



HOUSTON
BUS
ACCIDENT
GUIDE

ATTORNEY HECTOR LONGORIA



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If you are involved in a collision, whether you are the passenger of the bus or the bus collides with your car, you know how scary it can be. Your injuries could prevent you from working, providing for your family, and being able to carry on with daily activities. You deserve compensation that is fair and just in accordance to the severity of your injuries.

Bus accidents can be life-changing, scarring events, and you should not have to suffer the effects of tragedies like these. Experienced Houston bus accident lawyer Hector Longoria has provided reliable legal representation to people throughout the Houston metro area who have endured the trauma of these distressing incidents and fought for the compensation that they deserved. When you are ready to begin your case, our team will support you at every step of your personal injury lawsuit.

Hector Longoria knows how to protect you from the insurance companies. He provides strong and dedicated legal representation to clients involved in bus accidents. At Longoria Law, we do not settle for low settlement offers from the insurance companies and neither should you.

RISING POPULARITY OF BUSES IN HOUSTON

With gas prices and traffic jams on the rise, many residents of Houston are turning to public transit in order to take the headache out of their commute, get to school on time, and travel to all corners of Texas on vacation. Houston's buses have emerged as a popular and versatile transportation option. They may ferry a few hundred riders to the urban core during rush hour, or they may make overnight trips to faraway cities like Amarillo and El Paso, but the fact is that buses remain a cost-effective means of travel.

No vehicle is accident-proof, unfortunately, and buses are no exception. Though bus accidents are considerably less common than accidents involving passenger cars, sports utility vehicles, and pickup trucks, they still happen several thousand times each year in the state of Texas. The consequences of these accidents can be dire. If you were the driver of a private vehicle or a bus passenger who was injured in a recent bus accident, once you have received medical care, you should consider reaching out to a personal injury attorney for legal guidance and representation as soon as you are able. Unlike car accident cases, all bus accidents include several parties that may be responsible, and our team of attorneys has years of experience helping accident survivors contend with their medical and legal needs.



BUS ACCIDENT STATISTICS

The Greater Houston metro area is home to dozens of bus routes, all managed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO). With METRO Rail still in the process of expanding its routes, METRO Bus is the go-to mode of public transit for most commuters across Houston and its suburbs. In addition, Houston's many school districts rely heavily on familiar yellow buses to carry students from pre-school to high school across the city to their schools five days per week. Residents of Greater Houston, regardless of age, count on local bus services for speedy and safe transportation, and bus-related accidents in the metro area make up a small fraction of all vehicle accidents each year.

Just because bus accidents in Greater Houston can be far rarer than most other vehicular collisions are, it does not mean that this type of accident is unprecedented. In 2016, throughout the state of Texas, there were almost 3000 bus crashes, 18 of which were fatal for at least one passenger. School bus crashes were less common, but Texas was still home to over 1300 such accidents, six of which resulted in death. These statistics cannot hold a

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candle to the hundreds of thousands of car and truck accidents in the state each year, but bus accidents can still prove to be major, life-threatening disasters. Whether the vehicle involved in the accident was a school bus, a commuter shuttle, or an interstate motor coach, prompt legal action is necessary in order for survivors to receive compensation.

AT-FAULT PARTY IN A BUS ACCIDENT

It is highly unusual for a passenger or a pedestrian to be at fault in a bus accident. Far more often than not, the blame lies with the bus driver, the driver of the other vehicle involved in the crash, the company that owns the bus, the bus's manufacturer, or even the school district that manages the bus route. Much like truck-related accidents, bus accidents can happen when drivers do not check their blind spots and do not see nearby cars and other vehicles. Bus drivers may neglect to do this if they are in the middle of a long shift. Inclement weather may play a role in reducing visibility. Distracted driving is also a common culprit; carrying on a conversation and exchanging text messages both increase the likelihood of an accident. If your attorney can prove that the bus driver was overworked, unable to deal with adverse weather conditions, or simply not paying proper attention, you may very well be entitled to damages in your lawsuit.

Alternatively, the driver of one of the other vehicles in the accident may be at fault, and an attorney would approach this type of collision differently. Passenger vehicle drivers who do not respect the rules of the road can contribute to the risk of an accident. Cutting in front of a bus, refusing to stop when a bus is making a turn, and inadvertently hiding in the bus driver's blind spots are all patently unsafe actions, and even the most experienced of bus drivers may find it impossible to come to a stop under these circumstances. Because the bus driver may not be considered at fault in examples such as

these, your attorney may consider pursuing the driver of the other vehicle in your case.

Sometimes, there is no driver at fault, and the root of the accident goes far deeper. If there is a mechanical failure immediately before the accident, the manufacturer could be sued for producing and selling an unsafe vehicle. The blame may lie instead with the private company that hired the driver and commissioned the bus for failing to provide appropriate training and maintenance. If a bus's tire suddenly bursts or the brakes cut out, the manufacturer or private company—or both—could be to blame.

AFTER THE CRASH: HIRING A BUS ACCIDENT ATTORNEY

In the aftermath of a bus accident, your personal injury attorney will benefit from any information that you can provide about the accident itself, the bus, the driver, your injuries, and all other elements pertaining to the event. Your attorney's role does not end there; the next step would be to prove liability in the accident, and this is the most critical part of every bus accident case. You can help your attorney by offering the contact information of any witnesses to the accident. One of our personal injury attorneys would likely hire an expert to inspect the bus and all other vehicles involved in the accident, and the bus's maintenance logs could merit an in-depth review. All this evidence together can strengthen the case and influence a ruling in favor of the injured parties.



