

ABSN@UST



Welcome to Houston, Texas

A CITY THAT WILL FEEL LIKE HOME



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. THOMAS

Kick Off Your Future in Houston

Start Your Nursing Journey in Space City

We're so glad you're considering moving to Houston to start your accelerated nursing journey at the University of St. Thomas Houston. We know the decision to enroll in an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) program is a big one, and you have many options to consider.

While committing to our program may be a clear choice, we know questions like, **"Where should I live?"**, **"What is there to do here?"** and **"What are my job prospects after graduation?"** might make it more complicated to commit to a new city. Well, we thought about those questions, too, and put all the answers here to help make your potential move to Houston for nursing school as seamless as possible.

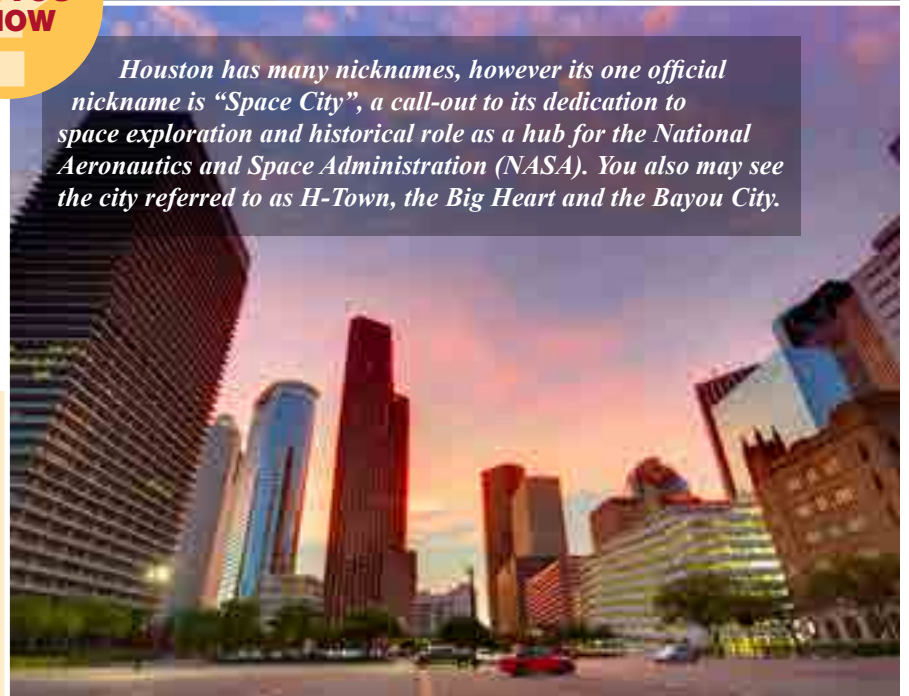
We think after reviewing this guide, you'll come to the same conclusion we did: **there's no better place to become a nurse than here.** After all, Houston is known as "the city with no limits"; as a graduate of our program, there's no limit to where you can go with your nursing education.

**DID YOU
KNOW**

Houston has many nicknames, however its one official nickname is "Space City", a call-out to its dedication to space exploration and historical role as a hub for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). You also may see the city referred to as H-Town, the Big Heart and the Bayou City.



About Houston	3-4
Healthcare Scene	5-6
Welcoming Neighborhoods.....	7-10
Explore the Area	11-17
Transportation.....	18-19
Relocation Resources	20



Welcome to the Cosmopolitan Heart of Texas

An eclectic city with a rich mix of culture and the promise of an inspired future, there's nowhere quite like Houston.

Even though it's a city in the Lone Star State, with more than 2.3 million residents, it'll be hard to feel lonely. Houston is the fourth most populous city in the United States, following only New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. The city is the largest in the South and the Southwest.

