Medical Power of Attorney can say that the agent cannot make certain decisions.

Even though it is not required, a person signing a Medical Power of Attorney should also sign an Authorization to Disclose Protected Health Information form. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), certain medical information cannot be given to another person without the patient’s written permission. This form allows the agent to have the full medical picture in order to make medical decisions.

2. Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates

Also known as a “living will,” this form tells doctors and family members what type of treatments a person does or does not want in the event of two conditions:

- a. An illness that is expected to lead to death within 6 months, or
- b. An irreversible condition, such as being brain dead.

In this form, a person can also list extra information, such as how he or she feels about feeding tubes and when they should or should not be used.

3. Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Order

This form allows a person to tell first responders, emergency room staff, and other medical people outside of a hospital not to perform CPR, put the person on a ventilator, or take any other special life-saving actions.

4. Declaration for Mental Health Treatment

With this form, a person can list what types of mental health treatment he or she would want, if it is needed, including medicines and emergency treatment actions.

5. Statutory Durable Power of Attorney

This form gives someone the ability to make decisions about financial matters, including property. This form can be as broad or as narrow as a person wants and can be set up so that it only begins once the person loses the ability to make decisions him- or herself. This is the only form that deals with money.

Forms Created Outside of Texas

If someone has any of these forms that were created under the laws of another state, they will still be considered valid in Texas if they are similar enough to what is required under Texas law. If they are not similar enough, there is a chance that they will not be honored. It is recommended that someone who has moved to Texas and becomes a Texas resident fill out forms that have everything in them needed under Texas law.

For all of these forms, keep a signed copy with your important papers and give copies to your doctors as well as to the person named as the "agent." It is also wise to talk with the appointed agent about medical wishes and decisions. The forms and decisions can be changed at any time.

Organ and Body Donation


Anyone can register to be an organ donor. Whether or not that person can be a donor is determined at death. Someone wanting to be an organ donor should register his or wishes. Registering as an organ donor does not have any effect on the medical care someone receives.

Currently, a person may donate, if they are in good working order, heart, kidneys, pancreas, lungs, liver, and intestines. A person may also be able to donate body tissue, including corneas/

eyes, skin, heart valve, bone, blood vessels, and connective tissue. New technology has also made it possible to donate hands and face. When someone registers, a person can choose what he or she would be willing to donate. A person's family pays nothing for any medical procedures related to donation.

WHERE TO FIND FORMS AND RESOURCES

Donate Life Texas is the state's organ donor registry program. It has information on how to register as well as answers to commonly asked questions about organ donation.

 1-800-788-8058

 donatelifetexas.org

MyDirectives.com lets people record their wishes in plain language, and that information is used to create valid forms. Anyone with whom the forms are shared, including hospitals that are in the MyDirectives network, can access the forms.

 www.mydirectives.com


National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization


has additional information about Advance Care Directives, how to talk with loved ones about them, and has all of the forms together for each state with directions on how to complete them. It also has a hotline that can answer some questions and provide resources.

 1-800-658-8898

 www.caringinfo.org


Texas Attorney General has information about medical privacy and a link to the Authorization to Disclose Protective Health Information form for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) form.

 1-800-252-8011

 www.texasattorneygeneral.gov
(keyword: State and Federal Health Privacy Laws)

Texas Health and Human Services has the forms on its website for the Medical Power of Attorney, the Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates, the Out of Hospital DNR Order, the Declaration for Mental Health Treatment, and the Statutory Durable Power of Attorney. The forms can be downloaded, completed, and either witnessed or notarized. Forms are in English and Spanish.

 1-855-937-2372

 hhsc.texas.gov
(keyword: Advance Directives)

SECTION 5.2 FUNERAL PREPARATIONS

To protect loved ones during a stressful time, the Federal Trade Commission has the Funeral Rule, which gives a person (or his or her family) the ability to pay only for wanted services instead of being forced to buy a package with unwanted items.

The Funeral Rule also allows the family to:

- Ask for information over the phone without having to give contact information
- Get prices in writing and be able to take the price list home
- Receive a written estimate with the costs of chosen items and services before paying the funeral home
- Get in writing information about anything that state law or the cemetery requires for burial
- Buy a casket anywhere and have the funeral home use it without extra charges or buy something other than a casket for cremation

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Planning a Funeral before death gives a person the chance to make thoughtful decisions and buy only what he or she wants. Make sure to put any wishes in writing and give a copy to a friend or family member. If there is a death benefit, make sure to add that to the information. In planning a funeral, consider:

- The type of service, who will perform it, and anything special to include in it (music, readings, etc.), clothes and jewelry to wear, type of casket
- Whether to be buried or cremated and if buried, where
- Information to be in the obituary if one is wanted
- How to pay for it
- Who should be notified of the funeral

Pre-Paying for a Funeral can be risky. Before signing a contract for prepaid funeral services, be able to answer these questions:

- Is the contract only for items or does it also cover services?
- What happens if the provider goes out of business?
- What happens to the money once it is paid?
- Can the contract be canceled and, if so, what will be refunded?
- What happens if the person moves or dies away from home?
- Can the final price be more than the prepaid amount?

Make sure family members know where to find the prepaid contract or they may end up paying for many of the same things.

Cremation is lower in cost than a traditional funeral and burial, and embalming is not necessary. If someone chooses cremation, he or she still can have a service, and many funeral homes have rental coffins. A person choosing cremation should leave information about what he or she wants done with the ashes.

If a person dies at home and is not under hospice care, call 911, and emergency personnel will start the process. If the deceased was on hospice, contact the hospice company.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Federal Trade Commission offers a Consumer Guide/Complaints Against Funeral Homes

☎ 1-877-382-4357

💻 www.consumer.ftc.gov

Funeral Consumers Alliance of Houston

is a volunteer operated non-profit that provides vital and timely information about low-cost, simple, yet dignified funeral choices.

☎ 713-526-4267

💻 www.funeralshouston.org

Texas Department of Banking's Texas

Prepaid Funeral Contract webpage provides information on preparation to lower the cost and ensure that the wishes of the deceased and family are honored. It also takes complaints regarding these contracts.

☎ 1-877-276-5554

💻 prepaidfunerals.texas.gov

Texas Funeral Service Commission

protects the public from funeral home deception through inspection, education and licensure. It also investigates funeral home complaints.

☎ 1-888-667-4881

💻 www.tfsc.state.tx.us

Burial Assistance and County Indigent Burial Program

3 "A" Bereavement Foundation offers assistance to low-income families to bury their loved ones.

☎ 713-649-3232

💻 www.3abereavement.org

Each county is required by law to provide for the burial of a low-income/indigent person. These are considered programs of last resort, meaning that neither the deceased or the family can have any resources that can be used for burial. If the deceased was honorably discharged from the military, contact the Veterans Administration.

Harris County Bereavement Program

☎ 713-696-7900

💻 www.csd.hctx.net

Fort Bend Pauper and Indigent Burial Services

☎ 281-342-7300

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: indigent burial)

Montgomery County Indigent/Pauper Burial Services

☎ 936-539-7812

Waller County Indigent/Pauper Burial Service

☎ 979-826-7700

SECTION 5.3 GRIEF COUNSELING

Dealing with the death of a loved one is difficult. Grief counseling provides a chance to process the loss with a professional. It can be provided by professionally trained individuals, self-help support groups, and your hospice provider. Medicare covers grief counseling if a loved one was covered by Medicare's hospice benefit at the time of his or her death.

Many religious institutions and hospitals also offer support groups. Contact a local community or speak with hospital staff about groups that are offered.

SUPPORT GROUPS & INFORMATION ON GRIEF

American Cancer Society has a patient support center that can refer callers to local grief support groups and programs.

☎ 1-888-227-6222

💻 www.cancer.org

Bo's Place has groups and support services to help someone in the grieving process and find ways to celebrate someone's memory.

☎ 713-942-8339

💻 www.bosplace.org

Caring Connections provides information of grief counseling and can help find local hospice care that offers grief support.

☎ 1-800-658-8898

💻 www.caringinfo.org

Center for Islamic Counseling and Guidance provides death and grief counseling.

☎ 281-917-9026 (hotline)

☎ 281-529-6272 (office)

💻 islamiccounseling.org

Chapelwood United Methodist provides group support ministries and grief recovery seminars.

☎ 713-354-4430

💻 www.chapelwood.org
(keyword: grief)

Compassion and Choices has tools to help someone manage end of life care choices and an information line where people can talk through their choices with a consultant.

☎ 1-800-247-7421

💻 www.compassionandchoices.org

Congregation Beth Yeshurun offers a Jewish grief support group weekly.

☎ 713-666-1881

💻 bethyeshurun.org/grief-group

Family Life Ministry has a list of bereavement groups run by churches in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

☎ 713-741-8708

💻 www.familylifeministryhouston.org/bereavement-ministry.html

First United Methodist Church - Pasadena

☎ 281-487-8787

💻 www.houstongriefsupport.org

Grief Share has a database of support groups. It also offers a daily email of encouragement for a year. Groups are located in Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties.

☎ 1-800-395-5755

💻 www.griefshare.org

Memorial Drive Presbyterian offers an 8-week Christ-centered grief program. There is a small cost for materials, but scholarships are available.

☎ 713-490-9542

💻 www.mdpc.org
(keyword: Mourner's Path)

Modern Widows Club is a group of women who help each other transition from being a widow to being fully integrated into society. The group meets monthly and has a MeetUp group. There is a small membership fee. There are chapters in Houston and The Woodlands.

 www.modernwidowsclub.com

St. Ambrose hosts a monthly bereavement group.

 713-682-2242

 stambrosehouston.org

SECTION 5.4 AFTER A PERSON PASSES

Death Certificates are supplied by the funeral home. Sometimes there is a small fee. Additional certificates can be ordered from the state or from the city/county where the person died. Certificates can be ordered online or by mail and take 10 to 15 business days to be processed.

Report the Death of a Social Security Beneficiary as soon as possible. A small death benefit is paid to a surviving spouse or eligible child. In most cases, the funeral home will ask for the deceased person's social security number so it can report the person's death to Social Security. If a family member wishes to make the report, contact Social Security.

Prevent Deceased Identity Theft by taking the following steps:

- Do not provide too much information in the obituary, such as birth date, address, mother's maiden name or other personally identifying information that could be useful to identity thieves.
- Notify banks and creditors of the death.
- Contact the three credit bureaus to report the death and send each bureau a copy of the death certificate. See Identity Theft & Fraud (Section 7.4) for credit bureau phone numbers.
- Report the death to Social Security; they will flag the decedent's number as inactive.


- Send the IRS a copy of the death certificate. This is used to flag the account to show that the person is deceased.
- Remove the deceased's name from direct marketing lists by registering at the Deceased Do-Not-Contact website.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Deceased Do Not Contact Registry will remove someone's name from telemarketing and direct mail lists.


 www.ims-dm.com/cgi/ddnc.php


Social Security Administration has a hotline for questions and to reach a local office.

 1-800-772-1213

 www.ssa.gov

Texas Department of State Health Services handles requests for death certificates. Texas residents can order certificates for immediate family members. Non-Texas residents can only be the surviving spouse, parent, or the funeral home on record.

 1-800-772-1213

 www.texas.gov
(keyword: vital records)

SECTION 5.5 HOSPICE

Hospice care focuses on providing comfort and symptom relief for terminally ill patients, while maintaining the highest possible quality of life. This type of care can be provided at home or in a hospice or long-term care facility.

Medicare Part A Covers Hospice If:

- The care is provided by a Medicare- certified hospice program.
- The hospice medical director or treating doctor documents and certifies that the person is terminally ill with a life expectancy of six months or less. If, at the end of six months, the person still is alive, the doctor can certify that hospice still is needed.
- The person signs a statement choosing hospice care instead of routine Medicare-covered benefits for the terminal illness. Medicare will still pay for covered benefits for any health problems not related to the terminal illness.

Medicare Advantage plans are not required to cover hospice care. If the plan does not offer hospice care, Original Medicare will automatically cover the care. A person may still keep the Medicare Advantage plan to cover any treatment not related to the terminal illness.

Enrolling in Hospice

Patients are usually referred to hospice by their primary physician, but family members, friends, clergy, or health professionals can also make referrals.

Hospice & Palliative Care

Hospice care focuses on a person's medical, emotional, and spiritual care. Sometimes, hospice care is called palliative, or comfort care. Palliative care, however, is not hospice care as someone can receive palliative care at any time and any stage of illness.

Hospice care uses a team approach. Often, a hospice team will include doctors, nurses, and

counselors or social workers. The team provides support that is tailored to the person's wishes and also provides support and training to the person's family and caregivers. Family caregivers provide primary caregiving responsibility, but the team makes regular in-home visits and are on call 24 hours a day.

Hospice care is all inclusive and the team provides, as needed, skilled nursing care, medical equipment and supplies, medication to manage symptoms and pain, short-term hospitalization, home health and homemaker services, and appropriate therapy services.


Medicare pays for some caregiver respite services for someone who is in hospice care. A person is allowed to change hospice providers once during each period of care, and a person always has the right to stop hospice and go back to regular medical treatment.

Medicaid also covers hospice services. Contact the provider for specific coverage information.

When a loved one in hospice care dies at home, contact the hospice provider immediately.


INFORMATION & RESOURCES AND TO FIND A PROVIDER

Compassion and Choices supports, educates, and advocates for choice and care at the end of life.

 1-800-247-7421


 www.compassionandchoices.com

Hospice Foundation of America website offers information on grief and other end-of life resources. It also allows people to "Ask the Expert" a question.


 1-800-854-3402

 www.hospicefoundation.org


Medicaid has a booklet about hospice benefits.

 www.cms.gov
(keyword: hospice toolkit)


Medicare has information about what hospice services are covered.

 1-800-633-4227

 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: hospice)


National Hospice and Palliative Care Helpline advocacy and resources for end of life care.

 703-837-1500

 www.nhpco.org

The Texas New Mexico Hospice

Organization has a tool to find nearby hospice organizations.

 1-800-580-9270

 www.txnmhospice.org

SECTION 5.6 ORGAN AND BODY DONATION

Anyone who meets the “suitability criteria” can donate their organs, tissue, or body provided the individual or family members give consent. Suitability criteria is determined by the condition of the organ, tissue, or body at the time of death.

The **Glenda Dawson Donate Life Texas Registry** is the official State of Texas organ, tissue, and eye donor registry. Texans can register their intent to be an organ, eye, and tissue donor online at Donate Life Texas, or when renewing their driver license or personal identification card at DPS offices. Disease or advanced age does not mean that someone cannot donate.

Body Donation

A person can also donate one’s entire body for education or research, though certain restrictions apply. If someone chooses to do this, that person should make his or her family aware of the choice and have advance directives that state the preference to donate.

When someone who wants to donate his or her body dies, time is of the essence as donation usually happens within 24 hours of death. Often, there is not enough time to hold a funeral or memorial service with the body present. Some families find that holding a funeral, even without the loved one’s body is therapeutic and helps them begin the healing process.

Body donation is a big decision that should be made with the help and knowledge of family, friends, and/or professionals. Some programs will return the remains after a time, and some will not.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Baylor College of Medicine Willed Body Program accepts whole body donations to be used in the education of physicians and other allied health professionals.

☎ 713-798-3858

💻 www.bcm.edu

(keyword: willed body)

Biogift accepts whole body donations to facilitate medical research or education only.

☎ 1-866-670-1799

💻 www.biogift.org

Donate Life Texas is the only official organ, eye and tissue donor registry for the state of Texas. People who register record their legal consent for organ, eye and tissue donation after death. The site also has information on whole body donation programs for medicine, forensic science, and other scientific uses.

☎ 1-800-788-8058

💻 www.donatelifetexas.org

Lifegift is the federally-designated organ and tissue recovery agency, which offers hope to individuals needing transplants. It has information on organ donation, the process, religious viewpoints on organ donation and other information which may be helpful for someone considering donation.

☎ 1-800-633-6562

💻 www.lifegift.org

Lion's Eye Bank at Baylor College of Medicine provides information about becoming an eye donor.

☎ 713-798-5500

💻 www.bcm.edu

Living Bank has information on the different types of organ donation – living, deceased, and whole body.

☎ 713-961-9431

☎ 1-800-528-2971

💻 www.livingbank.org

Texas Department of State Health

Services provides information on organ, tissue, and eye donations. They also offer information on the laws and procedures for becoming a donor.

☎ 1-800-788-8058 (Glenda Dawson Donate Life registry)

💻 www.dshs.state.tx.us/organdonation

The **University of Florida** has an online directory of medical schools and institutions that accept whole body donations.

💻 anatbd.acb.med.ufl.edu/usprograms/

SECTION 6 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

SECTION 6.1 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE


Financial assistance agencies may be able to provide emergency financial assistance if funds are available. Most agencies have eligibility requirements and limitations on service areas and types of assistance. Additionally, many social ministries provide emergency assistance. See Section 6.2 to find the nearest one.

Most counties also have emergency aid programs to help residents with basic needs.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Operated by United Way of Greater Houston, the **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

 2-1-1

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

Houston/Harris County


Baytown Resource and Assistance Center provides emergency assistance to Baytown, Highlands, and West Chambers residents.

 281-424-5752

 baytownresourceandassistancecenter.com

Catholic Charities–Guadalupe Center


provides social services to seniors, veterans, meals, pantry and wellness center, case management and home visits.

 713-526-4611

 1-866-649-5862

 www.catholiccharities.org


City Wide Club offers assistance with housing, utilities, food, child care, medical care, substance abuse treatment and job training available.

 713-752-2582

 citywideclub.com


First Baptist Church operates two Faith Centers where people can go for emergency food and clothing assistance, one in Spring Branch and the other in Southwest Houston. Each has limited hours.

 713-554-8801

 houstonfirst.org
(keyword: food pantry)

Gulf Coast Community Services

Association provides several types of emergency assistance, including rent, utilities, transportation, and prescription. People seeking help meet with staff to create a plan of action to address the need.

 713-393-4700

 www.gccsa.org

Harris County Office of Social Services

provides assistance to low-to-moderate county residents in need of emergency utility assistance, case management, or veteran services. Services are available to residents of the following areas:

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Interfaith Caring Ministries serves residents living in the Clear Creek and Friendswood ISD area.

☎ 281-332-3881

💻 lcmtn.org

Katy Christian Ministries serves Katy, West Houston, Fulshear, and Simonton

☎ 281-391-9623

💻 ktcm.org

Matthew 25 at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church reviews applications for request by appointment and serves both church members and non-members.

☎ 713-747-7101

💻 wheelerbc.org

My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center

meets with people in need to determine what type of assistance can be provided.

☎ 281-498-9933

💻 mybkoutreach.org

St. Vincent De Paul offers assistance with utilities, housing and healthcare, gas vouchers and holiday programs.

Serves Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other area counties

☎ 713-862-2605

💻 www.svdphouston.org

Wesley Community Center accepts calls for emergency assistance only on Fridays to set appointments for the following week.

☎ 713-821-8917 (emergency assistance calls)

💻 www.wesleyhousehouston.org

Fort Bend County

Catholic Charities provides emergency services to county residents.

☎ 281-202-6200

💻 www.catholiccharities.org
(keyword: Mamie George center)

Second Mile Mission Center has a food pantry people can access once every 30 days. It also has a mobile food pantry that visits churches in Needville, Rosenberg, Four Corners, Kendleton, Katy, and Fresno by appointment.

☎ 281-261-9199

💻 www.secondmile.org

Fort Bend County Social Services offers short-term assistance for emergency basic needs, such as help with utilities, food, housing, medications, and burial, among other services. Different programs may have different eligibility requirements.

☎ 281-238-3502 (Rosenberg office)

☎ 281-403-8050 (Missouri City office)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: social services)

Montgomery County

Crisis Assistance Center helps Montgomery County residents with utilities, rent, and prescription assistance.

☎ 936-539-9211

💻 www.cac-mctx.org

Interfaith of the Woodlands provides emergency assistance for basic needs.

Serves individuals in South Montgomery County, Village of Creekside Park, Village of Sterling Ridge. Call for specific information.

☎ 281-367-1230

💻 www.woodlandsinterfaith.org

Society of Samaritans provides help with food, clothing and financial assistance to residents of Greater Magnolia.

☎ 281-259-8452

💻 www.societyofsamaritanstx.org

SECTION 6.2 SOCIAL MINISTRY COALITIONS

Social or assistance ministries offer help to individuals of any background. Many provide emergency assistance with utility bills, rent and other critical needs if funds are available. Some may also help with food and clothing. Most ministries are zip code restricted. Find which agency or agencies serve a particular zip code, and then find the contact information after the zip code list. The assistance ministry will be able to tell which services are provided. For unlisted zip codes or more information on services, call 2-1-1.

The following organizations have social ministries, and most are zip code restricted. Find which agency covers the needed zip code. Agency contact information is provided after this list.

All	St. Vincent de Paul
77002	Christian Community Service Center
77003	Christian Community Service Center
77004	Christian Community Service Center
77005	Christian Community Service Center
77006	Christian Community Service Center
77007	Christian Community Service Center
77007	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77007	Manna
77008	Manna
77008	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77009	Manna
77009	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77010	Christian Community Service Center
77011	Christian Community Service Center
77012	Christian Community Service Center
77014	Northwest Assistance Ministries
77017	Southeast Area Ministries
77018	Manna
77018	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77019	Christian Community Service Center
77020	Christian Community Service Center
77021	Christian Community Service Center
77022	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77022	Manna
77023	Christian Community Service Center


77024	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77025	Christian Community Service Center
77025	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77026	Christian Community Service Center
77027	Christian Community Service Center
77028	Christian Community Service Center
77030	Christian Community Service Center
77031	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77032	Northwest Assistance Ministries
77034	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77034	Southeast Area Ministries
77035	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77035	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77036	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77037	Manna
77037	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77038	Northwest Assistance Ministries
77039	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77040	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77040	Manna
77041	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77042	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77042	West Houston Assistance Ministries
77043	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77044	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77045	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77046	Christian Community Service Center
77050	Northwest Assistance Ministries
77051	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77053	East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry
77053	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77054	Braes Interfaith Ministries
77055	Memorial Assistance Ministries
77056	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77056	Christian Community Service Center
77057	Christian Community Service Center
77057	West Houston Assistance Ministries
77058	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77059	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77060	Northwest Assistance Ministries
77061	Southeast Area Ministries
77062	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77063	West Houston Assistance Ministries

77064	Northwest Assistance Ministries	77303	Kingwood First Baptist Church
77065	Cypress Assistance Ministries	77304	Crisis Assistance Center
77066	Northwest Assistance Ministries	77305	Crisis Assistance Center
77067	Northwest Assistance Ministries	77306	Crisis Assistance Center
77068	Northwest Assistance Ministries	77306	Mission Northeast
77071	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77306	St. John of the Cross
77071	Braes Interfaith Ministries	77306	Kingwood First Baptist Church
77072	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77316	Society of Samaritans
77074	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77316	Crisis Assistance Center
77075	Southeast Area Ministries	77318	Crisis Assistance Center
77076	Manna	77328	Crisis Assistance Center
77076	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77333	Crisis Assistance Center
77077	West Houston Assistance Ministries	77336	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77079	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77336	Mission Northeast
77080	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77336	Kingwood First Baptist Church
77081	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77338	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77081	Christian Community Service Center	77338	St. James the Apostle
77082	West Houston Assistance Ministries	77339	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77082	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77339	Kingwood First Baptist Church
77083	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77339	Mission Northeast
77085	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77344	St. Mary Magdalene
77085	Braes Interfaith Ministries	77345	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77087	Southeast Area Ministries	77345	Mission Northeast
77088	Manna	77345	Kingwood First Baptist Church
77088	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77346	St. Mary Magdalene
77089	Southeast Area Ministries	77346	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77089	Interfaith Caring Ministries	77347	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77091	Manna	77347	St. Mary Magdalene
77091	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77353	Society of Samaritans
77092	Manna	77354	Society of Samaritans
77092	Memorial Assistance Ministries	77354	Crisis Assistance Center
77094	Katy Christian Ministries	77355	Waller Assistance And Restoration Ministry
77095	Cypress Assistance Ministries	77355	Crisis Assistance Center
77096	Braes Interfaith Ministries	77355	Society of Samaritans
77096	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77356	Crisis Assistance Center
77096	Christian Community Service Center	77356	Society of Samaritans
77098	Christian Community Service Center	77357	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77099	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center	77357	St. John of the Cross
77301	Crisis Assistance Center	77358	Crisis Assistance Center
77302	Crisis Assistance Center	77362	Society of Samaritans
77302	Mission Northeast	77362	Crisis Assistance Center
77302	St. John of the Cross	77362	Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries
77302	Kingwood First Baptist Church	77363	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry
77303	Crisis Assistance Center	77365	Mission Northeast
77303	Mission Northeast	77365	Humble Area Assistance Ministries

77365	St. John of the Cross	77477	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77365	Kingwood First Baptist Church	77478	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center
77365	Crisis Assistance Center	77484	Society of Samaritans
77372	Crisis Assistance Center	77484	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry
77372	Humble Area Assistance Ministries	77493	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77372	Mission Northeast	77493	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry
77372	St. John of the Cross	77494	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77372	Kingwood First Baptist Church	77501	Pasadena Community Ministries
77375	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77502	Pasadena Community Ministries
77375	Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries	77503	Pasadena Community Ministries
77377	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry	77504	Pasadena Community Ministries
77378	Crisis Assistance Center	77505	Pasadena Community Ministries
77380	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77506	Pasadena Community Ministries
77380	Crisis Assistance Center	77532	Humble Area Assistance Ministries
77381	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77536	Pasadena Community Ministries
77381	Crisis Assistance Center	77546	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77382	Crisis Assistance Center	77565	Interfaith Caring Ministries
77382	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77581	Christian Community Service Center
77383	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77584	Christian Community Service Center
77384	Crisis Assistance Center	77587	Southeast Area Ministries
77384	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77588	Christian Community Service Center
77385	Crisis Assistance Center	77868	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry
77385	Interfaith of the Woodlands	77873	Crisis Assistance Center
77386	Crisis Assistance Center		
77386	Interfaith of the Woodlands		
77387	Crisis Assistance Center		
77388	St. Mary Magdalene		
77389	Interfaith of the Woodlands		
77396	Humble Area Assistance Ministries		
77396	St. Mary Magdalene		
77401	Christian Community Service Center		
77401	My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center		
77423	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		
77429	Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries		
77429	Cypress Assistance Ministries		
77433	Cypress Assistance Ministries		
77433	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		
77445	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		
77446	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		
77447	Society of Samaritans		
77449	Interfaith Caring Ministries		
77450	Interfaith Caring Ministries		
77459	East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry		
77466	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		
77477	Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry		

AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Braes Interfaith Ministries

 713-723-2671


 braesinterfaithministries.com

Christian Community Service Center

 713-961-3993

 ccschouston.org

Crisis Assistance Center

 936-539-9211


 www.cac-mctx.org

Cypress Assistance Ministries

 281-955-7684

 www.cypressassistance.org

East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry

 281-261-1006


 www.humanneeds.org

Humble Area Assistance Ministries

 281-446-3663

 haaministries.org

Interfaith Caring Ministries

 281-332-3881


 icmtx.org

Interfaith of The Woodlands

 281-367-1230

 woodlandsinterfaith.org

Katy Christian Ministries

 281-391-5261

 ktcm.org/

Kingwood First Baptist Church


 281-358-4266

 www.kingwoodfirst.org

Manna


 713-682-7756

Memorial Assistance Ministries

 713-468-4516

 www.maministries.org

Mission Northeast

 281-354-1200

 www.missionne.org

My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center

 281-498-9933

 mybkoutreach.org

Northwest Assistance Ministries

 281-885-4555

 namonline.org

Pasadena Community Ministries

 713-477-4336


 pasadenacommunityministry.org

Southeast Area Ministries

 713-944-0093


 southeastareaministries.com

Society of Samaritans

 281-252-9647


 www.societyofsamaritanstx.org

St. James the Apostle

 281-353-5053

 stjta.org

St. John of the Cross

 281-399-9008


 www.sjotctx.org

St. Mary Magdalene

 281-540-1907


 st-mm.com

St. Vincent de Paul Society

 713-741-8234


 www.svdphouston.org

Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries

 281-351-6700

 teamtomball.com

Waller Assistance and Restoration Ministry

 936-372-5173

 wallerassistance.org

West Houston Assistance Ministries

 713-977-7803

 whamminitries.org

SECTION 7 FINANCES AND BUDGETING

SECTION 7.1 GENERAL BANKING AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The information that follows is an overview and is not intended as advice.

Older adults looking for help with their finances can get help from a banker, accountant, licensed insurance agent, certified financial planner, stockbroker, or attorney. These professionals can help set up accounts that best fit their specific needs.

Some important questions to consider when setting up financial accounts:

- Can another person access the account to pay the bills when the owner (primary account holder) becomes ill or unable to pay themselves?
- Will the IRS tax the assets in the accounts upon the owner's passing?
- Will the assets be subject to probate if the owner does not have a will?
- Will the assets pass directly to the owner's designated heirs?

Keep a record of all beneficiaries who are listed on insurance policies, retirement, and stock accounts, and all other accounts. Only the owner can change the name of a beneficiary in order to establish clear ownership and survivorship rights for all financial accounts and property ownership.

Account Terms to Know

- **Co-owned accounts** have both people's names with "or" in between. Either person can use the money. If the account has two names with "and" in between, both people must sign to get to their money.
- If the account has **right of survivorship**, when one person dies, the other gets 100%.
- If the account is **without right of survivorship**, when one person dies, his or her piece goes to the estate for distribution, not to the other person.
- **Payable on Death** or **beneficiary** is an account owned by one person who lists someone else to get the money when he or she dies. Until then, the beneficiary cannot touch the money.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is an agency created by Congress. It insures accounts up to \$250,000 per depositor and also monitors banks to make sure they are complying with laws.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify. Each AAA may offer different services.

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

BenefitsCheckup.org is a web-based service that helps older adults with limited incomes find federal, state, local, and private benefit programs that can help lower their prescription, utility, food, housing, or other basic need bills, find legal and financial assistance, and meet other needs such as health care, in-home services, and transportation.

💻 www.benefitscheckup.org/

The **Benefits Enrollment Center** at the **Chinese Community Center** is a one-stop shop for anyone looking for help in signing up for public benefits, such as Medicaid, Harris Health services, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP), and other programs available to older adults.

☎ 713-271-6100

💻 ccchouston.org/socialservices

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau protects consumers from unfair, deceptive or abusive practices by providing people with the information they need to make smart financial decisions. Information is available in multiple languages.

☎ 1-855-411-2372

💻 www.consumerfinance.gov

Family Houston Financial Stability Program offers financial education classes and one-on-one financial coaching and mentoring to help individuals become financially stable and ultimately self-sufficient.

☎ 713-861-4849

💻 www.familyhouston.org

The **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)** has information on its website about banking and consumer protection as well as money management tips. It also helped develop Money Smart for Older Adults.

☎ 1-877-275-3342

💻 www.fdic.gov

National Council on Aging has resources on healthy aging, economic security, and other topics for older adults.

☎ 1-800-373-4906

💻 www.ncoa.org

Peopleslawyer.net is a program sponsored by the University of Houston Law Center's Center for Consumer Law. It provides information on many legal topics and twice a year hosts the People's Law School, a free program that covers the basics of wills, family law, and other topics of general interest. The site also gives people an opportunity to ask general legal questions.

☎ 713-743-2168 (People's Law School information)

💻 www.peopleslawyer.net
(main website)

💻 www.law.uh.edu/peopleslaw/
(People's Law School information)

Own Your Future Texas has a long-term care planning kit that can be downloaded. The kit can help someone figure out how to afford long-term care in the future.

💻 www.ownyourfuturetexas.org

SECTION 7.2 BUDGETING AND CREDIT

When living on a fixed income, knowing where the money goes can help someone manage, save, and plan. Unexpected life changes can and will impact a person's financial resources, including future expense. Some unexpected changes include:

- Changes in health or cost of health coverage
- Increased basic living expenses
- Moving
- Losing a spouse or caregiver
- Having adult children and/or grandchildren move in

Using credit cards can make money even tighter. Paying down credit card balances before retiring will help with financial issues later in life. Maintaining good credit into retirement is important. Older adults may need credit if they move, change utility providers, or choose to help their children or grandchildren financially.


There are three main bureaus that track credit: Equifax, Experian, and Transunion. By law, a person can request a free report from each of these once per year. It is recommended that a person check one bureau every three months. This may help prevent identity theft, where someone uses another person's information for credit purposes.

There are resources available to help clients who may have problems paying for basic needs such as rent, utilities, groceries or medications. Take early action and seek help by calling 211 or see Section 6 for emergency assistance organizations.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Operated by United Way of Greater Houston, the **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

 **2-1-1**

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

AARP offers a tool for planning your personal budget.


 www.aarp.org/foundation

Annualcreditreport.com is where a person can get copies of their credit reports from the three main credit reporting agencies. Reports can be requested online, by phone, or mail.

 **1-877-322-8228**

 www.annualcreditreport.com

Chinese Community Center offers classes in Chinese and Vietnamese on a variety of financial topics.


 **713-271-6100**

 www.ccchouston.org


The **Federal Trade Commission** has information about dealing with debt collectors.

 www.ftc.gov/debtcollection

Peopleslawyer.net is a program sponsored by the University of Houston Law Center's Center for Consumer Law. It provides information on many legal topics and twice a year hosts the People's Law School (free). It has information on general consumer issues.

 **713-743-2168 (People's Law School information)**

 www.peopleslawyer.net
(main website)

 www.law.uh.edu/peopleslaw/
(People's Law School information)

Credit Cards

- Be wary of credit card offers.
- Compare Annual Percentage Rates (APR) and fees among credit card offers.
- Credit unions and small banks many times offer lower credit card interest rates, which can save you money if you carry a balance.
- Carrying a debit card can be a safe alternative for someone who does not want to carry cash but does not want a credit card.

SECTION 7.3 INSURANCE

Insurance

There are many types of insurance plans and policies that provide needed coverage for older adults.

Long-Term Care Insurance is a type of insurance that older adults can buy to cover care not covered by Medicare, such as having someone to help in the home with bathing, dressing, or eating. It also may cover care outside of the home, such as independent or assisted living communities. Each policy has its own restrictions and limits, and someone interested in long-term care insurance should research his or her options.

Most policies are guaranteed renewable, which means that as long as premiums are paid and benefits have not all been used, the coverage will continue.

Medicare does not cover most long-term care, so the right long-term care policy may help pay for needed care. See Section 9.3 for information about what is covered.

For information on Medicaid and Medicaap, including coverage information, see Sections 9.2 and 9.3.

What to Consider

- Does the company have a good record with the Texas Department of Insurance?
- Does the insurance agent specialize in long-term care insurance? Is he or she able to help someone choose the right coverage for a person's needs?
- What services are covered? Are there benefits for home health care, adult day care, assisted living facilities and nursing homes?
- What must happen before the policy pays?
- Does the policy have inflation protection so that the plan benefits keep up with the rising cost of health care? While inflation protection can be rejected, it should only be done so in writing.
- The policy the client chooses should state that their premium would not increase if they become ill or disabled.

LIFE INSURANCE

Term and **Whole Life** insurance are the two most common types of life insurance policies.

Term life insurance pays a set amount to a designated beneficiary if the insured person dies while the coverage is in effect. The premium, or amount paid each month, generally stays the same for the entire term. While less expensive than whole life coverage, if a person still is alive when the term ends, the policy ends.

Whole life insurance combines a term policy with an investment component. The policy builds cash value can be borrowed against or cashed in. The premiums remain the same throughout a person's life.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify. Each AAA may offer different services.

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA) serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

Consumer Reports website offers a comprehensive guide on choosing a health-insurance plan whether an HMO, PPO, or Medicare.

☎ 832-393-4301

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.consumerreports.org

National Association of Insurance

Commissioners has information on its website about buying different types of insurance policies. It also has a tool to locate lost life insurance policy information.

💻 www.naic.org

Medicare is the government's health insurance program for older adults and people with disabilities. For more information, see Section 9.3

☎ 1-800-633-4227

☎ 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

💻 www.medicare.gov

Social Security Administration (SSA) is where someone can enroll in Medicare for the first time. If the person is enrolling in Medicare but not Social Security, the application can be completed online.

☎ 1-800-772-1213

☎ 1-800-325-0778 (TTY)

💻 www.socialsecurity.gov


Texas Department of Insurance has information on insurance companies, finding policies, what to know about insurance, and filing a complaint against an insurance company. It covers auto, residential property, life, long-term care, and many other types. Callers to the helpline can also request publications on various insurance topics.

☎ 1-800-252-3439 (helpline)


☎ 1-800-578-4677 (general)


💻 www.tdi.texas.gov

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Medicaid Helpline

 1-800-252-8263

National Flood Insurance Program

 1-888-379-9531

 1-800-427-5593 (TTY)

Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership


Primary Care Case Management & STAR+PLUS

Client Notification Line

 1-800-414-3406


 www.tmhp.com

Standard & Poor's

 1-212-438-2400

 www.standardandpoors.com


Texas Department of Insurance


 1-800-252-3439

 www.tdi.texas.gov

Consumer Assistance Program - Texas


Department of Insurance takes complaints about insurance companies.


 1-800-252-3439 (information assistance)

 1-800-252-3437 (consumer helpline)

 www.tdi.texas.gov

Help Insure is the State's website to help consumers locate homeowner's insurance

 1-800-252-3439

 1-800-735-2988 (TTY)

 www.helpinsure.com

Texas FAIR Plan helps homeowners who have been turned down by at least two insurance companies find homeowners insurance.


 1-800-979-6440

 www.texasfairplan.org

 www.tdi.state.tx.us


Texas Department of Insurance

Publication Order Line offers free publications about purchasing long-term care insurance, Medicare Medigap/ Supplemental insurance, Advantage Plans, etc.

 1-800-252-3439


 www.tdi.texas.gov

Texas Department of Insurance publishes a list of long-term care insurance providers.

 1-800-252-3439

 www.tdi.texas.gov

US Department of Health & Human Services Hotline

 1-877-696-6775

 www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy

SECTION 7.4 RETIREMENT PLANNING AND REVERSE MORTGAGES

Without retirement planning, a person runs the risk of outliving financial resources. There are many tools to help someone to create his or her plan, and talking with a certified financial planner or financial advisor may be helpful.

Questions to Ask Before Retirement

- What is the person worth?
- Can he or she keep the same lifestyle in retirement?
- How should assets be diversified?
- Is there a pension? How and when will it be distributed?
- What is the best age to start collecting social security? What will that decision do to the amount of benefits the person can receive?
- How much life and health insurance is needed, and what will these insurance policies cost after retirement?
- Is long-term care insurance needed? What type of long-term care options will most likely be needed?
- Is there a will and is it up to date and in a place where would be found?
- Where does the person want to spend retirement and what will it cost?

REVERSE MORTGAGES

When someone does not have resources to meet retirement needs, that person may consider a **reverse mortgage**. A reverse mortgage is a type of home loan where someone withdraws home equity. The loan is paid back once the person no longer uses the home as his or her primary residence or when the person does not follow the program's rules. At that point, the person's family or estate have to repay the loan. Any home equity

that still is in the home belongs to the family or to the estate. Most people who choose to take a reverse mortgage do so for extra monthly income or to handle unplanned expenses.

There are two different types of reverse mortgages, **home equity conversion mortgages (HECM)**, or government backed mortgages, or **proprietary reverse mortgages**, which are often for higher dollar amounts and are backed by private companies.

Home equity conversion mortgages (HECM) are available only through FHA approved lenders. Since 2013, the Federal Government requires someone applying for a HECM to be assessed financially to see if he or she has the income and credit resources to manage loan requirements, such as paying property taxes.

