

Bowie Senior Center



General Policies and Procedures

14900 Health Center Drive

Bowie, Maryland 20716

301-809-2300

www.cityofbowie.org/seniorcenter



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Phone Numbers

Bowie Senior Center	301-809-2300
Transportation	301-809-2324
Nutrition Site Manager	301-809-2356
Prince George’s County Senior Information/Assistance	301-265-8450
Prince George’s County (Aging Services) Home-delivered Meals	301-265-8475



The Bowie Senior Center Logo

The Bowie Senior Center logo has a sunflower in its center. The sunflower has been adopted to represent the essence of the Center’s culture and activities. The seed pod center represents the core of staff, volunteers, and facilities that makes things work. The petals radiating from the center represent the multitude of programs, events, services, and activities offered by the Center.

Working together, they make the Bowie Senior Center the success that it is and “Where the Finest People Meet.”

Political Activities

It is permissible for elected officials to make presentations on topics of particular interest to seniors. For example, a senator may explain new changes in social security regulations.

Candidates for public office or their representatives may mingle informally at any time as long as scheduled or structured activities are not interrupted or disrupted. They may frequent common or public areas in the Center. Under no circumstances may campaign literature be distributed directly or given to any individual in the Center. Candidates may leave literature with the staff. It will be placed in the central information area.

Candidates may not make partisan presentations to groups in the Center even in an informal setting. However, management may permit outside organizations to invite candidates to debate issues of concern to seniors at a formally scheduled program.

Religious Activities

Religious activities of an educational or cultural nature are permissible. Should an individual request a space to pray silently, one will be provided when possible.

Research Activities

All requests for research activities must be submitted in writing to management. The Center may choose to recruit members of the community to help create operating, marketing, or business proposals to assist with future growth needs of the Center and the city's population.

Special Interest Groups

Special interest groups are defined as those not sponsored by the Center. They may request permission from management to use the Center facilities. The request should be made as soon as possible prior to the needed date so that the facility reservation can be scheduled

Foreword

The Bowie Senior Center is a division of the City of Bowie Community Services Department. A community focal point providing services to individuals 55 years and older, it has adopted an integral and comprehensive approach toward providing diverse services to its members. Services include information, referral, and assistance for senior issues; nutrition; transportation; and volunteer opportunities. In addition, the Center provides continuing education; social stimulus; intellectual support; recreational opportunities; and health, wellness, and physical fitness programs. Services are designed for the full enjoyment and benefit of seniors in the Bowie community and surrounding areas.

This policies and procedures manual represents the work and input of the staff and advisory board and has been approved by the City of Bowie. It has evolved as the Center has changed and is designed to provide guidelines for staff, members, and visitors. It is reviewed periodically and updated as needed.

Questions regarding these policies and procedures may be directed to management.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Bowie Senior Center is to serve, support, and enhance the lives of individuals 55 years and older by providing programs and services which promote active, independent, and healthy lifestyles.

National Accreditation

The Bowie Senior Center has earned National Accreditation through the National Council on Aging/National Institute of Senior Centers. This achievement acknowledges that standards developed by NISC have been met and thus recognizes the Bowie Senior Center as a model for others to follow.

Membership

There is no fee to Join the Senior Center.

Eligibility requirements:

- Must be age 55 or older.
- Must be able to independently negotiate the Center facility and trip locations safely.
- Must be able to understand and carry out directions from staff.
- Must be able to recognize and respond appropriately to emergency situations.
- Must be able to eat independently.
- Must be able to use the restroom unassisted.
- Must be able to participate appropriately in a social setting using respectful manners and language.
- Must adhere to health standards and safety protocols.

An individual with cognitive or mobility issues requiring assistance cannot be accommodated unless accompanied by a caregiver.

Residents of assisted-living facilities, nursing centers, and group homes must make an appointment with the Center to receive information prior to applying for membership.

Discretionary judgment will be exercised regarding the Center's ability to accommodate any individual. It reserves the right to decline membership if it is determined that an individual has needs that cannot be accommodated by the staff and/or the facilities. In such cases, appropriate resources will be suggested.

Member eligibility or need for a caregiver is subject to periodic review.

See the Caregiver Policy on page 7.

Member Access

Upon acceptance of a membership application, the member will be photographed and issued an identification card. Upon entering the Center, the member is required to scan the card at the front desk to record daily attendance.

Trip Cancellations

If a participant cancels a trip reservation, the staff will attempt to fill the vacancy from the wait list if one exists. Reimbursements for canceled reservations can be made only if paid replacements are found. Credit for reservation cancellations up to \$50 will be issued. This money can be used for future trips or activities. If desired, reimbursement of a canceled reservation of more than \$50 may be issued by check from the City of Bowie. Transfer of a reservation to another individual is not permitted unless cleared by the staff. Refunds will be processed as replacements are found.

Trip Weather Policy

If Prince George's County cancels school or calls for a two-hour delay, City of Bowie bus trips are canceled. Efforts will be made to reschedule the trip. If charter bus trips are canceled, members who have signed up will be notified.