Described as having a down-home vibe, it's also a great place for you to kick off a lucrative career in nursing. The annual mean wage for RNs in the region was \$81,350 as of May 2019, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



BY THE NUMBERS

POPULATION
2,320,268

MEDIAN MONTHLY RENT
\$1,055

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY
\$54,290

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
3.8%

COMMUTE TIME
29.9 minutes

MEDIAN AGE OF RESIDENTS
34.2

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE
78.9° / 61.5°

AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL
54.7 inches

CITY RANKINGS

#10

**Best Metro Areas
For Millennials**
Business Insider (2017)

#9

**America's Most
Attractive Cities**
Travel + Leisure (2016)

#7

**Best Foodie Destinations
in the USA**
U.S. News and World Report (2016)

#16

**Most Diverse Places in America
2020 Best Places**
Niche

#27

Best Places to Live
U.S. News and World Report

#22

Best Places to Retire
U.S. News and World Report

#3

Best Places to Live in Texas
U.S. News and World Report

Sources:
U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Houston city, Texas
<https://realestate.usnews.com/places/texas/houston>

Make Yourself at Home

Between the year-round comfortable climate, myriad neighborhoods from which to choose and the welcoming atmosphere, it'll be a breeze to make Houston feel like home. Plus, moderately-priced living costs don't hurt either!

The median home sale price in Houston remains on the lower side compared to other similar metro areas, and the overall cost of living in Houston is lower than the national average. Your paycheck will also go further in Houston than it would in other major metro areas, with affordable housing and free or cheap attractions like biking along Buffalo Bayou and exploring the 7,800-acre George Bush Park.



The affordability of this southeastern Texas region is home to more than 7 million residents in the metro area, and it is continually attracting new people from across the country and around the world.

The C2ER Cost of Living Index for the third quarter of 2020 also shows that Houston has the second lowest cost of living among the nation's 20 most populous metropolitan areas. Houston's overall after-taxes living costs are 4.2 percent below the average for all 277 urban areas participating in the survey.

Housing costs are low, too. Among the nation's 20 most populous metro areas, Houston's housing costs are 51.2 percent below the average and 11.5 percent below the average for all U.S. metros. Excluding the two most expensive housing markets, New York and San Francisco, Houston's costs remain lower than the majority, with housing costs at 40.4 percent below the major metro average.

Houston: The Big Heart of Healthcare

They say everything is bigger in Texas, and the healthcare scene is no exception. Our ABSN program will prepare you for a career in the healthcare field, and where better to do that than the largest medical center in the world, located right here in Houston?

The Texas Medical Center (TMC) has more than 106,000 employees, 61 institutions and thousands of volunteers and patient visits, so it's no surprise more than 160,000 people visit Texas Medical Center each day. Over the course of the year, the campus welcomes more than 7.2 million visitors. Put simply: Houston is where the world comes for treatment.

The center sees patients who come from across the country and all over the world to receive care from the best doctors in their field. TMC also has eight different academic and research institutions, as well as 21 different hospitals.

TMC is home to the renowned M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, the No. 1 cancer hospital in the world.

During your time in our program, you might even be able to do your clinical rotations at the TMC. While we cannot guarantee placements, the TMC is a hub of exciting healthcare advancements and a great place to grow and learn.



Other major Institutions include:

- Texas Children's Hospital, tied for the No. 3 children's hospital in the nation
- Baylor College of Medicine
- Houston Methodist Hospital
- St. Luke's Health
- Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center
- The Texas Heart Institute
- University of Texas Health Sciences Center





Pioneers in Medicine

Pioneering medical discoveries and procedures in cardiac care and organ transplants, space medicine, spinal cord surgery and the decoding of the human DNA genome, which is leading to a new era of personalized medicine, all occurred in Houston, so as an ABSN student you'll be in the right place.

TMC also is any easy access point from virtually any place in the city, making it easy to commute. Houston's MetroRail Red line, which you'll learn more about later in this document, runs right through the center of TMC, making it easy for people to travel from the campus to Downtown, the Museum District, NRG Park and other parts of the city.