Borrower Eligibility Requirements:

- Be 62 years of age or older
- Have little to no mortgage or other loans on the home
- Live in the home as the primary residence
- Not owe on a federal debt without a payment plan
- Have the financial resources to pay property taxes, insurance, or homeowner fees
- Complete a consumer information session by approved HUD counselor

Eligible properties include single family homes or unit homes with up to four units where one is occupied by the borrower, HUD approved condominiums, or a manufactured home that meets FHA requirements.

Important Things to Know

- Reverse mortgages have several costs associated with the loan, such as mortgage insurance premiums, third party fees, and lender fees. Together, these fees can be thousands of dollars, and they can either be paid upfront or with part of the money borrowed
- While money through a HECM does not affect Social Security or Medicare, it could impact eligibility for need-based programs
- Like traditional mortgages, HECM can be fixed or adjustable interest
- Fixed rate HECM are paid out as a lump sum while adjustable rate HECM can be paid out monthly, over a set time period, or as requested
- Money received through a reverse mortgage is tax free
- Unlike a traditional loan where the amount owed goes down over time, with a reverse mortgage, it goes up
- There are no restrictions on how the money can be used

A reverse mortgage is not for anyone. There are government education programs run by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as well as non-profit programs like AARP's Reverse Mortgage Education Project that can help talk someone through his or her options.

Beware of Fraud

Unfortunately, there are people who encourage older adults to take reverse mortgages that are not in that person's best interest. Some of the most common scams are:


- A contractor selling expensive home repairs recommends a reverse mortgage to pay for them
- A financial planner or advisor recommends that the older adult buys an expensive (and unnecessary) product, paid for with a reverse mortgage

- A realtor asks an older adult to take out a reverse mortgage to buy a second home to be flipped; often the realtor makes considerable money at the expense of the older adult

Like with any loan, be careful about responding to unsolicited offers. Do not sign any documents that are not clear, are not completely understood, or have not been read.


INFORMATION & RESOURCES

AARP has online articles about reverse mortgage pros and cons and retirement planning.

 1-866-227-7443


 www.aarp.com


Certified Financial Planners Board. offers financial planning resources, including a Financial Planning Resource Kit. They also take complaints and provide information about the backgrounds of certified financial planners.

 1-800-487-1497

 www.cfp.net
(keyword: financial planning resource kit)


Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has a consumer guide about reverse mortgages.

 1-855-411-2372


 www.consumerfinance.gov
(keyword: reverse mortgage)

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) has a hotline for older adult investors where they can call with questions or to report concerns that a professional is mishandling their money.

 1-844-574-3577

 www.finra.org
(keyword: senior helpline)

Financial Planning Association of Houston has information about what a certified financial planner can do and how to find one locally.


 713-518-1785

 www.fpahouston.org

National Council on Aging Economic Checkup Tool provides information on retirement planning, money management, and other money management topics.

 www.economiccheckup.org

Social Security Retirement Estimator lets someone get a customized information about his or her estimated benefits.

 1-800-772-1213


 www.ssa.gov/estimator

Texas State Securities Board has publications about money management and investment as well as a place to investigate or file a complaint against a financial advisor.

 713-426-0336


 www.ssb.texas.gov/investors


South Central Pension Rights Project helps people in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma (or people whose plans were with a company based in one of these states) with pension issues, including finding benefits from old employers, answer questions about pension laws, and provide legal advice about pension rights in cases of death and divorce.

 1-800-443-2528

 www.southcentralpension.org


U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has searchable information on HUD approved reverse mortgage lenders, counselors, and counseling agencies.

 1-800-225-5342

 www.hud.gov
(keyword: HCEM)

U.S. Department of Labor has developed a guide called Taking the Mystery Out of Retirement Planning which can be downloaded or requested by phone.

 1-866-444-3272

 savingmatters.dol.gov
(keyword: taking the mystery)

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has investment information specifically for older adults.

 www.sec.gov/investor/seniors.shtml

SECTION 7.5 IDENTITY THEFT AND FRAUD

Identity Theft creates a financial crisis before the victim even realizes a crime has occurred. Thieves raid bank accounts, open credit card accounts, apply for loans, purchase cars, rent apartments, and more by using someone's identifying information. The information identity thieves want the most is the type people give freely: phone number, address, birthday, last four Social Security numbers, and driver's license.

Prevention Tips

The best defense against identity theft is awareness and education.

- Check bills and statements, including bank and Medicare statements, each month when they are received
- Leave identifying documents, including Medicare card, Social Security card, birth certificate, and passport at home unless they are needed
- Carry only one or two credit cards at a time
- Always destroy receipts
- Shred or tear up credit card solicitations and convenience checks
- Consider opting out of information sharing and of offers based on credit reports
- Deposit mail only in postal mailboxes or at the post office
- Do not give identification information over the phone unless the person or company is known
- Make copies of both sides of credit or debit cards and keep it in a safe place in case the wallet is stolen

What to Do When Identity Theft Happens

- File a police report with your local police agency (non-emergency)
- Call the bank and credit card companies to let them know and cancel cards; change PIN numbers on all accounts
- Notify merchants and creditors and have them to close all accounts immediately
- Call one of the major credit bureaus and request a fraud alert; that credit bureau will share the information with the other two
- If you suspect mail was used to commit the fraud, notify your local postmaster
- Call the Federal Trade Commission identity theft hotline and the social security administration or the IRS if a social security number has been compromised

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Chexsystems is like a credit bureau but for banks and other financial institutions. By law, anyone can request a copy of his or her report to see if anyone has opened an account under his or her name.


 1-800-428-9623 (voicemail only)

 www.chexsystems.com


The major credit bureaus, **EquiFax**, **TransUnion**, and **Experian** work together in cases of identity theft. A person can contact one, and the information will be shared with others.

 1-800-525-6285 (EquiFax)

 www.equifax.com

 1-800-680-7289 (TransUnion)


 www.transunion.com

 1-888-397-3742 (Experian)

 www.experian.com

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

has an identity theft hotline and easy online reporting. The online tool at [identitytheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) helps create a personalized identity theft recovery plan. While individual claims may not be investigated, reporting helps the FTC find identity thieves. [Ftccomplaintassistant.gov](https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov) helps someone file a complaint for many types of identity theft, unwanted communication, and fraud.

 1-877-438-4338

 www.identitytheft.gov

 www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov

For victims of identity theft that live in Houston, the **Houston Police Department** recommends that victims call the Teleserve unit to report the crime.


 713-308-2500

The **Identity Theft Resource Center** has information on scams and data breaches. It also provides assistance for people dealing with identity theft. Staff can provide help in English and Spanish.

 1-888-400-5530

 www.idtheftcenter.org

Opt-out Prescreen stops prescreen credit and insurance offers for up to 5 years by calling or visiting the website. It also has directions on how to stop unwanted offers permanently. Opt-out prescreen is run by the major credit bureaus.


 1-888-567-8688

 www.optoutprescreen.com

The **Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General** handles reports of Social Security Fraud. The fraud hotline takes calls from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Fraud can also be reported directly to the Social Security Administration.

 1-800-269-0271 (Fraud Hotline)

 1-866-501-2101 (TTY)

 oig.ssa.gov
(keyword: report fraud)

FRAUD

If someone calls or emails and says that he or she is calling from the IRS, a credit card company, or bank and says that he or she needs to verify password or personal information, do not give it. That person is trying to get personal information for fraud or identity theft. If that happens, do not answer the email or request a call back number. Then, look up the organization's number and call it. Never call the callback number given. That is one way to increase protection from fraud.

Most Common Fraud/Scams Targeting Older Adults

The following scams are the most frequent:

- The IRS calling to say back taxes are owed and unless they are paid immediately, the IRS will sue. The IRS never calls.
- Someone pretends to be a Medicare representative and asks for personal information to provide free services. Most of the time, this is someone who will either use the information for identity theft or will use it for Medicare fraud.
- In the lottery or sweepstakes scam, a person typically calls and congratulates the person on winning a sweepstakes or lottery he or she does not remember entering. The scammer asks for prepayment of taxes or fees. Once a person pays, the scammer keeps contacting for more money. Ignore these calls – the scammer will keep trying to convince the person to pay the fake charges.
- Sometimes, the computer scam starts with a computer pop-up ad that says the computer has a virus and to click for someone to remove it. The ad then asks for contact information. Someone calls pretending to be from Microsoft or another computer company and asks for money to remove the virus. If there is a virus, the scammers put it on the computer. Never click on these pop-up ads. Microsoft and other computer companies do not reach out to people and ask for information.

- In the grandparent scam, a caller pretends to be the grandchild, says he or she is holding the grandchild hostage, or that the grandchild is hurt or arrested. The scammer then asks for money to be wired immediately to address the emergency.
- Romance scams involve someone befriending an older adult in a chat room or on a dating site. Once the scammer earns the person's trust, the scammer then asks for money for financial emergencies.

No one can protect him- or herself from fraud 100% of the time, but there are steps people can take to reduce the possibility for fraud.

1. Never update or confirm any personal information in response to an advertisement or an unasked for phone call or email. Don't share Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers, PINs, birthday, or password information unless the person on the other end is known and trusted. No legitimate company will reach out and then ask for full account numbers and other personal information, and companies will not ask for this information by email.
2. Assume that any "too good to be true" offer, especially one from a stranger, probably is fraud.
3. Check bank and credit card statements for items that are incorrect. Notify the company immediately if there is a problem.
4. Don't leave anything with personal financial information laying out in the open. Shred credit card offers and papers with sensitive information.
5. Check credit reports regularly from EquiFax, Transunion, and Experian. Experts recommend checking one of the three credit reports every four months. Also check Chexsystems yearly for bank account fraud. Use free credit monitoring services, like Credit Karma or Quizzle for regular updates.
6. If someone uses sales pressure tactics, walk away.

Cramming is when a company adds a charge, usually to a phone bill, for an unwanted and unasked for service. People who suspect cramming should first contact their provider for an explanation and adjustment. If it remains unresolved, contact the Federal Communications Commission, state utility commission, or, for non-phone issues, with the Federal Trade Commission. It is important to regularly review all bills.

Basic Internet Safety

Use caution when giving out credit card, bank, or other financial information on any website.

- Always read the website's privacy policy.
- Look for signs that the website is secure, such as https before the website, a lock on the address bar, or a seal of approval from VeriSign or Entrust.

Smartphone Safety

As more personal information is stored on smartphones, they have become a goldmine for hackers and identity thieves.

- Make sure there is a password on the phone that is not easily guessable.
- Only download apps from a trusted place.
- Beware of public wifi or public charging stations.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For information on Medicare or Social Security Fraud, see Sections 9.3 and 9.4.

For information on Equifax, Transunion, and Experian, and Chexsystems, see earlier in Section 7.5.

CreditKarma and **Quizzle** both provide access to credit information and score estimates, completely for free.

 www.creditkarma.com


 www.quizzle.com

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) takes complaints from people who were victimized by online.

 www.ic3.gov


The Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

fun's FTCComplaintassist, a website that walks someone through the process of filing many types of complaints, including cramming.

 1-877-382-4357

 www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov

Memorial Assistance Ministries offers free shred days every quarter at its Spring Branch location.

 713-468-4516

 www.maministries.org/shred

ProShred of Houston offers free shred days in Harris and Fort Bend Counties.

 www.proshred.com/Houston/events

SECTION 7.6 TAX INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Income Taxes

For older adults who file taxes, there are places that may be able to provide free tax preparation services. Known nationally as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, volunteers are trained by the IRS to process tax returns. In Harris County, most tax assistance programs are coordinated through the Neighborhood Tax Centers.

Property Taxes

Homeowners age 65 and older or homeowners age 55 and older who are the surviving spouse of someone ages 65 or older when they died may apply with their appraisal district for extra homestead exemptions. The Over-65 and Over-55 Surviving Spouse Homestead exemptions lowers property taxes by increasing the amount of a

home's value that is not subject to taxes. Those over age 65 or who are disabled may also apply for tax deferment, meaning that the tax bill will continue to add up and will need to be paid when the older or disabled person no longer lives in the home. The deferral does not necessarily impact taxes that were due before the deferral was filed.

See Section 3.8 for information on disability exemptions and to find contact information for area appraisal districts.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

AARP Tax Aide offers free tax assistance to low-income people ages 50 and older. Trained tax volunteers assist with tax returns. AARP Tax Aide also runs a year-round online help forum for tax questions. No AARP membership is required for this free service.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

☎ 1-888-687-2227

💻 www.aarp/taxaide

BakerRipley Tax Centers help families earning up to \$58,000 file their taxes electronically for free with IRS trained volunteers providing assistance. Call 2-1-1 or visit the website to find area locations.

☎ 2-1-1

💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) important numbers and websites

☎ 1-800-829-3676 (order forms)

☎ 1-800-829-1040 (tax questions)

☎ 1-800-829-4477 (pre-recorded information)

💻 www.irs.gov
(general information)

💻 www.irs.gov/forms-pubs
(download forms)

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers offer in-person face to face tax assistance and resolution. There are four Houston locations to serve the greater Houston area: Downtown, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest. An appointment is necessary.

☎ 1-844-545-5640 (all locations)

💻 www.irs.gov
(keyword: taxpayer assistance)

Myfreetaxes.com is a United Way and H&R Block Partnership to allow free tax preparation and e-filing online for families making less than \$64,000 per year.

💻 www.unitedway.org/myfreetaxes/

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE)** programs operate throughout the region. For TCE locations, a person must be age 60 or older with limited income to receive assistance. Locally, most programs are run through the Neighborhood Tax Centers or the AARP.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

☎ 1-800-906-9887

💻 www.irs.gov
(keyword: free tax help)

HELP WITH INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) TAX DISPUTES

BakerRipley Tax Center offers year-round support, including tax returns and amended tax returns for up to 5 years and assistance with other IRS issues. Walk-ins only.

☎ 713-273-3755

💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations

Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program provides free, bilingual legal assistance to low-income Harris County residents with IRS tax disputes. The program does not prepare or file income tax returns.

☎ 713-255-1829

💻 www.makejusticehappen.org

SECTION 7.7 WORK RESOURCES AND JOBS

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Many social and assistance ministries offer free job searching classes, coaching, and assistance. To find the nearest location, see Section 6.2.

Senior Corps programs may pay a small stipend to low-income older adults in exchange for their public service. For more information on these programs, see Section 17.5.

Between Jobs Ministry is a faith-based program assisting job seekers that meets most Wednesday mornings. Meetings are in Spring but are open to the Greater Houston area.

☎ 281-376-1110

💻 www.nwbc.org/betweenjobsministry

Career & Recovery Resources Senior Training & Referral Services provides older adults ages 55 and older with computer literacy training, job search training, job placement assistance, referrals to subsidized training programs, and other services.

☎ 713-754-7000

💻 www.careerandrecovery.org

Goodwill Industries Job Connection Centers help with basic job search preparation and support. There are locations throughout the Houston area, but the Meyerland location specializes in helping older adults.

☎ 832-900-7454 (Meyerland)

☎ 713-692-6221 (main number)

💻 www.goodwillhouston.org/services/job-connection-services/

Houston Center for Independent Living

has Community Work Incentives Coordinators who can explain Social Security's work incentive programs for people receiving SSI and/or SSDI. The Community Work Incentives Coordinator can also give information about federal, state, and local programs that help someone get back to work and how working may change SSI or SSDI payments and benefits.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller County as well as 7 other area counties

☎ 713-974-4621 (voice) or

☎ 713-974-2703 (TTY) – Houston

☎ 281-980-2219 – Fort Bend

☎ 1-877-877-7802 – outside of Harris and Fort Bend Counties

💻 www.hcil.cc
(keyword WIPA)

JS101 provides free job career coaching services.

☎ 713-866-4002

💻 www.js101.org

The **Senior Community Service Employment Program** is a federal program that trains older workers for jobs in public and non-profit locations. To be eligible, a person must be age 55 or older, have a family income of less than 125% of the federal poverty level (\$20,300 for a family of 2 in 2017). There are 4 local providers in Harris County: SER Jobs (Southeast Harris); Chinese Community Center (West Harris), and AARP (North and Southeast Harris).

☎ 1-877-872-5627 (to find program locations)

💻 www.doleta.gov/SENIORS/
(general information)


☎ 713-773-6000 (SER Jobs for Progress)


💻 www.serhouston.org

☎ 713-271-6100 (Chinese Community Center)

 www.ccchouston.org

 281-820-7451 (AARP-North)

 281-922-9952 (AARP-Southeast)

 www.aarp.org
(keyword: SCSEP)

Workintexas.com is an online Texas job resource for those looking for a job or for employers looking for qualified employees.

 www.workintexas.com

Workforce Solutions offers job search assistance as well as programs to help people retrain for different careers. It also assists job seekers who are receiving unemployment. Offices are located throughout the Greater Houston area.

 1-888-469-5627 (find an office)


 www.wrksolutions.com/find-a-location

WORKPLACE PROBLEMS

Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission handles complaints about job discrimination.

(report employment discrimination)

 1-800-669-4000

 www.eeoc.gov
(general information)

 egov.eeoc.gov/eas/
(filing a complaint)

Texas Workforce Commission handles unemployment claims.

 1-800-939-6631 (to file)

 www.twc.state.tx.us

SECTION 8 FOOD AND NUTRITION

Most services in this section are restricted by area or zip code. For ease of use, many are listed by general area served. It is highly recommended that someone interested in a service call to ask about eligibility requirements, including zip codes served.

Many social and assistance ministries also offer food pantries. To find the nearest location, see Section 6.2.

SECTION 8.1 FOOD PANTRIES / EMERGENCY FOOD


There are many food pantries, each with varying eligibility requirements and hours of operation. To find the nearest food pantry:

2-1-1 Texas/United Way Helpline

 2-1-1


 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/

Community Family Center

 713-923-2316


 www.communityfamilycenters.org

Crisis Assistance Center (Montgomery County)

 936-539-9211

 www.cac-mctx.org

East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry


 281-261-1006

 www.humanneeds.org

FoodPantries.org


 www.foodpantries.org/ci/tx-houston

Fort Bend County Social Services

 281-238-3502


 www.co.fort-bend.tx.us

Houston Food Bank (pantries by zip code)

 713-532-3663

 www.houstonfoodbank.org

Montgomery County Food Bank

 936-539-6686


 mcfoodbank.org

Target Hunger assists individuals and families who live in the inner-city neighborhoods of Houston.

 713-226-4953


 www.targethunger.org

Waller County House of Help Food Pantry

 979-826-4445


 hohhempstead.org

Warm Pantry

 936-372-5173

 wallerassistance.org

Bethel Heavenly Hands (Harris County)

 713-729-6477

Catholic Charities–Guadalupe Center

(Harris County)

☎ 713-227-9981

City Wide Club Food Program

(provides vouchers only - Harris, Ft. Bend, Montgomery, and Waller)

☎ 713-752-2582

💻 citywideclub.com

Fair Haven United Methodist Food Pantry

(Spring Branch/Memorial)

☎ 713-467-4363

💻 www.fairhavenumc.org

Gano Baptist Mission Center

(North Houston)

☎ 713-227-0304

💻 missioncenters.org

Gulf Coast Community Services Association (Harris)

☎ 713-393-4700

💻 www.gccsa.org

Heights Interfaith Ministries (Heights)

☎ 713-861-6155

💻 www.himfoodpantry.org

Interfaith of The Woodlands

☎ 281-367-1230

Joy Fellowship Center

(East/Southeast Harris)

☎ 713-921-0197

💻 missioncenters.org

Montgomery County Emergency Assistance

☎ 936-539-9211

Montgomery County Food Bank

(pantries by zip code)

☎ 936-539-6686

💻 mcfoodbank.org

North Channel Assistance Ministries

(Northeast Harris)

☎ 713-453-8028

💻 www.woodforestpc.org/mission/ncam/

Second Mile Mission Center (Ft. Bend)

☎ 281-261-9199

💻 www.secondmile.org

Society of Samaritans

(Greater Magnolia area)

☎ 281-259-8452

💻 www.societyofsamaritanstx.org

Southeast Area Ministries

(Southeast Harris)

☎ 713-944-0093

💻 southeastareaministries.com

South Union Church of Christ

(South Harris)

☎ 713-747-5440

💻 www.sumbc.org

St. Bernadette Christian Action

(Clear Lake)

☎ 281-486-0337

💻 www.stbchurch.org

St. John Vianney (Spring Branch/Memorial)


☎ 281-497-4434

💻 www.stjohnvianney.org


HOLIDAY FOOD PROGRAMS

Many social and assistance ministries offer holiday baskets or holiday food items. To find the nearest location, see Section 6.2.

2-1-1 Texas/United Way Helpline

 2-1-1


City Wide Club of Clubs hosts two huge community meals, one on Thanksgiving Day and the other on Christmas Eve. In addition to a hot meal, participants receive groceries, clothing, and other needed supplies and services. Registration is required.

 713-752-2582

 citywideclub.com

Harris County Area Agency on Aging Houston Meals for the Elderly (HoME)


Program provides home-delivered meals to people ages 60 and older, their spouses, caregivers, or dependents who will otherwise not have a hot Thanksgiving Day meal. Requests are taken beginning in October until slots are filled.

 832-393-4301

MONTHLY GROCERY PROGRAMS

Some programs provide a premade bag of groceries while others let clients shop the pantry for what they need.

Emergency Aid Coalition gives one bag of groceries per family member plus non-food items such as laundry detergent when available.

 713-528-3663


 www.eachouston.org

Houston Food Bank operates an emergency food pantry for people who are employed and who need food assistance. Services can be accessed every 30 days.

 832-369-9390


 www.houstonfoodbank.org


Mamie George Community Center in Richmond operates a self-select market food pantry for residents receiving services through Catholic Charities.

 281-202-6200

 www.catholiccharities.org
(keyword: Mamie George center)

Northwest Assistance Ministries offers a self-select market food pantry for people living in the service area. Low-income older adults can qualify for food each month.

 281-583-5600

 namonline.org
(keyword: nutrition center)


PROGRAMS THAT MAY OFFER FRESH PRODUCE

Houston Food Bank Food Fairs

 832-369-9390 (for fair locations)

 www.houstonfoodbank.org

Montgomery County Food Bank

 936-539-6686

Some social ministries also have food pantries that are zip code specific. See **Social Ministry Coalitions (Section 6.2)**.

SECTION 8.2 FOOD STAMPS

Food Stamps (Lone Star Card) HHSC Food Stamp Program

☎ 713-767-2000

National Help Desk

☎ 1-800-777-7328

Hempstead Health and Human Services

☎ 979-826-0502

HHSC Status of Lone Star Card Application

☎ 1-800-448-3927

Houston and **Harris County**

☎ 713-652-0077

☎ 1-800-733-8394

Lone Star Legal Aid helps eligible SE Texas residents with food stamp applications and related legal issues. To find the office near you:

☎ 1-800-733-8394 (Houston office, including intake line)

☎ 713-652-0077 (Harris, Fort Bend, and parts of Montgomery Counties)

☎ 1-888-595-8969 (Waller and parts of Montgomery County)

☎ 936-539-2130 (Waller and parts of Montgomery Counties)

💻 www.lonestarlegal.org

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

Program (SNAP) helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health. Eligibility requirements apply. Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)

💻 www.hhsc.state.tx.us/

Texas Health and Humans Services Commission Montgomery County

☎ 281-592-0531

SECTION 8.3 MEALS ON WHEELS

There are several agencies that provide home-delivered meals to Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller County older residents who are homebound and/or who are disabled. Each agency serves specific zip codes, and eligibility and wait times may vary by agency. Call 2-1-1 to find the agency that serves the zip code.

Baytown Meals on Wheels

☎ 281-427-2145

Bay Area Meals on Wheels

☎ 281-326-3336

💻 www.bayareamealsonwheels.com

City of Jacinto City

☎ 713-675-4487

City of South Houston

☎ 713-947-7700

City of La Porte

☎ 281-470-9897


Evelyn Rubinstein Jewish Community Center of Houston (ERJCC)


Serves Kosher meals on request

☎ 713-595-8177

💻 www.erjcchouston.org/seniors/meals-on-wheels

Fort Bend Senior Meals on Wheels


 281-633-7049

 1-800-643-9654

 www.fortbendseniors.org


Interfaith Ministries

Also provides pet food to eligible clients through aniMeals

 713-533-4978


 www.imgh.org/meals-on-wheels

Meals on Wheels Montgomery County

 936-756-5828


 www.mowmc.org

Northwest Assistance Ministries

 281-885-4622


 namonline.org/get-help/meals-on-wheels

Salvation Army Meals on Wheels – Pasadena

 713-378-0020

YWCA

 713-868-9922

 www.ywcahouston.org
(keyword: what we do/senior programs)


SECTION 8.4 NUTRITION

Malnutrition in older adults can be caused by:

- Chronic diseases (arthritis or cognitive limitations, like Alzheimer’s and dementia) that may lead to physical limitations. These conditions can make shopping, preparing, and consuming food difficult
- Medications
- Dental problems can result in seniors avoiding foods that have the best nutrition
- Changes in the senses of smell and taste can cause a decrease in food consumption, disinterest in, and even an aversion to formerly preferred foods
- Eating alone. Food is often associated with family and social events. Preparing food and eating alone can be difficult for older people who have reached a stage in life where many of their loved ones have either died or moved away. Older men who have lost their wives (who did the cooking) may be at special risk

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Houston Bureau of Health Promotion and Education Programs

 832-393-4856

 www.houstonhealth.org

The **National Women’s Health Information Center** How to Read a Food Label

 www.womenshealth.gov

Nutrition.gov offers access to information on food and nutrition

 www.nutrition.gov

MedlinePlus is a government website that has information about herbal medicines and dietary supplements, how effective they are, and what interactions they have with other medicines.

 medlineplus.gov/druginformation.html

Nutritional supplements like Ensure are generally not covered by Medicare, unless a person is tube-fed as their primary source of nutrition. The In-Home and Family Support Program and the Harris Hospital System cover this item if the patient is on their program. Social ministries, food pantries, or the Houston Food Bank sometimes have supplements available.

SECTION 8.5 RECREATIONAL AND CONGREGATE MEAL SITES

Many senior centers are recreational centers that offer a variety of activities, such as crafts, bridge, bingo, dominoes, line dancing, field trips, and more. Lunch programs may be offered for free or for a small donation (some offer breakfast as well). Some centers provide limited transportation.

Some centers offer fitness programs, which may include stretching, flexibility, balance, and low-impact exercises, which are tailored to accommodate different levels of fitness. These types of programs and services help seniors remain independent and maintain important social relationships, all of which can assist them as they age in place.

To locate additional recreation centers and congregate meal sites visit:

 www.houstontx.gov/parks.org

When calling to confirm services, ask about availability, times of service and any applicable fees.

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
CENTRAL					
All Saints Catholic Church Third Age Learning Center	77008	yes	no	yes	☎ 713-248-1277 seasonal
Denver Harbor Senior Center	77020	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-395-0892
Gateway Senior Center - YWCA	77021	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-868-9922
Golden Age Hobby House	77004	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-533-9540
Harrisburg Senior Center - YWCA	77011	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-979-4468
Hester House (Julia C.)	77020	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-274-1394
IndoChinese Cultural Center	77004	yes	no	yes	☎ 713-522-7799
JW Peavy Senior Center	77020	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-393-3869
Ripley House	77011	yes	no	yes	☎ 713-315-6400
Salvation Army Irvington Corps	77009	yes	yes	no	☎ 713-692-0522
Third Ward Multi-Service Center	77004	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-393-4073
Wesley Community Center	77009	yes	yes	no	☎ 713-223-8131
West End Senior Center	77007	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-802-2284
West University Senior Services	77005	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-662-5895
NORTH					
Acres Homes Multi-Service Center	77091	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-393-4127
Hardy Senior Center "Peppy" Precinct 1	77076	no	yes	yes	☎ 281-260-6772
Mangum-Howell Center Precinct 4	77038	no	yes	yes	☎ 281-591-7830





Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
NORTH (con't)					
North Central Senior Center - YWCA	77076	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-695-3167
Salvation Army Aldine Westfield Comm. Center	77093	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-694-5688
NORTHEAST					
Aldine Community Center	77039	yes	no	yes	☎ 281-449-4828
Chambers/Barrett Station Community Center Pct. 2	77532	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-328-4713
Crosby Community Center Precinct 2	77532	no	no	yes	☎ 281-462-0543
Duessen Park Senior Center Precinct 1	77044	no	no	yes	☎ 832-927-2100
Humble Area Activities Center	77338	no	no	yes	☎ 281-540-7442
May Community Center Precinct 2	77336	no	no	yes	☎ 713-274-2434
North East Community Center	77093	yes	no	yes	☎ 281-442-7950
North East Multi-Service Center	77016	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-395-0475
Settegast Community Center	77003	no	yes	yes	☎ 713-238-2200
NORTHWEST					
Bear Creek Community Center Precinct 3	77084	no	no	yes	☎ 281-859-1566
Fify Plus (NAM)	77090	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-885-4600/01
Hockley Community Center Precinct 3	77447	no	no	yes	☎ 936-931-5030
Lakeview Senior Center - YWCA	77080	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-722-0979

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
NORTHWEST (con't)					
Longhorn Senior Center - YWCA	77080	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-465-6588
Trini Mendenhall Community Center	77055	no	no	yes	☎ 713-956-0881
Tomball Community Center	77375	no	no	yes	☎ 1-281-255-6221
SOUTH					
New Life Enrichment Center	77048	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-991-5972 ext. 7
South Houston Senior Center	77587	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-947-7700 ext. #355
Tom Bass Community Center Precinct 1	77047	no	no	yes	☎ 713-733-3717
SOUTHEAST					
Bay Area Community Center	77586	no	no	yes	☎ 281-326-2955
Bay Area Senior Center	77062	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-282-9700
Cleveland-Ripley Neighborhood Center	77504	no	no	yes	☎ 713-944-9186
East Harris County Activity Center	77505	no	no	yes	☎ 281-479-4232
Harbach-Ripley Neighborhood Center	77087	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-640-7119
Hometown Heroes Park - League City Senior Citizen Program	77573	yes	no	yes	☎ 281-554-1180
Kingspoint Senior Center - YWCA	77075	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-900-9835
Maxwell Senior Center - Deer Park	77536	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-478-7276
Norman L. Malone Senior Center	77571	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-470-9897
Salvation Army Pasadena Corp	77502	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-378-0020
Telephone Road Senior Center - YWCA	77087	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-641-1683

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
SOUTHWEST					
Bayland Community Center Precinct 3	77074	no	no	yes	☎ 713-541-9951
Bellaire L.I.F.E.	77401	no	no	yes	☎ 713-662-8290
Bellerive Senior Center - YWCA	77036	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-370-3495
Chancellors Family Center	77096	no	no	yes	☎ 713-772-9955
Chinese Community Center	77036			yes	☎ 713-271-6100
Corporate Senior Center	77036	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-777-5123
Evelyn Rubenstein Community Center of Houston (ERJCC)	77096	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-729-3200
Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers	77096	yes	no	no	☎ 713-772-9955
Oak Tree Senior Center - YWCA	77035	yes	yes	yes	☎ 832-258-3927
Salvation Army International Corps Community Center	77072	no	no	yes	☎ 713-988-5201
South Kirkwood Senior Center - YWCA	77099	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-258-6102
Southwest Multi-Service Center	77074	yes	no	yes	☎ 832-395-9900
TW Davis YMCA Richmond	77469	no	no	yes	☎ 281-341-0791
Hiram-Clarke Multi-Service Center	77045	yes	no	yes	☎ 832-393-4200

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
EAST					
Alvin D. Baggett Community Center Galena Park	77547	yes	no	no	☎ 713-674-1741
Baytown Senior Recreation Center	77520	yes	no	yes	☎ 281-420-5735
City of Jacinto City Senior Program - Heritage Hall	77029	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-675-4487
City of Pasadena Madison Jobe Senior Center	77506	no	no	yes	☎ 713-477-0175
Flukinger Center - Channelview Pct. 2	77530	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-457-1810
Highlands/San Jacinto Community Center Pct. 2	77562	no	no	yes	☎ 281-426-7561
Kashmere Multi-Service Center	77026	yes	yes	no	☎ 832-393-5503
Pleasant Village Apartments	77029	yes	no	no	☎ 713-674-7648
J.D. Walker Community Center Precinct 2	77521	yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-426-3551
Leon Grayson Community Center	77015	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-455-3660
WEST					
Fussell Senior Center	77493	no	no	yes	☎ 281-391-4837
Mary Jo Peckham Aquatic & Fitness Center Precinct 3	77493	no	no	yes	☎ 281-391-4482
Quillian Recreation Center @ 1st Methodist Houston	77042	no	no	yes	☎ 713-781-9195

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
WEST (con't)					
Tracey Gee Community Center Precinct 3	77042	no	no	yes	☎ 713-266-8193
West Office Senior Center - YWCA	77042	yes	yes	yes	☎ 713-784-9049
FORT BEND COUNTY					
Senior Centers		yes	yes	yes	☎ 281-633-7049
Bud O'Shieles Community Center	77471	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Fifth Street Community Center	77477	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Fort Bend YMCA	77459	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
HomeTowne on Bellfort	77099	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
The Huntington at Sienna	77459	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Irene Stern Community Center	77441	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Katy YMCA	77494	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Leroy Dorsey Center	77451	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Mustang Community Center	77545	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049
Pinnacle Senior Center	77053	no	no	yes	☎ 832-471-2765
Sugar Land - T E Harman Center	77478	yes	no	yes	☎ 281-275-2893
Woodsland Park Recreation Center	77494	yes	yes	no	☎ 281-633-7049

Name	Zip Code	Lunch	Transportation	Fitness	Phone Number
MONTGOMERY COUNTY					
EMC Fair Association Building - Sallas Park Community Center (New Caney)	77357	yes	yes	no	 281-354-1223
South County Community Center (The Woodlands)	77301	yes	yes	no	 281-363-9410
West County Community Development Center (Magnolia Friendship Center)	77355	yes	yes	no	 281-259-6665
WALLER COUNTY					
United Way Service Center	77423	yes	no	no	 281-633-7049

SECTION 9 GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

SECTION 9.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

This section has general local government resources. For government resources for a specific issue, see that section.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify. Each AAA may offer different services.

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

CareConnection Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

offers many services for older adults, their caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages. It connects people with government programs and community resources. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, and 9 other Greater Houston area Counties

☎ 1-855-937-2372

💻 www.careconnection.org

CITY OF HOUSTON RESOURCES

City of Houston Citizens' Assistance Office

handles complaints from city residents and works to resolve them

☎ 832-393-0955

💻 www.houstontx.gov/cao/

City of Houston City Services

gives residents a place to request non-emergency city services. Residents can call or submit requests online. Residents can make requests for a wide variety of services, including requests related to animals, garbage, utilities, street lights that are not working, and social services.

☎ 311 or 713-837-0311

💻 www.houstontx.gov/311/

City of Houston Police Non-Emergency

is where city residents can call when they need something that does not need an immediate response. On the website, residents can report minor crimes, request more police patrols, and other police services.

☎ 713-884-3131

💻 www.houstontx.gov/police/contact/

COUNTY PROGRAMS

Fort Bend County Social Services offers short-term assistance for emergency basic needs, such as help with utilities, food, housing, medications, and burial, among other services. Different programs may have different eligibility requirements.

☎ 281-238-3502 (Rosenberg office)

☎ 281-403-8050 (Missouri City office)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: social services)

Harris County Office of Social Services

provides assistance to low-to-moderate county residents in need of emergency utility assistance, case management, or veteran services.

Services are available to residents of the following areas:

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Harris County Housing and Community Resource Center

has a website that helps people find affordable housing. It has many specialty searches, including disability-friendly apartments and Section 8 apartments.

Serves: Most of Harris County, including the City of Houston

☎ 1-877-428-8844

💻 www.harriscountytexashousing.org

The county's **Tax Assessor-Collector** handles property and vehicle taxes as well as other county functions.

☎ 713-274-8000 (Harris County)

💻 www.hctax.net

☎ 281-341-9267 (Fort Bend County – property)

☎ 281-341-3709 (Fort Bend County – auto)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: tax assessor)

☎ 936-539-7897 (Montgomery)

💻 www.mctx.org
(keyword: tax assessor)

☎ 979-826-7620 (Waller/Hempstead)

☎ 281-934-2406 (Waller/Brookshire)

💻 co.waller.tx.us
(keyword: tax office)

Emergency Management Offices provide up to date information on emergencies affecting the area. Residents can also sign up for alerts to be emailed or texted to them.

☎ 713-881-3100 (Harris)

💻 www.readyharris.org

☎ 281-342-6185 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.fbcoem.org

☎ 936-523-3900 (Montgomery)

💻 www.mctxoem.org

☎ 979-826-8282 (Waller)

💻 wcoem.org

SECTION 9.2 MEDICAID

Medicaid is a federal and state health coverage program for low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly, and people with disabilities. Each state has its own rules for eligibility and services. In Texas, most Medicaid plans are managed care plans.

Texas Medicaid Qualifications

- Resident of Texas
- U.S. national, citizen, permanent resident or legal alien
- In need of health care or health insurance assistance
- Low income (call Medicaid for requirements)
- Must be age 65 or older, disabled, caring for a child, or participating in the Medicaid Buy-In program

How to Apply

A person can apply for Medicaid online through the Health Insurance Marketplace or by contacting the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Services Medicaid May Pay For

Medicaid covers some inpatient services such as hospital services (doctor visits, emergency care, x-rays, vision care and more), nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities for people who have intellectual disabilities such as day programs and services for people who are 65 and older and live in a residential facility for mental diseases.

Medicaid Nursing Facilities

A nursing facility is a place where long term care and other services and support are provided. Coverage for Medicaid Nursing Facility Services is only available for services that are given in a nursing home that is licensed and certified by

the state as a Medicaid Nursing Facility. Medicaid Nursing Facility Services are only available when a person has no other way to pay for service and he or she is eligible for Medicaid.

Nursing Facility Services include

- Skilled nursing or medical care and related services
- Rehabilitation for an injury, disability or illness
- Long term care such as constant health related care and services for a mental or physical condition

Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) program

The Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) program offers Medicaid health care services at a low-cost to working individuals who have a disability. MBI offers the same health care benefits as regular Medicaid. Some people have to pay a monthly fee for the program. The cost is based on money earned from working and any other money a person gets that is over \$733.

How to Apply for Medicaid Buy-In

- Download the H1200 form
- Call 2-1-1 and ask to have the H1200 sent in the mail
- Pick up the H1200 form at an HHSC benefits office

How Medicaid Works with Medicare

Medicaid covers some services that are not covered by Medicare. Services that are covered by both Medicare and Medicaid are first paid for by Medicare and then Medicaid pays the rest up to what is allowed by the state's payment limit.

Ways to Qualify for Medicaid Long-term Care When a Person's Income or Assets are More Than Medicaid Allows

Medicaid reviews a person's assets and income for the last 5 years to decide if a person qualifies for Medicaid. The 5-year period starts the day a person applies for Medicaid. This is called the look-back period. There are still ways someone may be able to qualify for Medicaid.

Also, there are Medicaid provisions that protect the "well-spouse" so that he or she does not have to become very poor in order for his or her loved one to qualify for Medicaid.

Financial Help for Medicare/Medicaid Eligible People

If someone qualifies for both Medicare and Medicaid, he or she may be able to get help with Medicare premiums, deductibles, or his or her copay share.

Help for When a Person Loses Medicaid Benefits Because of a Cost of Living Adjustment

In some cases, a person who loses Medicaid coverage because he or she makes too much money after a cost of living adjustment may be able to be requalified for Medicaid. If the person was

- eligible to receive both Social Security retirement, survivors, or disability benefits and SSI at the same time
- is currently ineligible for SSI
- is currently receiving some type of Social Security benefits, and
- after adjustments, have an income that made that person eligible for SSI when he or she was last eligible for both SSI and Social Security benefits then he or she may qualify for Medicaid under the Pickle Program. Contact Texas HHSC for more information.

Medicaid Appeals

If a person is turned down for Medicaid, it is important to follow the appeal information on the letter in a timely manner. Missing the deadline may mean that person can no longer appeal. See Section 18.3 for legal resources that may be able to help.

