Printed November 4, 2026 Last checked against official sources: November 3, 2026

Mailing this to someone inside? Print one side only, black ink, plain white paper. No staples or clips. Put their full name and number on the envelope. Some facilities limit pages per envelope: check their mail rules first.

FEDERAL PRISON GUIDE

VISIT PACKET: FDC HOUSTON

Federal Detention Center · Houston, TX · Phone 713-221-5400

VISITING

VISITING HOURS AND DAYS

WHO	DAYS	HOURS
Monday	Odd months (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov): unit 6 East in the morning, 6 West in the afternoon. Even months (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec): 6 West in the morning, 6 East in the afternoon.	Morning 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; afternoon 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday	Morning is legal visits only. Afternoon: odd months 3 West, even months 3 East.	Social 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday	Morning is legal visits only. Afternoon: odd months 3 East, even months 3 West.	Social 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Thursday	Odd months: 4 East in the morning, 4 West in the afternoon. Even months: 4 West in the morning, 4 East in the afternoon.	Morning 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; afternoon 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday	Odd months: 5 West in the morning, 5 East in the afternoon. Even months: 5 East in the morning, 5 West in the afternoon.	Morning 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; afternoon 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Saturday	Odd months: 3 West. Even months: 3 East.	8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Sunday	Odd months: 3 East. Even months: 3 West.	8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Special Housing Unit (SHU)	Non-contact, by video monitor, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. One 30-minute visit a month. They ask for it with a Cop Out (Inmate Request to Staff). Visitors under 18 may not visit the SHU.	Not stated

Visitors are processed starting 30 minutes before a session (1 hour before on weekends and holidays) and processing stops 1 hour before the session ends. Processing also stops 30 minutes before each count (4:00 p.m. every day, 10:00 a.m. on weekends and federal holidays) and during staff shift change, ordinarily 1:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. A count takes 30 to 40 minutes. Once your loved one leaves the visiting room they cannot go back in.

They can only visit during their own housing unit's session (see the table). Legal visits are separate: Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and weekends 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. [1]

The BOP's own papers disagree. The Houston handbook (May 1, 2026) and the visiting rules (August 24, 2026) disagree on a few points. **Weekend hours:** the handbook says Saturday and Sunday visits run to 2:00 p.m.; the newer rules say 1:30 p.m. **Money:** the handbook says up to $25 per family for vending machines; the rules say $20. **Number of visits:** the rules give 6 points a month at 2 points a visit (3 visits); the handbook does not give a count. The table above follows the newer rules. Call 713-221-5400 before you drive, especially on a weekend.

THE RULES AT THE DOOR: ID, POINTS, WHAT YOU CAN BRING

HOW MANY VISITS	They get **6 points** of visits each calendar month. Each visit costs **2 points**, so that is **3 visits a month**. Any part of a visit counts as a whole visit. [1]
HOW MANY PEOPLE	No more than **4 visitors at one time, including children and babies**. Visitors may not swap places. [1]
WHO CAN VISIT	People waiting for trial and holdovers: **immediate family only** (mother, father, stepparents, foster parents, brothers, sisters, spouse and children). Work cadre men and designated short-term women can add up to **10 other relatives or friends**. A live-in partner who is not a legal spouse can be approved if there is proof, such as a lease, driver's licenses with the same address, or shared utility bills. [1]
ID	Everyone over **16** needs a valid driver's license or a state or federal photo ID. **Mexican consulate ID cards are not accepted.** Visitors under 16 must come with a parent or legal guardian. A parent or guardian must sign for anyone under 18. [1]
SCREENING	Everyone must clear the **metal detector**. Remove hairpins and anything metal. If you have a metal implant, bring your medical card. If you refuse a search, you cannot come back to visit without approval from the Associate Warden of Programs. Visitors are also tested at random with an electronic drug detection unit in the lobby. [1]
WHAT YOU CAN CARRY	Only: your ID; cash up to **$20 per family** and/or a debit or credit card for the vending machines; necessary medicine such as an asthma inhaler (the officer keeps it); and baby items. Baby items: one pacifier, two diapers, five wipes, one clear bottle or sippy cup with contents, and one infant blanket, all in one clear one-gallon zip bag. No other bags. [1]
LOCKERS AND PARKING	A limited number of lockers are available, first come first served. The handbook says there is **no visitor parking** at the center, and cars parked around it can be towed. [2]
TOUCHING	A handshake, brief embrace and brief kiss at the start and end of the visit. They may hold their children. Visitors sit across from them. Nothing may be passed in either direction, and papers cannot be signed. [1]
MONEY	You cannot hand over money in the visiting room. Money for their account goes by mail to the BOP lockbox in Des Moines (see the Money tab). [1]
RESTROOM	They normally cannot use the restroom during a visit unless it lasts more than one hour. [1]