Notable Rankings

An annual survey conducted by *U.S. News and World Report* on "America's Best Hospitals" has ranked at least one Texas Medical Center institution in all 19 categories of care for adults and all 10 care categories in pediatrics.

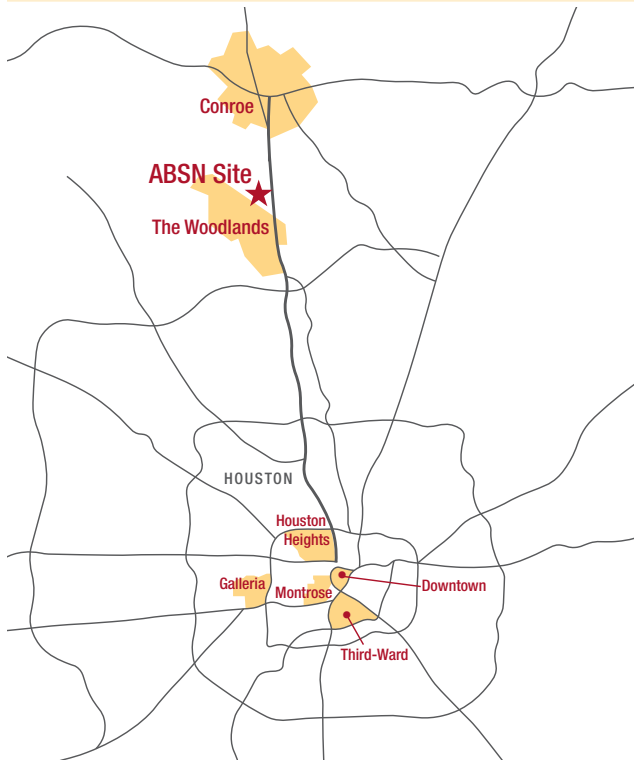
More heart surgeries are performed in the TMC than anywhere else on the globe.



TMC Library

Houston is home to the second-largest medical library, where visitors can view rare books and special collections, such as the records of the Atomic Bomb Causality Commission and NASA Space Life Sciences Archives.

In Houston, it's always a beautiful day in the neighborhood, and there are plenty of welcoming neighborhoods from which to choose! Here are a few of our favorites.



The Woodlands

The Woodlands

The Woodlands is well known in Houston for its abundance of parks and recreation, golf, corporate headquarters, schools, places of worship, shopping, dining, hospitality, healthcare and 220 miles of hike and bike trails.

The **Woodlands Mall** holds more than 160 stores and restaurants, and, if you walk across the street, you can enjoy **Waterway Square** to find entertainment and even more dining options. The restaurants range from pizza places to fine-dining establishments. There are also a few bars sprinkled throughout the area. You can also check out the **Riva Row Boat House**, which offers kayaks to patrons to tour the Woodlands Waterway and Lake Woodlands.

Also in this neighborhood is **North Shore Park**, where you can enjoy the playground and picnic area, complete with picnic tables and barbecues. This park also features a boat launch point into Lake Woodlands as well as a fishing area open to the public. If the water isn't your thing, you can enjoy the open playing field or the basketball court. Every Sunday there is also a free Concert in the Park that helps promote local musicians.



Conroe and Houston Heights

Conroe

Living in Conroe, just north of The Woodlands, offers residents a suburban feel. Here, most residents own their homes and enjoy convenient access to parks and highly rated public schools.

Three fantastic microbreweries are also in Conroe. **Southern Star**, **B52's**, and **Copperhead** breweries are all wonderful spots to enjoy fresh cold beers while enjoying great entertainment on the weekends. Live music and games are available for your enjoyment as well.



Houston Heights

Northwest of Downtown is a section of historic neighborhoods that date back to the late 1800s. Full of character, Houston Heights is home to diverse Houstonians that love its rich and character-filled architecture, mom- and pop-type shops and funky restaurants.