Medicaid Estate Recovery Program (MERP)

When a person receives help through Medicaid for long-term care, such as nursing homes or home-based services, the state may try to reclaim some of the money spent after the person dies through the Medicaid Estate Recovery Program (MERP). The state will not always try to reclaim money. For example, if the person's spouse is alive or an unmarried adult child lived in the home for at least one year before the person died, the state will not ask for money. Also, if paying back the money from the person's estate (property a person has when he or she dies) would be very difficult for the person's family, the state may not try to recover the money. For example:

- if a Medicaid Estate Recovery claim would cause other family members to have to apply for public benefits or would keep them from getting off public benefits
- if the person's estate was a family business for at least a year and provides the family's income
- if the home is worth less than \$100,000 and the person's family is low income

then the state may choose not to seek reimbursement.

If the family has receipts to show that the person's home was maintained while he or she was in a nursing home, that amount may be taken into account when the state tries to recover money spent on Medicaid. Additionally, other claims are paid before the state can make a request. For example, a person's funeral costs, mortgage, and other debts will be paid before the state receives any money. Family members will never have to pay

for services under MERP. The state will only take what is available from the estate.

The state contracts with a private company, HMS, to handle Medicaid Estate Recovery claims. Any letters received about MERP and questions about claims should be directed to HMS.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

HMS is the State's contractor for Medicaid Estate Recovery Claims. For questions about a claim or to file a hardship waiver, contact HMS directly.

☎ 1-800-641-9356

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has information about Medicaid, how to apply, and how to access Medicaid related programs.

For applications

☎ 2-1-1 (to request a form or to find a local office)

☎ 1-800-252-8263 (to request a form or find a local office)

💻 yourtexasbenefits.hhsc.texas.gov
(online application)

To find and compare residential facilities that accept Medicaid

☎ 1-855-937-2372 (help identifying services)

☎ 1-800-458-9858 (to apply for HHSC/DADS services)

💻 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

To request transportation assistance for medical appointments

☎ 1-855-687-4786 (Houston area)

☎ 1-877-633-8747 (outside of Houston)

For the **Medicaid Buy-In Program**

☎ 2-1-1 (to request form H1200)

☎ 1-877-541-7095 (to locate an office)

💻 hhs.texas.gov
(keyword: Medicaid buy in)

For **Medicaid Estate Recovery Program** general questions

☎ 1-800-458-9858 (option 8)

💻 hhs.texas.gov
(keyword: guide Medicaid estate program)

The **Texas Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Unit** handles abuse complaints when the victim is receiving long-term care in a place that receives Medicaid funding.

☎ 713-225-0691

☎ 1-800-252-8011

✉ mfcu@texasattorneygeneral.gov

Texas Medicaid Health Partnership is the state's website to find medical providers that accept Medicaid. A person can also call to find a provider.

☎ 2-1-1

☎ 1-800-252-8263

💻 www.tmhp.com

SECTION 9.3 MEDICARE

Medicare is the government's health insurance program for older adults and people with disabilities. Parts of Medicare are similar to private health insurance where you generally have to pay a premium. While Medicare typically pays for most of a person's healthcare related expenses, there are some exceptions, such as personal care and homemaker services.

Medicare Qualifications

- 65 years old or older
- U.S. citizen or someone who has a resident visa, and has lived in the U.S. for at least five years in a row
- Some people younger than 65 may qualify if they have certain medical conditions or disabilities

Important Things to Know About Medicare

- A person may be eligible for Medicare even if he or she is not eligible for Social Security
- Everyone should apply for Medicare at age 65 or risk a penalty fee
- Medicare does not send out reminders or information about enrolling in Medicare. A person must contact Social Security directly (online, in person, or by phone) in order to get enrolled in a plan
- People who are receiving Social Security retirement, disability benefits or railroad retirement checks before turning 65 will automatically be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B
- Each year a person can add or change his or her plan during the open enrollment period of October 15 – December 7

Common Terms and What They Mean

Creditable coverage- a plan that has "creditable coverage" is expected to pay, on average, as much as the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage.

Original Medicare- both Medicare Parts A and B.

Custodial care- care that does not require a license, like help with bathing, dressing, eating, getting in or out of a bed or chair, moving around, and using the bathroom. It may also include health-related care like using eye drops.

Home health services- services that can be given in a person's home for an illness or injury. This can include wound care for pressure sores or a surgical wound, injections, monitoring serious illness and unstable health status and more.

Homemaker services- help with shopping, cleaning, and doing laundry.

Personal care- usually given by home health aides, who help people with using the bathroom, getting dressed, and bathing.

People Who are Covered by Employer Insurance at age 65

People who are covered by their employer's or spouse's insurance may stay with their insurance if it is creditable coverage.

People who are covered by an employer's health insurance plan when they turn 65 should ask if their coverage is creditable and how it works with Medicare so that they do not miss the enrollment period. There is a penalty fee for enrolling in Medicare late. If the insurance company does not provide a letter, a person should request a letter that says the health coverage is creditable coverage. If someone does have creditable coverage, Medicare suggests signing up for Part A, which helps pay hospital costs not covered by a group health insurance plan.

Enrollment Periods, Coverage, and Plan Options

There are 5 life events that trigger Medicare special enrollment periods under which someone may enroll in Medicare. The Medicare Enrollment Periods Chart, Section 9.3, provides dates, definitions and examples.

If someone does not enroll in Medicare the first time he or she is eligible, it could result in fewer plans to choose from and possibly having to pay a penalty. If a person qualifies for the special enrollment period, they may not have to pay a penalty. See the Medicare Enrollment Periods Chart for more information.

Parts of Medicare and What They Mean

Medicare has four parts

- **Part A** (Hospital Insurance)
- **Part B** (Medical Insurance)
- **Part C** (Medicare Advantage Plans)
- **Part D** (Prescription Drug Plans)

Most people have to enroll themselves in Medicare. The following people will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A & Part B by Social Security:

- Anyone receiving benefits from Social Security or the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB)
- Under 65 years old and have a disability
- Diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease)
- Diagnosed with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

Part A (Hospital Insurance)

Medicare recommends people sign up for Medicare Part A when they turn 65 even if they have private health insurance. Most people get Part A when they apply for Medicare. To receive Part A for free, a person must have earned enough credits by working. If someone has worked

for at least 10 years, and paid Medicare taxes, he or she most likely has enough credits. For people who are not sure if they have enough credits, they can contact Social Security. If someone cannot get Part A for free, he or she can purchase it.

Part A covers:

- Hospital care
- Nursing home care (as long as custodial care is not the only care needed)
- Skilled nursing facility care
- Hospice
- Some home health services (intermittent skilled nursing care, physical therapy, speech-language pathology services, continued occupational services, and more)

Medicare does not pay for:

- 24-hour-a-day care at home
- Meals delivered to a person's home
- Homemaker services
- Personal care

Part B (Medical Insurance)

There is a base premium for Part B. The base premium amount usually changes each year. It will be \$134 for 2017. To determine the amount a person will pay, contact the Social Security Administration.

Part B covers medically necessary services and preventative services, such as:

- Clinical research
- Ambulance services
- Durable medical equipment (crutches, blood sugar test strips, hospital beds, etc.)
- Mental health (inpatient, outpatient, partial hospitalization)
- Getting a second opinion before surgery
- Limited outpatient prescription drugs

Part B Premium Costs

Medicare costs much more than what a person pays. For most people, the government pays 75 percent of that cost leaving beneficiaries to pay the 25 percent. If a person has a higher income, the government expects the person to pay a bigger part of the cost. The government uses the most recent tax return on file to determine if a person has a higher income and is expected to pay more.

Higher-Income Beneficiaries

- Determined by the most recent tax return. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reports the tax return to SSA.
- Pay higher premiums for Part B and Medicare prescription drug coverage.
- People may have to pay 35, 50, 65, or 80 percent of the premium, depending on their most recent tax return.
- If a person must pay a higher premium, the SSA will send the person a letter with the amount and the reason he/she must pay the higher premium.

Original Medicare

Original Medicare is both Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Part B (Medical Insurance). This plan allows people to choose their healthcare provider as long as the provider accepts Medicare. If the provider does not accept Medicare, people will have to pay the entire bill themselves. The costs of Original Medicare are the same that someone would pay for Part A and Part B individually. Original Medicare does not include prescription drug coverage.

Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans)

Medicare Advantage Plans are Medicare health plans offered through a private company. These plans only offer Medicare Part A and Part B (Original Medicare).

- A person still has Medicare if he or she has a Medicare Advantage Plan
- All Medicare covered services, except hospice, are covered under these plans

Things to Know About Medicare Advantage Plans

- There is sometimes a monthly premium for Medicare Advantage in addition to the Part B premium
- A person may have to pay all the costs of a service that his or her plan says is not medically necessary
- Each plan can cost a different amount and the rules about the getting the services can change by plan
- If a person is not sure if a service is covered under his or her plan, he or she should check with their provider before receiving the service
- Many plans offer special services or benefits such as vision, hearing, dental, and health and wellness programs

Part D (Prescription Drug Plans)

Part D plans are run by private companies. These plans pay some of the cost for prescription drugs and prescription drug insurance premiums.

Things to Know About Part D

- Must cover all commercially available vaccines that are medically necessary AND not covered under Part B
- Drug plans may have rules that vary by plan. A person should call his or her plan for more information

OTHER PLAN OPTIONS

Medigap (Medicare Supplement Insurance)

Medigap is a health insurance plan that is sold by private companies. It supplements the Original Medicare benefits, so a person must have Original Medicare (Medicare Part A and Part B) to qualify for any Medigap plan. Some Medigap plans cover services that Original Medicare does not cover.

What to Know About Medigap

- A person must have Original Medicare. Anyone with a Medicare Advantage plan cannot buy Medigap
- There is a monthly premium for Medigap in addition to the premium for Medicare Part B
- A Medigap plan only covers one person, so each person that wants a Medigap plan must buy one separately
- Medigap plans are not allowed to include prescription drug coverage. A person can join Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Plan) if he or she wants prescription drug coverage
- It is illegal for anyone to sell a Medigap plan to someone who has a Medicare Medical Savings Account (MSA) Plan
- A person can buy a Medigap plan from any company that is licensed to sell Medigap in the person's state.
- Some Medigap plans include coverage for when a person travels outside of the U.S.
- Cancelling an entire Medigap plan may have penalties when a person tries to enroll in a new Medicare drug plan

Medigap Does Not Cover

- Long-term care
- Vision or dental care
- Hearing aides
- Eyeglasses
- Private-duty nursing

Medicare Enrollment Periods

Enrollment Periods	When to Sign Up	Example
Initial Enrollment (Parts A, B, C, & D)	A person has a 7 month window around his or her 65th birthday to enroll.	If a person is turning 65 on July 25, he can enroll in Medicare from April 1 – October 31.
Open Enrollment (Make changes to current Medicare coverage)	October 15 – December 7 A person who currently has any Medicare coverage can switch Medicare plans or remove plans.	A person can switch from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage • Medicare Advantage to Original Medicare • Medicare Advantage to another Medicare Advantage plan
Special Enrollment (Part C & D)	When a life change occurs that affects health coverage. Dates to enroll depend on the situation. Call Medicare for more information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving to an area that a person's plan does not cover • Losing employer coverage
General Enrollment (Parts A, B, & D)	January 1 – March 31 If a person did not enroll in Medicare when he or she was first eligible, this is another chance to enroll.	A person turned 65 on July 25 and did not enroll in Medicare between April 1 and November 1 of the year he or she turned 65.
Medigap Open Enrollment (Must have Medicare Part B) See p. 125 for more information	6 month period that begins on the first day of the month a person turns 65.	If a person is turning 65 on July 25, he or she can enroll in Medigap from July 1 – December 31.

Original Medicare vs. Medicare Advantage

Questions	Original Medicare	Medicare Advantage Plans
What is the cost?	Depends on work history and current income. Most people get Part A free and pay for Part B. Call Social Security for individual information.	A person pays the Medicare cost determined by Social Security, the premium of his or her Medicare Advantage plan, the deductible AND copay.
Are routine vision and dental services covered?	No, routine services are not covered. Call Medicare for information on what non-routine services may be covered.	Maybe. Some plans include these services. Call the plan provider.
Can I buy a Medigap policy?	Yes, if it is within an enrollment window. Call (insurance provider) for more information.	No. A person CANNOT buy a Medigap policy if he or she has a Medicare Advantage Plan.
Can I see providers nationwide?	Yes. A person can go to any doctor or hospital in the U.S. that accepts Medicare.	Usually not. Most have networks that a person must use if he or she wants the plan to cover care.
Do I need a referral to see a specialist?	No.	Most likely.
Are my prescription drugs covered?	No. A person must buy a drug plan separately if he or she wants drug coverage.	Most likely. Most Advantage Plans include prescription drug coverage.
Is there an out-of-pocket limit on what I can spend on my health care?	No. There is no yearly limit on what a person pays out-of-pocket.	Yes. There is a yearly limit on out-of-pocket costs a person pays for medical services.
What are the other costs?	Part A is free for most people. Part B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly premium starting at \$134 for 2017. • A deductible of \$183 for 2017 • 20% coinsurance after meeting deductible 	Monthly premium, deductibles, copayments and/or coinsurance varies by plan. Call plan for more information.

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAMS

Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) pays for Medicare Part A premium, Medicare Part B premium, and pays some deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments.

Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) helps pay for Medicare part B premiums when people earn more than the maximum income for the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program.

Qualifying Individual (QI) pays for Medicare part B premiums.

Qualified Disabled Working Individual (QDWI) will help pay for Medicare Part A if a person meets certain conditions. Find more information in Section 2.

If a person qualifies for a QMB, SLMB, or QI program, he or she automatically qualifies for Extra Help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage.

LETTERS A PERSON MAY RECEIVE RELATED TO MEDICARE

Medicare Summary Notice (MSN)

A Medicare Summary Notice is a notice that people with Original Medicare may receive in the mail every 3 months. This letter shows all of the services or supplies a person has received that have been billed to Medicare by health care providers. The MSN also tells a person what Medicare paid for the services and/or supplies and how much that person owes his or her provider. If a person has received any services or medical supplies, he or she will get a Medicare Summary Notice for the 3-month period. If a person has not received any services or medical supplies during a 3-month period, they will not get an MSN for that period.

- A person should always check his or her MSN to make sure that he or she received all the services or supplies listed.
- If an item or service is denied, Medicare suggests that a person call his or her health care provider's office to make sure they submitted the correct information. The office can submit the information again if it was not correct. A person can submit an appeal if he or she does not agree with a coverage or payment decision made by Medicare.

Advanced Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN)

An Advanced Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage is a letter that tells a person that his or her services or equipment may not be covered by Medicare. The health care provider or equipment supplier may provide this notice to a person. ABN gives a person the information he or she needs to decide to receive the service or not. A person should understand that he or she may have to pay for the services.

Tips to Prevent Medicare Fraud

- Only carry a Medicare card when going to a doctor's appointment. If a doctor already has a person's Medicare information, he or she should not need to bring it to the appointment.
- Never give a Medicare number to a stranger. People should guard their Medicare number like their credit cards.
- A person should never give his or her Medicare number in exchange for free medical care. A truly free service does not require a Medicare number.
- A person should not be pressured into getting equipment or services he or she does not need.
- Always review Medicare statements to check for mistakes and always keep a record of visits to the doctor.
- A person should never sign a blank form and always get a copy of everything that he or she signs.
- A person should ask his or her doctor to explain charges on his or her Medicare Summary Notice that he or she does not understand.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Center for Medicare Advocacy provides self-help guides for people who want to appeal a Medicare denial. In some cases, it also can provide legal support.

☎ 202-293-5760

💻 www.medicareadvocacy.org

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services handles complaints related to prescription drug plans and HIPAA violations.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

☎ 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

Gateway to Care Medicare Education and Access Program helps older adults figure out what health care programs and services they may be able to access to keep costs lower.

☎ 713-783-4616

💻 gatewaytocare.org

KEPRO is the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Texas. If someone wants to file a complaint about a provider or appeal a Medicare Advantage Plan's denial of service or a hospital's decision to discharge someone, KEPRO handles the issue.

☎ 1-844-430-9504

☎ 1-855-843-4776 (TTY)

💻 www.keproqio.com

Medicare.gov has information about general benefits and answers to most Medicare questions. It also has tools to find doctors and facilities that take Medicare. Each year, Medicare puts out its official handbook called Medicare & You. This book has up to date information on what Medicare covers.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

☎ 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

💻 www.medicare.gov

Medicare recipients can use **mymedicare.gov** to compare health and drug plans, review claims, and view Medicare Summary notices online.

💻 mymedicare.gov

Medicare's **Competitive Acquisition Ombudsman (CAO)** handles complaints from Medicare beneficiaries about companies that supply durable medical equipment, prosthetics, and other supplies of that type. A person must first complain to the supplier, but if the problem is not resolved, contact Medicare to be referred to a CAO.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

☎ 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

💻 www.medicare.gov

Medicare's **Replacement Card Program** helps people whose cards are lost or become damaged. Replacement cards can be ordered online through My Social Security, by phone, or in person at the local Social Security office.

☎ 1-800-772-1213

☎ 1-877-325-0778 (TTY)

💻 www.ssa.gov/medicarecard

Medicare's **Pharmaceutical Assistance Program** website has information on programs that may be able to help someone get the prescription medicine he or she needs.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

💻 www.medicare.gov

(keyword: pharmaceutical assistance)


The **Medicare Plan Finder** allows someone to see what Medicare plans are available in his or her area or to narrow down plan options based on personal medical information.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

💻 www.medicare.gov

(keyword: plan finder)


Medicare Rights Center has a telephone helpline where people can call with their questions about Medicare. It also screens people for additional benefits. Calls are taken in both English and Spanish. The Center also offers Medicare Interactive, an online tool to help people navigate the health care system.


 1-800-333-4114

 www.medicarerights.org


 www.medicareinteractive.org

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging provides assistance in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and English, including help with Medicare issues.

 1-800-582-4218 (Chinese)

 1-800-582-4259 (Korean)

 1-800-582-4336 (Vietnamese)

 1-800-336-2722 (English)

 napca.org


The **Social Security Administration** is where someone can enroll in Medicare for the first time. If the person is enrolling in Medicare but not Social Security, the application can be done online. Applications can also be made by phone or in person. Appointments are needed for in-person appointments.

 1-800-772-1213 (apply or find an office)

 1-800-325-0778 (TTY)

 www.ssa.gov/medicare/


Texas Attorney General's Office takes complaints from people who believe a company, including a Medicare Advantage Plan, is violating the do not call list, trying to commit fraud, or is trying to mislead a person into signing up for a plan he or she does not want.

 1-800-621-0508

 texasattorneygeneral.gov

(keyword: consumer protection)


Texas Department of Insurance takes complaints against insurance companies. On its website, it has some guidance about how to file a complaint.

 1-800-252-3439


 www.tdi.texas.gov

(keyword: insurance complaint)

Texas Health and Human Services Commission can help a person with his or her complaints about the quality of care received from a doctor or facility participating in Medicare, such as drug errors, not getting treatment after a condition changed, getting discharged from a hospital too soon, or inappropriate treatment.


 1-800-252-9240


Texas Legal Services Center offers legal services to people who are ages 60 and older or Medicare eligible on a variety of legal issues. Call (leave a voicemail if no one answers) to discuss a legal issue.

 1-800-622-2520

 www.tlsc.org

Texas Senior Medicare Patrol takes reports of suspected abuse or fraud involving Medicare benefits, such as paying for services not received. It also educates Medicare recipients about Medicare fraud and abuse.

 713-341-6187

 1-888-341-6187

 www.texassmp.org

APPLYING FOR EXTRA HELP AND MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAMS

The **Area Agencies on Aging** (AAA) benefits counseling and can assist with screening for extra help and Medicare Savings Programs. The Harris County AAA serves only Harris County while the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA) serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area Counties.

☎ 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

☎ 1-800-213-8471

☎ 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

☎ 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

Gateway to Care Medicare Education and Access Program helps older adults figure out what health care programs and services they may be able to access to keep costs lower.

☎ 713-783-4616

💻 gatewaytocare.org

Social Security Administration can answer questions about Medical Savings Programs.

☎ 1-800-772-1213

☎ 1-800-325-0778 (TTY)

💻 www.ssa.gov/medicare/prescriptionhelp/

SECTION 9.4 SOCIAL SECURITY

The Social Security Administration is responsible for many government benefits to include, retirement, disability and Medicare (See Section 9.3).

Applying for Benefits

There are three periods when a person can apply for retirement benefits: before, at, or after full retirement age. Full Retirement Age is currently between 66 and 67, depending on a person's birth year.

Before Full Retirement Age

A person can begin receiving retirement benefits as early as age 62. If a person begins receiving retirement benefits before full retirement age, his or her benefits will be reduced by up to 30% for the entire time he or she is eligible to receive them. Choosing to receive benefits before full retirement age may also affect the benefits a person is entitled to when his or her spouse dies.

At Full Retirement Age

To receive full benefits, a person must reach his or her Full Retirement Age, before applying for benefits. Full Retirement Age is based on the year a person was born. For people born in 1937 or earlier, their full retirement age is 65. See the Social Security website for a Full Retirement Age chart.

After Full Retirement Age

If a person continues working after his or her full retirement age and waits before collecting benefits, his or her benefit amount will be higher, also known as delayed retirement credit. The benefit increase only goes up to age 70 and will no longer increase even if a person continues to delay taking benefits.

What You Need to Apply

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Marriage/Divorce information
- U.S. Military Service (branch and service dates)
- Children's names and dates of birth if disabled prior to age 22, unmarried and under age 18, are 18 or 19 years old and attending high school full-time
- Employer information (current year and last 2 years)
- Direct Deposit information

Working While Receiving Benefits

If a person is working and receiving early retirement benefits, Social Security has an annual earnings limit. Social Security will reduce the amount of monthly benefits if a person earns more than the annual limit. Once a person reaches full retirement age, his or her benefits will increase to include the amount deducted while working and receiving benefits. Contact Social Security for more information.

Survivor Benefits

When a person dies and has earned Social Security benefits, family members can receive the deceased person's benefits, survivors benefits. Family members that may be eligible to receive survivor benefits are widows or widowers, dependent parents, and unmarried children under certain conditions.

Widow/Widower

The earliest a widow or widower may begin receiving Social Security survivor's benefits is at age 60 and until his or her full retirement age. If benefits start before full retirement age, the monthly amount may be reduced as much as 28.5%.

Usually, if a person is receiving survivor's benefits and will qualify for his or her own retirement benefit that is more than their survivors benefit, he or she can switch to their own benefit between ages 62 and 70. The rules vary by situation. Contact Social Security for more information.

Dependent Parents

If someone who was helping his or her parent(s) with at least half of the money they needed to live dies, the parent(s) may be able to claim the deceased child's Social Security benefits. Parent(s) must be at least 62 years old.

When a Person Dies

Report the death of a Social Security beneficiary as soon as possible. A small benefit is paid to a surviving spouse or eligible child. In most cases, the funeral home will report the person's death to Social Security. For more information see Section 5.4.

Same Sex Couples

Social Security recognizes same-sex marriages and other non-marital relationships. Contact Social Security for more information.

Social Security Services

A person can use Social Security services in-person, online or over the telephone. Some benefits must be applied for in-person, such as survivor benefits. A few services that might be easier to access online than in-person are:

- Applying for Social Security benefits
- Requesting replacement Social Security, Medicare card, SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S
- Finding out if someone qualifies for benefits
- Estimating future benefits
- Getting benefit verification letter (includes Medicare and SSI)
- Starting or changing direct deposit

Direct Deposit

Social Security benefits are direct deposited, which means that they are paid directly into a person's bank account or special prepaid card if that person does not have a bank account. It is rare for Social Security to issue a check. The Direct Deposit program for Social Security and other federal benefits programs is Go Direct and the prepaid card program is called DirectExpress.

Garnishment

Social Security garnishment is when someone has the right to reduce a person's benefits because of unpaid debt to the government or unpaid child support or alimony. The government can also garnish benefits for taxes, student loans, and federal housing loans. No one can garnish Social Security benefits except the government.

Taxes

Many people will not pay taxes on their Social Security Benefits. For people receiving social security who have to file a federal tax return because of their income, they likely will also have to pay taxes on their social security benefits.

Fraud

Fraud is misusing benefits, including one's own. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is responsible for investigating and handling fraud cases.

Social Security fraud includes, but not limited to:

- Giving false information to Social Security
- Not reporting a death and using the deceased person's benefits
- Hiding information that can affect eligibility for Social Security benefits
- Using someone else's benefits for anything besides caring for the person

Money Management

If someone has issues managing their benefit money, the Social Security Administration has a Representative Payment Program that may be able to help. This program assigns a family member, friend, or organization to manage the person's funds and make sure his or her basic needs are met. Refer to Sections 3.1 and 15.4 for more information.

Financial Assistance Programs


The Social Security Administration has two programs that provide financial support to people with disabilities and/or little to no income: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Refer to Section 3.1 for more information.


When a Social Security Recipient Dies


When someone receiving social security passes away, Social Security should be notified immediately. Many times, a funeral home will do this for the family. Wherever Social Security benefits are deposited, such as a bank or the DirectExpress prepaid card, should also be notified immediately. Social Security benefits for the month when a person died may need to be returned. If the person left behind a spouse that was living with him or her, that spouse may receive a one-time \$255 payment. Other benefits may be available to the surviving spouse. Talk with Social Security for more information.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES


The **Social Security Administration** handles all matters related to Social Security.

 1-800-772-1213 (general information and office locator)

 1-877-325-0778 (TTY)

 www.ssa.gov
(information and questions)

 secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/rib
(apply for Social Security)

 www.ssa.gov/myaccount
(Social Security online services)

Social Security Offices

Houston NE (77039)

Houston NW (77040)


Houston SE (77054)


Houston SW (77099) – Also serves all of Fort Bend County


Conroe (77304)- Also serves all of Montgomery County


Brenham (77833) – Also serves all of Waller County

Social Security has many other helpful resources to help with retirement planning or managing benefits.

 www.ssa.gov/retire/estimator.html
(benefits estimator)

 www.ssa.gov/espanol
(Social Security information in Spanish)


 www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/current.htm
(list of services people can do online)

 www.ssa.gov/planners/taxes.html
(information about taxes and social security)


The **Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General** handles reports of Social Security Fraud. The fraud hotline takes calls from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Fraud can also be reported directly to the Social Security Administration.

 1-800-269-0271 (Fraud Hotline)

 1-866-501-2101 (TTY)

 oig.ssa.gov
(keyword: report fraud)

The U.S. Treasury's **GoDirect** program handles questions about direct deposit and the prepaid debit card.

 1-800-333-1795

 fiscal.treasury.gov/GoDirect/

SECTION 9.5 VOTER AND ELECTED OFFICIAL INFORMATION

This section contains information about voting, voter education, and how to contact elected officials.


Voting identification requirements have changed several times over the last few years. The Texas Secretary of State or the county website will have information for the next election.


All adults who are age 65 and older or who are disabled may request a ballot by mail. The form may be downloaded or ordered from the Texas Secretary of State or requested from the county's Early Voting Clerk.

Many cities and counties have information on how to reach elected officials. For locations not listed, call the main city number.

 www.houstontx.gov/council/whoismymc.html


 www.harriscountytexas.gov/electedofficials.aspx


 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: elected officials)

 www.co.waller.tx.us/page/ElectedOfficialsContactList


 www.legacy.mctx.org/election

Election Day Problem hotlines are available in many languages to help voters experiencing problems at the polls. The hotlines are managed by the League of Women Voters.


 1-866-687-8683 (English)

 1-888-839-8682 (Spanish)

 1-888-274-8683 (several Asian languages)

 1-844-418-1682 (Arabic)

The **League of Women Voters of the Houston Area** puts out an election guide before major elections. It covers state elections as well as those in Harris County. Candidates can submit answers to questions for voters to learn more about them. The voter guides are available online and in printed form for free.

 713-784-2923

 www.lwvhouston.org

The **Texas Legislative Council** has a website where people can find out who represents them in Congress, the Texas Legislature, and the State Board of Education. The website also lists contact information for each official.

 www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us

The **Texas Secretary of State's** website can tell a person whether he or she is registered to vote.

 teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov


The **Texas Tribune** has a list of the state's major elected officials and how to contact them.

 www.texastribune.org/directory/

Vote411.org has voting information that is based on a person's address. The website has information about candidates, when available, registered voter verification, and other voting topics.

 www.vote411.org

VoteTexas.Gov is the state's website for election information, including voter rights, answers to common questions, and how to register a complaint.

 1-800-252-8683

 www.votetexas.gov

The **Voter Registrar** or **Election Office** handles voter registration questions and issues. It is also where voters can request an absentee ballot.

 713-755-6965 (Harris County)


 www.harrisvotes.org


 281-341-8670 (Fort Bend)

 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: election administration)

 936-539-7843 (Montgomery)

 legacy.mctx.org/election/

 979-826-7643 (Waller)

 co.waller.tx.us
(keyword: elections)

SECTION 10 HEALTH CARE

SECTION 10.1 COUNTY LOW-COST HEALTH CARE

Each county has to provide health care to low-income residents who cannot afford it, whether through hospital districts like Harris and Montgomery Counties or through indigent health care programs, like Fort Bend or Waller Counties. Through these programs, residents can receive basic health care services, such as physicals, immunizations, hospital services, and medical screenings. Some programs may provide more services, such as help with diabetes equipment, psychological services, and vision and dental care.

Harris County has a system of clinics and hospitals. Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties contract with private doctors and facilities to pay for treatment on behalf of eligible patients.

COUNTY PROGRAMS

Harris Health System (formerly known as Harris County Hospital District) takes private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare (including most Medicare Advantage Plans), and Workers Compensation. It also offers a sliding scale for County residents with lower incomes or no health insurance.

To qualify for financial assistance with health care (formerly known as the Gold Card), a person must first apply either by mail or by visiting an eligibility center. The application is available on the Harris Health website, and eligibility centers are located in Acres Homes, Pasadena, Alief, Aldine, and South Acres/Crestmont Park. Receiving financial assistance through Harris Health is not the same as having health insurance.

Harris Health has primary care clinics, same day walk-in clinics for quick issues, specialty care locations, and hospitals.

☎ 713-566-6509 (for all enrollment centers)

☎ 713-526-4243 (appointments/locations)

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: apply financial assistance)

Primary Harris Health Clinic Locations

Northeast

Aldine (77039)

Settegast (77028)

Northwest/West

Acres Homes (77088)

Cypress (77070)

Long Branch (77055)

Northwest (77018)

Southeast/South

Gulfgate (77012)

Martin Luther King Jr. (77047)

Southwest

El Franco Lee (77099)

Vallbona (77074)

Central

Casa de Amigos (77009)

Thomas Street (77009-HIV only)

Outside of Houston

Baytown (77520/Baytown)

Danny Jackson (Katy/77449)

Squatty Lyons (77338/Humble)

Strawberry (77506/Pasadena)

Same-Day Clinics (no appointment needed)

Ben Taub (Med Center/77030)

Margo Hillard Alford (NW/77026)

Monroe (SE/77017)

Robindell (SW/77081)

Sareen (SW/77031)

Sunset Heights (Central/77009)

Specialty Clinics

Bayland Geriatric (77074 – older adult specialty)

Dental (77021 – dental only)

Outpatient Center (77026 – specialty diagnostic and outpatient surgery)

Riverside Dialysis (77004 – kidney failure treatments)

Smith Clinic (77054 – specialty care)


Hospitals


Ben Taub (Medical Center)

LBJ Hospital (NE)

Quentin Mease Hospital (Medical Center)


Harris County Public Health has four clinics that provide basic medical services and screenings. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are highly encouraged. Clinic locations are Antoine/Northwest, Baytown, Humble, and Pasadena/Southeast.

 **713-212-6800**

 publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov
(keyword: health wellness clinic)


Fort Bend County Indigent Health Care is for low-income residents with inadequate health insurance.


 **281-341-6624**

 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: indigent health)


Montgomery County's Health Care

Assistance Program (HCAP) is for low-income residents with no public or private health insurance.

 **936-523-5101**

 www.mchd-tx.org
(keyword: HCAP)

Waller County Indigent Health Care is for low-income residents with inadequate health insurance.

 www.co.waller.tx.us
(keyword: indigent health)

SECTION 10.2 DENTAL SERVICES

Medicare does not pay for routine dental services like cleanings, dentures, or fillings. Some Medicare Advantage plans will cover dental services.

Medicaid, itself, does not cover dental services, but some STAR+PLUS plans offer limited dental care as part of its value added, or extra, services.

For questions about dental coverage, contact the Medicare or Medicaid plan.

FIND A DENTIST

Greater Houston Dental Society provides referrals by zip code for the Greater Houston area.

 **713-961-4337**


 www.ghds.org

The **American Dental Association** has a tool to let people search for dentists by their location and their specialty. It also has a symptom checker where someone can enter in symptoms for possible conditions and treatments.

 www.mouthhealthy.org

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Medicaid Helpline

provides information on which dentists accept Medicaid.

 1-800-252-8263

FREE, LOW-COST, OR SLIDING SCALE SERVICES


AccessHealth takes Medicare, Medicaid, and most private insurance for dental services. Anyone without insurance may be eligible for discounted services. Dental services are provided in the Stafford Location.

 281-342-4530 (appointments)

 281-261-0182 (Stafford clinic)


 www.myaccesshealth.org

Avenue 360 Dental Clinic (formerly Bering Dental Clinic) provides HIV+ patients with a wide variety of dental services, ranging from general dental care and cleanings to root canals and dentures.

 713-341-3790

 www.beringomega.org

Denver Harbor Clinic's Family Assistance Program provides a range of low-cost dental services. Patients without dental insurance pay sliding scale fees. The clinic also provides medical services.


 713-343-5502


 www.denverharborclinic.org

Ibn Sina Foundation operates several clinics that provide free or reduced dental care to people who cannot afford it. Those with family income under 150% of the federal poverty level (\$24,030 for a family of 2). The clinics also take insurance. There are locations throughout Harris County.

 281-977-7462 (Wilcrest)

 281-990-7462 (Clear Lake)


 281-438-7462 (South Post Oak)

 281-695-7462 (North Shepherd)

 ibnsinafoundation.org

Smiles Foundation's Healthy Smiles for Texans

program offers dental care to people ages 62 and older, veterans without VA benefits, domestic violence survivors, and people who need dental care before chronic illness treatment. The program, which often gives people dentures or partials, has a wait list, and people are encouraged to talk with the program coordinator before applying.

 512-448-2441 Ext. 207

 www.tdasmls.org

El Centro de Corazon offers dental services such as cleaning, fillings, extractions, and root canals. Dental services are provided at the Eastwood (77023) location.

 713-660-1880 (appointments)

 www.elcentrodecorazon.org

Good Neighbor Dental Office provides dental care at an affordable price. Refer to the website for information on all non-dental health services offered at the Good Neighbor Healthcare Center.

 713-529-3260 (77007/Heights)

 713-387-7186 (77433/Cypress)

 www.gnhc.org

Harris Health System offers dental services such as cleanings, extractions, fillings, and dentures in 9 locations throughout Harris County. A Harris Health doctor has to refer someone for dentistry services. Dentistry services are available at the Dental Center, Acres Homes, Aldine, El Franco Lee, Gulfgate, Martin Luther King Jr., Strawberry, and Vallbona Health Centers. See Section 10.1 for clinic information.

☎ 713-526-4243 (patient appointment center)

💻 www.harrishealth.org

Interfaith Community Clinic provides basic and preventative dental care to the uninsured in Montgomery County. Individuals first must have an eligibility appointment to be approved for care.

☎ 281-364-7889

💻 interfaithcommunityclinic.org

Legacy Community Health provides dental examinations, fillings, and other dental services at three locations. Everyone is treated regardless of age or ability to pay.

☎ 832-548-5000 (Montrose/77006)

☎ 713-351-7350 (Baker-Ripley/77074)

☎ 832-548-5400 (Lyons/77020)

💻 www.legacycommunityhealth.org

Lone Star Community Health Center serves residents of Montgomery County. The center takes insurance, most Medicare and Medicaid plans, and Montgomery County's Health Care Assistance Program. There also is a sliding scale fee option. It offers basic and restorative dental services. Locations are available in Conroe, Spring, and Willis.

☎ 936-539-4004 (Conroe/Willis)

☎ 832-246-8700 (Spring)

💻 www.lonestarfamily.org

National Association of Counties offers a low-cost membership program to residents of participating counties that can give discounts on dental services for people without insurance. Enroll on the website or by contacting the county. Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and many other Texas counties

☎ 1-877-573-2395

💻 www.nacohealth.org

Pasadena Community Health Center

offers general dental services at low rates. In addition to Medicaid and some insurance, the clinic offers sliding scale fees for low-income people who qualify.

☎ 713-554-0510

💻 www.pasadenahealthcenter.com

San Jose Clinic offers low-cost dental services ranging from cleanings to dentures. People interested in services first have to complete an application and go to an eligibility appointment. The clinic is located close to Downtown Houston.

☎ 713-490-2610 (eligibility questions)

☎ 713-228-5716 (dental clinic)

💻 www.sanjoseclinic.org

Second Mile Mission Center offers free dental care to uninsured Fort Bend county residents. To receive services, a person must visit Second Mile to talk with a counselor and get an application and bring the application back to a counselor for review.

☎ 281-261-9199

💻 www.secondmile.org

UTHealth School of Dentistry has student and graduate clinics where fees are considerably less than going to a private dentist.

☎ 713-486-4000 (automated line)

💻 dentistry.uth.edu/patients/

VCare Clinics provides basic dental care and diagnostics. The clinic charges \$35 per office visit, and no appointments are necessary. Locations are available in Pasadena and Southeast Houston.


 713-944-2273 (Pasadena)

 713-640-2273 (Southeast Houston)

 www.vcareclinics.org

FILE A COMPLAINT

Texas State Board of Dental Examiners offers enforcement, licensing, and other related information to dentistry professionals and their patients.

 1-512-463-6400

 www.tsbde.texas.gov

SECTION 10.3 DOCTORS

Doctors have limited time to spend with each patient, so it is up to the patient to get the most out of the visit. There are things a person can do to prepare for a visit and information to bring to each appointment:

- Health insurance cards for all coverage
- A list of concerns, questions, and information to share
- Information on recent illnesses, tests, or surgeries
- What the current problems are, the symptoms, and whether they started suddenly or happened over time
- A list of current medications being taken and in what dosage, including prescriptions, vitamins, supplements, and over the counter medicine
- Any allergies or information on substances to which the person is sensitive
- Any aide devices, such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures
- Family medical history
- Information on tobacco, alcohol, or other substance use
- Copies of any health care directives

If a doctor says something that is not clear, do not hesitate to ask the doctor to repeat or restate the information. Don't be afraid to let a doctor

know that someone was not understood. Also, it may be helpful to write down directions or other information to make sure it is remembered after the visit.


Doctors sometimes have to ask sensitive, personal, or embarrassing questions, but they are only trying to get the information they need to make a proper diagnosis. Be honest in answering all questions, including about substance use or abuse or whether prescriptions are taken as they should be.

Some doctors, called geriatricians, have had special training in issues and diseases common to older people. They often specialize in treating people with multiple health issues.

The health insurance company is the first place to start to find a doctor that accepts that particular health insurance plan.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Ask My Nurse is a free service provided by Harris Health. Nurses are available 7 days a week to answer questions and provide guidance about whether emergency medical care is needed. Calls are answered in English and Spanish.


 713-634-1110


Gateway to Care helps older adults figure out what health care programs and services they may be able to access to keep costs lower.

 713-783-4616

 gatewaytocare.org


Medicare.gov has a tool that helps people find and compare doctors near them that accept original Medicare.

