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Arapahoe County assists seniors with transportation, household chores *Senior programs help older adults to maintain a healthy and independent life*

Littleton, Colo. — Arapahoe County's Senior Resources Division helps seniors to stay independent, healthy and active in the community by offering rides on small buses, as well as programs that help with household cleaning and heavier chores.

"Arapahoe County is home to more than 87,000 residents age 60 and older, and we anticipate this population will more than double in the next 15 years," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld. "Seniors in our community regularly identify household chores and transportation as key areas where they need assistance, so the County works hard to offer useful services to help meet these needs."

Arapahoe County partners with **First Ride** Transportation Services to offer rides to seniors over age 60 on small, wheelchair-accessible buses. First Ride transports seniors to medical appointments, senior dining centers, grocery stores and food banks. The buses serve residents of Aurora, Glendale, Greenwood Village, Centennial, Littleton, Englewood, Sheridan and unincorporated Arapahoe County. The program is supported by Arapahoe County and Colorado State Funding for Seniors funds. There is no fee to ride, although donations are encouraged to assist in serving more residents.

"Last year, 376 seniors took more than 10,000 rides on First Ride buses," said Senior Resources Division Manager Linda Haley. "More than half of those rides were to and from medical appointments, with a particularly large need for trips for dialysis, while many other riders visited senior centers for lunch and healthy interaction."

To schedule a trip on a First Ride bus, please call 720-540-5566 at least three days in advance.

Seniors who need assistance with routine, light housekeeping may be eligible for Arapahoe County's **Homemaker Services**. County employees will visit the senior's home every other week and assist with chores such as vacuuming, mopping, cleaning bathrooms and kitchens, doing laundry and changing linens. Homemaker Services are funded by a Community Services Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Arapahoe County. Seniors must meet income limits to be eligible.

Meanwhile, the **Chore Services** program can assist seniors over age 60 with non-routine, heavier chores such as fall or spring yard work, washing outdoor first-floor windows, or major household

cleaning or organizing projects. Chore Services are scheduled on a limited basis for up to three and a half hours. Chore Services are funded by Older Americans Act funds.

Last year, the Homemaker Program served 369 seniors and Chore Services provided nearly 3,000 hours of service to 338 individuals. These programs are not able to provide pet, personal or health care. To find a service provider for such needs, please visit the DRCOG Network of Care at www.networkofcare.org.

To apply for Homemaker or Chore Services, or for more information on senior resources in Arapahoe County, please call 303-738-8080 or visit www.arapahoegov.com and click on "Services" and then "Senior Services."

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Download photos of First Ride buses and passengers at this link:

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/Senior/>

FirstRideBus: Arapahoe County has partnered with First Ride to transport seniors to and from medical appointments, senior dining centers, grocery stores and food banks.

FirstRideAid: First Ride driver Homer Gile assists passenger Violet Echavarria to board a First Ride bus at the Aurora Center for Active Adults on Feb. 11.

FirstRidePassengers: Residents Billie Hammond, Violet Echavarria and Juanita Garcia caught a ride on a First Ride bus with driver Homer Gile after dining at the Aurora Center for Active Adult in February.