Elsewhere around the neighborhood, you can spend a day exploring at one of **19th Street's boutiques**, where you're sure to find something unique. Thrift stores, antique havens and cafes prove to be popular at the Heights-strip. Stop by for the "**First Saturday Arts Market**" on the first Saturday of each month for live music, crafts, plants and artwork.



Montrose and Galleria / Uptown

Montrose

Eccentric and diverse, Montrose sits in the heart of the city. The four-square-mile area hosts everything from neon-lit tattoo parlors and 24-hour drive-thrus to tree-covered bungalows and quaint coffee shops.

Developed in 1911, Montrose is also known for its **art galleries** and **attractions**. Grab a bite at a local café or find one-of-a-kind treasures at the many thrift shops along the **Westheimer Curve**. For visitors, a unique stay is assured at one of Montrose's many bed and breakfasts.



Galleria / Uptown

Galleria is Houston's premier shopping district. More than 700 retailers, fine-dining establishments, sports facilities, and hotels are housed within two square miles. Inside Texas' largest shopping mall, the **Galleria**, comprised of more than 375 stores, two hotels, an ice rink and endless food options, make it a popular destination.

Spend a day over at **Post Oak Boulevard** north to **Uptown Park**, where well-heeled boutiques fill the Italian-inspired shopping villa, or drive (just inside the Loop) to **Highland Village**, where national chain restaurants and retailers mix with locally owned shops.



Third-Ward / Hobby Airport and Downtown

Third-Ward / Hobby Airport

One of the original six wards of Houston, Third Ward is rich in culture and history and sits just inside the 610 Loop southeast of Downtown and to the east of the Texas Medical Center.

Third Ward is also adjacent to **William P. Hobby Airport**, one of the city's two passenger airports. Near Hobby, you'll find a number of hotels and the historic **1940 Air Terminal Museum**.



Downtown

Downtown, or the Central Business District, is home to pro sports teams like the **Astros** and **Rockets**, as well as nationally renowned **Houston Theater District**. It is home to Alley Theatre as well as the Houston Ballet, Houston Grand Opera, Houston Symphony, Society for the Performing Arts and Theater Under the Stars.

Watch a show or enjoy a night out at GreenStreet, a four-block, mixed-use entertainment complex. You'll also want to check out **Avenida Houston**, which features the 12-acre **Discovery Green**, **George R. Brown Convention Center** as well as many new events, restaurants and exciting experiences.



Experience the Rich Culture of Houston

Not only is Houston the fourth largest city in the U.S., it's an international region that has such a racially and ethnically diverse population. More than 145 different languages are spoken in Houston. That's the third largest number of languages spoken in a U.S. city behind New York (192) and Los Angeles (185). More than a third of Houstonians older than 5 speak a language other than English at home.

Houston does an amazing job with immersing the public in all of the unique cultures it's made up of through its accessible Museum District. Here are a few you won't want to miss.



Arts and Culture

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is dedicated to presenting the best and most exciting international, national and regional art of the last 40 years.

The Health Museum is where you can put your nursing knowledge to work. This affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution is a multi-sensory and ever-evolving interactive experience featuring health science advances and the intricacies and implications of how bodies work.

Space Center Houston, the Official Visitor Center of NASA Johnson Space Center, is Houston's No. 1 attraction for international visitors and the first Smithsonian Affiliate in the greater Houston area. It showcases more than 400 space artifacts including flown spacecraft and has the largest collection of moon rocks on public display. With multiple major seasonal exhibits a year, Space Center Houston offers an array of exciting attractions for people of all ages.

The Buffalo Soldiers National Museum is the only museum in the U.S. dedicated primarily to preserving the legacy and honor of the African-American soldier. It houses the largest collection of African-American military history in the world.



Arts and Culture



The Holocaust Museum Houston is dedicated to honoring the 6 million Jews and other innocent victims of the Holocaust. Using the lessons of the Holocaust and other genocides, the museum teaches the legacy of the survivors as well as the dangers of hatred, prejudice and apathy.