 1-800-633-4227

 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

 www.medicare.gov/physiciancompare/

Vial of Life provides a free product to store important medical information. If someone needs emergency care, doctors will already know about conditions, allergies, and medicines so that they can give better care quicker.

 1-888-931-1010

 www.vialoflife.com


WebMD is a database for health information, such as health-related news and medical graphics or images.

 www.webmd.com


FILE A COMPLAINT

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

can help a person with his or her complaints about the quality of care received from a doctor or facility participating in Medicare, such as drug errors, not getting treatment after a condition changed, getting discharged from a hospital too soon, or inappropriate treatment.

 1-800-252-9240

Texas Medical Board can be used to check a doctor's credentials or to file a complaint.

 1-800-248-4062


 www.tmb.state.tx.us/


SECTION 10.4 HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Medicare generally does not pay for hearing exams or hearing aids though some Medicare Advantage Plans offer hearing coverage.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES


Better Hearing Institute has an online quiz to help someone identify hearing loss and discuss ways to address it. It also has booklets with information on topics related to hearing loss prevention and treatment.

 1-800-327-9355

 www.betterhearing.org
(keyword: eguides)

Career and Recovery Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing

services offer education, training, and employment leads. Programs are run by deaf professionals or professionals skilled in communicating with the deaf and hard-of-hearing. All workshops and classes are conducted in American Sign Language.

 713-754-7000

 www.careerandrecovery.org

Hearing Loss Association of Houston

offers information, educational resources and support for people with hearing loss. Chapters are in Houston/Harris County and Montgomery County.

 www.hearingloss-houston.org


Houston Deaf Network provides resources, support, networking and education to hearing impaired individuals.


 www.houstondeafnetwork.com

National Association of the Deaf provides a wide range of information for deaf and hard of hearing individuals to help improve their quality of life and ensure equal access for them in their communities.

 www.nad.org


National Institute on Deafness and Other Communications Disorders has information about causes for hearing loss and how to protect hearing.


 1-800-241-1044

 1-800-241-1055 (TTY)

 nidcd.nih.gov/

The State's **Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP)** provides financial assistance for specialized assistive equipment or services for individuals whose disability interferes with their ability to access the telephone network.

 1-800-628-5115


 1-866-581-9328 (TTY)

Texas Health and Human Services Office of Deaf and Hard Hearing Services offers several services for the hearing impaired. It has information about financial resources for hearing aids and assistance with getting a phone better suited to people with hearing loss. It also a searchable list of state contractors.

 512-407-3250


 legacy.hhsc.state.tx.us/dhhs/findservices.asp

Texas Hearing and Service Dogs provides dogs that are custom trained for each client at no cost. Clients include people who are deaf or hearing impaired and people with mobility impairments. The application and wait time for a dog may take as much as two years.

 1-877-839-3647


 www.servicedogs.org


Vocational Rehabilitation Services has a program that may be able to help disabled older adults. The program often has a long wait list. The Houston office serves the Greater Houston area.

 713-521-1119

Specialized Telecommunications

Assistance Program (STAP) provides financial assistance for specialized assistive equipment or services for individuals whose disability interferes with their ability to access the telephone network.

 1-800-628-5115


 1-866-581-9328 (TTY)






 legacy.hhsc.state.tx.us/dhhs/

ASSISTANCE FOR EXAMS AND AIDS



Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as help getting a hearing aid. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

The Harris County AAA serves only Harris County while the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA) serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area Counties.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471
 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)
 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)
 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/
 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/



Better Hearing Institute has a guide to financial assistance programs for hearing aids.

 1-800-327-9355
 www.betterhearing.org
(keyword: financial assistance)



Hear Now is an application-based program run by the Starkey Hearing Foundation that provides hearing assistance services to low-income individuals. Accepted applicants are fit with new digital hearing aids that are personalized to their individual hearing needs. They also conduct a Hearing Aid Recycling program.

 1-800-328-8602
 www.starkeyhearingfoundation.org/Hear-Now



Hear-Say fits hearing aids, both refurbished and new, and repairs some types of hearing aids at a low cost. They also take hearing aid donations.

 713-665-8987
 www.hear-saypartnersinhearing.org



The **Help America Hear Program** from the Foundation for Sight and Sound provides financial assistance for people who need hearing aids. There is an application fee that varies based on the resources a person has available. Requests for assistance can only be made once every 5 years.

 1-888-580-8886
 www.foundationforsightandsound.org




Miracle Ear Foundation provides hearing aids at a reduced cost for people who meet income guidelines and have no other way to pay for them. There is an application fee, and applications must be submitted to a participating Miracle Ear store.

 1-800-464-8002 (to find a store)
 www.miracle-ear.com/foundation



Texas Health and Human Services Office of Deaf and Hard Hearing Services offers several services for the hearing impaired. It has information about financial resources for hearing aids and assistance with getting a phone better suited to people with hearing loss. It also a searchable list of state contractors.

 1-512-407-3250
 legacy.hhsc.state.tx.us/dhhs/findservices.asp

Travelers Protective Association offers financial assistance to people who need hearing aids or specialized hearing care. Applications are reviewed four times per year, and funding is given out based on need and ability.

 1-877-872-2638
 www.tpahq.org
(organizational information)
 www.stgrants.org

University of Houston Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic provides hearing services to patients with speech, language, or hearing impairments. Testing and treatment are both done in the clinic. Hearing aids are fitted and sold on site. Fees may be reduced for people in need.

 713-743-0915
 www.uh.edu/class/cond/slhc

TECHNOLOGY

Technology has made it easier for those who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with the hearing world. Video and internet calling are helpful tools, but many people still use TTY phones. For a person without a TTY phone to reach someone with a TTY phone, a relay service, like Relay Texas must be used. Video Relay Services (VRS) are similar to traditional relay systems but instead of an operator typing the call, video chat is used with a sign language interpreter serving as the bridge. It, too, is provided free to callers.

The **Federal Communications Commission** has information on video relay service, how it works, and how to file a complaint against a provider.

☎ 1-888-225-5322

☎ 1-888-835-5322 (TTY)

💻 www.fcc.gov

Relay Texas connects people using regular telephones with those using TTY phones. Operators who work 24 hours a day provide services in English and Spanish. Relay Texas also offers the ability for someone to use an internet relay to call a deaf or hard of hearing person

☎ 7-1-1 or 1-800-735-2988

💻 www.relaytexas.com

HEARING AID RECYCLING PROGRAMS

The **Center for Speech and Hearing** takes hearing aid donations for the reuse or recycling.

☎ 713-523-3633

💻 www.centerhearingandspeech.org

The **Hearing Charities of America's Hearing Aid Project** accepts any make, model, and condition of hearing aid to fix or recycle. There is an online form donation form to complete before sending the donation.

☎ 816-333-8300

💻 www.hearingaiddonations.org

Miracle Ear Foundation accepts Miracle Ear brand hearing aids to recycle or to give to people in need. Donated hearing aids can be brought to any local store.

☎ 1-800-464-8002 (to find a store)

💻 www.miracle-ear.com/foundation

SECTION 10.5 MEDICATIONS

DISCOUNTED PRESCRIPTIONS

There are several programs available to help people pay for their prescriptions. Most major pharmacies offer many generic drugs for as little as \$4 a prescription and can give information about which medicines are available. Always ask the pharmacist if there are generics available for a prescription. There are also websites that allow people to compare prescription prices at nearby pharmacies and find coupons to lower their costs. Many of these sites also offer special prescription cards.

GoodRx lets people comparison price shop their prescriptions and shows people what coupons are available. A discount pharmacy card also is available by request.

💻 www.goodrx.com

LowestMed is a website and mobile app that lets people compare drug prices at different pharmacies. It also has coupons and a prescription drug card.


💻 www.lowestmed.com

National Prescription Savings Network provides free pharmacy discounts.

 www.npsncard.com

COMPLAINTS AGAINST PHARMACIES

Texas State Board of Pharmacy licenses and disciplines Texas pharmacists and pharmacies. Complaints can be filed either online or by phone.


 1-800-821-3205

 www.pharmacy.texas.gov

COMPOUNDING PHARMACIES

Compounding pharmacies make customized prescriptions when someone needs a medicine with different ingredients.

PCCARX has a tool to find the nearest compounding pharmacy.

 www.pccarx.com
(keyword: find a compounder)


FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME OR THE DISABLED


Most major drug companies have special programs, called Patient Assistance Programs (PAP) to help people pay for prescriptions. These programs can provide free medications to low-income individuals. Each company has different policies regarding application procedures and qualifications. The application process can take a while, so these programs are not appropriate for getting medication quickly. Contact the drug maker for more information.

Social ministries may also offer emergency prescription assistance. See Section 6.2 for the nearest ministry.


Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as limited prescription assistance. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area Counties.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471


 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/

The Assistance Fund helps with patient medication copays for nearly 30 different diseases. Each disease has its own fund, and availability changes throughout the year.


 1-855-845-3663

 tafcares.org

BenefitsCheckup is a free service that shows programs a person may be able to access, including prescription drug assistance programs.

 www.benefitscheckup.org

Caring Voice Coalition offers medication and health insurance assistance when someone has a variety of medical diseases. The availability of funding changes throughout the year.

 1-888-267-1440

 www.caringvoice.org

Crisis Assistance Center provides prescription assistance to Montgomery County residents who have recently been to the emergency room or doctor's office and cannot afford their prescription.

☎ 936-539-9211

💻 www.cac-mctx.org

Fort Bend County Social Services offers both emergency and non-emergency prescription assistance to citizens who can demonstrate financial need.

☎ 281-403-8050 (East End office)

☎ 281-238-3502 (Rosenberg office)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: medical assistance)

Good Days provides financial assistance to people suffering from many chronic diseases. It has different programs to help pay for medications when people cannot afford them. It also has programs to help people with chronic illnesses reduce insurance costs and provides travel and housing assistance when someone has to travel for treatment. Some diseases have waiting lists; visit the website for availability

☎ 1-877-968-7233

💻 www.mygooddays.org

Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA) offers prescription assistance for medication someone already is taking. A person may receive help up to two times a year. There are financial eligibility guidelines.

☎ 713-393-4700

💻 www.gccsa.org/prescription-assistance/

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD (formerly **MHMRA**) provides services for eligible patients on a sliding-scale when ordered by their physicians.

☎ 713-970-7000

💻 www.mhmraharris.org

Harris County Social Services

Prescription Aid Program helps older residents without prescription drug coverage apply for assistance through drug company programs.

☎ 713-696-7900

💻 www.csd.hctx.net

HealthWell Foundation provides financial assistance to people who have insurance that will help them pay for medication when they cannot afford it. To qualify, a person must have a disease and/or medicine that is covered by the foundation and be under 500% of the Federal Poverty Limit (\$80,100 for a family of 2 in 2016). Visit the website or call for information on what diseases qualify for funding.

☎ 1-800-675-8416

💻 www.healthwellfoundation.org

Interfaith of the Woodlands provides prescription drug assistance for Montgomery County residents without medical insurance.

☎ 281-367-1230

💻 www.woodlandsinterfaith.org

Medicare's Pharmaceutical Assistance Program website has information on programs that may be able to help someone get the prescription medicine he or she needs.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

💻 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: pharmaceutical assistance)

National Association of Counties offers a drug discount card to help residents (and their pets) save on medications. Enroll on the website or by contacting the county.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and many other Texas counties

☎ 1-877-321-2651

💻 www.nacorx.org

Needy Meds provides information about different ways to save on medications.

 1-800-503-6897

 www.needymeds.com


Partnership for Prescription Assistance

helps people find prescription assistance plans to reduce medication costs.

 www.pparx.org

Patient Advocate Foundation Co-Pay Relief (CPR) Program

provides financial assistance to qualified patients, assisting them with the prescription drug co-payments. The program has several funds based on diseases; check the website to see which funds are taking new requests.

 1-866-512-3861

 www.copays.org

Rx Assist has a database of drug companies' prescription assistance programs as well as information on how to reduce other health care costs.

 www.rxassist.org

Rx Outreach is a non-profit mail order pharmacy that may save some people money on their prescriptions. Individuals must make less than \$48,060 per year for a family of two.

 1-800-769-3880

 www.rxoutreach.com

VACCINES

Vaccines, including flu and pneumonia shots, are covered by Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans at locations that accept Medicare. The Vaccine Finder can help find locations that provide the vaccines, such as pharmacies and clinics. Doctors' offices also can provide vaccines. Many stores and pharmacies will provide incentives to use their location.

VaccineFinder.org lets someone see all of the pharmacies and clinics to get vaccines and boosters near his or her location. VaccineFinder also has information on recommended vaccines.

 vaccinefinder.org

Internet Drug Purchases: Facts & Risks

Some people may save money by buying their prescription drugs online, but there also are risks. Some sites are not real or may not give the correct information. Other may be legitimate but do not know about other medicines or supplements a person may be taking, increasing the risks of drug interactions. Use caution to make sure the right medicines are purchased. Make sure the pharmacy requires a prescription and that there is a pharmacist available to answer questions. Look for accreditation from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacies or another reputable group.

National Association of Boards of Pharmacies (NAPB) has a program that certifies online pharmacies as legitimate sites. Known as the VIPPS accreditation program, the NAPB has a list of accredited pharmacies and also has a place to report suspicious pharmacy websites.

 www.vipps.info

US Food & Drug Administration (FDA)

provides tips on how to purchase drugs safely online.


 1-888-463-6332


 www.fda.gov

(keyword: buying medicine internet)

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Harris County Area Agency on Aging has a medication review program where a trained specialist will review medications for interactions and duplications.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471

 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

SECTION 10.6 MEDICAL FACILITIES

Levels of Care

Clinics are facilities that handle primary or specialty outpatient care. Some are associated with a hospital or medical school. There are two types of specialty hospitals or units that older adults may find themselves in. An Acute Care of Elders (ACE) hospital unit is specially designed to care for older adults when they have a severe short-term illness or injury. The ACE has special support to prevent the decline that may come with hospitalization. Long-term Acute Care Hospitals (LTAC) are for people with serious medical problems that require special, intense, long-term treatment. Often, a patient comes to an LTAC from an intensive care unit in a traditional hospital.


Outside of Hospital Care


A skilled nursing facility (SNF) provides extended care following a hospital stay. It provides a lower level of care than does a hospital. If a person spent at least 3 days admitted into a hospital, and that person needs a SNF, Medicare will cover up to 100 days in an approved SNF.

Rehabilitation Therapy Centers work to cure or improve a condition at keep it from getting worse. There are different types of therapy that may be ordered for someone. Aquatic therapy is water-based therapy for someone who needs non-weight bearing exercise. Occupational therapy helps people practice activities of daily living, such as bathing or dressing, so they can remain independent. Physical therapy helps improve a person's ability to move, reduce pain, or strengthen injured areas. Speech therapy helps people who need to work on their speaking, swallowing, or memory loss.


INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Medicare.gov Hospital Compare allows users to compare hospitals and see their rankings.


 1-800-633-4227

 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: hospital compare)

The **Joint Commission** is an independent organization that awards accreditation to hospitals, doctors' offices, and other health care facilities based on quality of care and patient safety. Its Quality Check program allows people to search for accredited agencies. The Joint Commission also accepts complaints about organizations it has accredited.

 630-792-5800


 www.qualitycheck.org

 www.jointcommission.org/report_a_complaint.aspx

NIH Senior Health is a webpage created by the National Institutes of Health with information on many different health topics of interest to older adults. The site also has educational videos and tips on healthy aging.

 nihseniorhealth.gov

Texas Department of State Health Services takes complaints about health facilities. Complaints can be called in or mailed.

 1-888-793-0022

 www.dshs.texas.gov/facilities/complaints.aspx

Texas Department of State Health Services **Family & Health Services Clinic Locator** allows people to search for community health centers in their neighborhood.

 1-888-963-7111

 txclinics.dshs.texas.gov/CHCL/

FEDERALLY FUNDED HEALTH CENTERS

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)

provide care for people with no insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare, and some private insurance. Service fees are based on income. Many also have on-site pharmacies with discounted medicine or deals with other pharmacies to reduce costs. See Section 10.1 and later in this section for information on county health programs and for other community health centers that are not federally qualified.

HARRIS COUNTY

Avenue 360 (formerly Bering Omega) serves adults at its Greater Heights and Spring-Cypress locations.

☎ 713-426-0027 (Greater Heights)

☎ 281-537-8627 (Spring-Cypress)

💻 hacstxs.org

Central Care Integrated Health Services

has clinic locations in Sunnyside, Acres Homes, Third Ward, Independence Heights, Southwest Houston, and Humble.

☎ 1-844-644-0000

💻 www.centralcarechc.org

Denver Harbor Family Clinic

☎ 713-674-3326

💻 www.denverharborclinic.org

Hope Clinic has locations in West Houston and Alief.

☎ 713-773-0803

💻 hopechc.org

Busy Bee Wellness Centers has two locations in Braes Oaks and Westchase.

☎ 713-771-2292

💻 www.mybbwc.org

El Centro de Corazon provides services to adults at its Eastwood and Magnolia locations.

☎ 713-660-1880

💻 www.elcentrodecorazon.org

Good Neighbor Healthcare Center

provides services in the Heights and Cy-Fair.

☎ 713-387-7196

💻 www.gnhc.org

Legacy Community Health provides services for adults in its Montrose, Baytown, Baker-Ripley, Mapleridge, and Fifth Ward locations. Geriatric specialty services are offered at the Baytown location.

☎ 832-548-5000 (Montrose)

☎ 281-420-8400 (Baytown)

☎ 713-351-7350 (Baker-Ripley)

☎ 713-779-7200 (Mapleridge)

☎ 832-548-5400 (Fifth Ward)

💻 www.legacycommunityhealth.org

Pasadena Health Center

☎ 713-554-1091

💻 www.pasadenahealthcenter.com

Spring Branch Community Health Center

has three locations in the Greater Spring Branch area at the Hillendahl, Pitner, and Katy/West Houston locations as well as a traveling mobile clinic.

☎ 713-465-6565 (Hillendahl)

☎ 713-462-6545 (Pitner)

☎ 713-462-6555 (Katy/West Houston)

💻 sbchc.net

💻 healthyfamilieshealthycommunity.com
(mobile clinic)

St. Hope Foundation has clinics in Bellaire and Greenspoint.

☎ 713-839-7111 (Bellaire)

☎ 832-300-8040 (Greenspoint)

💻 offeringhope.org

FORT BEND COUNTY

AccessHealth serves adults at its Richmond and Missouri City locations.

☎ 281-342-4530

💻 www.myaccesshealth.org

St. Hope Foundation

☎ 281-277-8571

💻 offeringhope.org

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Lone Star Community Health Center has locations in Conroe, Spring, and Willis.

☎ 936-539-4004 (Conroe/Willis)

☎ 832-246-8700 (Spring)

💻 www.lonestarfamily.org

St. Hope Foundation

☎ 936-441-2440

💻 offeringhope.org

WALLER COUNTY

AccessHealth

☎ 281-342-4530

💻 www.myaccesshealth.org

HealthPoint - Hempstead

☎ 979-826-8200

💻 www.healthpoint-tx.com

OTHER COMMUNITY CLINICS

Casa El Buen Samaritano provides basic medical services to low-income and uninsured individuals in Southwest Houston. The clinic combines medical care with worship; patients are invited to meet with a ministry volunteer for a personal gospel presentation. The clinic is open Tuesday and most Thursday evenings. Appointments are requested.

☎ 713-721-4101

💻 www.casaelbuen.org

Christ Clinic serves adults in the Katy area without any type of insurance. To be eligible, a person must be below 100% of the federal poverty level (\$16,020 for a family of two). There is a cash only fee due at the time of service.

☎ 281-391-0190

💻 christclinickaty.org

Ibn Sina Foundation operates several clinics that provide free or reduced health care to people who cannot afford it. Those with family income under 150% of the federal poverty level (\$24,030 for a family of 2). The clinics also take insurance. There are locations throughout Harris County.

☎ 281-977-7462 (Wilcrest)

☎ 281-990-7462 (Clear Lake)

☎ 281-438-7462 (South Post Oak)

☎ 281-695-7462 (North Shepherd)

💻 ibnsinafoundation.org

Interfaith Community Clinic provides basic and preventative health care to the uninsured in Montgomery County. Individuals first must have an eligibility appointment to be approved for care.

☎ 281-364-7889

💻 interfaithcommunityclinic.org

San Jose Clinic offers primary health care and many types of specialty health care. People interested in services first have to complete an application and go to an eligibility appointment. The clinic is located close to Downtown Houston.

☎ 713-490-2610 (eligibility questions)

☎ 713-462-0535 (medical clinic)

💻 www.sanjoseclinic.org

Second Mile Mission Center offers free basic medical care to uninsured Fort Bend county residents. To receive services, a person must visit Second Mile to talk with a counselor and get an application and bring the application back to a counselor for review.

☎ 281-261-9199

💻 www.secondmile.org

TOMAGWA Health Care Ministries provides basic and specialized health services to people without insurance. Located in Tomball, the clinic serves people from Harris, Montgomery, and Waller Counties. Dental services are also available to current clinic patients.

☎ 281-357-0747

💻 www.tomagwa.org

VCare Clinics provides basic health care and diagnostics. The clinic charges \$35 per office visit, and no appointments are necessary. The clinic also offers many free cancer screenings. Locations are available in Pasadena and Southeast Houston.

☎ 713-944-2273 (Pasadena)

☎ 713-640-2273 (Southeast Houston)

💻 www.vcareclinics.org

GERIATRIC SPECIALTY CLINICS AND PROGRAMS

Harris Health has several locations that operate Silver Seniors Clinics or Geriatric Centers, where doctors and staff are specially trained in medical issues affecting older adults. These clinics are for people ages 65 and older with more than one medical condition. Staff at the clinic look at both medical and social needs that impact health. Clinics are located at the Baytown, Casa de Amigos, Settegast, and Bayland locations as well as Quentin Mease Hospital. Regular eligibility and enrollment procedures apply. See Section 10 for more information on the Harris Health System.

☎ 713-566-6509 (for all enrollment centers)

☎ 713-218-2009 (appointments)

💻 www.harrishealth.org

(keyword: geriatric medicine)

Harris Health House Calls and Palliative Care Program will send medical and other professionals to a homebound person's home. The team of doctors, medical professionals, case managers, and social workers are available 24 hours per day.

☎ 713-566-6832

Memorial Hermann Southwest has a **Senior Emergency Department**. Separate from the main emergency room, it is for patients ages 55 and older and designed with older adults' needs in mind.

☎ 713-456-5000

💻 www.memorialhermann.org

Oak Bend Medical Center in Fort Bend County has an **Acute Care of Elderly Unit** designed to decrease hospital stays among older adults.

☎ 281-341-3000

💻 www.oakbendmedcenter.org

(keyword: ACE unit)

Park Plaza Senior Care Clinic, Emergency Department, and Acute Care for Elderly Unit have all been designed and are staffed for people ages 55 and older.

☎ 713-527-5000

💻 www.parkplazahospital.com

UT Center for Healthy Aging is a group of medical professionals, each with special training in geriatrics. The office is in Bellaire.

☎ 713-486-5150

💻 www.utphysicians.com

(keyword: healthy aging)

SECTION 10.7 MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental health issues are not a normal part of aging. Often, family members, caregivers, and doctors fail to recognize the signs of mental health issues, thinking instead that feelings of sadness or anxiety are natural reactions to later-in-life losses. Left untreated, these issues can lead to more physical and emotional problems and a higher risk of suicide.

Today's older adults grew up with mental health issues being stigmatized far more than they are today. Many older adults are very reluctant to seek help for mental health issues. Because of this, family and friends play a special role in identifying symptoms and encouraging their loved one to seek treatment.

Depression is one such issue. If identified, depression can be treated successfully with medications, counseling, or a combination of both. Support groups also can help by providing peer-to-peer practical information and advice about relieving stress and making lifestyle changes.

Symptoms of Depression

If someone has four or more of these symptoms and they last longer than two weeks, that person should see a doctor or mental health specialist.

- Fatigue or decreased energy
- Excessive crying or irritability
- Sadness or anxiety that lasts for weeks
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Fidgeting and pacing
- Insomnia, early morning wakefulness, and other sleep disorders
- Physical symptoms, such as digestive issues and pain
- Lost interest in usual activities
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Anxiety

Anxiety is an emotion that causes feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes, such as increased blood pressure. People with anxiety disorders usually have intrusive thoughts and concerns that keep coming back. Therapy and medications can be used to treat anxiety.

Symptoms of Anxiety

- Feelings of being on edge or restless
- Feelings of being fearful or powerless
- Physical symptoms such as muscle tension, sweating, or a racing heartbeat
- A sense of doom or impending danger
- Difficulty concentration or mind going blank
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbances

Left untreated, mental health issues increase a person's risk of suicide. Some warning signs that a person may be suicidal include:

- Loss of interest in things or activities that he or she previously found enjoyable
- Less interaction with friends or family
- Neglecting one's care or grooming
- Breaking medical regimens, such as not taking medicines or stopping a diet
- Experiencing or expecting a significant personal loss, such as losing a spouse
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Putting affairs in order, giving away belongings, or making will changes
- Being preoccupied with death or showing a lack of concern for personal safety
- Talking about suicidal intent

Medicare Part B covers one depression screening a year which must be done by a doctor in a primary care setting that can provide follow-up treatment and referrals. Part B also covers therapy or counseling by approved individuals who accept Medicare.

Medicare Part A covers in-patient mental health treatment. See [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) or call the Medicare Advantage Plan provider for treatment costs. Drug plans are required to include anti-depressants and antipsychotic drugs,

Mental Health America has online screenings in English and Spanish for several different mental health conditions. After a screening, resources are given if appropriate.

☎ 713-523-8963 (Greater Houston)

💻 www.mhahouston.org

☎ 281-207-2480 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.mhafbc.org

☎ 1-800-969-6642 (national)

💻 www.mentalhealthamerica.net
(keyword: take a screen)

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

☎ 2-1-1

💻 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

The **Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD** operates a 24-hour Helpline for crisis interventions and other mental health and substance abuse needs.

☎ 713-970-7000 (press 1 for crisis help)

Harris County Psychiatric Center has a list of personal care homes in the Greater Houston area.

💻 hcpc.uth.edu
(keyword: personal care homes)

Medicare.gov has information about what mental health treatments and services are covered by Medicare.

☎ 1-800-633-4227

☎ 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

💻 www.medicare.gov
(keyword: mental health benefits)

National Alliance on Mental Illness

has resources available for people with mental illness, including for veterans, people of color, and LGBTQIA adults as well as for family members and caregivers. It also has a helpline for referrals. Local chapters offer support groups and other resources.

☎ 713-970-4419 (Greater Houston)

💻 namigreaterhouston.org

☎ 281-494-5193 (Fort Bend)

💻 namifortbendtx.org

☎ 1-800-950-6264 (national)

💻 www.nami.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

has a treatment locator on its website and a national referral line. The website also has information booklets on dealing with someone with mental health issues.

☎ 1-800-662-4357

💻 www.samhsa.gov

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Many Federally Qualified Health Centers offer mental health services. See previous subsection for nearby locations.

Anxiety and Depression Association of America offers online support groups and information for people with anxiety or depressive disorders.

☎ 240-485-1001 (voicemail only)

💻 www.adaa.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance offers resources and online and in-person support groups for people with mental health issues as well as their friends and family. The Houston chapter also has support groups for Spanish Speakers and LGBTQIA adults.

Groups located in: Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties

☎ 713-600-1131

💻 www.dbsahouston.org

☎ 1-800-826-3632

💻 www.dbsalliance.org

The Gathering Place provides free psychosocial services to its members. Membership is free for adults with a psychiatric diagnosis who are following their treatment plans. The Gathering Place offers employment services, employment assistance, and fun social activities.

☎ 713-275-5731

💻 www.menningerclinic.com
(keyword: Gathering Place)

Family Houston (formerly Family Services of Greater Houston) offers counseling services. Services can be billed to insurance; for those without insurance, a sliding-scale fee is offered.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

☎ 713-861-4849

💻 www.familyhouston.org

Harris Health's Silver Seniors Clinics or Geriatric Centers offer some mental health and behavioral services, such as screening and treatment for depression. Clinics are located at the Baytown, Casa de Amigos, Settegast, and Bayland locations as well as Quentin Mease Hospital. Regular eligibility and enrollment procedures apply. See Section 10.1 for more information on the Harris Health System.

☎ 713-566-6509 (for all enrollment centers)

☎ 713-218-2009 (appointments)

💻 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: geriatric medicine)

Jewish Family Service has individual and group counseling available to the community. It also has Project Shalom which is designed to keep Jewish adults with mental health illnesses remain connected to the Jewish community through different group activities, counseling, and monthly medication management.

☎ 713-667-9336

💻 www.jfshouston.org

Montrose Center has a variety of counseling services, some specifically for the LGBTQIA population and others for the general public. Montrose Center works with most insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid. For those without insurance, Montrose Center has sliding scale fees and grants to help.

☎ 713-529-0037

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

Texana Center provides mental health services for a variety of mental health issues.

Serves: Fort Bend and Waller Counties

☎ 1-866-483-9262

☎ 1-800-633-5686 (crisis hotline)

💻 www.texanacenter.com

Tri-County has inpatient and outpatient mental health services for Montgomery and nearby counties.

☎ 1-800-550-8408 (general)

☎ 1-800-659-6994 (crisis hotline)

💻 www.tricountyservices.org

Crisis Hotlines

Each county has an agency with a crisis hotline for residents in trouble.

☎ 713-970-7000 (option 1)

☎ 1-800-633-5686 (Fort Bend, Waller)

☎ 1-800-659-6994 (Montgomery)

The **National Suicide Prevention Hotline** is a 24/7 hotline. It is for people who need to talk with someone or who are thinking about hurting themselves, for concerned loved ones, and for those looking for local mental health resource referrals. Calls are answered in English or Spanish. The website also has online chat.

☎ 1-800-273-8255

☎ 1-800-799-4889 (TTY)

💻 suicidepreventionlifeline.org

TREATMENT CENTERS WITH OLDER ADULT SPECIALTY

The following facilities have inpatient programs that specialize in the needs of older adults:

Memorial Hermann Southwest (Harris)

☎ 713-456-5000

💻 www.memorialhermann.org

Oak Bend Medical Center (Fort Bend)

☎ 281-341-3000

💻 www.oakbendmedcenter.org
(keyword: ACE unit)

Oceans Behavioral Hospital (Harris)

☎ 281-492-8888

💻 oceanskaty.com

West Houston Medical Center (Harris)

☎ 281-588-3444

💻 westhoustonmedical.com

COMMITMENTS TO A FACILITY

San Jacinto Methodist Hospital

☎ Alexander Campus 281-420-6736

💻 www.sanjacintomethodist.com

Inpatient Facilities

Harris County Psychiatric Center

☎ 713-741-5000

Kingwood Pines Hospital

☎ 281-358-1495

Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital Senior Treatment and Recovery Unit for Behavioral Care

☎ 713-456-4800

💻 www.memorialhermann.org/seniors

Outpatient Services

Harris County Psychiatric Center

☎ 713-741-5000

Legacy Community Health Services (sliding-scale)

☎ 713-830-3000

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD

☎ Northwest Clinic 713-970-8400

☎ Southeast Clinic 713-970-4300

☎ Southwest Clinic 713-970-3800


☎ Ripley Clinic 713-970-8100

To report abuse in The Harris Center facility: Adult Protective Services

☎ 1-800-647-7418

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING FREE/LOW-COST/SLIDING SCALE


Baylor Psychiatry Clinic

 713-798-4857


Central Care Community Health Center

 www.centralcarechc.org


Delano

 713-831-9663

Martin Luther King Clinic

 713-734-0199

Eastwood Health Clinic


 713-926-6229

Family Houston (Family Services of Greater Houston) Fort Bend/Harris/Montgomery/Waller Counties

 713-861-4849

 www.familyservices.org

Houston Area Women's Center

 713-528-6798

 www.hawc.org

Jewish Family Service


 713-667-9336

 www.jfshouston.org

Krist Samaritan Center


 281-480-7554

Mental Health America of Greater Houston Pro Bono Counseling Referral Service

 713-522-5161


 www.mhahouston.org

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center


 713-791-1414

 1-800-553-2278


Montrose Counseling Center (GLBTQIA)

 713-529-0037


University of Houston Psychological Services Downtown

 713-743-8600

Clear Lake

 281-283-3330

University of Texas (UT) Harris County Psychiatry Center

 713-741-5000

 hcpc.uth.tmc.edu

Veterans Center Post Oak Road


 713-682-2288

Richmond Clinic

 713-523-0884

SURROUNDING AREAS


For counseling in Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Matagorda, Waller, and Wharton Counties: Texana Center/Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline

 1-800-633-5686

Fee for Service

 Menninger Clinic 713-275-5000

OakBend Medical Center Senior Care Center

 281-238-7880

 www.oakbendmedicalcenter.org

SECTION 10.8 VISION AND EYE CARE

Vision changes as people age, but with proper education, exams, and care, the impact the changes have on one's lifestyle can be minimized. Left untreated, eye problems and diseases can have a significant impact on a person's lifestyle, such as the ability to drive or to perform daily activities. Regular eye exams are an important part of preventative health care. Annual eye exams are an integral part of preventive health care. Regular exams can detect serious eye conditions that sometimes have few if any symptoms. Evaluation of the effects of diabetes, high blood pressure, thyroid disease, cataracts, and glaucoma are a few of the problems that can be detected and treated. Many other diseases can impact eye health, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and thyroid disease. Eye problems such as cataracts and glaucoma can also be found and treated.

Vision screening determines if you have decreased vision. It can also indicate the presence of a vision problem or a potential vision problem, though it cannot diagnose exactly what is wrong with your eyes. Low-vision rehabilitation can help when vision loss cannot be corrected with glasses, surgery, or medication. Vision care professionals work with you and your doctor(s) to maximize your remaining vision by teaching you to use assistive technology, such as video magnifiers, prescription magnifiers, and telescopes, allowing you to read, drive, and continue performing the Activities of Daily Living.

When identified, many diseases can be treated. If medication, surgery, or glasses cannot correct the problem, low-vision rehabilitation may help. Experts can work with a person to find and use adaptive technology to make it easier to read, drive, and perform daily activities. Medicare pays for eye care that is related to a medical problem, such as a glaucoma test or macular degeneration treatment, and for treatment, such as cataract surgery. For people with diabetes, Medicare also

will cover a diabetes eye exam. Medicare does not cover regular eye exams to test vision for eyeglasses. However, some Medicare Advantage plans have vision benefits. Contact Medicare or the Advantage Plan for more information.


For people who need help paying for regular eye care, many federally qualified health clinics provide vision services. See Section 10.6 for nearby centers.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

American Foundation for the Blind's VisionAware Program has tips on how to adjust to life after vision loss and a special page for older adults and caregivers.

 www.afb.org


The Robert Cizik Eye Clinic Center for Visual Rehabilitation has a loaner library of commonly used visual aids, and monthly support groups for people dealing with low vision.

 713-559-5269

 www.cizikeye.org/low-vision-visual-rehabilitation/

Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind

provide guide dogs for people who are legally or fully blind. The foundation provides the dog and training for selected individuals.

 1-800-548-4337

 www.guidedog.org

Lighthouse of Houston has two community programs to assist people dealing with vision loss. The Community Independence Program can provide volunteers to help with tasks affected by vision loss, such as help with grocery shopping, reading mail, or trips to the doctor. The Center for Behavioral Health Services can work with people who have fear, frustration, grief, or denial about vision loss and work with the person and

his or her family to address issues that affect independence. The Adult Day Center offers activities for people who are visually impaired and have another health condition.

☎ 713-284-8473 (Community Independence Program)

☎ 713-284-8440 (Center for Behavioral Health Services)

☎ 713-284-8494 (Adult Day Program)

💻 www.houstonlighthouse.org
(Keyword: Community Services)

Low Vision Gateway has information about adjusting to life with vision problems, basic information on technology to assist people with low-vision, and other helpful topics.

💻 www.lowvision.org

Texas Workforce Commission (formerly the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Division of Blind Services) has a tip sheet on living life fully with visual impairment.

☎ 1-800-252-3642

💻 www.twc.state.tx.us
(keyword: vision tips)

Texas Workforce Commission's Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind program is for people ages 55 and older whose vision problems make everyday tasks difficult. The program offers services such as skills training, assistance with low-vision devices, and counseling. The Houston Field Headquarters serves parts of Harris County and all of Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties. The Southeast Field Headquarters serves parts of Harris County.

☎ 713-802-3100 (Houston)

☎ 1-800-687-7028

☎ 713-948-7960 (Southeast)

☎ 1-800-687-7036

💻 www.twc.state.tx.us
(keyword: independent living older adult)

IN-HOME EYE CARE

Home Eye Doc will provide in-home eye exams and fit people for glasses. Services may be covered by Medicare Part B, private pay, or through referral from some state agencies.

☎ 281-841-2723

💻 www.homeeyedoc.com

FREE, LOW COST, OR SLIDING SCALE PROGRAMS

Many **Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)** provide low cost or free vision services. See Section 10.6 for nearby centers. Additionally, many social ministries may help with the cost of eye exams or glasses. See Section 6.2 to find the nearest organization.

Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services (ECHOS) offers vision screenings to ECHOS clients and will provide referrals for discounted follow-up care and glasses. Contact ECHOS about becoming a client and for other provided services. Services are available in English and Spanish

☎ 713-270-0369

💻 echos-houston.org

EyeCare America, an American Academy of Ophthalmology program, provides eye care to U.S. citizens or legal residents with no out-of-pocket costs. Eligible people must be age 65 or older, not have an HMO or receive VA benefits, and not have seen an eye doctor in the previous 3 years. This program does not cover eyeglass exams or glasses.

☎ 1-877-887-6327

💻 www.aao.org/eyecare-america

Houston Eye Associates Foundation helps people who have been denied for county indigent medical programs and need medical eye care services. If someone is over age 65, he or she may be served if that person has been denied

care from Medicare. An application and supporting documents are required.

Serves: All of Texas though care is provided in the Greater Houston area

☎ 713-558-8740

💻 www.houstoneye.com/foundation

La Nueva Casa de Amigos Eye Clinic is a partnership between the City of Houston and the University of Houston to provide low cost eye exams. Those people receiving financial assistance from Harris Health receive an additional discount.

☎ 832-395-0574 (Optometry clinic only)

New Eyes provides vouchers for people who are under 100% of the federal poverty level (\$16,020 for a family of 2) with recent eye exams and no way to pay for glasses. Eligible people receive a voucher that can be used online. People who need help must go through a social service agency to request the voucher.

☎ 973-376-4903

💻 www.new-eyes.org

Operation Sight, a program of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery Foundation, matches low-income adults who need cataract surgery with free care. To be eligible, family income must be below 200% of the federal poverty level (\$32,040 for a family of 2) and the person must be a good candidate for the surgery.

☎ 793-591-2220

💻 www.ascrsfoundation.org

Prevent Blindness – Southeast Texas Region has programs to help adults who need eye exams and glasses but cannot afford them.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties

☎ 713-526-2559

☎ 1-888-987-4448 (outside of Houston)

💻 texas.preventblindness.org

Respectacle has a database of free, used glasses that are in good shape. A person with a prescription for glasses can enter their prescription information into the system, and if there is a close match, the glasses can be claimed. While the organization asks for a contribution to cover shipping, it is not required to get glasses.

💻 respectacle.org

San Jose Clinic offers basic and specialty vision services. People interested in services first have to complete an application and go to an eligibility appointment. The clinic is located close to Downtown Houston.

☎ 713-490-2610 (eligibility questions)

☎ 713-462-0535 (medical clinic)

💻 www.sanjoseclinic.org

Texas Workforce Commission (formerly DARS) Blindness, Education, Screening and Treatment (BEST) Program helps pay for urgent eye treatment for adults with inadequate health insurance and who are at risk for blindness without treatment. The application is filled out in conjunction with a doctor or optometrist.