Children

Children are only permitted to visit for specific reasons and under controlled conditions. The staff must be made aware of all children in the building. Since each situation may be different, management will exercise discretion in approving such visits. Examples would be intergenerational programs, such as the collaborative "Glad You Are Here" program with Tall Oaks Vocational High School.

Pets

Except for service animals, pets are not allowed. It is recommended that service animals display a vest or tag to that affect. However, management may make exceptions for programs that include animals.

Solicitations

Solicitations for private gain by any individual, agency, or company are prohibited.

Trip Information and Policy

Trip schedules are posted on the bulletin board in the hall outside of the administration offices. They are also listed in the monthly newsletter and on the website (www.cityofbowie.org/seniortrips).

Registration may be completed at the front desk on a first-come basis after 9 a.m. Payment may be made with cash, credit card, or check made payable to the City of Bowie.

Once the trip capacity has been reached, members may be placed on a wait list and will be notified if space becomes available.

Chartered bus trips depart from and return to the Kenhill Center, 2614 Kenhill Drive, Bowie. Members must provide their own transportation to the Kenhill Center. All other trips depart from and return to the Bowie Senior Center.

Trip Rules

To ensure that all trips are conducted in a safe, orderly, and comfortable fashion, the following rules apply:

- Passengers must sit in the same bus seat both to and from the scheduled destination.
- The bus will depart at the designated time and return at the time specified by the trip leader.
- Each passenger is responsible for returning to the bus at the specified time. The goal is to adhere to the departure and return times so that all passengers can plan their days according to the published trip list.
- Passengers who fail to board the bus at the specified departure time will be responsible for arranging alternate return transportation.

Additional rules are posted on the bulletin board.

Membership is renewable on the member's anniversary date (or the first visit thereafter). The card scanner will generate a buzzer sound to alert the staff that it is time for on-file information to be updated if necessary.

A small fee will be charged to replace a lost card.

Regular Center Hours

Hours are 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on Monday - Friday; and 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Hours may be subject to change and will be posted on the Center's front door and website.

Weather Policy

When Prince George's County public schools are closed, the Center's scheduled activities including SAGE (Seasoned Adults Growing Educationally) classes, transportation, and the nutrition program will be canceled for the day. The Center will be open for staff and nonscheduled activities.

When schools are opening two hours late, transportation and the nutrition program will be canceled for the day. In addition, morning classes and activities scheduled before 11 a.m. will be canceled.

If schools close two hours early because of impending inclement weather, all classes scheduled after 2 p.m. will be canceled. The Center will make the decision whether to close or remain open for other activities.

If other unscheduled Center closures are required due to unusual circumstances, an announcement will be made on Alert Bowie, the city's website (www.cityofbowie.org), and Bowie TV cable channel.

See the Trip Weather Policy on page 13.

Advisory Board

The advisory board was established in June 2000. The purpose of the board is to advise and assist management in the promotion of principles and policies, as well as the provision of services to seniors of the City of Bowie and surrounding areas. The board consists of nine individuals who must be residents of Bowie and Center members for at least six months. A board member's term of service is three years. For more information, see the advisory board bylaws located at the front desk.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Center encourages and offers many volunteering opportunities for individuals to share their skills and talents. Volunteers help the staff expand and enhance programs and services.

Volunteer recruitment, training, assignment, and retention are all important functions. Supervision closely parallels that of the regular staff because volunteers are expected to support the mission of the Center and abide by its policies and procedures and guidance provided by the volunteer handbook.

The Center stresses the importance of confidentiality with each volunteer position. A volunteer handbook and job description are provided and reviewed during orientation. An annual volunteer recognition event is hosted in appreciation of donated service.

Financial Transactions

The following are typical examples of financial transactions:

- Fees charged for most Center-sponsored classes and activities. Nonresidents of Bowie pay a small surcharge.
- Fees for trips and events.
- Bus transportation fares.

Food Policy

Food and beverages (except bottled water) are not permitted in carpeted rooms. Permission is required for any event where food is to be served. Food items for such events must be provided by a certified caterer or purchased from a grocery store or restaurant. No homemade food may be brought in to be served or sold.

Transportation

Through the Center, the City of Bowie offers a variety of transportation services within the city. Most of these services require an appointment. A small fare is charged for each boarding.

These services include travel to and from the Center, medical appointments, club meetings, and shopping. Nonmembers may accompany their spouses. Caregivers must provide their names to the transportation supervisor and accompany members when being transported.

A complete description of these services and applicable restrictions are provided in the transportation brochure available at the front desk.

Nonmember adults (ages 18 to 54) with disabilities may also use this service for medical appointments and other approved destinations as bus availability and capacity permit.

Disability must be verified by providing a copy of the social security disability determination letter or a letter from a physician documenting the diagnosis of the disability. An emergency fact sheet must also be completed prior to an individual's being transported.