The Houston Museum of Natural Science, one of the most heavily attended museums in the U.S., features the Wortham Giant Screen Theatre, Burke Baker Planetarium, Cockrell Butterfly Center as well as permanent exhibit halls and traveling exhibitions.

The Clayton Library for Genealogical Research is one of the leading resources for national and international records related to research on family history. This historic home turned library is located in Houston's Museum District.

The Museum of Fine Arts numbers nearly 70,000 works. Established in 1900, it embraces the art of antiquity to the present including collections from Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas, Modern & Contemporary Art as well as prints and drawings, photography and more.

Mural Tour is the top spot for getting Instagram-worthy photos at the city's most popular murals. This tour by Joyride Houston will take you to the best and brightest murals through Downtown, Midtown and EaDo.

Shopping

Whether you love to walk the shopping malls or are looking for a more local, handmade vibe, Houston has a shop for you.

Shopping Malls

These popular shopping malls offer clothing, food and other retail staples:

- **The Shops at Houston Center**
- **River Oaks District**
- **Memorial City Mall**
- **The Galleria**

Local Gift Shops

These local gift shops offer unique items from the makers of Houston:

- **Sparrow and the Nest** holds workshops, sells handmade goods and hosts house concerts.
- **Hello-Lucky** offers products from local and global artisans.
- **Relic General Store** is your one-stop shop for quality goods such as clothing for men, women and children, hand-poured candles, fragrances, pillows and more thoughtful gifts all with a neighborhood feel and a vintage touch.



Outdoors



Houston has no shortage of outdoor events and activities. Whether you are looking to get active, attend a concert or see sights in the city, Houston has something for you.

Miller Outdoor Theatre is open from March through November. The venue hosts a range of performances including classical music, ballet, dance, film, Shakespeare and more.

Discovery Green Park has something going on all the time. In the spring and fall, spend happy hour listening to local musicians perform live on stage, browse and buy from local craftspeople at monthly markets and, in the winter, enjoy ice skating on Kinder Lake (for a small fee).

Houston Arboretum and Nature Center is located on the west side of Memorial Park and holds a 155-acre nature sanctuary that educates visitors on how to protect native plants and animals in the city. Walk the center's five miles of trails and visit the sanctuary's interactive exhibits free of charge. Dogs on leashes are welcome.

Boat Tour of the Port of Houston allows you to see the city by 90-passenger boat with a free, 90-minute tour. You'll learn about the history of the seaport and be able to watch ocean freighters and barges navigate the 50-mile channel.

The Lee and Joe Jamail Skatepark is a \$2.2 million, state-of-the-art facility thought to contain the largest cradle in the world and is located close to Downtown near Eleanor Tinsley Park.

Sports

Houston is a home run for all things sports. The city has an abundant sporting culture, and the area's residents are active in many spectator and participant sports.

There is something for everyone from running in Memorial Park to sailing on Galveston Bay and Clear Lake. A number of other sports are also available, including nearly a dozen fencing clubs, ranging from recreational clubs to elite competitive organizations.

Houston has seven professional major league teams, including the:

- **Houston Astros** (MLB)
- **Houston Texans** (NFL)
- **Houston Rockets** (NBA)
- **Houston Dynamo** (MLS)
- **Houston Dash** (NWSL)
- **Scrap Yard Dawgs** (NPF)
- **Houston SaberCats** (MLR)

Houston does not have an NHL team.

Minute Maid Park is home of the Astros and Toyota Center is home of the Rockets. Both are located in Downtown Houston, making it a popular destination for sports fans to catch a game.



The city also boasts the first domed stadium in the United States, now known as the Reliant Astrodome, and also holds the NFL's first retractable roof stadium — NRG Stadium.