☎ 1-877-787-8999

💻 www.twc.state.tx.us
(keyword: blindness education)

Vision USA, an American Optometry Association Foundation program, will provide a free basic eye exam to U.S. citizens or legal residents without any insurance, including Medicare or Medicaid, who meet income guidelines (\$32,040 for a family of 2), and who have not had a Vision USA referral or eye exam in the past two years. Applications must also be working with an agency that is able to refer clients to the program. A list of agencies that can refer to the program is on the website.

☎ 1-800-766-4466

💻 www.aoafoundation.org/vision-usa/

Visual Compassion's InFOCUS Vision Stations provide a free basic eye screening, a referral to an optometrist if needed, and low-price glasses. To access the programs that serve adults, make an appointment with and visit a vision clinic site.

Americas Medical Clinic (SW)

☎ 713-995-5700

Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services (SW)

☎ 713-270-0369

Denver Harbor (East)

☎ 713-674-3326

Ministry Assistance of Near NW Alliance

☎ 713-686-6440 x 202

Tomagua Medical Clinic

☎ 281-357-0747

☎ 1-866-398-7525 (InFocus)

💻 www.infocusonline.com/Houston

EYEGLOSS RECYCLING/ DONATION PROGRAMS

Many eyeglass stores and eye care professionals' offices have a place to donate used eyeglasses for recycling or for fixing up to give to people in need.

Lion's Recycle for Sight is a Lion's Club program that collects used eye glasses and redistributes them to people who need and cannot afford them. Visit the website for a list of locations in the greater Houston area.

Serves: Harris, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

☎ 713-796-2960

Respectacle takes mailed donations of eyeglasses and logs them into the database for people who need them but cannot afford them.

💻 respectacle.org

American Academy of Ophthalmology

To find an ophthalmologist in your area:

💻 www.aao.org

American Council of the Blind

☎ 1-800-424-8666

American Foundation for the Blind

☎ 1-800-232-5463

💻 www.afb.org

Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind

☎ 1-800-548-4337

💻 www.guidedog.org

Lighthouse of Houston

☎ 713-527-9561

💻 www.houstonlighthouse.org

Texas Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Division of Blind Services

☎ 713-802-3100

ADULT DAY CENTER

Lighthouse of Houston provides day activities for persons who are blind and have a medical condition that qualifies them for multi-care services. Clients participate in therapeutic activities, education, and other support services. Transportation is provided.


☎ 713-527-9561

💻 www.houstonlighthouse.org

EYE EVALUATION/TREATMENT

Fee-for-Service

Home Eye Doc provides in-home exams for eye health and glasses performed by board-certified optometrists.

 281-841-2723

 homeeyedoc.com

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Academy of Ophthalmology

To find an ophthalmologist in your area:

 www.aao.org

American Council of the Blind


 1-800-424-8666

American Foundation for the Blind

 1-800-232-5463


 www.afb.org

Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind

 1-800-548-4337


 www.guidedog.org

Lighthouse of Houston

 713-527-9561

 www.houstonlighthouse.org

Texas Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Division of Blind Services

 713-802-3100

EYE EVALUATION/TREATMENT AND/OR ASSISTANCE IN PURCHASING GLASSES

Free/Low-Cost/Sliding-Scale


Houston Eye Assoc. Foundation

 713-668-6828

La Nueva Casa de Amigos Eye Clinic


 713-547-8085

Legacy Eye Clinic & Wellness Center


 713-830-3000

 www.legacycommunityhealth.org

Prevent Blindness Texas


 713-526-2559

San Jose Eye Clinic

 713-228-9411

Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Division of Blind Services/DARS


North Office

 713-802-3100


South office

 713-349-1360

Vision USA helps low-income, working families get free eye exams.

 1-800-766-4466

EyeCare America provides eye care to needy individuals. US citizens, and legal residents without insurance through an MCO or the VA are eligible.

 1-800-222-3937

 www.eyecareamerica.org

Eyeglasses Donations

InFOCUS works with health and social service providers to help families access eye care services, including affordable glasses.

☎ 281-398-7525

💻 www.infocusonline.org

PROGRAMS & SERVICES FOR THE VISUALLY & HEARING IMPAIRED

Center for Visual Rehabilitation

☎ 713-559-5269

💻 www.cizikeye.org

Choice Magazine Listening offers an audio anthology of magazine articles at no cost.

☎ 1-888-724-6423

💻 choicemagazinelistening.org

Houston Grand Opera offers descriptive services for the visually impaired. Call three days in advance.

☎ 713-980-8675

Low-Vision Gateway provides information on low-vision aids, visual rehabilitation, alternative media, and libraries for the blind and visually impaired.

💻 www.lowvision.org

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS)

administers a free library program of Braille and audio materials circulated to eligible borrowers in the United States by postage-free mail.

💻 www.loc.gov/nls

ScreenReader.net provides free, downloadable talking computer software for those with little or no sight.

💻 www.screenreader.net

Houston Public Library Access Center

offers full library services to people with visual and hearing disabilities. It provides special adaptive equipment and materials, such as Descriptive Video Services that allow the user to experience the medium and access the information it contains.

Houston Public Library

☎ 832-393-1313

☎ 832-393-1539 (TTY)

💻 www.hpl.lib.tx.us

The Lighthouse of Houston

💻 www.houstonlighthouse.org

Information & Referral

☎ 713-527-9561

Adult Day Care

☎ 713-284-8494

SECTION 11 HOME MANAGEMENT


SECTION 11.1 CLOTHING / FURNITURE


The following organizations offer emergency, low-cost or free clothing and/or furniture. Zip codes indicate shop location. Most of these organizations also accept donations.

The **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with critical health and human service programs in our community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.


 2-1-1

Outside Texas


 1-877-541-7905

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

Catholic Charities

 713-526-4611


Charity Guild Resale Shop

 713-529-0995


Christian Action Ministry - St. Bernadette Catholic Church
(77062)

 281-486-0337

City Wide Club


 713-752-2582

**Cypress Assistance Ministries
Angels' Attic**

 281-955-7683

 www.cypressassistanceministries.org


Emergency Aid Coalition

 713-528-3663

Faith Center

 713-554-8801

**Fort Bend County-Second Mile
Mission Center**

 281-261-9199


Fort Bend County Women's Center

Pennywise Resale Centers (to find one near you)

 www.fortbendwomenscenter.org

Goodwill Industries


(to find a store near you)

 713-692-6221

 www.goodwillhouston.org

Habitat for Humanity ReStore

(building supplies)

 713-643-1100

 houstonhabitat.org

Hand Me Up Shop

(The Woodlands and Montgomery County)

 281-367-4942


Houston Junior Forum Resale Shop

(77008)

 713-868-6970

Humble Area Assistance Ministries (HAAM)

Black Cat Junction

 281-359-5667

HAAM Resale Store

 281-446-0993

MANNA Thrift Shop

(77018)

 713-686-6440


Memorial Area Ministries

 713-468-4516


NAM Treasures of the Heart

 281-880-9000

St. John Vianney Joseph's Coat Resale Shop

 281-497-4434

St. Vincent De Paul Society


 713-741-8234

Thrift Shop (77401)

 713-669-9410

Salvation Army

(77502)

 713-378-0020


Second Blessing

(77042)

 713-780-2727

Southeast Area Ministries Store

(77587)

 713-944-7405

Sunshine Resale Shop

 713-665-4000

Charitable Organizations accept donations that help the needy and provide a tax benefit for the donor. Always ask for a tax receipt when donating items or money.

Legitimate Charities

Ensure the charity you are donating to is legitimate.

Better Business Bureau (BBB)

 www.bbbhou.org

Charity Navigator

 www.charitynavigator.org

Charity Watch

 www.charitywatch.org

SECTION 11.2 FALL PREVENTION

Falls at home are the most common accidents for older adults. Most falls happen in the bathroom, bedroom, and on the stairs. Preventing falls can reduce or delay the need to move out of the home and into a facility.

To help prevent falls, exercise regularly, have your doctor or pharmacist review your medications (both prescription and over-the-counter) to make sure they do not cause dizziness or affect your balance, and have regular vision and hearing exams. Any changes may increase your chance of falling. Learning how to fall can help reduce your chance of serious injury. For tips on how to fall safely:


 www.wikihow.com/Fall-Safely


Home Safety Tips

- Clear all items from stairs and walkways.
- Remove floor rugs.
- Keep cords and wires out of walkways.
- Store frequently used items in reachable cabinets and drawers.
- Have plenty of lighting and night lights.
- Wear low-heel, low-friction shoes inside and outside your home.
- Use an elevated toilet seat, add grab bars in shower, tub, and toilet area, and put non-slip strips in shower/bathtub.
- Install stairway handrails.
- Use a cane or another assistive device.
- Keep your cell phone with you at home.
- Give a key to a trusted neighbor or friend.
- Have an emergency response system of people who check in on you.


INFORMATION & RESOURCES

The **Harris County AAA** serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging (HGAC-AAA)** serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area counties.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471


 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

 www.h-gac.com/human-se

 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/rvices/aging/

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

 1-800-232-4636

 www.cdc.gov/injury

National Institute of Health Senior Health

 www.nihseniorhealth.gov/falls

SECTION 11.3 HOME REPAIR

Simple home repairs can help keep people safe in their homes and living independently longer. Some low-cost repairs include adding grab bars or handrails, making sure the home has a fire extinguisher and smoke alarms, and adding a wheelchair ramp or handrails if there is a step or steps into the home.

Home repair programs help eligible residents make their homes safe. Most programs have waiting lists, and the programs require the homeowner to be current on property taxes or be in a payment plan.

HOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Baytown Community Development has funding to help homeowners bring older homes up to current safety standards. The program has separate funding caps for rebuilding, fixing, or adding disability accommodations to a home. The assistance is a 5 year forgivable loan. To be eligible, families cannot make more than \$27,200 a year for a family of 2.

☎ 281-420-5398

💻 baytown.org

(keyword: community development)

The **City of Houston** provides repairs for key parts of the house such as plumbing, roofing, and electrical.

☎ 832-394-6300

💻 www.houstontx.gov

(keyword: home repair)

City of Pasadena Community Development Program may provide assistance with basic home repair. Assistance is a forgivable loan with a portion paid back at 0% interest. The portion is a sliding amount based on family income.

☎ 713-475-7294

💻 www.ci.pasadena.tx.us

(keyword: comdev)

Fort Bend Corps volunteers provide free home repair to qualified families. To be eligible, the homeowner must be age 62 or older, have a disability, or be low-income. The Corps can assist with roof repair or replacement, exterior repairs, such as ramps, caulking, or painting, and inside repairs, such as basic plumbing, water heater repairs, and making a bathroom accessible.

☎ 281-617-7416

💻 www.fbcorps.org

Fort Bend Habitat for Humanity will provide critical home repairs on a sliding scale. Repairs must be safety related, such as grab bars, ramps, rails, roof repair, or floor repair. To be eligible, participants must meet income guidelines and be able to pay for part of the repairs. Once accepted, the payment plan will start and the funds will be held until repairs can be made. Owner and/or family is expected to help if able.

☎ 281-403-0708

💻 www.fortbendhabitat.org

Fort Bend Housing Rehabilitation Program

provides assistance to low- to moderate-income homeowners who need repairs to bring their home up to code. The assistance is in the form of a forgivable loan.

☎ 281-341-4410

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov

(keyword: housing rehabilitation)

The **Geezer Squad** is a group of retired men that build ramps for Montgomery County residents in need. There is no cost for this program. Serves: Montgomery County, including Conroe, Willis, Magnolia, Splendora, New Caney, The Woodlands, and up to 10 miles South of the Woodlands

✉ info@geezersquad.org (email only)

💻 www.geezersquad.org

Habitat for Humanity Montgomery County offers 0% interest loans up to \$2,500 to qualified homeowners who need repairs. Habitat for Humanity will work with the homeowner and volunteers to make sure repairs are reasonably priced. Repairs such as leaky roofs, minor plumbing, and other small but important repairs will be considered.

☎ 936-441-4663 ext. 102

💻 www.habitatmctx.org

Habitat for Humanity Northwest Harris County will help with home repairs for older and disabled homeowners. The homeowner is expected to help with material costs. Repairs are mainly to the home's outside for safety and for protecting the home against weather conditions.

☎ 281-477-0460

💻 www.habitatnwhc.org

Harris County Area Agency on Aging has several programs that offer home repair or modification. The first, **Healthy Homes** assists with grab bars, elevated toilets, rails, and ramps to reduce someone's risk of falling in the home. The second helps with repairs related to accessibility, safety, such as electrical wiring and minor plumbing or flooring repairs, and moderate structural repairs. Third, HCAAA can assist with weatherization repairs that protect the home from outside weather.

☎ 832-393-4301

☎ 1-800-213-8471 (outside Harris County)

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

Harris County Home Repair Program provides grants or forgivable loans to qualified homeowners. Applicants must be age 62 or older or have a disabled person living in the home. The amount available depends on what area of the county the home is in. Money is also available to help with repairing or replacing septic systems. This program targets the unincorporated of the county. Visit the website or call for eligible zip codes.

☎ 713-578-2059

💻 www.hrc.hctx.net

Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging has funding to assist people who need modifications to their homes, including bathroom updates, such as grab bars and shower handrails, assistance creating a pathway into the home, and ramps and brighter outside lights. Call for eligibility and waitlist information.

☎ 281-633-0519 (Ft. Bend County)

☎ 936-441-3200 (Waller and Montgomery Counties)

💻 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/default.aspx

Rebuilding Together Houston provides both minor and more significant home repairs based on income guidelines. Minor repairs include ramps, grab bars, and other such repairs to make a person's home safer and more accessible. Homeowners must be age 62 or older, a veteran or spouse of a veteran, or a person with a disability currently on a government disability program, and own a one-story home in Harris County or the City of Houston. Rebuilding Together can also help with roof repair, plumbing, electrical, and heating or cooling problems.

☎ 713-659-2511

💻 www.rebuildinghouston.org

Senior Rides and More volunteers can assist with small handyman projects and light gardening. It serves people ages 60 and older who live in Southwest Houston, Northeast Fort Bend, and parts of Northwest Harris County.

☎ 713-772-8181

💻 www.seniorridesandmore.org

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs has a list of programs by county that may be able to help with home repair or modification.

☎ 1-800-525-0657

💻 www.tdhca.state.tx.us

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development offers 1% interest home loans and grants to homeowners in rural areas. Loans may be used to modernize or to remove health and safety problems; grants only can be for health and safety issues. Participants must qualify based on income and by location.

☎ 254-272-9770

💻 www.rd.usda.gov

West University Senior Services has volunteer handymen who can help with small household repairs and odd jobs for older and disabled West University residents.

☎ 713-662-5896

💻 westutx.gov
(keyword: unique senior programs)

HOME MODIFICATION RESOURCES

Howtoadapt.org is about one person's lessons learned after an accident forced him to make his home accessible. Many of his tips are easy to implement.

💻 www.howtoadapt.com

The **National Association of Home Builders** offers a directory of **Certified Aging in Place Specialists (CAPS)** who have received special training in how to design or modify a home so that it is friendly to someone with limited mobility or other health challenges.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in addition to other areas of the state

💻 www.nahb.org
(keyword: CAPS directory)

FREE OR LOW COST HOME IMPROVEMENT MATERIALS

City of Houston's Environmental Service Center takes household chemicals and paint that have been discarded but are in good condition and makes them available to the public for free. The location also hosts a ReStore (not affiliated with Habitat for Humanity) where people can get craft items, books, industrial scrap, and other items useful for art projects.

☎ 3-1-1 or 713-837-0311

💻 www.houstontx.gov
(keyword: ESC)

City of Houston's ReUse Warehouse takes donations of excess building materials from people or from companies and makes them available for non-profits. Non-profits can share materials with their clients.

☎ 281-814-3324

💻 www.houstontx.gov
(keyword: reuse)

Habitat for Humanity ReStore is a home improvement resale store where items are sold at greatly reduced prices. It is open to the public and sells both new and like-new materials. Proceeds from sales support the mission of Habitat for Humanity.

☎ 713-643-1100 (Houston)

💻 houstonhabitat.org/restore

☎ 281-890-5585 (Northwest Harris)

💻 www.habitatnwhc.org/restore

☎ 281-403-0708 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.fortbendhabitat/restore

☎ 936-441-5888 (Montgomery)

💻 www.habitatmctx.org/restore

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

The following organizations provide weatherization assistance to qualified homeowners. Those who are approved will receive minor repairs to make their homes more energy efficient. Examples of assistance include caulking, weather stripping, insulation, or even replacement of heating or cooling systems.

Combined Community Action serves Fort Bend County

☎ 1-800-688-9065

💻 www.ccaction.com
(keyword: weatherization)

BakerRipley (formerly Neighborhood Centers) serves Harris County.

☎ 713-558-6381

💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations/weatherization-program

VN Teamwork assists people in the Houston area covered by Centerpoint. It helps with replacing older lightbulbs with new, energy efficient ones, adding solar screens and insulation, as well as replacing older refrigerators and checking air conditioning systems for problems.

☎ 281-495-8936

💻 vnteamwork.org/community-service-programs

SECTION 11.4 PET CARE

Tips for protecting your pet and yourself:

- Vaccinate and de-worm your pet every year.
- Use a veterinary-recommended flea and tick control product.
- Neuter/spay your pet.
- Keep medications out of your pet's reach.
- Wash your hands after touching your pet and any of their food bowls or toys.
- Groom your pet to prevent allergens in your home.
- Clean your cat's litter box every day.
- Keep litter boxes away from cooking and eating areas.
- Consider having a microchip put in your pet for identification and emergency purposes.

ANIMAL CONTROL

For stray or dead animal pick-up, rabies information, or animal complaints:

City of Houston Dead Animal Pickup

requests can be made on the 3-1-1 website or by calling 3-1-1.

☎ 3-1-1

💻 www.Houston311.org

City of Houston Live Animal Pickup (only in city of Houston/bites, licenses, and regulation)

☎ 713-229-7300

Harris County Veterinary Public Health

☎ 281-999-3191

💻 www.hcphe.org

DOG/CAT SPAY/NEUTER

Houston Humane Society

☎ 713-433-6421

💻 www.houstonhumane.org

SNAP–Houston Spay and Neuter Assistance Program (low-income individuals)

☎ 713-862-8001

💻 www.snapus.org

Disaster Preparedness for Animals is offered by the Houston SPCA that includes hints and a checklist to help pet owners in case of an emergency or disaster.

💻 www.houstonspca.org

(Drop the Resources window, scroll down to Disaster Preparedness)

Dog Parks (City of Houston) allow you and your dog to exercise safely and off-leash. Check website for locations and hours.

💻 www.houstontx.gov/parks/dogparks

PET ADOPTION/RESCUE

Houston/Harris County

For a list of Houston area animal welfare groups, visit:

💻 www.hppl.org

Abandoned Animal Rescue (Tomball)

☎ 281-290-0121

Citizens for Animal Protection offers free or low-cost adoptions of older pets to seniors 65 or older.

☎ 281-497-0591

💻 www.cap4pets.org

Houston Humane Society

☎ 713-433-6421

Special Pals

☎ 281-579-7387

SURROUNDING AREAS

Montgomery County Animal Shelter

☎ 281-364-4219

PET ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

ASPCA Animal Poison Control

☎ 1-800-548-2423

Emancipet provides low-cost preventative veterinarian services. Appointments can be made or owners can walk in with their pets. Appointments are required for spay/neuter services. The clinic is in East Houston.

☎ 713-321-2713

💻 emancipet.org

Harris County Free Prescription Discount Card offers discounts on pet prescriptions

☎ 1-877-321-2651

Houston Humane Society

☎ 713-433-6421

Houston SPCA

☎ 713-869-7722

PAWS Houston

☎ 713-840-7297

💻 www.pawshouston.org

Pet Patrol provides food and care for pets belonging to low-income frail and elderly or those with a life-challenging illness.

☎ 281-733-7696

💻 www.thepetpatrol.org

Humane Society of United States offers a free kit called Providing for Your Pet's Future Without You.

☎ 1-202-452-1100

💻 www.humanesociety.org

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) accepts all animals in need, regardless of species, size, or health.

Houston SPCA

☎ 713-869-7722

💻 www.houstonspca.org

SECTION 12 HOMELESS SERVICES

SECTION 12.1 COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS


Coalition for the Homeless provides an online Homeless Services Directory for Houston and Harris County that includes shelters, drop-in centers, health care, food pantries, transportation, legal, mental health care, and job training. To access this directory, go to their website below:

 713-739-7514


 www.homelesshouston.org/find-a-provider/

Emergency Shelters for Men

Star of Hope – Men’s Development Center
1811 Ruiz, 77002


 713-227-8900

Salvation Army – Red Shield Lodge
2407 Main, 77009

 713-224-2875

Emergency Shelters for Women and Families


Star of Hope
419 Dowling, 77003

 713-222-2220

Salvation Army - Family Residence
1603 McGowen, 77004


 713-650-6530

Salvation Army – Sally’s House (single women) 1717 Congress, 77002

 713-223-8889


Day Shelter

The Beacon (clients enrolled in Dunn Center & Coordinated Access)
1212 Prairie, 77002

 713-220-9737


Veterans

VA McGovern Drop In Center
1418 Preston, 77002


 713-797-2913

Domestic Violence

Houston Area Women’s Center

 713-528-2121


The Bridge Over Troubled Water

 713-473-2801

Fort Bend County Women’s Center


 281-342-4357

Bay Area Turning Point


 281-338-7600

ASSISTANCE & MEALS

SEARCH provides many services for clients experiencing homelessness, including case management, ID card referral, lunch, showers/ laundry facilities, medical, dental/ vision, mental health clinics, food stamps, legal aid, job placement, and HHS financial assistance applications. (Mon–Fri morning and variable afternoon)

 713-739-7752

The Beacon/John S. Dunn Outreach Christ Cathedral Lunch/dinner, showers, laundry service, clothing, case management, and counseling. (Fri–Mon)

 713-590-3321

Bread of Life/St. John's offers case management, showers, laundry service, medical clinic, breakfast/dinner, housing assistance, and counseling (open 24/7, breakfast 6am/dinner 8pm).

☎ 713-659-3237

Cathedral Justice Project

(legal assistance for the homeless)

☎ 713-220-9781

💻 www.chomhouston.org

Compass at Christ Cathedral offers employment assistance, transportation tokens, limited legal assistance, ID fee assistance, haircut vouchers, clothing referrals, personal hygiene items. (Mon–Fri, 9am–2pm)

☎ 713-229-8319

FamilyTime Crisis and Counseling Center has a crisis hotline and shelter in the Humble area.

☎ 281-446-2615

💻 www.familytimeccc.org

Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen, sponsored by Magnificat House, offers a hot lunch, Tues–Sun

☎ 713-224-1373

💻 www.magnificathouse.org

Lord of the Streets Episcopal Mission

offers spiritual, emotional, and social programs, free health care at the Caritas Health Care Clinic, clothing, and counseling.

☎ 713-526-0311

💻 www.lordofthestreets.org

Impact Houston Church of Christ

(showers, meals on Mon and Wed)

☎ 713-864-5667

Martha's Kitchen, St. Martha Catholic Church, provides a hot lunch, Mon–Fri

☎ 713-224-2522

Montrose Center (LGBTQIA) hotline handles general information calls during business hours, but crisis calls are handled 24-hours a day.

☎ 713-529-3211

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

New Horizon Family Center has a crisis hotline and shelter serving Baytown.

☎ 281-424-3300

☎ 1-800-824-4807

💻 www.newhorizonfamilycenter.com

Open Door Mission (breakfast/lunch/dinner, Mon–Sun)

☎ 713-921-7520

FORT BEND COUNTY

Fort Bend Women's Center has a crisis hotline and shelter serving Fort Bend County.

☎ 281-342-4357

💻 www.fbwc.org

Katy Christian Ministries has a crisis hotline.

☎ 281-391-4357 (domestic violence)

☎ 281-693-7273 (sexual assault)

💻 www.ktcm.org

Focusing Families has a crisis hotline and shelter serving Northwest Harris County and Waller County.

☎ 979-826-3209

☎ 1-877-237-2339

💻 www.focusing-families.org

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County Women's Center has a crisis hotline and shelter serving Montgomery County.

☎ 936-441-7273

💻 www.mcwctx.org

WALLER COUNTY

Focusing Families has a crisis hotline and shelter serving Northwest Harris County and Waller County.

☎ 979-826-3209

☎ 1-877-237-2339

💻 www.focusing-families.org

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Career & Recovery Resources Homeless Outreach Program conducts employment-related workshops at local shelters and residences for homeless individuals. After the initial workshop, follow-up with intensive case management and job placement assistance is provided at the main office.

☎ 713-754-7000

Houston Community Voice Mail (SEARCH) provides free voice mail service to people without phones seeking jobs, housing, health care, and safety.

☎ 713-739-7752

IDENTIFICATION CARD- OPERATION ID

First Presbyterian Church (Tues/Thurs, 9am-11:30am, fee required, referrals needed)

☎ 281-833-3508

MEDICAL CLINICS FOR THE HOMELESS - FREE/LOW-COST/ SLIDING-SCALE

Bread of Life/St. John's (walk-in, free, Thurs only, opens at 10am)

☎ 713-659-3237

Cathedral Clinic (walk-in, free, primary/mental health care)

☎ 713-220-9730

Good Neighbor Healthcare (sliding-scale, primary/dental/vision)

☎ 713-529-3597

Harris Health System (HHS) Health Care for the Homeless Program provides a variety of preventive and primary healthcare services through shelters and mobile units. The program also provides HHS financial assistance services.

☎ 713-634-1088

77002 S.E.A.R.C.H

☎ 713-739-7752

77002 Compass

☎ 713-229-8319

77002 Sally's House

☎ 713-223-8889

77003 Star of Hope Men's Shelter

☎ 713-226-5400

77003 Star of Hope Women & Families Shelter

☎ 713-222-2220

77004 Salvation Army Family Center

☎ 713-650-6530

77004 Salvation Army Men's Shelter
(Harbor Light)

☎ 713-224-2875

77007 Adult Rehabilitation Center
(The Salvation Army)

☎ 713-869-3551

77007 Casa Juan Diego

☎ 713-869-7376

77007 Harmony House

☎ 713-223-8104


77018 Jackson Hinds Gardens

☎ 713-697-4411 77054


Transitional Living Center (Star of Hope)

☎ 713-748-0700

Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston SEARCH (primary care/dental/mental)

 713-286-6000

Houston Area Community Services

 713-426-0027


Legacy Community Health Services

(HIV/primary care)

 713-830-3000

Lord of the Streets Episcopal Mission

offers free health and vision care at the Caritas Health Care Clinic.

 713-526-0311

 www.lordofthestreets.org

San Jose Clinic


 713-228-2651

 www.sanjoseclinic.org

HOMELESS VETERANS


Homeless Veterans Service Center (HVSC) provides services that can include

assistance in resume writing, job listings, and referrals for housing. (Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun 9am-1pm.)


 713-229-8122

McGovern Healthcare & Service Center

(homeless veterans only)

 713-794-7533


National Call Center for Homeless Veterans

 1-877-424-3838

TRANSPORTATION

Project Access provides free transportation to essential medical/social services. Riders must have a ticket for each ride.

SEARCH

 713-739-7752

For other transportation options, refer to Section 20.


SECTION 12.2 OUTSIDE OF GREATER HOUSTON

For information on homeless services in other Texas cities, contact the agencies listed in or call:

2-1-1 Texas/United Way Helpline

 2-1-1

Outside Texas

 1-877-541-7905

SECTION 13 HOUSING AND LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Older adults have many housing choices depending on the services they need. Elder friendly communities support older adults and accommodate their changing needs. Before making a housing choice, older adults or their families should research and, if possible, visit the facility in person. Depending on the type of complex or facility, there are many checklists and question guides that can be found online and may be useful in “interviewing” the facility.

Senior Decision is a website that lists ratings and reviews of quality of care and housing options for older adults. This website also offers advice on how to select a memory care community and what to expect during the assessment process.

 www.seniordecision.com

Federally Funded Affordable Housing

programs help pay for housing for older adults with low to moderate incomes. This type of housing is in great demand, and as a result, there is often a waiting list. Below are the three major types of federally-funded housing.


Public Housing Apartments provide housing for eligible, low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The rent charged is usually no more than 30 percent of one’s income. Application must be made in person at the housing authority near you.


Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher is the federal government’s major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled. The vouchers are administered locally by public housing authorities. If you are accepted into this program, you will receive a voucher that entitles you to rental assistance. You pay 30 percent of your income and the housing authority pays the difference. Most housing authorities have a very long waiting list.


Once you qualify for a voucher in a housing authority in your area, you can use it anywhere you choose in the United States. Contact the housing authority near you to see if their waiting lists are open and if you qualify.

Subsidized Housing Complexes (no vouchers) are for low-income individuals. Some are exclusively for seniors, while others are for the physically disabled. They may offer support services such as meals and transportation. You need to apply directly to the complex where you are interested in living. Under this Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program, your rent is usually 30 percent of your income. To receive a list of all subsidized apartments in Harris and surrounding counties:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

 713-718-3199 (Greater Houston office)

 1-800-955-2232 (public housing)


 1-800-569-4287 (counseling to avoid foreclosure)

 www.hud.gov

HOME OWNERSHIP ASSISTANCE

Harris County Down Payment Assistance Program


Provides deferred, forgivable loans to qualified, disabled borrowers.

 713-578-2210

 www.hrc.hctx.net

Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance Program

For eligibility requirements:


 713-522-4663

 www.houstonhousing.org

Easter Seals of Greater Houston Home of Your Own Program (HOYO) provides financial education and down payment assistance for qualified families where at least one member has a disability. Funding is limited for this program, and areas served may change based on current funding.

Serves: Montgomery County and Harris County (when funding is available)

 713-838-9050

 www.eastersealshouston.org
(keyword: housing initiative)


Housing Authorities - Greater Houston Area

Baytown

 281-427-6686


 www.baytownhousing.org

Harris County

 713-578-2100


 www.hchatexas.org

Houston

 713-260-0600

 www.housingforhouston.com

Montgomery County

 1-936-539-4984

Pasadena

 713-475-5544

 www.ci.pasadena.tx.us


Rosenberg

 281-342-1456

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Harris County Housing Resource

Center's website helps seniors, the disabled, and their families locate affordable apartments.

 713-578-2055


 www.hrc.hctx.net

National Church Residences provide housing for people of moderate means, including seniors and the disabled. To locate an apartment near you:

 www.ncr.org/home/supportive-housing.asp

Texas Inter-Faith Management offers affordable apartments and accepts Section 8/ Housing Choice Vouchers on a space available basis. You can apply for a Housing Choice Voucher at the housing authority nearest you.

 713-526-6634

 www.ti-f.org/Property_Management/Property_List

SECTION 13.1 **PAYING FOR LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (LTSS)**

Paying for Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) can be done in one of two ways:

1. private pay, either out of pocket or through long-term care insurance; or
2. government programs, such as Medicaid (STAR + PLUS in Harris County), Medicare, or Veterans benefits.

Medicare may be accepted for limited medical purposes. Medicaid and Veterans' benefits can be used for LTSS that are more extensive. With the exception of private pay, all methods of payment may have limitations on what is covered. Older adults should refer to their plan or call the hotline that each plan has to learn about limitations as well as benefits.

SECTION 13.2 **ALZHEIMER'S / DEMENTIA / MEMORY CARE**

Person's with Alzheimer's and/or another form of dementia require specialized care due to memory loss. Many communities have specifically designed areas to accommodate their needs. These communities provide housekeeping and laundry to meal preparation and transportation. They also provide activities to help the client reconnect with their memories. Daily activities

are designed around a resident's past interests, which include arts and crafts, pet therapy, music, and memory games. Some communities also provide escorted outings. Many communities also take measures designed to keep the resident safe, including security alarms on doors and regular safety checks.


SECTION 13.3 ASSISTED LIVING

Assisted living communities offer living arrangements to residents who can no longer live in their homes or who choose not to remain in their home. These facilities are not designed for individuals who may require serious medical attention. They provide many living options ranging from dormitory-style rooms to one and two bedroom apartments. Personal assistance services may include help with bathing, dressing, grooming, and medication reminder services. Most facilities offer three meals a day, snacks, laundry services, and weekly housekeeping. In most cases, residents pay a monthly rent and additional fees for specific services.

Many assisted living facilities also provide respite care for older adults and caregivers who may need a break from caregiving duties. Respite care can range from several hours to several days.


To review a list of all licensed assisted living facilities in Texas or the quality rating of a particular facility, visit:

Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Long-Term Care Quality Reporting System (QRS)

 713-767-2200

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

To request additional information about a particular facility, call:

 1-800-252-8016

 email: mail@dads.state.tx.us

SECTION 13.4 CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES (CCRCs)

Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) provide different levels of service based on the resident's changing personal care and health needs. These communities combine part independent living, part assisted living and part skilled nursing home in a single setting. CCRCs give older adults the option to live in a single community continuously without leaving the community.

CCRCs are often the most expensive of long-term care options and require the client to pay a large upfront fee prior to admission in addition to a monthly fee. Check with the facility to find out if part or all of the initial investment may be refunded to the client's estate if the client's needs change or after the client is deceased. Each community has different rules and operating procedures, so clients and their family should read the contracts and other paperwork carefully.

SECTION 13.5 **INDEPENDENT LIVING COMMUNITIES (IL)**

Independent Living (IL) communities allow older adults to live on their own without necessarily needing help with the activities of daily life. They can live in apartment buildings, townhouses, or individual rooms. The main benefits of living in an IL community is to receive help with meals, housekeeping, and building a social network.

Many IL communities are equipped with bathroom grab bars, wide doorways, and emergency pull cords to help ensure residents' safety. Recreational activities are usually offered. Some communities offer transportation to the doctor or shopping centers. In-home support services for special needs may also be available from contracted home care agencies.

SECTION 13.6 **NURSING HOMES**


Nursing homes are also called long-term care or nursing facilities. They are for older adults who can no longer be cared for in their homes or who need 24-hour nursing supervision. Medicaid may cover nursing home costs, but the client must meet financial eligibility requirements, and a

doctor must sign an order stating it is medically necessary that they live in a nursing home. Not all nursing homes accept Medicaid. The State of Texas licenses all nursing homes.

SECTION 13.7 **RESIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL CARE HOME**

Residential (Personal) Care Homes are usually single-family homes. This level of care and supervision is for people who are unable to live by themselves, but who do not need 24-hour nursing care. They provide room, board, housekeeping, personal care and other basic activities. They also give out medications for residents to self-administer. These homes are non-medical facilities. Some homes may provide nursing and rehabilitation services and specialized care for illnesses such as Alzheimer's.

In Texas, all residential and personal care homes serving at least four people (who are not related to the owner) are licensed by the Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS), although it is recognized that there are some homes that are not in compliance. Questions about the license status of a facility should be directed to Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Consumer Rights and Services at:


 **1-800-458-9858**

SECTION 13.8 SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) provide short-term, post-hospital, extended skilled nursing care and related services for individuals requiring medical or rehabilitation services at a lower level of care than is provided in a hospital.

To be admitted to a SNF, a doctor's order is required. SNFs have a transfer agreement in effect with one or more hospitals. All skilled nursing facilities are licensed by the State of Texas. To review a list of all skilled nursing facilities in Texas, or the quality rating of a particular facility, visit:

Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Long-Term Care Quality Reporting System (QRS)

 713-767-2200

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

To request additional information about a particular facility, call:

 1-800-252-8016

or email:


 mail@dads.state.tx.us

SECTION 13.9 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Insurance Information Institute explains the services long-term care insurance covers

 www.iii.org

Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Regulatory Services Division

 713-767-2200

 www.dads.state.tx.us


Nursing Home or Long-Term Care Facility Mediation

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at the University of Texas (UT) Center on Aging is a free, on-site mediation program designed to help residents of long-term care facilities and their families resolve conflicts in a safe, impartial, and confidential setting.

University of Texas (UT) Center on Aging– Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Mediation

 713-500-9931

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Area Agency on Aging (serving Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton Counties).

 713-627-3200

 www.h-gac.com

Legal Hotline for Texans Facility Victim Program provides free legal services to eligible seniors who have been abused or exploited by owners or employees of nursing homes, assisted living, and adult day care facilities, or in-home nursing service providers.

 1-800-622-2520


 www.tlsc.org

The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

 www.ltombudsman.org

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) takes complaints against assisted living, nursing home facilities, and residential/personal care homes.

 1-800-458-9858

 1-800-252-8016

Nursing Homes That Accept Medicaid

For a list of nursing homes that accept Medicaid:

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services

 www.dads.state.tx.us

Nursing Home/Long-Term Care Facility Locator & Quality Comparison

Nursing Home Compare provides information about the past performance of every Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing home in the country.


 www.medicare.gov


Texas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents

 281-488-5291

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) has an online Quality Reporting System (QRS) to help consumers locate long-term care facilities and evaluate the quality of their services. The website has detailed reports on nursing facilities, assisted living communities, home health agencies, and adult day care providers that is updated monthly.

Consumer Rights & Services


 1-800-458-9858

 1-800-252-8016

Long-Term Care Quality Reporting System (QRS)

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

To request additional information about a particular facility, call:

 1-800-252-8016

or send an email to:

 mail@dads.state.tx.us

NURSING HOME/LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY LOCATOR & QUALITY COMPARISON

Nursing Home Compare provides information about the past performance of every Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing home in the country.

 www.medicare.gov


Texas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents

 281-488-5291

Health and Human Services Commission (formerly Department of Aging and Disability Services -DADS) has an online Quality Reporting System (QRS) to help consumers locate long-term care facilities and evaluate the quality of their services. The website has detailed reports on nursing facilities, assisted living communities, home health agencies, and adult day care providers that is updated monthly.

Consumer Rights & Services


 1-800-458-9858

 1-800-252-8016

Long-Term Care Quality Reporting System (QRS)

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

Facility Information

 1-800-252-8016

 mail@dads.state.tx.us (email)

SECTION 14 IN-HOME CARE

SECTION 14.1 HOME HEALTH CARE

Personal Assistance Services are often referred to as in-home or custodial care. A detailed explanation of these services is provided later in this section.

Medicare pays for part-time home health care services, if person meets the eligibility criteria and services are considered medically necessary for the treatment of an illness or injury. This is known as the Medicare Home Health Benefit.

Medicare does not cover custodial care.

Medicare beneficiaries with a Medicare Advantage Plan (not Original Medicare), can contact their plan for details about how the plan provides their Medicare-covered home health benefits (see Section 9.3).

Some services may be covered by one's long-term care insurance policy. Check with the insurance provider for specific coverage.

Who Needs Home Health Care?

- Persons discharged from the hospital who are not fully recovered
- Persons with chronic conditions who require frequent monitoring and can no longer meet their needs alone
- Persons with a terminal disease who need skilled and/or personal care and pain management
- Family caregivers who need respite (rest) from their caregiving duties as a result of caring for a loved one who has a specific disease or condition

Services Covered by Medicare

Medicare will cover in-home health care if patient meets ALL of the following conditions:


- Patient must be under the care of a doctor and getting services under a plan of care reviewed regularly by a doctor
- A doctor must certify that patient needs one or more of the following: skilled nursing care, physical therapy, speech-language pathology services, and/ or continued occupational therapy
- The home health agency must be Medicare certified
- Doctor must certify that patient is homebound


Homebound: leaving the home is not recommended because of patient's condition; the condition keeps patient from leaving home without help (such as using a wheelchair or walker, needing special transportation, or getting help from another person); leaving home requires huge effort on patient's part.

The official government resource Medicare and Home Health Care clarifies the specific eligibility requirements that entitle patients to home health care benefits.

 www.medicare.gov/publications

Patients should make sure that the home health care agency they will be using is regulated by the Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS).

 1-800-458-9858

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us
(scroll down to Home Health Care)

Services Not Covered by Medicare Home Health Benefit

- 24-hour care at home
- Meal delivery to home
- Homemaker services such as: shopping, cleaning, and laundry
- Errand services
- Home health/personal assistance services, such as: bathing, dressing, and toileting (if this is the only care patient needs)
- Non-emergency transportation


Some home health care agencies may provide these services for a fee.