VENDING MACHINES	Only visitors use them, with cash or a card. Anything bought for them must be eaten in the visiting room. [1]
WHEN IT GETS CROWDED	The visiting room holds **179** people. Staff first ask for volunteers to leave. If that is not enough, visits end in the order they started. [1]
SEX OFFENSE INVOLVING A MINOR	People convicted of a sex offense involving a minor sit in an area near the officer's station for the whole visit. [1]

HOW TO GET ON THE VISITING LIST

1. Your loved one gives their unit counselor a **Request for Visitor Approval** (Attachment B of the visiting rules for pretrial and holdover inmates; Attachment C for work cadre and designated short-term women). Your loved one also gets a **Visitor Information Form (BP-629)** from their unit team.
2. The unit team mails the BP-629 to you. Fill it out and return it to the **Counselor**.
3. The counselor runs a background check (NCIC) on every visitor. A visitor with a criminal record needs the Warden's written approval. Approval normally takes about 7 days after the center has everything.
4. The counselor gives your loved one a copy of the approved list. **They** tell you. Do not drive until you are approved. If you are denied, your loved one is told, and they must tell you.
5. The rules put no limit on how often the list can change.
6. You are normally on only one person's list, unless you are in the same immediate family.

Fill out the visiting form for Houston

[1]

DRIVING DIRECTIONS (FROM THE BOP)

THE ADDRESS	FDC Houston is at 1200 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002, at the corner of Texas Avenue and San Jacinto Street, in downtown Houston.
FROM DALLAS	I-45 South to downtown Houston. Use the left lane to exit 48A for I-10 East toward Beaumont. Keep left and follow signs for Milam Street. Continue onto N. Milam Street and turn left onto Texas Avenue.
FROM AUSTIN	US 290 East to exit 11 to merge onto I-10 East. Use the right two lanes to exit 769A for Smith Street. Drive to Texas Avenue.
FROM VICTORIA	US 59 North to downtown Houston. Take the Polk Street exit. Use the right lane to merge onto Chartres Street. Turn left onto Capitol Street. Turn right on San Jacinto and right at the first cross street, Texas Avenue.
FROM LOUISIANA	I-10 West to downtown Houston. Use the right two lanes to exit 769B toward San Jacinto Street/Main. Take San Jacinto and Fannin Streets to 1200 Texas Avenue.
BUS, TRAIN AND PLANE	METRO Rail and Bus: 713-635-4000. Amtrak: 800-872-7245. Greyhound: 713-759-6565. George Bush Intercontinental Airport: 281-230-3100. William P. Hobby Airport: 713-640-3000. Taxis (handbook): Airport Taxi Service 281-444-8294, Fiesta Cab 713-225-2666, United Cab 713-699-0000, Yellow Cab 713-236-1111.

Street address for your GPS: 1200 Texas Avenue, Houston, Tx 77002. [2]

WHAT TO WEAR TO A VISIT

The BOP beats to its own drum. The front desk has the final say. Keep a spare outfit in the car.

FDC HOUSTON

Rules dated **August 24, 2026** (this year)

Official rules (PDF) (bop.gov/locations/institutions/hou/hou_visit.pdf) No Spanish version posted

Skirts and dresses	Skirts/dresses no shorter than one inch above the knee; no high splits.
Shorts	Adult visitors may not wear shorts.
Colors to avoid	Adults and children: no khaki clothing. No green military-type clothing. No orange clothing. No yellow clothing.
Leggings, spandex	No leotards or spandex. No extremely tight or form-fitting dresses or pants.
Bras and metal	Not in the written rules. Some prisons ban underwire bras anyway, and the penalty can be more than being sent home. Wear a sports bra or a bra with no wire.
Camouflage, military	No green military or camouflage clothing.
Shoes	Only closed-toe, closed-back shoes; no Crocs-style shoes.
Children	Not in the written rules.

ALL 22 RULES, IN THE BOP'S OWN WORDS

LENGTH AND FIT

- Skirts/dresses no shorter than one inch above the knee; no high splits.
  BOP wording: "any skirt or dress shorter than one (1) inch above the knee, and/or any skirt or dress with a high cut split in the back or front or side."
- Adult visitors may not wear shorts.
  BOP wording: "Adult visitors will not be allowed to wear shorts or revealing sun dresses, halter tops, bathing suits,"
- No sleeveless garments or tank tops.
  BOP wording: "any sleeveless garment, any skirt or dress shorter than one (1) inch above the knee,"
- No low-cut blouses or dresses.
  BOP wording: "crop tops, low-cut blouses or dresses, leotards, sweatpants"
- No crop tops.
  BOP wording: "crop tops, low-cut blouses or dresses, leotards, sweatpants"
- No halter tops, backless tops, strapless garments or tube tops.
  BOP wording: "strapless garments, backless tops, tank tops, tube tops,"
- No see-through garments of any type.
  BOP wording: "see- through garments of any type,"
- No extremely tight or form-fitting dresses or pants.
  BOP wording: "extremely tight/form-fitting dresses/pants, miniskirts, backless tops, hats or caps,"
- No leotards or spandex.
  BOP wording: "leotards, sweatpants or spandex,"