Other places to catch major league teams in Houston include BBVA Compass Stadium, a soccer-specific stadium. Scrap Yard Sports Complex (home of the Dawgs) is located north of Houston in Woodlands and Constellation Field (home of the SaberCats) is located southwest of Houston in Sugar Land.



Cuisine

You won't go hungry in Houston!

With 10,000 restaurants representing cuisine from more than 70 countries and American regions, Houston's restaurant scene is as exciting and diverse as its residents.

Houston was even named the "newest capital of great food" by *Food & Wine Magazine* and the country's most exciting food city by *Tasting Table* magazine. But why take their word for it? Try a few of our favorites for yourself.

Riel highlights local flavors by utilizing regionally sourced products and allowing room for interpretation. Inspiration for the menu is pulled from the culinary landscape of Texas' gulf coast, Lachaine's Ukrainian heritage and French-Canadian fare.

State of Grace is housed in the Lamar-River Oaks Shopping Center and offers old favorites played with new spice, accent and freshness: Southern, American, Latin, Gulf Coast, German and Asian options can be found on the menu.



Bollo is located in Upper Kirby, serving authentic Neapolitan pizza baked in an 800-degree wood fired oven. The menu also includes small shareable plates, salads, entrées and desserts.

Golden Dumpling House is an Asiatown staple and an excellent choice for traditional dumplings by the plateful. Step up to the cash-only counter and get them boiled, steamed or fried, along with an assortment of noodle dishes and cold appetizers.

Vital Kitchen delivers pre-made meals designed for food-savvy and health-conscious Houstonians.



Find Your Way

Getting around Houston may seem overwhelming, but it's much easier when you break it down and learn the local terminology. We'll have you zooming around the city like a local in no time.

The most geographically noteworthy marker in Houston is the "Loop." Interstate 610 creates a circular barrier within Houston, defining neighborhoods and providing a geographical reference.

Houston Highway System

Houston is the crossroads for Interstates 10 and 45. Other major highways serving Houston are Loop 610, U.S. 59, U.S. 290, U.S. 90, Texas 288, Texas 225, Hardy Toll Road, Sam Houston Tollway and the Grand Parkway (Texas 99). If you plan to travel these roads, you'll want to purchase an EZ Tag for discounted rates while traveling on toll roads.

Houston also lies along the route of the proposed I-69 NAFTA superhighway that will link Canada, the U.S. industrial mid-west, Texas and Mexico.



Freeway Names: More than a Number

Every freeway in the city has at least two names, some as many as seven, so it's easy to get turned around if you're unfamiliar. But soon, you'll know them like the back of your hand.

Here's a list to help you decode the nicknames:

- **Beltway 8:** Sam Houston Tollway
- **Interstate 10 West:** Katy Freeway, West Freeway
- **Interstate 10 East:** East Freeway
- **Interstate 45 North:** North Freeway
- **Interstate 45 South:** Gulf Freeway
- **Interstate 45 through Downtown:** Pierce Elevated
- **Interstate 610:** The Loop, often preceded by North, South, East or West
- **U.S. 59 North:** Eastex Freeway
- **U.S. 59 South:** Southwest Freeway, Sen. Lloyd Bentson Highway, Future Interstate Corridor, NAFTA Superhighway, I-69
- **U.S. 75:** See Interstate 45
- **U.S. 90 East:** Beaumont Highway
- **U.S. 90 West:** See Interstate 10
- **U.S. 290:** Northwest Freeway, Hempstead Highway
- **Texas 6:** Highway 6, Addicks Howell Road, Alvin Sugar Land Road, Addicks Satsuma Road, Hempstead Road
- **Texas 3:** Galveston Road
- **Texas 225:** La Porte Freeway
- **Texas 249:** Tomball Parkway
- **Texas 288:** South Freeway, Nolan Ryan Expressway
- **Highway 99:** Grand Parkway

Getting Around Houston

A major perk of living in such a big city is that there are also tons of public transportation options to help you get from point A to point B. From the rail system to buses and of course Uber, there's always a way to get to and from labs and clinicals.