Questions to ask a Home Health Care Agency or Personal Assistance Services Agency

- Does the home health care agency offer trained medical and/or social services?
- Is the agency licensed and Medicare or Medicaid approved?
- Is the agency bonded and insured?
- Are caregivers available for the days and times you need them?
- In case of an emergency, is someone on call 24 hours a day to respond and if so, what are the procedures?
- What if caregiver is late?
- Will patient always have the same caregiver?
- Will a replacement be provided if patient is not satisfied with the current caregiver?
- Does the provider have written statements describing services, eligibility, fees, patients' rights, confidentiality, complaint procedures, and hours of service, including minimum hours?
- How does the agency select caregivers?
- Is the agency willing to work with patient if patient must pay out-of-pocket?

- Does the agency conduct criminal background checks on all employees?
- Is the agency a member of a state and/or national home care organization?

To compare home health care agencies:


 1-800-633-4227


 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

 www.medicare.gov/homehealthcompare


Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Quality Reporting System (QRS)

provides an up-to-date list of licensed and/or Medicare-certified Texas home health care providers online by zip code, area code, city and/or county.

 1-800-458-9858

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us
(scroll down to Home Health Care)

To request additional information about a particular facility, call:


 1-800-252-8016

Email:

 mail@dads.state.tx.us

For more detailed information on Medicare-covered services:

Medicare

 1-800-633-4227

 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)

 www.medicare.gov

SECTION 14.2 PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Personal Assistance Services are non-skilled or custodial services and are not covered by Medicare. These services include two levels of care:

- Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) such as: personal hygiene, dressing and undressing, eating, using the restroom, transferring from bed to chair, and the general ability to move around
- Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) are more complex activities, such as shopping, meal preparation, phone use, housekeeping, self-administered medications, medication reminders, etc.

The Personal Assistance Services offered can include:

- Sitters/companions
- Errand services
- Homemaker services (light housekeeping, meal preparation, grocery shopping, laundry, medication reminders)

Personal Assistance Services may be provided by any of the following caregivers:

- **Direct care workers** are paid (but not necessarily certified) caregivers who are hired through a privately owned, state-licensed agency.
- **Home health care aides** are professionally trained, certified by the state, and provide specific medical services under the supervision of their agency's registered nurse.
- **Informal caregivers** are typically family members, friends, or neighbors. A certified, but non-licensed independent caregiver who does not work through a state-licensed agency, is also considered an informal caregiver.

If you rely on an informal caregiver, be sure to:


- Understand any fees that will be charged for the care given
- Check references carefully
- Conduct a criminal background check
- Make sure that the older adult and the caregiver are compatible
- Regularly monitor services provided
- Have a back-up plan in case a problem arises with the caregiver

Regardless of the type of caregiver you choose, watch for signs of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation. Report suspicious activity to the agency and state authorities (see Section 16.4 for reporting information).

Medicaid provides custodial home care to eligible Texas applicants.

Current Medicaid clients can request home health care services and coverage information:

Medicaid Health Plans Hotline

 1-800-252-8263


INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Home Health Compare website, operated by Medicare, provides information about the quality of home health agencies. To access this chart, select Compare Home Health Agencies in Your Area.

 www.medicare.gov/hhcompare

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services/ Consumer Rights and Services Hotline

To inquire if a home health care or personal assistance services agency is licensed in Texas or to make a complaint:

 1-800-458-9858

Quality Reporting System (QRS) provides online reports concerning home health care agencies.

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us

US Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General Hotline
accepts reports on suspected fraud by a provider.
☎ 1-800-447-8477

COMPANIONS PROGRAMS

Free/Low-Cost/Sliding-Scale/Volunteer
These organizations have personnel or volunteers who will make regular visits to homebound seniors.

Interfaith CarePartners

☎ 713-682-5995
💻 www.interfaithcarepartners.org

Senior Companions Program sponsored by Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center of Houston (ERJCC).

☎ 713-729-3200 ext. 3239

ERRAND SERVICES

Free/Low-Cost/Sliding-Scale

HERO—Helping Elderly Residents Out
(77024, 77043, 77055, 77079, 77088)

☎ 713-932-3996

Senior Rides & More (formerly VIC-SW) uses volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments, the grocery store, to pick up prescriptions, or similar necessary errands. Riders must be at least 60 years old and be able to walk (canes and walker are ok) on their own.

Serves: Parts of Southwest and North Harris and East Fort Bend County

☎ 713-772-8181
💻 www.seniorridesandmore.org

PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE (PAS) PROVIDERS

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services In-Home Services provides in-home support to help older adults remain in their homes.

Services are offered on a sliding-scale based on family income.

☎ 713-685-6577
💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations

TELEPHONE REASSURANCE PROGRAMS

The following volunteer organizations call seniors, usually every weekday, to check on their safety and well-being.

Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office

☎ 281-341-4665

Harris County Constable Precinct 7 offers two programs for older residents who live in the area. The **Senior Citizen Hotline** uses volunteers to make daily welfare calls to older residents.

☎ 713-274-3518
💻 constable7.harriscountytexas.gov
(keyword: Programs)

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Southeast Texas

Harris County

☎ 713-595-8195

Fort Bend

☎ 979-308-3316

Montgomery

☎ 936-856-8647

Waller

☎ 281-822-4209

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services

☎ 713-685-6577

Veterans who are chronically ill or disabled, regardless of age, may be eligible for long-term care services through the Veterans Administration's Home and Community Based Services program.

💻 www.va.gov

SECTION 15 **LEGAL**

This section contains information about legal topics, but it is meant as an overview and should not be used as legal advice. For any legal questions, including how to use the forms mentioned in this section to make sure personal wishes are followed, talk with an attorney. If you cannot afford one, there may be volunteer programs that can help.

SECTION 15.1 **GENERAL LEGAL RESOURCES AND HOTLINES**

Fort Bend Lawyers Care offers a **LegalLine** every other Friday from 10:00-noon. During that time, people call in to prequalify for services and attorneys call back within two business days.

☎ 281-239-0015

💻 www.fortbendlawyerscare.org

The **Houston Bar Association** offers a **LegalLine** twice a month in English and once a month in Spanish where people can call in and for free seek basic legal advice, ask legal questions, and get referrals to resources. The English hotline is on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 5:00-9:00 pm and the Spanish language LegalLine is on the first Thursday of the month from 6:00-8:00 pm.

☎ 713-759-1133

💻 www.hba.org
(keyword: LegalLine)

Advocate Legal Senior Center provides several legal advocacy services to or for the benefit of Houston's older adults, including housing advocacy, help with power of attorney forms, and support for families applying for guardianship over a loved one.

☎ 832-393-4074

💻 www.senioradvocatetx.org

The **St. Frances Cabrini Center for Immigration Legal Assistance Charlas Workshops** are offered for free six times per month (three in Houston and three in Richmond) where participants learn about immigration laws and afterward can talk with an immigration attorney or other knowledgeable person about their situation.

Serves: Harris and Fort Bend Counties

☎ 713-526-4611 (Houston)

☎ 281-202-6200 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.catholiccharities.org
(keyword: Cabrini)

The **Houston Lawyer Referral Service** can provide referrals to attorneys in almost 40 areas, ranging from personal injury and family law to criminal matters.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, and Galveston Counties

☎ 713-237-9429

☎ 1-800-289-4577 (outside of Houston)

💻 hlrs.org

Texas Advocacy Project runs three hotlines to help victims of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The hotlines handle civil, not criminal, issues and can handle more than 170 languages. Some callers may get assistance over the phone while others may be referred to local agencies.

☎ 1-800-374-4673 (Family Violence line)

☎ 1-800-777-3247 (Family Law)

☎ 1-888-296-7233 (Sexual Assault)

💻 www.texasadvocacyproject.org

The **Houston Bar Association** has three legal handbooks that are updated every two years. The free books are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese (other languages may be possible). They can be downloaded or mailed, but the person asking for them must pay postage. Current topics include Elder Law, Family Law, and Consumer Law and cover Texas law.

☎ 713-759-1133

💻 www.hba.org
(keyword: legal handbooks)

Katy Bar Association provides lawyer referrals for people in the greater Katy area.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller Counties

💻 katybar.org

National Academy of Elder Law

Attorneys has a searchable list of attorneys who special in elder law and special needs issues. They can help with issues such as figuring out if a trust and what type is best for someone, completing documents that cover health and end-of-life decisions, and planning for long term care needs.

☎ 703-942-5711

💻 www.naela.org

National Elder Law Foundation has a list of attorneys with a special certification in elder and special needs law. Someone with this certification will have CELA after his or her name. A CELA has a lot of experience in issues such as estate planning, wills, end-of-life decision-making, and planning for the future.

☎ 520-881-1076

💻 www.nelf.org

National Resource Center on LGBT

Aging has general information about planning documents to ensure that a person's medical wishes are followed and other estate planning documents.

☎ 212-741-2247

💻 www.lgbtagingcenter.org

Peopleslawyer.net is a program sponsored by the University of Houston Law Center's Center for Consumer Law. It provides information on many legal topics and twice a year hosts the People's Law School, a free program that covers the basics of wills, family law, and other topics of general interest. The site also gives people an opportunity to ask general legal questions.

☎ 713-743-2168 (People's Law School information)

💻 www.peopleslawyer.net
(main website)

💻 www.law.uh.edu/peopleslaw/
(People's Law School information)


Texas Consumer Complaint Center


(TCCC) provides information and assistance with financial legal issues such as debt collection, credit or credit cards, car sales or repairs, housing, banking, and apartments. It also handles legal questions related to flooding and other natural disasters. The TCCC is a project of the University of Houston Law Center's Center for Consumer Law.

☎ 713-743-2168


💻 texascgcc.com
(online form for help)

Texas Lawyer Referral Service provides referrals for many legal issues or matches someone with his or her local certified lawyer referral service. Services are in English and Spanish.

 1-800-252-9690

 www.texasbar.com
(keyword: Lawyer Referral and Information Service)


The **Woodlands Bar Association** hosts a free Law Line on the first Monday of the month from 5:00-8:00 pm. The Law Line can answer general legal questions and provide referrals.


 281-292-4155

 www.woodlandsbarassociation.com


Texas Legal Services Center (TLSC) offers several free legal hotlines and information guides to the public. If the hotline goes to a voicemail, leave a name, phone number, best time to be reached, and a brief description of the question or issue.


TLSC Health Law Program handles Medicare and Medicaid, Family Medical Leave Act, being denied treatment, and end-of-life planning issues, among others. This hotline is for Texans whose income less than 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$19,223 for a family of 2 in 2016).

 1-866-979-4343


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: Health law)


TLSC Legal Hotline for Texans offers assistance to Texans who are either age 60 or older or who are Medicare recipients.

 1-800-622-2520


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: Legal hotline)


TLSC Veterans Legal Assistance Project (VLAP) is for Texas veterans and their spouses, dependents, and surviving spouses who have income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level or below (\$32,040 for a family of 2 in 2016). The hotline handles a variety of issues, some that are service related and others that are not. Common questions have to do with family law, housing, consumer protection, bankruptcy, probate, and VA benefits.

 1-800-622-2520 (option 2)


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: VLAP)

TLSC Transfer on Death Deed (TODD) Project helps prepare special deeds that transfer property on a homeowner's death without having to go through probate. For more information on Transfer on Death Deeds, see Section 15. To be eligible, a family must have income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level or below (\$32,040 for a family of 2 in 2016).

 1-800-622-2520


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: TODD)


TLSC Legal Aid for Survivors of Sexual Assault (LASSA) hotline offers legal advice for victims of sexual assault. A person can call without giving their name and ask questions about legal options.

 1-844-303-7233


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: LASSA)


TLSC AVOICE Project provides help, including free legal representation, to victims of violent crime. It also offers advice, safety planning, and help applying for crime victim assistance programs. Other services include help with protective orders, elder abuse issues, housing, identity theft, and immigration issues that are related to the crime or that impact the victim.

 1-888-343-4414


 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: AVOICE)

TLSC Texas Kincare Taskforce hotline is for grandparents and other family members who are raising a relative without the support of the child's parents. The hotline provides callers with legal tools and advice on how to navigate the health care, school, and other systems. The website also has a booklet for kinship caregivers about their rights and responsibilities.

 1-866-979-4343

 www.tlsc.org
(keyword: Texas Kincare Taskforce)

South Central Pension Rights Project helps people in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma (or people whose plans were with a company based in with pension issues, including finding benefits from old employers, answer questions about pension laws, and provide legal advice about pension rights in cases of death and divorce.


 1-800-443-2528

 www.southcentralpension.org


SECTION 15.2 FREE OR LOW-COST LEGAL REPRESENTATION

American Civil Liberties Union of Texas provides free legal assistance in limited cases where someone's civil rights or civil liberties may have been affected. Generally, it only takes a case if the case involves a government action.

 713-942-8146


 www.aclutx.org
(keyword: Request legal assistance)

Beacon Law provides legal assistance to homeless individuals who need help applying for benefits, getting identification documents, getting a simple will and related documents, and resolving housing, employment, and consumer law issues. Intake is every Monday and Friday at the Beacon Day Center in downtown Houston. Anyone interested in services must arrive by 8:00 am.

 713-220-9780


 www.beaconlaw.org

Brazos Bend Guardianship Services provides information sessions for potential guardians in Fort Bend County. At the end of sessions, an attorney is able to answer legal questions. The program also provides financial support on a sliding scale basis for people needing to seek guardianship over another adult.

 281-232-7701


 www.brazosbendguardianship.org


Disability Rights Texas advocates and provides legal representation for people with disabilities who have faced discrimination. They can also connect people to additional services. Due to limited capacity, Disability Rights Texas currently takes cases in limited subject areas. Call to discuss a situation.

 1-800-252-9108

 www.disabilityrightstx.org

Boat People SOS offers help to low-income Vietnamese Texans on domestic violence, human trafficking, family law, immigration, and wills. They also have volunteer opportunities, information and resources, support groups, employment assistance and wellness programs.

 281-530-6888

 832-300-5556

 www.bpsos.org/bpsos-houston

The **St. Frances Cabrini Center for Immigration Legal Assistance** provides low cost or free resources to immigrants and refugees on immigration matters, such as immigration petitions, and applying for visas or U.S. Citizenship. Clients must be referred by the Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program, St. Jerome's, or from Charlas information sessions which are open to the public. Older refugees and low-income individuals qualify for free services.

Serves: Harris and Fort Bend Counties

☎ 713-526-4611 (Houston)

☎ 281-202-6200 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.catholiccharities.org
(keyword: Cabrini)

Harris County Area on Aging has contract legal services available to Harris County residents ages 60 and older. Legal services are provided for free to eligible callers. Call for more information about waitlists, what types of cases can be handled, or other requirements.

☎ 832-393-4301

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging

Lone Star Legal Aid provides free legal representation to low-income individuals in the Greater Houston area. It handles a variety of cases such as landlord/tenant issues, when the government denies or reduces benefits and a person needs to appeal, consumer fraud, and a variety of other civil issues. Call the local office for eligibility and qualification information as well as for when and how a person can ask for help. All intakes for the Greater Houston area are through the Houston office.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and many other East, West, and Southwest Texas Counties

☎ 1-800-733-8394 (Houston office, including intake line)

☎ 713-652-0077 (Harris, Fort Bend, and parts of Montgomery Counties)

☎ 1-888-595-8969 (Waller and parts of Montgomery County)

☎ 936-539-2130 (Waller and parts of Montgomery Counties)

💻 www.lonestarlegal.org

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) takes complaints about discrimination based on race, age, national origin, sex, religion and disability. Each office requires a form to be filled out with the complaint details and may not be able to take complaints over the phone.

☎ 713-526-3389 (Houston)

💻 www.naacphouston.org
(keyword: Resources)

💻 www.naacpmissouricity.org
(keyword: Resources)

💻 www.mcnaacp6304.org
(Montgomery County)

BakerRipley (formerly Neighborhood Centers) Immigration Services provides walk-in immigration legal clinics in the East End and Sharpstown areas each week. There is a small consultation fee. It also provides legal representation for certain cases. To receive representation, a person must first attend a walk-in clinic.

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) also provides free legal representation and assistance for Naturalization cases on a first come first served basis.

☎ 713-273-3707

💻 www.immigrationforgood.org

S.H.A.P.E. Community Center offers a free legal clinic every Saturday in Southeast Houston. Call for more information.


☎ 713-521-0641

💻 www.shape.org

South Texas College of Law Houston

has several legal clinics that provide legal representation to veterans who need help with getting their benefits or handling other service related matters, to older adults who need basic wills and estate planning documents, to families facing probate issues, and to families that need help with guardianship issues.

 713-526-3389 (Houston)

 www.naacphouston.org
(keyword: Resources)


Tahirih Justice Center offers free legal representation to women and children leaving domestic violence situations. It assists with visas open to crime victims and Violence Against Women's Act petitions. Call to arrange an intake appointment.


 713-496-0100

 www.tahirih.org

Texas Civil Rights Project takes cases involving civil rights, such as voting issues or discrimination by a government agency. Intake for the greater Houston area is on Thursdays from 2:00 until 4:00 pm. It also helps immigrants who are abuse victims file immigration paperwork. This service is for people in rural and underserved areas.


Serves: Greater Houston Area


 832-767-3680 (Civil Rights)

 1-888-364-8277 (Immigration)

 www.texascivilrightsproject.org

Each Wednesday, the **YMCA** offers a walk-in clinic in Southwest Houston for people who need legal help with immigration issues. The YMCA may provide free or low-cost legal help to people who come to the clinic.

 713-339-9015

 www.ymcahouston.org
(keyword: international services)

SECTION 15.3 ESTATE PLANNING

No matter how much or how little a person has, estate planning is important. With estate planning, a person can state what his or her wishes are with regard to money, property, and personal belongings. Estate plans are good for virtually everyone because it:

1. Can get your property to people faster
2. Gives a person a chance to record their end-of-life wishes and take care of some of the stressful decisions loved ones will face
3. Can minimize certain taxes and expenses

Without an estate plan, the courts may have to step in and decide what happens to the person and his or her belongings. There are laws about who gets what if there is no will.

An attorney with estate planning experience can help a person make sure he or she has all of the needed documents. Some of them may include:

- **Wills** – A will is a document that has instructions about what a person wants to have happen to his or her property. In Texas, a will must be written, signed by the person (or in some cases his or her representative in front of that person), and signed by two witnesses. If a will was made in another state or country and those laws were followed, the courts generally will accept it.

A will should not be the place where a person lists organ or body donation information or burial information because often it is not found for days or weeks after a person dies.

- **Trusts** – A trust is a legal document that allows a person to transfer ownership of an asset such

as property or money to another person, called a trustee, for that trustee to use for someone's benefit (the beneficiary). There are many different types of trust. An attorney can help a person figure out if a trust (and what kind) is right.

- **Advance Planning Documents** – See Section 5.1.

Local Bar Associations can provide referrals to attorneys who specialize in estate planning and elder law issues. Many attorneys provide a free consultation. Costs for services vary. Before setting up the first appointment, consider the following questions:

- How much will the first visit cost and what will be accomplished? How much are subsequent visits? Is there a per hour or per service charge?
- What certifications, training, and experience does the attorney have in elder law issues?
- How will the attorney handle formal updates to estate planning or advance directive documents?

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Fort Bend Lawyers Care can provide assistance with wills to low income older adults. It may also partner with other organizations to host an on-site wills clinic. Call for more information and to prequalify for services.

☎ 281-239-0015

💻 www.fortbendlawyerscare.org
(keyword: Clinics)

Houston Bar Association/Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program hosts a Will-a-Thon in the spring where attorneys provide free wills to low-income older adults age 60 or older, and people with disabilities and veterans of all ages. To qualify, a person must call to be screened and for information about when and where wills will be prepared.

☎ 713-228-0735

💻 hba.org
(keyword: Will-a-thon)

Houston Lawyer Referral Service at the **Houston Bar Association** (Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, and Galveston Counties)

☎ 713-237-9429

💻 www.hlrs.org

Katy Bar Association (Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller Counties)

💻 katybar.org

Life Care Planning Law Firms

Association provides information and referrals to attorneys who use the Life Care Planning model, which involves a lawyer and a team of professionals from different fields that work with a family to create a plan for an older person's care. The team helps the family find affordable care, handles legal issues that are related to the older adult's changing health, and is an advocate for the older adult and his or her family when the person moves to a long-term care facility.

☎ 520-270-1541

💻 www.lcplfa.org

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (elder law attorneys)

💻 www.naela.org

National Elder Law Foundation (certified elder law attorneys)

☎ 520-881-1076

💻 www.nelf.org

South Texas College of Law Houston has a legal clinic that can draft simple estate planning documents.

☎ 713-646-2990

💻 www.stcl.edu
(keyword: Legal Clinic)


The Woodlands Bar Association


(Montgomery County)

 www.woodlandsbarassociation.com

Thurgood Marshall School of Law – Texas

Southern University has a legal clinic that can draft simple wills and other estate planning documents. This program is only open to Harris County residents.

 713-313-7275

 www.tsulaw.edu
(keyword: Legal Clinic)

SECTION 15.4 GUARDIANSHIP

Guardianship is a legal process to protect someone who can no longer make decisions or care for him- or herself because of an illness, injury, or an intellectual or developmental disability. If someone has a guardian appointed, that person is known as a ward. The goal of guardianship is to give the ward as much independence as possible while at the same time making sure that his or her basic needs are being met. Often, applying to the court for guardianship is a tough decision for families to make. When a person becomes a ward, he or she loses the ability to make certain decisions.

A guardian can be appointed for someone in two situations. The first is when someone is appointed Guardian for the Ward's Person. This happens when a person can no longer take care of his or her own wellbeing. The second type of guardian is Guardian of the Estate. This happens when a person can no longer make financial decisions for him- or herself. Often, a guardian is appointed for both situations.

Guardianship is not an overnight process as the courts do not take guardianship decisions lightly.

There are two ways to start the guardianship process:

1. When someone files to become guardian of a person.

A person applying for guardianship of another person must have an attorney, and the guardianship application must have a document

showing that a doctor has examined a person thoroughly and determined that the person is unable to care for him- or herself. The court may send an investigator out to meet with people to get a better idea about whether the person can care for him- or herself. The person may also have an independent attorney appointed.

2. When someone notifies a probate court that there is a person who needs a guardian.

Sometimes, a family cannot or will not file for guardianship. A person can write to a probate court stating how he or she knows the person, what the situation is, and any information about why the family is not applying for guardianship.

In Harris County (as well as counties with Texas's largest cities), the court will investigate, talking to the person and others who know about that person. If the court decides that the person needs a guardian, it may also investigate who the best guardian would be. Ultimately a staff attorney prepares the application for the court.

In the rest of the state, the court will appoint an attorney or social worker to be a guardian ad litem (friend of the court) to investigate and file a petition for guardianship if the guardian ad litem feels one is needed. Ultimately, the court will decide if the person can or cannot take care of him- or herself. In some cases, the court may appoint a guardian but limit the guardian's powers.

Guardianship Alternatives

If someone is struggling to take care of him- or herself, there are other options besides guardianship to help that person. If someone needs help mostly with managing money, there are programs that will make sure bills are paid. With a power of attorney or other advance directives (see Sec. 5), one person can choose another to make decisions on his or her behalf.


INFORMATION AND RESOURCES – GUARDIANSHIP

Several organizations have booklets or pamphlets with information on the guardianship process and what it means to be a guardian.

Harris County Probate Courts


 www.harriscountytx.gov/probate
(keyword: Guardianship Handbook)

State Bar of Texas


 1-800-204-2222 x 1800 (to request copies)

 www.texasbar.com
(keyword: Protecting the Incapacitated)

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

 www.hhs.texas.gov
(keyword: Guardianship)

Texas Guardianship Association offers general information about guardianship.

 1-888-399-9115

 www.texasguardianship.org

PUBLIC PROGRAMS


Harris County Protective Services (HCPS) Guardianship Program serves as the court-ordered guardian in cases where someone needs a guardian but there is no one to be a guardian for that person. If someone believes that another person needs a public guardian, he or she can contact HCPS.

 713-363-2300

 www.hcps.harriscountytx.gov


PROBATE COURTS


Harris

 832-927-1401


 www.harriscountytx.gov/probate

Fort Bend

 281-633-7415


 www.fortbendcountytx.gov
(keyword: Probate forms/information)

Montgomery

 936-539-7832

 www.mctx.org
(Click on Departments, A-C, County Courts)

Waller


 979-826-7763

 www.co.waller.tx.us
(keyword: County Court at Law)

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE PROGRAMS

Brazos Bend Guardianship Program


provides money management services to Fort Bend residents who are low income, have a disability, and are at risk for losing their independence because of money issues and unpaid bills. Participants must volunteer for the program and meet income and asset qualifications.

 281-232-7701

 www.brazosbendguardianship.org

CrissCross Representative Payee


Services provides representative payee services. Fees for the service are based on income. The program also provides help with setting financial goals and working with creditors.

 1-866-380-9708

 www.crisscross.org

Harris County Protective Services

Representative Payee Program helps manage finances for low income Harris County so that they can remain independent.

 713-363-2300

 www.hcps.harriscountytexas.gov

Find an Attorney

See Section 15.2 for organizations that may be able to provide low-cost or free assistance and Section 15.3 for a list of attorney referral providers.


SECTION 15.5 **MEDIATION**


When two people have a conflict, they can choose to have an uninterested third party listen to both sides and work with them to resolve the problem. Both parties have to agree to it. Sometimes in a mediation, people have lawyers, and sometimes not.

MEDIATION PROGRAMS

Harris County Dispute Resolution Center (DRC)

provides free mediation for Harris County residents that have a dispute. Many times, people use mediation before filing a lawsuit. Mediations typically occur in the evening unless the parties request one during the day. The DRC handles landlord/tenant, customer/business, employer/employee, and neighbor disputes.

 713-755-8274

 www.harriscountytexas.gov
(keyword: DRC)

Fort Bend County Dispute Resolution


Center offers low-cost mediation services to qualified individuals. Fees are based on a person's income. The Center handles such disputes as landlord/tenant, neighbor disputes, low-dollar property damage, and similar issues. Twice a year, the Center takes cases from the courts that may be handled through mediation and provides services for free. Residents from other counties may also use the service for a small additional fee.

 281-342-5000

 www.fortbenddrc.org

Dispute Resolution Center of Montgomery County

provides low-cost mediation for many different areas. If someone needs mediation but cannot afford the fee, the Dispute Resolution Center may reduce the fees on a case-by-case basis. Call for more information and schedule availability. Residents from other counties may also use the service for a small additional fee.

 936-760-6914

 resolution-center.org

SECTION 15.6 **MEDICAID PLANNING**

Medicaid is a means-tested program, which means that a person must meet income and asset guidelines in order to receive benefits. It is also considered a program of last resort because a person is expected to use his or her own resources to pay for care before using the Medicaid program. For information on Medicaid eligibility, see Section 9.2.

There are complicated rules about how far back the Medicaid program will look to figure out if someone meets the test. Generally, Medicaid will look back at the past five years to see if a person

has given away his or her money. If so, that money may be counted as assets even though the person no longer has the money. There are also legal ways to move money so that it is not counted as income or assets. A trained attorney can look at a person's situation and make recommendations.

Find an Attorney

See Section 15.2 for organizations that may be able to provide low-cost or free assistance and Section 15.3 for a list of attorney referral providers.

SECTION 15.7 **SPECIAL NEEDS TRUSTS**

A Special Needs or Supplemental Needs Trust is a legal tool that protects a person's money so that it does not keep someone from qualifying for benefits because of too many personal resources. The money is used to pay for things that benefits programs do not cover, such as dental care, computers, education, additional care beyond what Medicaid covers, or a vacation. See Section 9.2 for more information and for resources.

Find an Attorney

See Section 15.2 for organizations that may be able to provide low-cost or free assistance and Section 15.3 for a list of attorney referral providers.

SECTION 15.8 **VETERANS BENEFITS**

A veteran may wish to seek an accredited advocate or attorney in several circumstances:

1. Assisting with a claim for service-related compensation (not required but may make the process faster)
2. Appealing a decision if a claim is denied
3. Requesting a discharge upgrade in order to qualify for VA benefits

While a person can handle these issues him- or herself, the rules are very complicated, and missing

the deadline for one step could lead to the claim being dismissed or delayed.

An attorney or advocate must be accredited by the VA in order to represent someone in the process. Also, it is against the law for anyone to charge a person to help him or her file a benefits claim with the VA. If the claim is denied and a notice of disagreement (the first step in appealing) is filed, then the attorney can charge fees. There must be a written fee agreement, and the attorney and client can arrange for the attorney to be paid from any past-due benefits the client receives.

LEGAL HELP

For veteran serving organizations that can help a veteran apply for benefits, see Section 22.

National Organization of Veterans' Advocates provides information on when a veteran may want to seek legal help and an online directory with referrals to local attorneys and advocates who are accredited by the VA and meet certain standards.

☎ 202-587-5708

💻 vetadvocates.org

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has a searchable database of accredited attorneys and agents.

☎ 1-800-827-1000

💻 www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/

SECTION 15.9 COMPLAINTS AGAINST ATTORNEYS AND JUDGES

The **State Bar of Texas Client-Attorney Assistance Programs** has a hotline to answer questions about filing a complaint against an attorney and can also help intervene if someone has a problem with his or her attorney.

☎ 1-800-932-1900

💻 www.texasbar.com
(keyword: Grievance)

The State Bar of Texas Chief Disciplinary Council's Office handles complaints about attorneys.

☎ 713-758-8200 (Greater Houston area)

☎ 1-866-224-5999 (Statewide)

💻 www.texasbar.com
(keyword: Grievance)

SECTION 16 SAFETY AND PROTECTIONS

SECTION 16.1 CONSUMER ASSISTANCE

Consumer Finance Protection Bureau works to make sure that consumers are treated by banks, lenders, and financial institutions. It takes complaints and provides information on financial topics.

☎ 1-855-411-2372

💻 www.consumerfinance.gov

Consumer Product Safety Commission has information about recalls and safety information for consumers.

☎ 1-800-638-2772

💻 www.cpsc.gov

Federal Trade Commission protects consumers from business practices that are anticompetitive, deceptive, or unfair. It takes complaints from consumers, reports about identity theft, manages the Do Not Call registry, and sends out scam alerts.

☎ 1-877-382-4357

💻 www.ftc.gov

Food & Drug Administration is responsible for protecting the public health by ensuring that foods, cosmetic products, drugs and dietary supplements are safe and properly labeled. Their website provides information about recalls and safety alerts for products.

☎ 1-888-463-6332

💻 www.fda.gov

Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT)
(electricity and phone complaints)

☎ 1-888-782-8477

☎ 1-512-936-7136 (TTY)

💻 www.puc.state.tx.us

State Bar of Texas Client-Attorney Assistance Grievance Hotline

☎ 1-800-932-1900

💻 www.texasbar.com

Texas Attorney General Consumer Protection

☎ 713-223-5886

☎ 1-800-621-0508

💻 www.oag.state.tx.us

Texas Attorney General's Senior Alert Website

Warnings about scams

💻 www.oag.state.tx.us

Texas Consumer Complaint Center

addresses consumer problems such as credit, debt collection, auto sales/repairs, renters, banking and professional services.

☎ 1-877-839-8422

☎ 713-743-4881

💻 www.texasccc.com

Texas Health and Human Services (formerly DADS) Consumer Rights and Services Hotline

☎ 1-800-458-9858

☎ 1-800-252-8016

Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (TX DARS)

☎ 713-866-7765

Texas Department of Banking charters, licenses and regulates financial providers in the state of Texas to ensure that Texas has a safe and sound financial services system. File a complaint online or over the phone.

☎ 1-877-276-5554

💻 www.banking.state.tx.us

Texas Department of State Health Services takes complaints about health facilities.

💻 www.dshs.state.tx.us

Texas Department of Motor Vehicles

provides information about auto theft prevention, moving companies, the Texas Lemon Law, and allows consumers to file complaints against car dealers.


☎ 1-888-368-4689


Texas Department of Transportation has up-to-date road conditions, crash reports and travel information.

☎ 1-800-558-9368

💻 txdot.gov


Texas Governor Information Hotline

 1-800-252-9600

 1-800-843-5789

Texas Office of the Consumer Credit

Commissioner provides information and assists consumers who have issues with credit-related companies such as pawn brokers, secondary mortgage and home equity companies, payday and title companies, companies that finance car sales, and other similar companies. It also takes complaints against these types of companies.

 1-800-538-1579

 occc.texas.gov


Texas State Securities Board - To get a free background check on individuals who offer investment advice and sell investments:

 512-305-8300

 www.ssb.state.tx.us


Texas State Board of Medical Examiners


Complaint Hotline takes complaints against physicians, physician assistance, and acupuncturists.

 1-800-201-9353


Harris County Constable Precinct 7

offers two programs for older residents who live in the area. The **Senior Citizen Hotline** uses volunteers to make daily welfare calls to older residents. Residents concerned about an older adult also can call in. **The Senior Inspection Program** sends out someone to check the home for adequate door and window locks as well as working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

 713-274-3518

 constable7.harriscountytexas.gov
(keyword: Programs)


Better Business Bureau (BBB) helps older adult issues with businesses and contractors, education on resources, and other needs.

 713- 868-9500

 www.bbb.org

Better Business Bureau Education

Foundation takes reports and provides help to people who have been contacted by a scammer, who are victims of fraud or a scam, and people who have had problems with a business. It also provides no-cost workshops about scams, schemes and get-out-of-debt-quick traps.

 713-341-6141

Houston Non-Emergency Helpline

 3-1-1

Houston Police Department Internal Affairs

(complaints against officers)

 713-308-0040


STATEWIDE/NATIONAL CONSUMER PROGRAMS

DMAchoice.org helps you eliminate junk mail/email, such as pre-screened credit card offers, catalogs, telemarketing lists, etc., at no charge.

 www.dmachoice.org


Home Ownership Preservation Foundation

provides free counseling and referral services for individuals faced with foreclosure.

 1-888-995-4673

 www.995hope.org

National Do-Not-Call Registry helps stop unwanted telemarketing calls. It is free, and both home and cell phone numbers can be registered. To register by phone, call the toll-free number from the phone you wish blocked or register online.

 1-888-382-1222

 1-866-290-4236 (TTY)

 www.donotcall.gov

Texas Do-Not-Call List applies to any telephone marketer, including retail electric providers, who calls a Texas residential or wireless phone number. Your registered telephone number(s) remain on this list for three years.

☎ 1-888-309-0600

💻 www.texasnocall.com

To file a complaint regarding continued calls:
Federal Trade Commission

☎ 1-877-382-4357

💻 www.ftc.gov

SECTION 16.2 EMERGENCY AND DISASTER SERVICES

9-1-1 Fire, Police, and Ambulance (EMS)
(emergencies only)

☎ 9-1-1

American Red Cross Disaster Services

provides material assistance that may include food, shelter, clean-up kits, comfort kits and financial assistance.

☎ 713-526-8300

☎ 1-866-526-8300

💻 www.redcross.org/local/texas/gulf-coast

City of Houston Emergency Management

helps citizens prepare for, cope with and recover from the effects of natural and man-made disasters.

☎ 713-884-4500

☎ 713-884-4518 (TTY)

CenterPoint Energy Report gas leaks

☎ 713-659-2111

☎ 1-888-876-5786

Report power out/tree trimming/street light out

☎ 713-207-2222

☎ 1-800-332-7143

Emergency Aid Coalition provides help provide temporary assistance in the form of food, clothing and other basic needs.

☎ 713-528-3663

Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA) provides disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, education and references.

☎ 1-800-462-9029

☎ 1-800-462-7585 (TTY)

Harris County Housing Resource Center

provides funding for repairing and/or replacing water wells and septic systems that are not functioning or have received health safety violations.

☎ 713-578-2059

💻 www.hrc.hctx.net

National Weather Service (NWS) has up-to-date weather information.

☎ 281-337-5074


Poison Control Center offers free and confidential medical advice 24 hours per day.

☎ 1-800-222-1222


Public Works and Engineering (sewer/ water/street/ traffic signal repairs)

☎ 3-1-1

**Texas Department of Public Safety
Highway Patrol Dispatcher** (24 hours)

 281-517-1300

**Texas Department of Transportation
Highway Department** takes reports on hazardous roads.

 713-802-5000

Emergency Management Offices

Harris County

 713-881-3100

Montgomery County


 1-936-523-3900

Fort Bend County

 281-342-6185

Disaster Preparation


To learn how to prepare for a disaster, including evacuation routes, supplies, and to register if you need assistance in evacuating, call:

 2-1-1

Alzheimer's Association offers an online publication with tips on disaster preparedness for individuals with dementia.

 www.alz.org/national/documents/topicsheet_disasterprep.pdf

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills.

 www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams

Ready.gov has preparedness publications in English and Spanish for older Americans, persons with disabilities, and pet owners. To order:

 1-800-480-2520

 www.ready.gov


HURRICANE RESOURCES

Evacuation Transportation is available to those with special needs during a disaster. Older adults should register every year for the "ride to safety." To find out how to prepare for a disaster, including evacuation routes and the supplies, call:

 2-1-1

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, education and references.


 1-800-462-9029

 1-800-462-7585 (TTY)

National Hurricane Center

 www.nhc.noaa.gov

Texas Department of Insurance has insurance tips for hurricane season.

 1-800-252-3439

 www.tdi.state.tx.us

US Department of Labor (DOL) assists in hurricane recovery efforts. For general questions and assistance:

 1-866-487-2365

The **Texas Silver Alert Program** lets the public know when an older adult with cognitive challenges goes missing. Only law enforcement can request a Silver Alert, and in order to do so, certain conditions must be met. See Section 1.6 for more information and contact local law enforcement where the person lives.

 www.dps.texas.gov

SECTION 16.3 PERSONAL EMERGENCY/ MEDICAL RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) are electronic devices that are used to detect falls, or to summon immediate medical attention in the event of a stroke or heart attack. There are several options in the medical alert system that an older adult can choose from in the event of a medical emergency.

- Simple push-button devices can be worn on the wrist or around the neck. The device alerts a 24-hour call center in the event of an emergency, and allows wireless two-way communication.
- Auto Alert Systems can detect when an older adult falls, and it automatically sends help without relying on the user to push a button.
- Some devices are compatible with cell phones that have Bluetooth or a GPS that monitors the older adult's daily activities and delivers messages to users and their caregivers in an emergency.
- Most of these devices can be purchased, rented, or leased.

Insurance companies and Medicare typically do not pay for the cost of medical alert or life alert systems. Medicaid may offer waivers that cover Personal Emergency Response devices.

Questions to ask before getting a Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) include:

- What options are available for medical alert systems and do all options provide connection to a call center?
- Land-line (home-based)
- Cellular (mobile-based)
- Smart phone (medical app alert)
- Is the monitoring center open 24/7?
- What kind of training do staff receive?


- What is the average response time, and who is alerted?
- Is the system transferrable to other call centers if the client moves out of the area to another city or state?
- What is your repair and/or replacement policy?
- What are the costs for installation and monitoring?
- What services and features are included, for example is fall detection included?

These devices can provide peace of mind for you or a loved one and help support independence.

IDENTIFYING & REPORTING SCAMS

Better Business Bureau (BBB) Silver Sleuth Program is comprised of volunteers over the age of 55 working in conjunction with the BBB to combat schemes targeting older adults. Sleuths are trained to monitor and identify fraudulent schemes and scams in their neighborhoods and report them to the BBB for review.

Better Business Bureau (BBB) Education Foundation

 713-341-6141

 www.bbbhou.org

Texas Attorney General "Senior Alert" Bulletin and website provide current information about the latest scams, schemes, and other crimes against the elderly and allows citizens to report scams. Free subscriptions are available by email.

 www.oag.state.tx.us

SECTION 16.4 ELDER ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Texas law requires anyone to make a report if that person believes an older adult (age 65 or older) or someone with a disability is being abused, neglected, or exploited. It does not matter whether the person suspected of being abused is living with a spouse or giver or whether the person lives alone. The report is confidential. Anyone who believes that he or she is a victim of abuse may call and file his or her own report with the State. If there is immediate danger, call 911.