- No bathing suits.
  BOP wording: "revealing sun dresses, halter tops, bathing suits,"
- No sweatpants.
  BOP wording: "leotards, sweatpants or spandex,"

COLORS AND UNIFORMS

- Adults and children: no khaki clothing.
  BOP wording: "refrain from wearing any clothing similar to inmate clothing such as khaki, yellow, orange or green military (i.e., camouflage) colored clothing"
- No green military-type clothing.
  BOP wording: "khaki or green military type clothing,"
- No orange clothing.
  BOP wording: "such as khaki, yellow, orange or green military (i.e., camouflage) colored clothing"
- No yellow clothing.
  BOP wording: "such as khaki, yellow, orange or green military (i.e., camouflage) colored clothing"
- No green military or camouflage clothing.
  BOP wording: "green military (i.e., camouflage) colored clothing"

BRAS, UNDERWEAR AND METAL

- No smart watches or Fitbit-style watches with Wi-Fi/Bluetooth.
  BOP wording: "Smart watches and Fitbit style watches with Wi-Fi or bluetooth capability are not authorized."

SHOES

- Only closed-toe, closed-back shoes; no Crocs-style shoes.
  BOP wording: "only closed-toed/closed back shoes will be allowed by social visitors in the Visiting Room."

HATS, HOODS AND COATS

- No hats or caps.
  BOP wording: "miniskirts, backless tops, hats or caps,"

EVERYTHING ELSE

- No sun dresses; no Crocs-style shoes.
  BOP wording: "and/or Croes style shoes."

IF THEY SAY NO

- Operations Lieutenant may deny entry for improper dress.
  BOP wording: "The Operations Lieutenant has the primary authority to deny an inmate visitor entry into the institution for reasons related to institution security such as improper dress"
- Questionable clothing goes to Operations Lieutenant or IDO.
  BOP wording: "Clothing that is questionable will be brought to the attention of the Operations Lieutenant"

MAIL AND THE MAILING ADDRESS

Use their committed name exactly as the BOP Inmate Locator shows it. The name and number below are examples (JOHN ANTHONY SMITH-JONES, 12345-678).

JOHN ANTHONY SMITH-JONES
Reg. No. 12345-678
FDC Houston
P.O. Box 526255
Houston, Tx 77052

Put their **committed name, register number and housing unit** on the envelope. The handbook says incoming mail should show the housing unit. Ask your loved one for it. [2]

Use the P.O. Box only. Never mail to the street address (1200 Texas Avenue, Houston, Tx 77002).

PHOTOCOPIED	All regular mail is opened, checked for contraband and **photocopied** except legal mail. They do not get the original. The BOP keeps the original for 30 days and then destroys it. [2]
WHAT IS ALLOWED	Letters, magazines and paperback books. Newspapers and books must come directly from the publisher or a bookstore. They may keep no more than **5 publications** at a time. [2]
WHAT IS REJECTED	Stamps, musical greeting cards, magazines that are sexually explicit or show nudity, Polaroid photos, nude photos, plant material, anything that cannot be inspected, and **money of any kind**. It is returned to you with a rejection form, and they get a copy. [2]
THEIR OUTGOING MAIL	They may **not seal** outgoing mail. Staff read all of it, including outgoing special mail. [2]
WHEN MAIL COMES	Mail is usually handed out after the 4:00 p.m. count. [2]
LEGAL MAIL	The envelope must name a specific attorney with title and say "Special Mail - Open only in the presence of the inmate." If either is missing, staff may open it and read it like any other mail. [2]
PACKAGES	Every package must be approved in advance on form BP-A0331 (Authorization to Receive Packages or Property). The only others normally approved are release clothing and medical devices. [2]
STAMPS	They may buy no more than 20 stamps or one book of stamps per commissary visit, and may have no more than 40 stamps at once. With no money, they may get five free stamps a month through unit staff. [2]
WRITING TO OTHER PRISONERS	They need approval from their unit team. It is limited to immediate family and people in an ongoing legal case with them, such as co-defendants. [2]
MONEY	Never put money in a letter. It goes to the BOP lockbox in Des Moines, Iowa (see the Money tab). [2]

Books and magazines: at a administrative security prison, books and magazines must come straight from a publisher, book club or bookstore (Amazon, for example), never from home.

Sources

1. HOU 5267.09D, Visiting Regulations (August 24, 2026) bop.gov/locations/institutions/hou/hou_visit.pdf
2. FDC Houston Admission and Orientation Handbook (May 1, 2026) bop.gov/locations/institutions/hou/hou_ao-handbook.pdf