METRO Rail offers convenient and accessible service within the heart of the city between Downtown Houston and NRG Park, including the Museum District and Texas Medical Center. Two additional lines connect the Theater District with BBVA Compass Stadium and destinations east of Downtown.

Bus System METRO offers several types of bus service in Houston. Local service runs mostly on city streets, stopping at every other corner along its route. One-way fare is \$1.25.

Park & Ride service is for long-distance commuting. METRO's Park & Ride lots provide bus service to key destinations in the service area. One-way fare ranges from \$2 to \$4.50, depending on distance.

Taxis are actually more affordable than you'd think! The City of Houston has authorized a flat taxi fare of \$6 for all trips in the Downtown area. This \$6 fare will apply anywhere within the Central Business District, bounded by Interstate 45, Interstate 10 and U.S. 59. Here are the numbers you need to hail a taxi:

- **Fiesta Cab Co.** 713-225-2666
- **Liberty Cab Co.** 713-444-4444
- **Yellow Cab Houston** 713-236-1111



DID YOU KNOW

Houston was the first city in Texas to approve ride-sharing services including Uber.



Ride-Sharing Services Uber and Lyft are commonplace around the city, so a ride is always available at the touch of a button.

B-Cycle Program consists of 90 stations with 635 bikes available for short-term rentals throughout central Houston. The bike-share program allows guest users to check out a bike for \$3 per 30 minutes from any kiosk.

Parking

If you're looking to avoid the search for parking around Downtown Houston, you can plan ahead with Parking Panda. The online parking reservation service will help you find and purchase guaranteed parking Downtown, any time.

Parking options are available throughout Houston, including the Convention District, Theater District, NRG Park, Toyota Center and many other locations.

Another option for finding the perfect spot is Parking.com. This company operates more than 69 lots and garages across the city, from NRG Park to Downtown.

Make Houston Your Home



Long Distance Movers

Allied Van Lines

800-689-8684 | allied.com

American Van Lines

888-759-6000 | americanvanlines.com

Atlas Van Lines

800-638-9797 | atlasvanlines.com

Bekins

800-456-8092 | bekins.com

Mayflower

877-720-4066 | mayflower.com

North American Van Lines

800-228-3092 | northamerican.com

Two Men and a Truck

877-263-6444 | twomenandatruck.com

Local Utilities

ENERGY

CenterPoint Energy

713-659-2111 | <https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/>

Entergy Texas

1-800-968-8243 | <https://www.entergy-texas.com/>

CenterPoint Energy

512-472-6950 | centerpointenergy.com

TRASH AND RECYCLING

City of Houston Waste Management

swdworks@houston.tx.gov | <https://www.houston.tx.gov/solidwaste/>

WATER

City of Houston Water

713-837-0311 | <https://www.houstonwaterbills.houston.tx.gov/>

CABLE AND INTERNET PROVIDERS

Phonoscope

832-436-4000 | <http://www.phonoscopecable.com/>

DirecTV

800-543-1549 | directv.com

Dish Network

512-870-8221 | dish.com

Time Warner Cable

1-866-99-6533 | timewarnercable.com/texas

ABSN@UST



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. THOMAS

121 Vision Park Blvd. | Suite 300 | Shenandoah, Texas 77384

855-830-2713 | absn.stthom.edu

The provision of information in this relocation resources guide is for the convenience of University of St. Thomas students, faculty, and staff. The providers of various services listed in this guide are solely responsible for presenting information fairly and accurately. The University does not review or verify such information for fairness or accuracy, and the University cannot and does not guarantee or vouch for the fairness or accuracy of the information provided. The provision of information does not constitute and shall not be construed as an endorsement or approval by the University of the provider of services, including the suitability or safety of rental properties or other housing arrangements. You are encouraged to exercise your own good judgment and due diligence when evaluating any services described in this guide.