Physical abuse: when someone uses enough force against an older or disabled person that it causes physical pain, injury, or impairment. It includes violence, such as hitting or pushing as well as using drugs or other means to keep someone held against his or her will.

Emotional abuse happens when someone talks to or acts toward an older adult or a disabled person in such a way that it causes mental distress. It includes words, such as yelling at or embarrassing someone as well as ignoring someone, or using body language to make them afraid.

Sexual abuse happens when someone has contact of a sexual nature without the older adult or disabled person saying that it is ok. It also includes forcing someone to watch such contact when he or she does not want to see it. If a person cannot give consent because of physical or psychological issues, any contact is abuse.

Neglect happens when someone, a family member, caregiver, or even the person him- or herself does not meet the person's basic needs. Sometimes, it may be on purpose, but other times, it is an accident.

Financial exploitation is when someone uses an older adult or disabled person's money or property without that person's permission.

SIGNS THAT A PERSON MIGHT BE ABUSED OR NEGLECTED

Behavioral Signs

- Unexplained bruises, welts, or scars, especially those that appear on both sides of the body
- Injuries that do not fit the explanation of what happened
- Untreated medical conditions
- Sudden weight loss, clearly not eating or drinking enough
- Problems managing or taking medicines

Emotional Signs

- Being more withdrawn, confused, or showing an "I don't care" attitude
- Showing anxiety, fear, or agitation, especially in certain places or around certain people
- Increased depression or moodiness
- Symptoms such as rocking, sucking, or mumbling appearing
- Poor personal hygiene

Environmental Signs

- Unsafe or unclean living conditions
- Not having enough food, clothing
- Utilities turned off

Financial Signs

- Having unpaid bills or large piles of unopened mail
- Being unable to explain money or property transfers
- Frequent and expensive gifts to a caregiver

- Sudden changes to legal or financial documents or accounts
- Making a lot of checks out to “cash”
- Documents signed with handwriting that does not look like the older adult’s or disabled person’s

Caregiver Interaction Signs

- The older adult or disabled person and the caregiver have conflicting stories for what happened
- The caregiver prevents the person from talking to or seeing other people
- Either acting aggressively or not showing care toward the older adult or disabled person

Texas Department of Family & Protective Services – Adult Protective Services


Abuse Hotline has two ways to report abuse against people age 65 or older or disabled adults. Call the hotline for faster response. Reports on the website may take up to 24 hours to process. If someone is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 first.

 1-800-252-5400 (24-hour hotline)

 www.txabusehotline.org


The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services


handles abuse reports for people in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, day centers, and for those receiving services in their home provided by DADS.

 1-800-458-9858

The Texas Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Unit

handles abuse complaints when the victim is receiving long-term care in a place that receives Medicaid funding.

 713-225-0691

 1-800-252-8011

 mfcu@texasattorneygeneral.gov

SECTION 16.5 PROTECTIVE/RESTRAINING, AND BOND ORDERS

When a person has been hurt or is afraid of being hurt, he or she may ask the court for a protective order, a restraining order, or a bond order. A protective order is a court order telling the abuser to stay away from the victim. If the abuser goes near the victim, the police can arrest the abuser. Getting a protective order is free, and someone can go to the courthouse to do it him or herself or call the county attorney’s office for help.

If there is a lawsuit, like a divorce, a judge may issue a restraining order, telling one person to leave the other person alone. If the judge is disobeyed, that person will face consequences in court.

Lastly, if one person makes serious threats to hurt another, the person who is afraid of the threat can go to the court and ask for a bond order. A bond order forces the person who made the threat to deposit money with the court. If that person carries out the threat, he or she will lose the money and may face criminal consequences.

Harris County

Harris County District Attorney's Office

– Family Criminal Law Division

☎ 713-274-5800

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse

(AVDA) offers information on domestic violence, counseling, help with protective orders, and services to victims of domestic violence. AVDA can help anyone with protective orders, whether they are citizens or undocumented.

☎ 713-224-9911

💻 www.avda-tx.org

Asians Against Domestic Abuse (AADA)

provides counseling, interpretation help, and support to victims of domestic violence who live in the Greater Houston area but originally came from Asia. Volunteers speak many different Middle and Far Eastern languages. AADA sees people by appointment only.

☎ 713-339-8300

💻 www.aadainc.org/

Daya works with South Asian victims of domestic violence living in the Houston area. Services are offered in more than a dozen languages from South Asian countries. Daya offers counseling and legal assistance, including help filing immigration paperwork for domestic violence victims.

☎ 713-981-7645

💻 www.dayahouston.org

Fort Bend County

Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office

– Protective Division

☎ 281-341-4460 ext. 1

Harris County Sheriff's Office Crime

Victims Assistance Unit supports a person through the criminal justice process and connects that person to community resources.

☎ 713-274-9172

Houston Police Department – Family

Violence Unit is in charge of investigating cases of family violence. It also has crisis counselors who can link a person to community resources.

☎ 713-308-1100

Katy Christian Ministries can help with protective orders, other legal matters, give referrals, and help someone offer counseling to domestic violence victims.

☎ 281-391-4357 (domestic violence hotline)

☎ 281-391-4504 (crisis center)

💻 www.ktcm.org

Montgomery County

Montgomery County District Attorney's Office Victim Assistance Division provides support and referrals to crime victims.

☎ 936-538-7800

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services It's Everyone's

Business campaign provides information on abuse and its warning signs.

☎ 1-800-252-5400 (Texas Abuse Hotline)

💻 www.dfps.state.tx.us/Everyones_Business/default.asp

Montrose Center (LGBTQA) has a 24-hour information and crisis hotline. General information is given during business hours but crisis calls are handled 24-hours a day.


☎ 713-529-3211

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

Waller County


Waller County District Attorney's Office –


Victim Assistance

 936-539-7800


REPORTING FINANCIAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

The **Better Business Bureau Education Foundation** takes reports and provides help to people who have been contacted by a scammer, who are victims of fraud or a scam, and people who have had problems with a business. It also provides free workshops about scams, schemes, and get-out-of-debt-quick traps.

 713-341-6141

 www.bbb.org/Houston
(Search for Programs & Services,
BBB Education Foundation)

The **Federal Trade Commission** takes complaints about identity theft and scams, identity theft can happen when one person pretends to be another to open bank accounts or credit cards.

 1-877-438-4338

 www.ftc.gov/complaint


Texas Department of Family & Protective Services – Adult Protective Services

Abuse Hotline takes reports of suspected financial abuse. A person has two ways to report abuse against people age 65 or older or disabled adults. Call the hotline for faster response. Reports on the website may take up to 24 hours to process. If someone is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 first.


 1-800-252-5400 (24-hour hotline)


 www.txabusehotline.org

The **Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services** handles abuse reports for people in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, day centers, and for those receiving services in their home provided by DADS.

 1-800-458-9858


The **Texas Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Unit** handles abuse complaints when the victim is receiving long-term care in a place that receives Medicaid funding.

 713-225-0691

 1-800-252-8011

 mfcu@texasattorneygeneral.gov

Texas Senior Medicare Patrol takes reports of suspected abuse or fraud involving Medicare benefits, such as paying for services not received. It also educates Medicare recipients about Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse.

 713-341-6184

 1-888-341-6187


 www.texassmp.org

SECTION 17 SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Research supports benefits of older adults staying physically and mentally active. Older adults who participate in adult activities remain healthy and independent in the community. They also have more energy and increased social skills that can improve their quality of life.

Supervised Adult Activities are offered at many locations throughout Houston and surrounding counties. Senior Centers and Adult day centers allow older adults to enjoy activities outside of their homes. Classes range from fitness classes, computer-training classes, arts and crafts and more. To find a Center in your area, refer to Section 17. Also, refer to Section 2.1 for a listing of licensed Adult Day Centers.

Older adults who are homebound may be eligible to receive personal assistance and physical fitness services from **Texas Health and Human Services, formerly Department of Aging and Disability (DADS)**. These services include activities that may sustain or improve a person's physical and mental health. Contact for more information at


 1-855-937-2372

 www.dads.state.tx.us/services/

SECTION 17.1 EDUCATION PROGRAMS


INFORMATION & RESOURCES

All Saints Catholic Church Third Age Learning Center

 713-248-1277


 www.talcasc.org/

American Red Cross Health & Safety Classes

 713-526-8300


 www.houstonredcross.org

Chinese Community Center

 713-271-6100

 www.ccchouston.org/


Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA)

 713-393-4700

 www.gccsa.org

Harris County Seniors Program


Precinct 1

 713-733-3717


Precinct 2

 713-455-4869

Precinct 3 - Jim & JoAnn Fonteno Senior Education Center

 713-981-4703


Glazier Senior Education Center

 713-274-3250

Precinct 4


 281-893-3726

Houston Community College

 713-718-5381


 www.hccs.edu/adult-education

Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center of Houston (ERJCC)

 713-729-3200

 www.erjcchouston.org/adults/adult-education/


Lee College Senior Adult and Travel Program

 281-425-6416

 www.lee.edu/workforce/ce/senior-travel/

Lone Star College System – Academy for Lifelong Learning (50+)


Atascocita Center

 832-775-0842


CyFair

 281-290-3460

Kingwood

 281-312-1750

Montgomery

 936-273-7446

North Harris

 281-618-5633

Tomball/Creekside

 281-401-1868

University Park

 281-290-5010

Victory Center

 281-810-5602


Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

 1-325-691-0855

 www.txshl.org/training.cfm


COMPUTERS & COMPUTER CLASSES

All Saint Catholic Church Third Age Learning Center


 713-248-1277

Centers for Independent Living (disabled only)


Houston

 713-974-4621 / 713-974-2703 (TTY)

Brazoria County

 1-979-849-7060 V/(TTY)

Fort Bend County


 281-980-2219

County Public Libraries offer free computer and software classes. You can contact your branch for a class schedule or go to the following website for a calendar of scheduled classes.


Fort Bend County Public Library System

 www.fortbend.lib.tx.us


Cinco Ranch

 281-395-1311

First Colony

 281-238-2800


Fulshear

 281-633-4675


George Memorial

 281-342-4455


Missouri City

 281-238-2100


Needville

 979-793-4270


Sienna

 281-238-2900


Stafford

 281-238-2881

Sugar Land

 281-238-2140


University

 281-633-5100


Harris County Public Library System

 www.hcpl.net


Aldine

 832-927-5410


Atascocita

 281-812-2162

Barbara Bush

 281-376-4610

Cy-Fair College Branch

 281-290-3214

Fairbanks

 713-466-4438


Freeman

 281-488-1906


Galena Park

 713-450-0982


High Meadows

 281-590-1456

Jacinto City

 713-673-3237


Katy

 281-391-3509


Kingwood

 281-360-6804


Maud Marks

 281-492-8592

North Channel

 281-457-1631


Northwest

 281-890-2665

Octavia Fields

 281-446-3377

Seabrook

 281-474-9142

South Houston

 713-941-2385


Tomball

 832-559-4200


Montgomery County Library System

 www.countylibrary.org


Central Branch (Conroe)

 936-539-7814


Malcolm Purvis (Magnolia)

 936-442-7704


Charles B. Steward – West (Montgomery)

 936-788-8314


R.B. Tullis (New Caney)

 281-577-8968


George & Cynthia Woods Mitchell (The Woodlands)

 936-442-7728

South Regional (The Woodlands)


 936-442-7727

R.F. Meador (Willis)


 936-442-7740

Mexican Institute of Greater Houston

 713-541-4558

 www.mexicaninstitute.org
(click on Programs)

S.H.A.P.E. Community Center

 713-521-0629

Houston Public Library

The Access Center offers full library services to the hearing and visually impaired. Through the use of adaptive technology, patrons can access the library's catalogue, databases, and the Internet.

The eBook Center allows customers to download electronic books, including best sellers and research information. These books are free if you have a valid library card.

Houston Public Library

☎ 832-393-1313

☎ 832-393-1539 (TTY)

💻 www.hpl.lib.tx.us

Adult Literacy Programs – Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, GED Preparation

Houston Center for Literacy

☎ Dial 2-1-1 for the nearest literacy center to you

Main Office

☎ 713-640-8200

Literacy Advance of Houston

Main Campus – Wilcrest

☎ 713-266-8777

Bay Area

☎ 281-282-6032

Waller

☎ 281-766-4742

Literacy Council of Fort Bend County

☎ 281-240-8181

Literacy Volunteers of America – Montgomery County

☎ 936-494-0635

SECTION 17.2 EXERCISE & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Research has found that staying physically active and exercising regularly can help prevent or delay many diseases and disabilities. As older adults age, exercise such as tai chi, weight training, aerobics class, and yoga can help manage stress, reduce feelings of depression, improve health and help maintain independence. Physical activities such as gardening, walking the dog, walking up, and going down the stairs gets the body moving. Before starting an exercise program or any physical activity, older adults should talk to their doctor about a program that will work for them.

Age Well Live Well is a state initiative to help older Texans live better, healthier lives.

💻 www.dads.state.tx.us/volunteer/atw/

Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center of Houston

☎ 713-729-3200

MedlinePlus

💻 medlineplus.gov/exerciseforseniors.html

BakerRipley (formerly Neighborhood Centers) operates community and senior centers throughout Greater Houston that offer many different types of physical activities.

☎ 713-667-9400

💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations

Texercise is a statewide fitness campaign that educates and involves older Texans and their families in physical activities and proper nutrition.

☎ 1-800-889-8595

💻 www.texercise.com

YMCA of Greater Houston – to locate a YMCA near you

☎ 713-659-5566

💻 www.ymcahouston.org

Houston Parks and Recreation

Department Senior Programs provide a wide variety of recreation and leisure activities for seniors, ages 55 year and older, at community centers across the city. Activities include specialty and creative craft classes, fitness and walking clubs, cultural events, field trips, and senior forums. Seniors may also participate in craft exhibitions, computer classes at local libraries, fashion shows, special holiday events, Senior Olympics competition, and sports programs. Most programming is FREE unless otherwise indicated. Field trips and certain programs may require a minimum fee or request that participants provide their own materials. For more information:

☎ 832-395-7133 / 832-395-7270

💻 www.houstontx.gov/parks/senioractivities.html

SECTION 17.3 FAITH BASED SENIOR PROGRAMS

Many faith-based organizations offer enrichment opportunities for senior adults. The list below includes some of the larger religions and denominations but is solely intended to be a demonstration. Contact the relevant faith communities in your area for further information.

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

💻 www.archgh.org/Find-a-Parish

Assemblies of God

💻 ag.org/top/church_directory

Buddhist Temples

💻 www.jadebuddha.org

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

💻 www.lds.org/maps/meetinghouses

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas

💻 www.epicenter.org/church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

💻 www.elca.org/tools/FindACongregation

Islamic Society of Greater Houston

💻 isgh.org/islamic-centers

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

💻 locator.lcms.org/search.asp

The Sikh Center Houston

💻 www.sikhcenterhouston.org

Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

💻 sbtexas.com/affiliated-churches

Synagogues

💻 www.houstonjewish.org/who-we-are/area-synagogues

The United Methodist Church

💻 www.umc.org/find-a-church

SECTION 17.4 TRAVEL


Traveling Tips

Review travel restrictions posted by the Transportation Security Administration

 1-866-289-9673

 www.tsa.gov/travel

- Review health insurance policy for health care travel needs. Additional travel insurance can be purchased to cover health care on domestic and international travel flights.
- Medications should be packed in their original containers in a carry-on bag.
- Stricter laws apply to overseas travel. Bring copies of prescriptions, and if possible, a letter from the doctor explaining the need for the drug and any particular medical problem.
- Bring a list of all prescription medications. When traveling overseas, it is recommended to bring the generic names because overseas pharmaceutical companies may use different names than the US companies.
- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has ruled that certain models of Portable Oxygen Concentrators (POCs) have been approved for in-flight use. Not all airlines permit POC's on board. When traveling internationally, contact the airline carrier to verify the procedures on POCs.
- Travel with an extra pair of eyeglasses and/or a copy of an eyeglass prescription.
- Bring a photo ID and medical insurance information.
- When traveling out of the country, take copies of passport photo page, health insurance policies, and travel itinerary.
- Check with the Center for Disease Control for any travel advisories on immunization information.

 1-800-232-4636


 www.cdc.gov/travel

Airline Assistance - Most airlines provide special assistance to older adults and to passengers with special needs.


- When booking a reservation, a request can be made in advance for a wheelchair at the originating and destination airports, or at the check-in counter.
- Airlines will provide help for passengers getting on and off the airplane. Ask the ticket agent for assistance.
- Airlines will issue an escort pass for passengers who need assistance getting to and from the gate area. A friend or family member can request the pass from the airline's ticket counter. Government-issued photo ID is required to obtain a gate pass.

Passport Information

Check with the passport office to find out what documents are required when traveling outside of the United States. Contact the Houston Passport Agency

 877-487-2778.

National Passport Information Center

 1-877-487-2778

 www.travel.state.gov

Medicare Coverage When You Travel

Original Medicare provides coverage for any doctor or hospital in the US and its territories that accept Medicare. Usually, it doesn't cover care outside the country, but there are exceptions. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, check to see if and how your coverage travels with you.

AIRLINE/BUS/TRAIN TRANSPORTATION

Amtrak travelers 62 and older receive a 15 percent discount on rail fares (excluding First Class) on most Amtrak lines. Accommodations are available for special needs travelers, including those who are in a wheelchair, need to carry oxygen onboard or use a service animal.

☎ 1-800-872-7245

☎ 1-800-523-6590 (TDD/TTY)

💻 www.amtrak.com

Bush Intercontinental Airport

☎ 281-230-3100

Greyhound Bus Line (long distance bus travel)

☎ 1-800-231-2222

💻 www.greyhound.com

Hobby Airport

☎ 713-640-3000

☎ 713-641-7722 (TTY)

💻 www.fly2houston.com/hobby

Megabus (long distance bus travel)

☎ 1-877-462-6342

💻 us.megabus.com

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE INFORMATION

Texas Parklands Passports are available to seniors, veterans and those who are permanently disabled and offer free or discounted entry to more than 90 parks statewide. Texas Parklands Passports can be purchased at any state park.

💻 tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/park-information/passes/park-passes

SECTION 17.5 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are thousands of places in the Greater Houston area that welcome older volunteers. From volunteering with a religious institution to helping at a museum, from community gardening to making items for cancer survivors, or from mentoring a child to delivering a meal to a homebound older adult, there is something for anyone who wants to get involved. Below is a sample of volunteer activities that are from many different types of organizations.

AARP and the AARP Foundation have volunteer activities to work with other older adults. Volunteers are needed to facilitate a money management class and help with taxes. No experience in either area is necessary. Volunteers also are needed to help with AARP advocacy and education and to teach driver safety courses.

CreathetheGood, an AARP initiative, has local volunteer opportunities and do-good project ideas.

☎ 1-866-227-7443 (Houston office)

☎ 1-800-775-6776 (foundation)

💻 www.aarp.org/giving-back/

💻 www.aarp.org/aarp-foundation/get-involved/

💻 createthegood.org/volunteer-search

Alzheimer's Association regularly needs volunteers to staff tables at events, participate in their speakers' bureau, help in the office or facilitate support groups, or work with special events. Volunteer registration is required.

☎ 713-314-1332

💻 www.alz.org/texas/

American Red Cross has opportunities to help community members during their time of need. Interested volunteers need to complete an online profile or call to be matched with opportunities.

☎ 713-526-8300

💻 www.redcross.org/local/texas/gulf-coast/volunteer

Better Business Bureau Education Foundation Senior Medicare Patrol

trains volunteers to educate and inform Medicare beneficiaries on how to combat fraud and waste of their Medicare dollars.

☎ 713-341-6141

💻 www.bbb.org/Houston
(Programs & Services,
BBB Education Foundation)

CanCare is a volunteer network of cancer survivors, family members of cancer survivors, and medical professionals who provide emotional support and information to others facing cancer. The support may be given through phone, email, or in-person hospital visits. Houston is one of the three national CanCare training centers.

☎ 713-461-0028

☎ 1-888-461-0028

💻 cancare.org

Catholic Charities looks for volunteers to help at food pantries, with donation centers and the gift shop, at special events, and with other agency needs. Volunteers are needed throughout Harris and Fort Bend Counties.

☎ 713-874-6676 (Harris)

☎ 281-202-6222 (Fort Bend)

💻 catholiccharities.org/what-you-can-do/

The Center seeks volunteers to work with adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities or to provide background support to the organization.

☎ 713-525-8431

💻 thecenterhouston.org/you-can-help/

Chinese Community Center Wan Yuan Senior Companionship Program matches volunteers with older adults to visit with them at least twice per month. Volunteers must commit for a year.

☎ 713-271-6100 x 205

💻 ccchouston.org/wanyuan/

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

is a volunteer team that helps residents prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Training is required. For Harris County information see Harris County Citizens Corp below.

☎ 281-342-4798 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.fbcoem.org/go/doctype/1528/30168/

☎ 936-523-3915 (Montgomery)

💻 www.mctxoem.org

☎ 979-826-8282 (Waller)

💻 wcoem.org

Executive Service Corps of Houston

volunteers have special skill sets that they lend to non-profits in order to help them improve.

☎ 713-780-2208

💻 eschouston.org

The **Foster Grandparent Program** is part of the federal **Senior Corps** program and is operated in Harris County by the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center. Adults ages 55 and older work with children in schools, shelters, and other places where they need a loving adult in their lives. Participants receive a small stipend and must qualify to be in the program.

☎ 713-595-8172 (Harris County)

☎ 281-344-3515 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.erjcchouston.org/seniors/foster-grandparent-program/


Generation to Generation is an **Encore.org** initiative to connect adults over the age of 50 with youth mentorship opportunities.

 generationtogeneration.org

Habitat for Humanity volunteers help build homes for low-income families.

 713-671-9993 (Houston)

 houstonhabitat.org

 281-477-0460 (NW Harris County)

 www.habitatnwhc.org

 281-403-0708 (Fort Bend)

 www.fortbendhabitat.org

 936-441-4663 (Montgomery)

 www.habitatmctx.org


Harris County Citizens Corp is the county's community service initiative. It helps coordinate the county's Community Emergency Response Teams and volunteering to support city and county efforts. The webpage has information on how to join many initiatives or volunteer with county departments.

 281-564-6669

 www.harriscountycitizencorps.com


Helping Elderly Residents Out (HERO)

uses volunteers to provide transportation, handyman services, and help with understanding bills or filling out paperwork to older residents in the Spring Branch area.

 713-932-3996

 hero-houston.org


Hospice programs need volunteers to visit and provide comfort to people on hospice, provide respite for family members, or help in the office. The Hospice Foundation of America has information about being a volunteer, and the Texas New Mexico Hospice Organization has a tool to find a nearby hospice organization.

 1-800-580-9270 (Texas)

 www.txnmhospice.org

 hospicefoundation.org/Volunteer


Interfaith CarePartners works with faith based communities to create care teams. Care teams offer respite and support to families dealing with difficult health circumstances such as HIV/AIDS, dementia, raising children with disabilities, or caring for an older adult with physical disabilities. Contact Interfaith CarePartners for a nearby faith community with a care team.

 713-682-5995

 www.interfaithcarepartners.org

Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston

has volunteers to support Meals on Wheels clients, including delivering food and checking in with clients, picking up or delivering pet food for their pets, or helping clients with basic chores. (Other volunteers assist with welcoming and resettling refugees.)

 713-533-4978

 www.imgh.org

Internal Revenue Service recruits volunteers for helping low to moderate income people file their taxes and supporting the low-income tax preparation centers.

 www.irs.gov

(keyword: volunteer)


Knitted Knockers has volunteers who knit external breast prosthetics for women who are breast cancer survivors.

 www.knittedknockers.org

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Program visit residents in long-term care programs to make sure their needs are being met and that they know their rights. They also meet with the families and advocate on their behalf with the facility if issues arise.

 713-500-9931 (Harris County)

 713-993-4562 (Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller)

 nursing.uth.edu/coa/ombudsman/

 www.h-gac.com

(keyword: ombudsman)

Meals on Wheels organizations need volunteers to help deliver meals and check-in with elderly and homebound people.

☎ 2-1-1 (to find the nearest provider)

Montrose Center has opportunities to work with youth through older adults, provide office support, provide community outreach, or other activities.

☎ 713-529-0037

💻 www.montrosecenter.org

Medical Reserve Corps is a volunteer group of medical and non-medical individuals who help with community medical needs during disasters or public health crises. They may also help with first aid at major events and with vaccine efforts.

☎ 713-783-4616 ext. 240 (Harris)

💻 gatewaytocare.org/volunteer/

☎ 281-844-3653 (Fort Bend)

💻 www.homelandpreparedness.org/FB.html

☎ 936-523-5020 (Montgomery)

💻 mcphd-tx.org/medical-reserve-corps-mrc/

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (formerly Neighborhood Centers) Sheltering

Arms Division uses volunteers in its adult day center for people with dementia and in its senior centers. Volunteers may help lead workshops, interact with clients, or work in the office.

☎ 713-667-2480

💻 volunteer.neighborhood-centers.org

BakerRipley (formerly Neighborhood Centers) Tax Centers uses volunteers to staff its tax centers to help low-and moderate-income people and families file their taxes and get tax credits they have earned.

☎ 713-273-3755

💻 volunteer.neighborhood-centers.org

Rebuilding Together Houston has volunteers that help with external home repairs for older or disabled adults who cannot afford them. No experience is necessary, but volunteers need to be mobile enough for assignments.

☎ 713-659-2511

💻 rebuildinghouston.org

The **Retired and Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP)** is a part of the federal Senior Corps program operated in Houston by the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center. Adults ages 55 and older are matched with community organizations that can use their talents or help them develop new skills.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston Counties

☎ 713-595-8195 (Harris)

☎ 979-308-3316 (Fort Bend)

☎ 936-856-8647 (Montgomery)

☎ 281-822-4209 (Waller)

💻 www.rsvpvolunteers.com

Senior Rides and More (formerly VIC-Southwest) volunteers take older and disabled adults without transportation on errands. Volunteers must have their own transportation.

☎ 713-772-8181

💻 www.seniorridesandmore.org


Service Corporation of Retired Executive volunteers provide mentoring services and teach seminars to small business owners to help them grow their own businesses.

Serves: Greater Houston area


☎ 713-487-6565

💻 houston.score.org


The **Senior Companion Program** is part of the federal Senior Corps program operated in Houston by the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center. Adults ages 55 and older give friendship and assistance to older adults who need extra support in order to stay in their homes. Participants receive a small stipend and must qualify to be in the program.

 713-595-8183


 713-595-8172 (Harris County)


 www.erjcchouston.org/seniors/senior-companions-program/

Local **Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** need volunteers to help care for animals in need of a home.


 713-869-7722 (Greater Houston)

 www.houstonspca.org

 www.spcaofmc.com
(Montgomery)

 www.erjcchouston.org/seniors/senior-companions-program/

Texas Hispanic Council on Aging is a group that combines people working in the aging field with older adult volunteers to learn and to give back to the older adult community.

 832-274-2756

 www.texashispaniccouncilonaging.org/

In the **Texas Silver-Haired Legislature**, Texans ages 60 and older who are registered to vote are elected to two-year terms. Those who are elected meet to push forward policy items important to older adults.

713-667-9400

 volunteer.neighborhood-centers.org

Volunteer Houston is a website where people can be matched with volunteer opportunities.

 281-656-1533

 volunteerhouston.org

Volunteer Match has listings of volunteer opportunities throughout the Greater Houston area.

 www.volunteermatch.org

SECTION 18 STATE AND NATIONAL RESOURCES

These Texas and national resources connect individuals to financial, legal, medical, housing, and government services in times of need.

SECTION 18.1 EMERGENCY AND CRISIS HELP

2-1-1 Texas / United Way Helpline -

Dial 2-1-1 or search online for basic needs, emergencies, natural disasters, health care, and other forms of help. This service is available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year in multiple languages.

 2-1-1

 referral.unitedwayhouston.org/


Elder Abuse Hotline 24/7 is a secure phone hotline and website for reporting suspicions of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, adults with disabilities, or people 65 years or older. File a report online or by phone.

 1-800-252-5400

 www.txabusehotline.org


American Red Cross provides help in case of evacuation, food, clothing and other needs.


 1-866-526-8300 (natural disaster and fire)

 713-526-8300 (Houston chapter)

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD (formerly MHMRA of Harris County)

provides resources, referrals, and crisis assistance.

 713-970-7000 (option 1 for suicide and mental health crisis hotline)

 1-866-970-4770 (general information)

 www.mhmraharris.org/helpline.asp


The **Texas Silver Alert Program** lets the public know when an older adult with cognitive challenges goes missing. Only law enforcement can request a Silver Alert, and in order to do so, certain conditions must be met. See Section 1.6 for more information and contact local law enforcement where the person lives.


SECTION 18.2 GENERAL SERVICES

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide information, referrals, and services for people ages 60 and older. Programs generally are for social, nutritional, and educational needs as well as basic needs such as housing, dental, or legal services. It also offers benefits counseling, care coordination services, caregiver support services, and much more. It also provides benefits and options counseling where trained staff can help someone figure out what their best options are and for what programs they may qualify.

Attorney General

The Attorney General protects senior consumers by taking legal measures. The Attorney General investigates abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of seniors in long-term care facilities that receive federal Medicaid funds. This agency also takes legal action against nursing homes, assisted living facilities and home health care agencies that violate state and federal standards.

 1-800-252-8011

 texasattorneygeneral.gov/seniors/senior-texans-page

BenefitsCheckup.org is a free service to ensure older adults are receiving all of the benefits that they are eligible for. Provided by the National Council on Aging, this checkup helps persons over 55 who need assistance with different types of programs to improve their health and economic security by connecting them to local, state, federal and private benefit programs. Types of expenses seniors may be able to get help with include medication, food, utilities, legal, health care, in-home services, and others.


 www.benefitscheckup.org

Eldercare Locator is a nationwide public service that helps older adults, their families, and caregivers find trustworthy, local support resources that can help seniors live independently and safely in their homes for as long as possible. Help is available in many different languages for such services as adult day care, financial assistance, home health, legal, Meals on Wheels, housing, and transportation.

 1-800-677-1116


 www.eldercare.gov


Food and Drug Administration is responsible for food and drug safety, including medications and medical devices.

 1-855-543-3784


 www.fda.gov/

The Harris County AAA serves Harris County while the **Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging** (HGAC-AAA) serves Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and other Greater Houston area Counties.

 832-393-4301 (Harris County AAA)

 1-800-213-8471


 281-633-0519 (HGAC-AAA Fort Bend office)

 936-441-3200 (HGAC-AAA Montgomery and Waller County office)

 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging/

 www.h-gac.com/human-services/aging/


Medicare includes federal, nationwide programs including eligibility for medical care. For more information, refer to Section 9.3.

 1-800-633-4227

 www.medicare.gov

Social Security Administration

For disability and retirement benefit information. For more information, refer to Section 9.4.


 1-800-772-1213

 www.socialsecurity.gov

Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS), part of HHS, offers many services to older adults with a disability. One service helps find and sometimes pay for items disabled older adults need to make their daily lives easier. If the disability means that the person cannot use his or her car without making changes, DARS also may be able to help. Call the number below to be transferred to the closest office.

 1-800-628-5115 (all DARS services)

 www.dars.state.tx.us/drs/RehabTechLab.shtml

 www.dars.state.tx.us/dbs/il.shtml
Division of Blind Services (life skills, independent living, job training)

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Adult Protective Services takes allegations about and provides services for abused, neglected, and exploited older and disabled adults. This includes self-neglect by older adults that may be isolated. Referrals are made for all services regarding the safety and welfare of elderly.

 1-800-252-5400

 www.dfps.state.tx.us/


Texas Department of Public Safety

Persons over 79 must go in to an office to renew their driver's license after the expiration date to take vision test.

 www.dps.texas.gov/index.htm

Texas Department of State Health Services (SHS), part of HHS


Public and community health services, including mental health and substance abuse help, Medicaid services including the NorthSTAR program, the Youth Empowerment Services (YES) program, Disaster Behavioral Health, the Money Follows the Person program. Also family health, primary clinics, public health organizations, disease prevention initiatives, facility registration, health data, and birth, death, marriage and divorce records.


 1-800-252-5400

 www.dshs.texas.gov/

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has information about **Medicaid**, how to apply, and how to access Medicaid related programs. For applications:

 2-1-1 (to request a form or to find a local office)


 1-800-252-8263 (to request a form or find a local office)


 yourtexasbenefits.hhsc.texas.gov
(online application)


Texas Health and Human Services

Commission (HHSC) (HHSC, covering DADS, DARS, DFPS and SHS)

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) is transitioning operations and client services into the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, scheduled to be complete by September 2017. This is not expected to change services for clients. HHS/DADS can help you find short, intermediate, or long-term care for a loved one that helps with their physical, mental, medical, and social needs. To find the best fit, visit the facility and talk with other clients before making a choice. For facility information

 1-855-937-2372

 1-800-458-9858 (to apply for HHSC/DADS services)

 facilityquality.dads.state.tx.us
(help identifying services)

General information

 www.dads.state.tx

The **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)** are part of the No Wrong Door system, which is designed to streamline public access to services and programs. ADRCs serve as a key point of access to specialized information, referral and assistance and provide one-stop access to information for people who need help finding long-term care services. ADRCs help cut through the confusing maze of funding sources, multiple intake systems, and eligibility processes. ADRCs provide help to people in all 254 counties in the state.

 hhs.texas.gov/services/aging/long-term-care/aging-disability-resource-center


Texas.gov is the State of Texas' homepage. It contains information in ten categories and provides public access to state and local government online services:

- Business information
- Communities
- Criminal justice and law
- Travel, tourism and recreation
- Employment
- Education
- Health and human services
- Texas information
- Technology
- State government

 www.texas.gov

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development


Buy a home, locate rental assistance, or help with finding public housing.

 713-718-3199

 portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD

Veterans & Retired Military

Honorably discharged military personnel can contact the Veterans Affairs Regional Office Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) for information on all veteran's benefits.

 1-800-827-1000

 iris.custhelp.com/

Veteran's Resources Directory – Lifeline for Vets

The National Veterans Foundation's Lifeline for Vets helps veterans of all eras, their family members and active duty service members, some while serving overseas in combat deployments. The Lifeline for Vets assists veterans with needs including medical treatment, PTSD counseling, VA benefits advocacy, food, shelter, employment, training, legal aid, suicide intervention and more.

 1-888-777-4443 Veteran's Crisis Hotline (Vet to Vet)

 nvf.org/


SECTION 18.3 LEGAL

Attorneys Specializing in Elder and Special Needs Law in Texas can be found through the **National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys'** website: Click on "Find an Attorney"

 www.texasnaela.com/txnaela

National Senior Citizen Law Center

Aging law and protection help, with a focus on older women, older adults of color, LGBT older adults, and limited English proficiency older adults.

 1-202-289-6976

 www.justiceinaging.org/

SECTION 18.4 MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH


Federally Qualified Health Centers

Locate medical care for clients who do not have health insurance

 findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov


Gateway to Care

Locate home health care agencies.

 713-783-4616

 www.gatewaytocare.org/

Poison Control Center – call for emergencies and recommendations for treatment from exposure to chemicals, taking the wrong medicine, or taking the wrong dose of medicine.

 1-800-222-1222


Mental Health Services


The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD (formerly MHMRA of Harris County) provides mental health outpatient services, comprehensive psychiatric emergency services, intellectual disability and autism services, and mental health forensic services.

 713-970-7000

 www.mhmraharris.org

Nurse Health Line provides registered nurses 24/7 to callers regarding current health concerns.

 1-855-577-7979

 713-338-7979

SECTION 19 SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups bring people together that have the same goals or concerns. Support groups allow people to come together with the same life experiences or issues. These support groups can be led by professionals or someone from the group and can be used as a tool to heal and make connections. Some organizations have multiple support groups in different communities, so contact the organizations in this section to see what may be close. As specific support groups can shift and change their location, times, etc., any list published in this section would be almost immediately outdated.

For the most accurate and up-to-date information on specific types and locations of support groups, call the 2-1-1 Texas / United Way Helpline.

Al-Anon (friends and family)

 www.houstonalanon.org

English

 713-683-7227

Spanish

 713-681-1296

Alcoholics Anonymous

 713-686-6300

 www.aahouston.org

ALS Association (Lou Gehrig's disease)

 713-942-2572

 www.alsa-houston.org

Alzheimer's Association/Houston & South East Texas Chapter

 713-266-6400

 www.alz.org/texas

Amazing Place (caregivers dealing with dementia)

 713-552-0420

 www.amazingplacehouston.org

American Cancer Society

 713-266-2877

 www.cancer.org

American Diabetes Association

 713-977-7706

 www.diabetes.org

American Lung Association of the Central States

 713-629-5864

 www.texaslung.org

Arthritis Foundation

 1-800-283-7800

 www.arthritis.org

BakerRipley Sheltering Arms Senior Services (caregiver support services)


 713-685-6577

CanCare (individual cancer support)

 713-461-0028

 www.cancare.org

Crohn's and Colitis Foundation South Texas Chapter

 713-572-2232

 www.ccfa.org

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance of Houston

☎ 713-600-1131

💻 www.dbsahouston.org

Epilepsy Foundation

☎ 713-789-6295

💻 www.epilepsyfoundation.org

Fibromyalgia Association of Houston

☎ 713-664-0180

Gulf Parkinson's Source

💻 gulfparkinsonsource.org

Harris County Area Agency on Aging and Aging and Disabilities Resource Center Family Caregiver Support Program

☎ 832-393-4301

☎ 1-800-213-8471

💻 www.houstontx.gov/health/Aging

Houston Area Parkinson Society

☎ 713-626-7114

💻 www.hapsonline.org

Houston Low Vision Club

☎ 713-743-0799

💻 www.uei.uh.edu

Lifeline (widows and widowers)

☎ 281-497-2663

Lupus Foundation

☎ 713-529-0126

💻 www.lupustexas.org

Mended Hearts (heart disease)

☎ 832-355-4160

Caring for the Caregiver

☎ 713-523-8963

The Montrose Center (60 and older LGBTQA and LGBT Seniors of Color)

☎ 713-529-0037

💻 www.spryhouston.org

Muscular Dystrophy Association

(English/Spanish)

☎ 713-522-3941

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Houston Chapter

☎ 713-970-4419

Park Plaza Hospital (caregivers)

☎ 877-613-4732

Texas Polio Survivors Association

☎ 1-800-259-4457

💻 www.texaspolio.com

TIRR Stroke Support Group

☎ 713-797-5942

💻 www.memorialhermann.org

United Ostomy Association

💻 www.uoahouston.org

Well Spouse Association (spousal caregivers)

☎ 1-800-838-0879

💻 www.wellspouse.org

SECTION 20 TRANSPORTATION

It can be difficult to get around in Houston and many parts of Texas with limited transportation resources aside from personal transportation (cars). There are public and private transportation services in the City of Houston. Some of these transportation services are offered by agencies to the elderly, disabled or those who have chronic illnesses. There are 3 common ways to get around Houston:

- Drive oneself
- Hire someone
- Shared rides (government funded/volunteer or agency provided)

“The Key Conversation”


One of the most difficult conversations to have with a loved one is about not driving anymore. In the greater Houston area, people primarily get around in their own cars, and 97% of drivers see taking the keys away as losing their independence. If someone is too ill to drive or is dangerous to others or themselves while driving, it may be time to have this discussion. Here are some warning signs:

- Easily distracted while driving
- Hitting curbs
- Having trouble merging onto lanes
- Poor judgment making left turns
- Failing to follow traffic signs and signals, this may lead to increased traffic tickets
- Dementia or brain impairment
- Struggling to drive at a high speed
- Range-of-motion issues such as failing to look over the shoulder, trouble shifting gears or confusing gas and brake pedals


The following resources provide free or low-cost transportation. Some of these services are provided by local government, and others are non-profit programs that use volunteers as drivers. Some provide curb-to-curb service while others provide door-to-door assistance. Some programs provide limited transportation, such as to the doctor’s office or grocery store, and others take someone wherever they wish to go. Call or visit the website for cost and eligibility information as well as program restrictions.