Users of transportation services are asked to update membership forms or emergency fact sheets annually or whenever changes in information occur. An individual will not be transported without the appropriate information on file as verified by the transportation supervisor.

Fitness Room Procedures

Participants must:

- Be a Center member.
- Fill out a fitness waiver form.
- Schedule and successfully complete orientation.
- Pay the appropriate fee prior to orientation. (Nonresidents of Bowie must pay an additional fee.)

Public Access Computers

Several computers are provided in public areas for use by members on a first-come basis. Instructions and restrictions are posted.

Nutrition Program

The Prince George's County Senior Nutrition Program is offered for the purpose of providing nutritious, low-cost meals in a congregate setting for seniors 60 years and older and their spouses regardless of their age. Eligible seniors are asked to give a donation for their meals. All others must pay the full cost of the meal.

Payment and donations are collected before the meal is served. The nutrition site manager is responsible for collecting payments.

All requests or cancellations for meals must be made 24 to 48 hours in advance by calling 301-809-2356 or 301-809-2300.

The county nutrition program directly supervises nutrition site managers assigned to the Center. Volunteers for the program are Center volunteers and may also be participants in the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Prince George's County. Center and nutrition staff work cooperatively in the execution of common program goals and the utilization of common program space.

More information on the Prince George's County Senior Nutrition Program policy is available at the front desk.

Class instructors can require students to bring their own materials and supplies to class. When lab fees are assessed by the Center, materials and supplies can be purchased by the Center and provided to the instructor, or the instructor can purchase them and request reimbursement. Reimbursable purchases should be kept to a minimum and require preapproval from management.

Donations

Monetary or material donations may be accepted. For memorial donations of \$200 or more, a nameplate may be placed on the memorial plaque located in the lobby.

Accidents, Illnesses, and Other Incidents

If an accident, illness, or other incident occurs, the staff will take necessary measures to evaluate the situation and proceed with appropriate action. Accidents, illnesses, and incidents occurring on city property will be recorded, and a report will be submitted in writing to the City of Bowie risk manager as soon as possible.

Emergency Preparedness

Center staff are trained to respond to emergency situations and an emergency preparedness handbook has been provided to each. A copy of the handbook can be reviewed at the front desk. An emergency exit plan is posted in each room of the building.

Caregiver Policy

Caregivers must register and abide by Center policies. They must remain with participants at all times. Caregivers are responsible for registering participants for programs and events and assisting them with their needs. When members enroll in activities that require fees for transportation, admission, or meals, caregivers must also enroll and incur the fees. Nonmember caregivers can only attend an activity or event if the participants are attending. They cannot join in activities on their own unless they are Center members.

Code of Conduct

This policy applies to staff, volunteers, members, caregivers, or others who may avail themselves of the facilities and services offered by the Center.

In keeping with the policy of maintaining a safe and friendly environment for seniors, standards of behavior have been established. Unacceptable behavior includes:

- Smoking on city property. (Smoking is prohibited on all city property. A violator is subject to a \$50 fine in accordance with Section 15-9 of the city code.)
- Possessing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances in the Center or on Center property.
- Using foul, abusive, or excessively loud language.
- Expressing racial, religious, or sexual harassment.
- Vandalizing, littering, defacing, or destroying property.
- Dressing inappropriately.
- Failing to practice personal hygiene.
- Exhibiting inappropriate behavior or conduct offensive or disturbing to others.
- Exhibiting repetitive lack of cognition or social skills as determined by the staff.
- Carrying firearms, dangerous weapons, or materials into the Center or onto Center property. Upon evidence of this violation, the staff will immediately notify the police.
- Gambling.
- Visiting inappropriate websites on the public computers.
- Taking conflict-of-interest actions.

When a violation is reported, the violator will be counseled by the staff and given an opportunity to correct the behavior. A record will be made of the incident. Additional violations will result in more thorough counseling and a requirement that the violator sign the code of conduct form acknowledging a review and understanding of the code. Additional violations may result in more severe action including membership suspension and/or permanent dismissal from the Center.

Copy/Fax Machine

Only staff or authorized volunteers may operate the copy/fax machine.

Limited copying by members may be permitted at the discretion of the staff. There is a charge for this service.

Telephone Use

Use of Center telephones is limited to emergency situations only or with staff approval.

Center Property

Under no circumstances is Center property to be removed from the premises without explicit permission of management. This includes furniture, equipment, plants, tools, records, supplies, and other items.

Exercise Activities

Exercise activities are organized physical activities which work the body's muscles and/or cardiovascular system. Activities include, but are not limited to, aerobics, armchair exercises, dancing, stretching, Tai Chi, table tennis, weight training, and yoga.

All participants must be Center members in order to participate in exercise activities including Prince George's Community College SAGE (Seasoned Adults Growing Educationally) classes. The college offers classes and provides instructors.

All contracted exercise instructors conducting or monitoring exercise programs must first complete an Independent Contractor Agreement form listing the instructor's name, title, organization, telephone number, qualifications, and certifications. This information is maintained by the Center.