FREQUENTLY ASKED BUS ACCIDENT QUESTIONS

Why Should I Hire a Bus Accident Attorney?

When clients who have been injured in a bus accident come in, they often want advice choosing a bus accident attorney, and want to know why they should hire me. I explain to them, that we're going to do our best to preserve the evidence. We're good sending out the necessary letters, preserving the claim, trying to preserve the evidence and then filing the lawsuit. Ultimately, if we have to, we are willing to go try the case in front of the judge and the jury, to go seek the injuries that the client is entitled to.

What Are the Common Bus Injuries?

It's important, like with all cases, that clients go to seek the best medical care they can get, to understand the full range of injuries that they have. What we generally see in common bus injuries are a full range of damages that people can suffer as a result of all the motion and trauma that's caused by the sudden crash. Common bus injuries include cervical injuries, lumbar injuries, shoulder injuries, knee injuries, etc. These occur because of they have been violently thrown around, twisted, and turned as a result of the crash.

What Should I Do If I'm Injured in a Crash with a Bus?

Municipalities, such as cities or counties, have special notices that they must receive in order to maintain a claim when their buses are involved in crashes.

If you don't send it in within the required time period, you could lose the right to go after them. The first thing I would tell people injured in a crash with a bus is to meet with an attorney, so they can protect your rights and identify who that bus carrier is.

How Do I File a Bus Injury Claim?

We want to immediately identify who the defendant driver was, and who the defendant owner of the bus was, so that we can put them on notice. Secondly, start preserving the evidence necessary to show the negligence that caused that crash. Once we have that, we decide whether we need to file a suit or just maintain the claim until we can identify, with greater specificity, the damages to make it.



Who Are the Liable Parties in Bus Accident Claim?

When a client is involved in a crash as a passenger on a bus, we always look towards the chauffeur and the bus company. We want to look at whether the chauffeur should have been hired, and whether or not there were policies and procedures in place to have protected the passenger

from a negligent chauffeur driver of the bus. We thoroughly look in to the possible liable parties in a bus accident claim to find out who is responsible for our client's injuries.

What Are the Differences Between Bus and Auto Accident Injuries?

Often, clients come in after a bus accident and want to start a claim. There are some differences between bus and auto accident injuries when it comes to liability. This is for a number of reasons. First, the chauffeur of the bus has certain guidelines and regulations that they must follow. Second, because they are professional drivers, they and their bus company are held to standards that can regulate the amount of sleep that the driver gets. There are many different things that come into play when a crash happens. We know that a driving safety rule has been violated.

Are There Time Limits to File a Bus Accident Claim?

If a client comes in and they're involved in a bus crash, we want to look at whether a municipality was involved. A municipality can include the city, the county, the state, or some other private bus company. Making the claim immediately is important for two reasons. One, to preserve people's right if it involves a government entity. Or two, preserving the evidence that the other party may have. We want to get involved as early as possible so that we can do the things necessary to protect the client's interest.

WHY CHOOSE LONGORIA LAW FIRM?

Free Initial Consultation

When you're injured in an accident, you often feel the financial impact immediately. Choosing the right attorney shouldn't add to that distress. We offer free consultations for all clients so you can get the answers you need without worrying about taking on another financial burden.

No Recovery, No Fee

At the Longoria Law Firm, we handle all personal injury cases on a contingency basis. This means that it will not cost you any money up front to retain us and have us represent you. Furthermore, you don't pay any fees unless we recover money for you.

Over \$200 Million Recovered

With over 20 years of experience, Houston injury lawyer Hector Longoria has obtained Court judgments and settlements for his clients in excess of \$200 million. Don't put your future in the hands of an amateur. Contact us today and let our experience work for you.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Attorney Hector Garcia Longoria was born in Galveston Texas, the youngest of five sons, to Matias and Edelmira Longoria. His mother was a school teacher in Cerralvo, Mexico and his father a police officer in Monterrey, Mexico. Shortly after marrying in 1951, his parents made the decision to come to the United States to build a better life for their family. In the United States, Hector's parents worked on farms in California and Florida before moving to Galveston, where Hector's father worked as a longshoreman.

Hector's parents were determined to see their children succeed; taught him the value of hard work; and the importance of family and respect. Hector graduated from Galveston Ball High School in 1987. Hector then attended Texas A&M University on a scholarship. In May 1992, Hector graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and minors in History and Finance.

With guidance from his parents, Hector then attended law school at the University of Texas beginning in August 1992. During the summer semester in 1993, Hector attended the University of Houston-Mexican Legal Studies in Mexico City, Mexico. In Mexico City, Hector had an opportunity to work as a law clerk for Rich Heather y Mueller S.C. During law school. Hector was also on the Board of Advocates, a member of the National Latino Moot Court Team, a finalist in the Vial Hamilton Endowed Mock Trial, a quarterfinalist in the Susman Godfrey Endowed Moot Court and operations manager for the Hispanic Law Journal. In May 1995, Hector graduated with a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Texas in. Hector became a member of the Texas Bar in November 1995 and has been a practicing attorney in Houston ever since.

As a lawyer, Hector works hard fighting for his client's rights. Hector devotes his practice to representing clients who have been victims of automobile, trucking, industrial, and work-related accidents that result in severe injuries to the client and client's family members. Hector understands the importance of being prepared in front the judge and the jury.

In addition to being admitted to practice in Texas state Courts, Hector is also admitted to practice in the Eastern, Southern and Northern United States District Court of Texas and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Hector has also worked on cases in California, Louisiana, New Mexico, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New York. Please call Hector if you have any questions regarding your legal rights.



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