METRO Fare System’s Q (Quick) Card Program

stores the cash balance you have deposited directly onto your personal Q Card. Fares are deducted each time you ride. The Q Card provides free transfers and tracks your progress toward earning free trips. Seniors, Medicare cardholders, and the disabled receive a discount on fares. The free 70+ Lifetime Pass is for persons 70 years and older.


 713-739-6968

Helpline

 713-739-4039

 www.ridemetro.org

METROLift provides pre-scheduled, shared ride, curb-to-curb transportation for the disabled. There are strict eligibility guidelines.


 713-225-0119

 www.ridemetro.org

METROLift Subsidy Program is for MetroLift patrons who have same day transportation needs or trip changes. The customer calls a participating taxi company and pays the first \$1 of the fare, METROLift pays the next \$8, and the customer pays anything over \$9. When calling a taxi company, the customer must say that he or she needs an MSP taxi.

 713-225-0119 (program information)

 713-223-0303 (Yellow Cab)


 713-428-5888 (Fiesta)

METRORail


 713-635-4000

 www.ridemetro.org

American Red Cross provides non-emergency medical transportation to Harris and Fort Bend County residents who are older or disabled. It is a door-to-door shared ride service, so reservations should be made at least two weeks in advance. There is no cost for this service.


 713-526-8300

Harris County RIDES provides subsidized shared and individual transportation for older and disabled adults. Transit is subsidized 50%. Prices vary depending on whether a shared-ride or taxi service is used and whether the individual receives additional subsidies from a partner agency.

 713-368-7433 (RIDES)

 www.harriscountyrides.com

Harris County Transit connects people outside the METRO service area to METRO services. It also has a Share Ride Taxi Program, which offers rides for medical appointments and services to people outside of the METRO area. Lastly, it offers the RIDES program which provides subsidized shared and individual transportation for older and disabled adults.

 713-578-2216 (information/Share Ride Taxi Program)

 www.harriscountytransit.com

Harris County Precincts offer buses and drivers for groups of older adults who want to take a day trip. Buses can travel 150 miles from Houston.


 713-733-3717 (Precinct 1)

 713-274-2352 (Precinct 2)

 281-492-3680 (Precinct 3)


 281-893-3726 (Precinct 4)


Helping Elderly Residents Out provides transportation for Spring Branch residents going to grocery stores or to a doctor's appointment.

 713-392-3996

 hero-houston.org

JRIDE provides transportation to adults over the age of 60 and adults with disabilities who are affiliated with a local Jewish organization and live in eligible Southwest Houston zip codes. The program will pick up someone from his or her home and take that person to medical appointments, the pharmacy, personal care appointments, or to the grocery store. There is a fee to participate, but the fee is waived for those who qualify based on income.

 713-595-8191


 www.erjcchouston.org/adults/transportation

The **Medical Transportation Program for Medicaid Recipients** will provide non-emergency transportation to medical appointments if someone has no other way to get to that Medicaid-related appointment. Call at least 2 work days before the ride is needed.

 1-855-687-4786

Senior Rides & More (formerly VIC-SW) uses volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments, the grocery store, to pick up prescriptions, or similar necessary errands. Riders must be at least 60 years old and be able to walk (canes and walker are ok) on their own.

Serves: Parts of Southwest and North Harris and East Fort Bend County

 713-772-8181

 www.seniorridesandmore.org

West University Senior Services provides shared-ride service for residents traveling up to 7 miles from West University.

Fort Bend County Transportation Programs

Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department provides several types of transportation services.

☎ 1-866-751-8747

💻 www.fortbendcountytx.gov

New Freedom Transportation a transportation service for people with disabilities who live in the rural areas of Fort Bend County.

☎ 281-633-RIDE or

☎ 866-751-TRIP (all programs)

Montgomery County Transportation Programs

Demand & Response is a shared ride, curb-to-curb service that covers Montgomery County. Passengers can be taken anywhere in the service area. Appointments are required at least one day in advance.

☎ 979-778-0607

☎ 1-800-272-0039

💻 www.btd.org

ADA Paratransit service is offered for persons with disabilities who cannot access the fixed routes due to a physical or mental impairment, and have an origin and destination within 3/4 of a mile of the fixed routes. This service currently serves the Woodlands and Conroe.

☎ 281-210-3800 (The Woodlands)

☎ 936-522-3526 (Conroe)

Interfaith of the Woodlands Senior Transportation – provides rides to medical appointments and the grocery store.

☎ 281-367-1230

Montgomery County Friendship Center

☎ 936-756-5828

SPECIALTY/MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Angel Flight of South Central, provides free flights for patients who need to travel for medical treatment.

☎ 972-458-0700 or

💻 www.angelflightsc.org

Corporate Angel Network, provides free flights on corporate jets to persons with cancer.

☎ 914-328-1313

Houston Ground Angels provide complimentary ground transportation between area airports and the Medical Center for patients traveling to Houston for medical treatment. Transportation is provided by Houston Ground Angel volunteers who donate their time, automobiles and gasoline.

☎ 281-900-7377

State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) is a free registry that provides local emergency planners and emergency responders with additional information for evacuation assistance on the needs in their community. More information can be found on the back inside cover of this Directory.

VA Hospital Transportation

Transportation to and from the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center from outlying areas is available by way of vans operated by various Veteran service organizations. Call the telephone numbers listed below for availability, pick-up point, and schedule information. It is a good idea to call the day before your appointment to arrange your ride.

Waller County

☎ 979-826-7733

Harris County Precinct #2 Van

☎ 713-274-2340, Informational Recording

Harris County Social Services

☎ 713-696-1991

Local Montgomery County Transportation

☎ 1-800-272-0039, Wheelchair accessible

Montgomery County Vans


☎ 936-756-5828, Voice Mail

💻 www.houston.va.gov/locations/directions.asp

SECTION 20.1 DRIVING AND AUTOMOBILE ASSISTANCE

AARP Smart Driver course offers an online driver's safety course that helps older drivers update their driving skills. This course includes information on:

- The rules and hazards of the road.
- Normal age-related physical changes and preventive measures to reduce driver distractions, and to adjust driving skills to compensate for these changes in order to reduce traffic violations, accidents, and injuries.
- Information on the effects of medication on driving.
- Proper use of safety belts, air bags, anti-lock brakes and new technology found in cars today.
- State-specific rules and regulations in 19-key areas, including construction zones, child safety seats, school buses, cellphone use and more.

 1-800-350-7025

 www.aarpdriversafety.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR OLDER DRIVER SAFETY:

CarFit helps older adults check how well their vehicles "fit" them – how well facets of the car like the seat and seatbelt fit and work for the older adult to keep them safe and comfortable. Information on being a safer driver and getting around the community is also given.

 www.car-fit.org

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging offers an online guide for older drivers, the Older Driver Safety and Transition for the Mature Driver.

 www.n4a.org/transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offers free materials to help you recognize and discuss changes in an older loved one's driving.


 www.nhtsa.gov/Senior-Drivers

SeniorDrivers.org offers valuable information on senior drivers and the challenges they face.

 www.seniordrivers.org

Alzheimer's Association offers an online publication on safe driving for older adults with Alzheimer's/Dementia. (Available in English/ Spanish/ Chinese/additional languages.) This site provides resources on how to help an older driver with Alzheimer's on how to plan ahead to ease the transition from driving. Some of the recommendations to help the older driver transition are:

- Tips on how to plan early for driving retirement by discussing with the older driver how driving will be handled once it becomes an issue.
- Tips on how to help the older driver with Alzheimer's retire from driving by transitioning the driving responsibilities to others and allowing the older driver to be active in the decision making process.
- Tips to help the reluctant older driver understand the importance of retiring from driving.

 www.alz.org/national/documents/topicsheet_driving.pdf

Stopping Unsafe Senior Drivers Who are Reluctant to Retire from Driving:


When action must be taken against the wishes of a loved one, here are some helpful tips.

- Stage an intervention—talk to the unsafe driver as a group of concerned family or caregivers.
- Take the keys, disable the car, or move it to another location.
- Concerns about unsafe older drivers who may have a medical, physical, or psychological condition that could affect their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle can be reported anonymously to the DPS in writing. Verbal notification is not sufficient evidence for DPS to take action. Provide a detailed explanation of why it is unsafe for the older adult to operate a motor vehicle. Information can be submitted by mail, fax, or email.

Texas Department of Public Safety Enforcement and Compliance Service

P.O. Box 4087

Austin, TX 78773-0320

 Fax: 1-512-424-5133

 Email: MAB@dps.texas.gov

Switching from a Driver's License to ID Card

State Issued ID Card for Non-Drivers is necessary at airports, banks, voting locations, for writing checks, or applying for government aid. The Department of Public Safety issues ID cards, which are used in place of a driver's license to conduct business.


If a driver has a current driver's license, or a driver's license that is within two years of expiration, he or she can apply for a state ID card. There are no testing requirements or age restrictions, if a driver's license has expired for more than two years. However, additional proof of identity will be required such as a birth certificate, Social Security card, or voter registration card before an ID card is issued.

Driver's License Renewals

Individuals ages 79 and older must meet special criteria to renew their license, including passing a vision test. Those between the ages of 79 and 84 must renew their license in person. The renewal is good for six years. Individuals age 85 and older must also renew in person, but the license expires approximately 2 years later.

For vehicle modification resources, see Section 3.10.

Disabled Parking Permits (temporary and permanent) are issued by your county tax office. To locate your Texas county tax office:

 www.txdmv.gov/vehicles/drivers/disabled.htm


Download an application

 www.txdmv.gov/wheretogo/tax_offices.htm


Fort Bend County

 281-341-3709


Harris County

 713-274-8000

Montgomery County

 936-539-7897

Waller County


 979-826-7620


DRIVER'S LICENSE RENEWAL AND IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety provides information on laws by state for older drivers

 www.iihs.org/laws/olderdrivers.aspx

Texas Department of Public Safety —to locate an office near you

 512-424-2600 (English)

 512-424-7181 (Spanish)

 www.dps.texas.gov

TexasOnline allows you to renew your driver's license, vehicle registration, and order your own driver records

 www.texasonline.com

The Online Driver's License Renewal

 wtxapps.texas.gov/tolapp/txdl/

EMERGENCY MOTORIST ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Non-Wrecker Service

Texas DPS Roadside Assistance/ Stranded Motorist Hotline provides help to motorists whose vehicles are disabled on state and federal roads in Texas. This phone number is for reporting non-life-threatening situations.


 *377

Free of charge for customers of participating wireless services

 1-800-525-5555


Motorist Assistance Program (MAP)

provides free help to motorists stranded on major freeways due to engine overheating, flat tires, or dry gas tanks.

 713-225-5627

Patron Emergency Assistance Team (PEAT)

provides free assistance due to overheating/flat tires/dry gas tanks on Harris and Fort Bend county tollways


 713-222-7328

WRECKER SERVICE

SAFEClear Program will send a wrecker to help a stranded motorist on a major freeway within the Houston city limits. A fee is charged. Vehicle owners who are unable to pay the fee at the point of service will have their vehicle towed to a city-approved storage facility for up to 48 hours at no charge.

Storage fees will be applied after the first 48 hours in addition to a towing charge.

 3-1-1

 713-837-0311

 www.houstontx.gov/safeclear

EMISSIONS TEST FAILURE - LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE

AirCheck Texas helps lower income people repair or replace vehicles that failed emissions tests. If the car is 10 years or older and still can be driven, the owner may be able to qualify for assistance buying a new vehicle. The vehicle must be registered with a participating county.

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Galveston, and Brazoria counties


 832-681-2527

 1-866-237-9392

 www.h-gac.com/airchecktexas

INSURANCE FOR HIGH-RISK DRIVERS

Texas Automobile Insurance Plan Association (TAIPA) helps consumers who have been turned down by at least two companies access lower-priced auto insurance.

 1-866-321-9154

 www.taipa.org

SECTION 21 UTILITIES

FOR EMERGENCIES OR OUTAGES

Electric Power Outage: Houston & surrounding areas

CenterPoint Energy

☎ 713-207-2222

☎ 1-800-332-7143

Entergy (serving parts of Harris, Waller, and most of Montgomery Counties)

☎ 1-800-968-8243

San Bernard Electric Cooperative (serving parts of Montgomery and Waller Counties)

☎ 1-800-364-3171

Gas Leaks:

CenterPoint Energy

☎ 713-659-2111

☎ 1-888-876-5786

Water Off or Low Pressure:

City of Houston Call Center

☎ 3-1-1

Outside Houston

☎ Call the municipal water provider

Lone Star 8-1-1 – Call Before You Dig Hotline

Before digging anywhere on your property, it is wise to have all underground cable locations marked. The utility companies provide this service free to consumers. By calling the hotline below, all utility companies will be notified and will schedule a time to mark the utility lines. Call Before You Dig Hotline:

☎ 8-1-1

☎ 1-800-669-8344

SECTION 21.1 ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Comprehensive Energy Assistance Programs (CEAP) help low-income households meet their energy needs. Approved households may receive help with electric and/or gas bills. Families must apply every year for assistance. For information, assistance, an application, or to locate the CEAP provider for a county, call 2-1-1 or the county provider.

☎ 2-1-1

Harris (BakerRipley, formerly Neighborhood Centers)

☎ 713-590-2327

💻 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations/utility-assistance-program

CEAP programs for counties other than Harris:

Fort Bend (Galveston County Community Action Council)

☎ 281-342-3012

💻 www.gccac.org

(keyword: programs, utilities assistance)

Montgomery (Brazos Valley Community Action Agency)

☎ 936-856-7036

☎ 1-855-856-3980

💻 www.bvcaa.org/programs/utility-assistance

Waller (Brazos Valley Community Action Agency)

☎ 979-595-1199

☎ 1-855-252-1467

💻 www.bvcaa.org/programs/utility-assistance

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Many social and assistance ministries offer utility assistance, though many require a disconnect notice before they can help. To find the nearest location, see Section 6.2. Most utility programs also offer utility assistance. Some offer assistance directly while others work through community organizations. People needing assistance with utilities are encouraged to contact their provider for resources that may be available, including payment plan options.

Some utilities also reduce or waive deposits for people ages 65 and older.

The **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with health and human service programs in the community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 2-1-1 specialists can identify utility assistance programs.

☎ 2-1-1

💻 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

Brazos Valley Community Action Agency

assists Waller County residents with utility needs.

☎ 979-595-1199

☎ 1-855-252-1467

💻 www.bvcaa.org/programs/utility-assistance

City of Houston Public Works offers to residents ages 60 and over who receive their water from the City of Houston the ability to apply for late fee waivers. Residents must complete an application, show proof of age, and live in a single-family home.

☎ 713-371-1400

Crisis Assistance Center helps Montgomery County residents with utility needs.

☎ 936-539-9211

💻 www.cac-mctx.org

Fort Bend County Senior Services will help with past due bills and disconnect notices. Call for an appointment at the nearest location and what documents are needed.

☎ 281-238-3502 (Rosenberg office)

☎ 281-403-8050 (Missouri City office)

💻 www.fortbendcountytexas.gov
(keyword: social services)

Harris County Office of Social Services

has funds to help with gas, electric, and water assistance. Call for information and for an appointment.

☎ 713-696-7900

Salvation Army provides utility assistance to Fort Bend County residents.


☎ 281-207-2500

Reliant Energy Beat the Heat Centers

allow people to be in a cool place all day while minimizing their own electricity usage. Beat the Heat Centers are at public locations during the summer months. There are Beat the Heat Centers at the Acres Homes, Denver Harbor, Magnolia, Northeast, and Sunnyside Multi-Service Centers. For information and hours, call:

☎ 2-1-1


Water Assistance to Elderly Residents (W.A.T.E.R.) Fund provides water assistance to people ages 60 and older who receive water from the City of Houston. Approved people can receive up to \$100 per month for six months to help offset water costs. At the end of six months, participants may reapply.


 713-371-1400

Weatherization Assistance Program


The **Weatherization Assistance Program** helps low-income households reduce their energy costs by providing energy efficiency home improvements. Examples of assistance include caulking, weather-stripping, insulation, duct-work, or helping with the repair or replacement of heating and cooling systems. For information, assistance, an application, or to locate the Weatherization provider for a county, call 2-1-1 or the county provider.


The **2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE** connects callers with health and human service programs in the community. Highly trained and knowledgeable HELPLINE Specialists answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 2-1-1 specialists can identify weatherization programs.

 2-1-1

 www.unitedwayhouston.org/our-211-helpline/
(to email 211 or to search the directory online)

Harris (BakerRipley, formerly Neighborhood Centers)

 713-590-2327


 www.neighborhood-centers.org/locations/utility-assistance-program

Fort Bend (Combined Community Action)

 1-800-688-9065

 www.ccaction.com/community-action/weatherization-program

Montgomery and Waller (Brazos Valley Community Action Agency)

 979-774-1831

 www.bvcaa.org/programs/weatherization

Telephone Assistance Programs

There are several programs that help lower telephone bills.

Directory Assistance Cost Exemption Programs

may be available for people who, because of their disabilities, may not be able to use a traditional phone directory. These programs may waive charges for calling directory assistance (411) and for having a call connected through directory assistance. Contact the phone provider for availability and how to apply.

Lifeline is a government program that provides a discounted landline or cell phone (but not both) to qualified low-income families. Participating in certain benefits, such as Medicaid, SNAP, and SSI automatically qualify someone for lifeline. Households must recertify each year to stay in the program. Visit the website or contact a participating phone carrier for more information.

Link-Up is for residents of tribal lands, and it helps pay activation or installation fees. To receive Link-Up assistance, a person must also qualify for **Lifeline**, and assistance will be provided automatically. Contact a participating phone carrier for more information.

Lifeline Support has tools to let someone know whether they qualify for Lifeline and a list of participating providers.

 1-866-454-8387

 www.lifelinesupport.org

At **Texas Lifeline**, people can sign up for the program or request an application be mailed. It also has a list of documents needed to be approved. Individuals can also check their application status.

 1-866-454-8387

 www.texaslifeline.org

SECTION 21.2 ELECTRICITY PROVIDERS


In parts of Texas, residents can choose their electric provider. When choosing or switching providers, people should be informed about the choice they make. Rates vary from company to company, and sometimes better rates are available if there is a contract in place. Understand the company's plan and how it addresses fluctuating monthly prices and seasonal price increases. Is renewable energy important, or is fixed monthly bills a better option. Many providers offer special plans; when choosing a company, a person must take into account what will be the overall best deal and meet his or her needs.


Tips to Keeping the Lights On

- Pay bills on time. If someone cannot pay, he or she should contact the company before the bill is late to access the best options, such as bill extensions or deferred payment plans.
- Maintain a good utility credit history
- Consider the provider's "same price every month" option. For some people, this plan keeps prices stable, but others may experience a higher charge if the average for the year was miscalculated.
- Ask the electric provider about payment assistance programs.

CHOOSING AN ELECTRIC PROVIDER

Power to Choose is run by the Public Utility Commission of Texas. Electric providers list their information on the site, and consumers can compare plans and choose the one that best fits his or her needs. The website also has tips on how to choose the right plan.

 1-866-797-4839 (general questions)

 7-1-1 (TTY)

 www.powertochoose.org

Utility Company Complaints


The **Public Utility Commission of Texas** takes complaints about electric service and companies that do not honor the rates they post on the Power to Choose website. It also provides information about common utility questions, tips on choosing new service, and where to get financial help with utility bills.

 1-888-782-8477

 www.puc.texas.gov

(keyword: consumer, utility complaints)

The **Texas Office of Public Utility Council** has information on consumer rights with regard to utilities and also provides some representation to residential customers who have complaints against utility companies.

 1-877-839-0363

 www.opc.state.tx.su

SECTION 22 VETERANS AND RETIRED MILITARY

This section provides information for U.S. military veterans. Other sections and services listed in this book will most likely apply to military veterans as well. It is important to know that a veteran is anyone who has served in the military and was discharged or released under any condition except for dishonorable.

Long-term Care Services

Long-term care services are provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) through VA medical centers, State Veterans Homes, or community organizations. Some services that the VA offers are assisted living, community residential care, nursing homes, adult day centers, health care, respite care, hospice and palliative care. To find out more about these programs, a person should contact the VA clinic where he or she receives primary care and ask for an appointment with a social worker.

Aid & Attendance

Aid and attendance (A&A) provides financial assistance to veterans and survivors who are eligible for a VA pension. To be eligible for A&A, a person should require the help of another person to perform everyday personal living functions, be bedridden due to a disability, be a patient in a nursing home, or have qualifying eye impairment.

Housebound

A monthly increase may be added to a person's monthly pension when he or she is confined to the immediate area around his or her home because of a permanent disability.

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Local

City of Houston Office of Veterans Affairs

☎ 832-393-0992

💻 www.houstontx.gov/vetaffairs/

Precinct 2gether Veterans Services

(Harris County Precinct 2)

☎ 281-426-2832 or

☎ 281-843-2019

💻 www.hcp2.com/community/community-programs

Harris County Precinct 2 also offers rides to and from the VA Medical Center.

Harris County Veterans Services Office

☎ 281-876-6600

💻 www.vso.hctx.net/

Ft Bend County Veterans Service Office

☎ 281-341-4550

Montgomery County Veterans Service

☎ 936-539-7842

Waller County Veterans Service Office

☎ 979-826-7733

State Veterans Homes

There are eight Veterans Homes across Texas that provide long-term care for veterans, their spouses, and Gold Star parents. The cost of staying in a Veterans Home is subsidized. Contact a VA social worker to find out more about these facilities. Facilities are located outside of the Greater Houston area.

💻 www.nasvh.org/StateHomes/stateInfo.cfm

Federal

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

☎ 1-888-332-7411

💻 www.dfas.mil/militarymembers.html

Veterans Crisis Line

☎ 1-800-273- 8255

VA Regional Office

☎ 713-383-1999 or

☎ 1-800-827-1000

Education

☎ 888-442-4551

Headstones and Markers

☎ 1-800-697-6947

Home Loans

☎ 1-888-232-2571

Life Insurance

☎ 1-800-419-1473 or

☎ 1-800-669-8477

Caregiver Support Line

☎ 1-855-260-3274

Military One Source connects veterans, their families, and caregivers with services and programs throughout the United States.

☎ 1-800-342-9647

💻 www.militaryonesource.mil/

Health and Mental Health

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center (MEDVAMC)

☎ 713-791-1414 or

☎ 1-800-553-2278

💻 www.houston.va.gov/

Telephone Care (available 24/7)

☎ 713-794-8985 or

☎ 1-800-639-5137

Veterans Crisis Line

☎ 1-800-273-8255

Women Veterans Hotline

☎ 1-855-829-6636

Outpatient Clinics

Conroe

☎ 936-522-4000 or

☎ 1-800-553-2278

Katy

☎ 281-578-4600

Richmond

☎ 832-595-7700 or

☎ 1-800-553-2278

Tomball

☎ 281-516-1505

TRICARE For Life is supplemental health coverage available to people who have Medicare Part A and B and are eligible for TRICARE. TRICARE typically cover what Medicare Parts A and B do not cover and also acts as a second payer for medical care.

☎ 1-800-538-9552

💻 www.tricare.mil/

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program offers dental insurance to retired service members and their family, Medal of Honor recipient and their family, and survivors. This national dental program covers crowns and dentures, orthodontics, exams, fillings, root canals, gum surgery, oral surgery and extractions.

☎ 1-888-838-8737

💻 www.trdp.org

TRICARE Pharmacy Program provides affordable prescriptions drugs to people who have TRICARE. TRICARE has a contract with Express Scripts, Inc. to offer this service.

☎ 1-877-363-1303

Basic Needs

Career and Recovery Resources

(Veterans Services) offers employment and housing assistance, case management, training services and connection to VA benefits.

☎ 713-754-7000

💻 www.careerandrecovery.org/veteran-services-1/

VetJobs

💻 vetjobs.com/

Homeless Veterans

Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP)

☎ 713-754-7055

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans

☎ 713-794-7848

Hotline for Homeless Veterans

☎ 1-877-424-3838

McGovern Drop-In Center for Homeless Veterans

☎ 713-794-7533

United States Veterans Initiative

☎ 832-203-1626

LEGAL

A veteran may wish to seek an accredited advocate or attorney in several circumstances:

1. Assisting with a claim for service-related compensation (not required but may make the process faster)
2. Appealing a decision if a claim is denied
3. Requesting a discharge upgrade in order to qualify for VA benefits

While a person can handle these issues him- or herself, the rules are very complicated, and missing the deadline for one step could lead to the claim being dismissed or delayed.

An attorney or advocate must be accredited by the VA in order to represent someone in the process. Also, it is against the law for anyone to charge a person to help him or her file a benefits claim with the VA. If the claim is denied and a notice of disagreement (the first step in appealing) is filed, then the attorney can charge fees. There must be a written fee agreement, and the attorney and client can arrange for the attorney to be paid from any past-due benefits the client receives.

National Organization of Veterans'

Advocates provides information on when a veteran may want to seek legal help and an online directory with referrals to local attorneys and advocates who are accredited by the VA and meet certain standards.

☎ 202-587-5708

💻 vetadvocates.org

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has a searchable database of accredited attorneys and agents.

☎ 1-800-827-1000

💻 www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/

Houston Volunteer Lawyers

☎ 713-228-0732

💻 www.makejusticehappen.org/

Texas Veterans Legal Assistance Project

☎ 1-800-622-2520, Option 2

💻 www.tlsc.org/programs/vlap.asp

Other

Disabled American Veterans

☎ 254-299-9932


💻 www.dav.org/

TexVet

☎ 512-341-4924

💻 www.textvet.com/

VFW (Local)

 713-383-1999

 www.texasvfw.org/

Senior Veterans Service Alliance (SVSA)

lists field service officers, appeals agents, advocates and eldercare services in many areas of the country. These listing providers help older veterans and their widows understand veteran's benefits available to them.


 www.veteransaidbenefit.org/

Texas Veterans Commission helps veterans access earned benefits.


 512-463-5538

 www.tvc.state.tx.us/

Texas Veterans Hotline


 1-800-252-VETS

Texas Veterans Land Board offers benefits such as land, home loans, home improvement loans and burial and cemetery programs to Texas veterans, their spouses, and Gold Star parents.

 1-800-252-8387

 www.glo.texas.gov/vlb/

Wounded Warrior Project offers services to people who received a service-connected illness or injury after September 11, 2001.

 832-536-3098

National Cemetery Burial Benefits

Burial benefits may be available to eligible veterans who have been honorably discharged. Burial benefits include a burial plot, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family.

 www.cem.va.gov/

VA Houston National Cemetery

 281-447-8686

SECTION 23 CONVENIENCE SERVICES

Convenience services are designed to make a person's life easier by bringing the good or service to the person when the person needs it. They are especially helpful for people who cannot leave their home. Most of these services charge a fee, and some of them have a monthly or yearly charge, so a person must weigh the cost versus the convenience. Some of these services only cover certain zip codes, so call or look online to find out what areas are covered.

The Senior Guidance Directory and United Way do not endorse any specific company or service. The overview below is provided to raise awareness as to how convenience services can impact older adults and their loved ones. Interested persons should research various options and alternatives, including ones not listed below, to find the product or service that best fits their specific needs.

GROCERY DELIVERY


Most major grocery stores now offer online ordering options. Some deliver groceries for a fee. Others offer free curbside pick-up where a person orders groceries online, an employee fills the order, and the groceries are loaded into the person's car. Call or visit a store's website for information about ordering and delivery availability.

Amazon Prime Pantry delivers a variety of grocery and household items. It requires a person to have an Amazon Prime membership.

 www.amazon.com/gp/pantry/info

The Grocery Station delivers food from any grocery store. It charges a delivery fee per order and a deposit, but there are no membership fees. Customers are matched with a personal shopper who they can email or call with their grocery list. Customers pay actual grocery prices (no markups).


Serves Harris County: Clear Lake, Pasadena, Friendswood, Downtown Houston, Southwest Houston, West Houston, Katy

 1-855-281-8222

 www.thegrocerystation.com

Instacart delivers food from Whole Foods, Costco, HEB/Central Market, and pet food from Petco. It has two types of services. The regular service charges a per delivery fee. The express service has a yearly fee and free deliveries (some restrictions). Most people order their groceries online or using a smartphone app, but if someone has a disability and needs help, Instacart can take orders over the phone.


Serves Harris County: Inner Loop (Downtown and West), Spring Branch, Memorial, Bellaire, West Houston, Spring, Katy. Also serves Fort Bend County: Katy, Sugarland and Montgomery County: The Woodlands, Conroe.

 1-888-246-7822

 www.instacart.com


Memorial Concierge delivers food from HEB, Randalls, Whole Foods, and Kroger. It charges a monthly membership fee and a delivery charge. Orders can be placed by phone or online.

Serves Harris County: Memorial, West Houston and Spring. Also serves Fort Bend County (Katy) and Montgomery County (The Woodlands and Spring).

 1-855-652-5425

 www.memorialconcierge.com

Randalls offers grocery delivery in many Greater Houston neighborhoods. There is a per order delivery fee based on the amount spent, but there are daily free delivery offers.

 1-877-505-4040

 shop.randalls.com/ecom/home

Shipt delivers food from HEB and has a membership fee that is paid yearly or monthly. All deliveries are free with a minimum purchase. Orders are placed online or smartphone app and paid for with a credit or debit card.

Serves Harris County: Central, Southwest, Southeast (Bay Area), North and Northwest, Kingwood, Tomball, Spring, Cypress. Also serves Eastern Fort Bend County and The Woodlands / Montgomery County.

 www.shipt.com

Pre-packaged or Restaurant Food Delivery

These services deliver ready-to-eat meals to the home.

UberEATS

 www.ubereats.com

Favor

 www.favordelivery.com

Door Dash


 www.doordash.com

DOCTORS

Medicare will pay for doctors' visits in the home if a person qualifies as homebound under Medicare. Some providers offer only doctor visits, and others also offer in-home x-rays, EKGs, ultrasounds, and other medical tests. To qualify, a person must, because of illness or injury, either need a wheelchair, walker, or something to help them get around or have a doctor's recommendation that leaving home would not be good for that person's health. That person must also only leave the home for short periods, and it must be difficult on the person to leave. Call the Medicare provider to see if the plan has a house call option.

House Call Doctors

Serves: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

 1-844-224-4423

 www.hcdmd.com


Houston House Call Doctors/Suncoast Medical Group

Serves: Southwest Houston

 281-404-1504


 www.houstonhousecalldoctor.com

Visiting Physician Association

 713-532-6884

 www.visitingphysicians.com


Home Eye Doctor

 281-841-2723

 www.homeeyedoc.com

Harris Health System House Calls and Palliative Care Program

 713-566-6832

 www.harrishealth.org
(keyword: house calls)

PET SERVICES

Haute Pets

 713-862-6900

 www.hautepets.net


Hot Shot Dog Grooming

 281-849-7999

 www.doggroominginhouston.com


MOBILE LAUNDRY SERVICES

Inner Loop Laundry

 832-563-5711

 www.innerlooplaundry.com


MW Cleaners

 1-877-506-2814

 www.mwcleaners.com/schedule-pickup-and-delivery.html

Door to Door Cleaners


Serves: Bellaire, Katy, Cinco Ranch, Downtown Houston, Galleria, Memorial, Meyerland, Missouri City, Pearland, Richmond, River Oaks, Sugar Land, West University

 713-307-5741

 www.drycleaning2u.com/how_the_service_works.html

Pilgrim Cleaners

Serves: Harris County, Fort Bend, The Woodlands

 www.pilgrimcleaners.com/pickup-delivery
(location phone numbers on website)

ERRAND SERVICES

Serving Seniors Errands Services

 281-581-8300

Task Rabbit matches people who need help with basic household tasks, such as minor home repair, furniture assembly, and yard work with people willing to do those tasks. Fees vary depending on task, and Task Rabbit background checks people willing to perform tasks.

 www.taskrabbit.com

SECTION 24 EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

This section covers some of the emerging technologies that may become commonplace within the next five to eight years – technologies that will help older adults to age in place and allow family members and other caregivers to provide more informed care.

The Senior Guidance Directory and United Way do not endorse any specific company, product or even type of product.

This is intended to provide a non-comprehensive overview of technologies that may be beneficial to older adults and their loved ones. Interested persons should research their options, including ones not listed below, to find the product or service that best fits their needs.

Medication Reminders are different devices that older adults can use to get reminded to take all of their medications at the correct times of the day.


MedMinder is a digital pill dispenser which can come with a locking feature or an unlocked feature. A caregiver fills the medicine tray that goes into the device and programs the medicine-taking schedule on a designated webpage and can

see if the older adult has complied with taking the medicine. The dispenser flashes or unlocks when it is time for the adult to take the medication. The caregiver will be notified by e-mail, text, or call if the older adult still has not taken the medication.

 1-888-633-6463


 www.medminder.com

Reminder Rosie is a voice-activated talking clock that tells people to take their medicine at a certain time. People can use it for other reminders as well. Once the medicine is taken, the older adult either says “reminder off” or touches it to turn it off.

 1-855-371-3320

 www.reminder-rosie.com


TabSafe is a personal medication management system that stores medications to be dispensed on a specific time schedule. Medication cartridges can be filled by the individual, the family, caregivers, or by certified pharmacies. When it is time to take medication or there are messages ready, the device displays visual and audible reminders. The device also provides follow-up alerts if not opened in order to prevent missing a medication.

 1-877-700-8600

 www.tabsafe.com

Alert systems help older adults in cases of emergencies.

Philips Lifeline with AutoAlert is a personal help button for home use that is worn around the neck or wrist and can detect if an older adult has fallen and can connect to a caregiver to let them know.

 1-855-332-7799

 www.lifeline.philips.com/safety-solutions.html

GreatCall Star Urgent Response is a mobile personal emergency response system for older adults to use at home or while traveling. If an emergency occurs, the GPS technology allows trained agents to find the location of older adult and assess the situation.

 1-866-829-4527


 www.greatcall.com/services-apps

MobileHelp is a mobile device with GPS satellite location tracking and an in home base station. When an emergency occurs, adults press the button and a response team seeks out medical help for older adult who pressed the button. The response team will also contact the client's family to tell them where the older adult is at the moment. MobileHelp also has a fall detection system installed in device.

 1-800-762-6981

 www.mobilehelp.com/


Life Alert is a pendant or wristband that an older adult can wear and has a help button on it for adult to press when in any emergency. As soon as the button gets pressed, a representative will send help to the home.

 1-800-990-0636

 www.lifealerthelp.com/

Body Monitoring Systems are devices that help people get a better idea of how healthily they are aging, showing details of health in an electronic manner.

GrandCare System tracks daily activity, has medical monitoring, such as glucose levels, oxygen, blood pressure, and weight. In addition it can display anything such as diets, discharge plans, or exercises, and the device also has an interactive touch screen feature for adults to be able to connect with their family members or caregiver and also enjoy the internet.

 262-338-6147

 www.grandcare.com/#home

Toto's Intelligent Toilet has a bidet, a heated seat, air dryer, and can obtain pertinent medical information from urine and fecal samples. The feature of being able to take urine and fecal samples can help older adults with early prevention, especially when in close communication with a doctor.

 www.totousa.com/find-a-showroom

Wearable Technology are articles of clothing that older adults may wear to detect excessive pressure, heat, and swollen feet or joints to assist them with knowing how their health or diabetes is being maintained. There are also accessories, such as smart watches and fitness trackers that can help older adults with health tracking purposes.

Lechal offers a line of smart shoe inserts to help visually impaired wearers more easily navigate the world. These smart insoles provide directional assistance in the form of gentle vibrations and phone notifications, giving seniors a greater degree of independence. The associated app also allows for location sharing, letting caregivers keep tabs on their loved one.

 store.lechal.com


The **Withings Pulse Ox** is a fitness tracker that can monitor users' activity status, heart rate, blood oxygen levels, and sleep quality.

 www.withings.com/us/en/products/pulse

Smart Technology such as smart phones, tablets, and Skype or Facetime are helping adults of all ages with communication, hobby purposes, transportation devices, and brain stimulating activities. These devices can help adults interact with family members that are all over the world. Devices also have many brain stimulating game options, transportation applications, and medical tracking applications that can help the older adult track health progress.

Camera Monitoring is a way that caregivers or family members can keep track of older adult's every day activities around the home.

BeClose helps older adults stay in touch with their caregivers and/or family members. By using discreet wireless sensors that are placed in an older adult's home, the device tracks the older adult's daily routine. Caregivers are able to check on the older adult at any time using a secure webpage and will also be alerted by phone, e-mail, or text message if there is any unusual behavior from an adult.

 1-877-389-4033

 www.alarm.com/productservices/wellness.aspx

NOTES


[illegible]

EMERGENCY PREPARATION

STATE OF TEXAS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE REGISTRY (STEAR)

This is a State of Texas registry for vulnerable individuals who may need assistance with evacuation. You can enroll in the STEAR program by:

Calling:

 2-1-1


Visiting the STEAR webpage at:

 [STEAR.dps.texas.gov](https://stear.dps.texas.gov)

By emailing the complete STEAR form to:

 STEAR@dps.texas.gov

Or by faxing the complete STEAR form to:

 866-557-1074

EVACUATION ROUTES

Evacuation routes are designated by state and local officials in advance of an evacuation and are clearly marked by signs on the roadway. The public can use any road to evacuate, but official evacuation routes are the only ones that may be monitored for stranded motorists or other assistance. **Four routes have been designated in the Houston area:**

- TX 290 (Houston to Austin, Bryan, College Station, and Waco)
- TX 59 (Houston to Nacogdoches)
- Interstate 45 (Houston to Dallas)
- Interstate 10 (Houston to San Antonio).

These routes may be activated as contraflow - converted to outbound traffic only in order to help move citizens safely and efficiently out of harm's way during a large scale evacuation.

HURRICANE EVACUATION ZONE

Hurricane evacuations will be ordered based on your zip code. This helps you easily identify whether or not your area is affected. These evacuations are staggered to allow for a quicker movement of people. The region has four areas, classified based on their level of threat from storm surge.

Zip Zone Coastal: 77414 (south), 77422 (south), 77465 (south), 77534 (south), 77541, 77550, 77551, 77554, 77563, 77577 (south), 77623


Zip Zone A: 77058 (south), 77510, 77514 (south), 77518, 77539, 77563, 77565, 77568, 77573, 77586, 77590, 77591

Zip Zone B: 77058 (north), 77059, 77062, 77414 (north), 77422 (north), 77465 (north), 77507, 77511, 77514 (north), 77515, 77517, 77520, 77523, 77531, 77534 (north), 77546 (north), 77546 (south), 77566, 77571, 77577 (north), 77597, 77598, 77665

Zip Zone C: 77011, 77012, 77013, 77015, 77017, 77023, 77029, 77034, 77049, 77061, 77075, 77087, 77089, 77430, 77444, 77480, 77486, 77502, 77503, 77504, 77505, 77506, 77521, 77530, 77535, 77536, 77547, 77562, 77578, 77581, 77583, 77584, 77587

MASS CARE SHELTERS

Depending on the type of event, there may be individual shelter information. During small, localized events, individual shelter information will be added to the 2-1-1 database to make referrals quick and easy. The types of events where shelters would be added include: flooding, tornadoes, and manmade disasters.

 **2-1-1 Call for information on shelter location and availability**

OUR MISSION

United Way of Greater Houston
engages caring people to improve lives
and build a stronger community.



United Way of Greater Houston

50 Waugh Drive
Houston, TX 77007
713-685-2300
unitedwayhouston.org