

# THE SUNSHINE LINE



JEFFERSON COUNTY  
AREA AGENCY ON AGING

**Telephone:**

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1-800-852-8036

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**Website:**

[www.jcaaa.org](http://www.jcaaa.org)

**Molly McNutt -**  
Executive Director



**Get the Sunshine Line**

Sign up on our website  
[www.jcaaa.org](http://www.jcaaa.org) or call  
us at  
(814)849-3096

The Sunshine Line  
is assembled and  
prepared for mailing  
by a group of  
wonderful volunteers

**The Jefferson County Area Agency on Aging is temporarily closing our offices to in-person visitors.**

**We would be happy to assist you over the telephone.**

**Please call us at:**

**814-849-3096**

**or**

**800-852-8036**

Inside the April newsletter you will find helpful resources to answer your questions regarding the Coronavirus COVID-19. This virus continues to spread globally, and the Jefferson County Area Agency on Aging is taking steps to help mitigate the spread. Our senior centers will remain closed through the month of April. Cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces will be ongoing at our senior centers to ensure a safe environment once we can reopen to the public.

We know this is difficult to many in our communities but please be assured our staff is just a phone call away. We encourage you to call us with questions or concerns.

Frozen meals will still be available while the senior centers are closed through our agency. Due to lack of interest we are discontinuing the daily hot meal take-out option at the senior centers. Please contact us if you wish to be assessed for home delivered meals. The center directors and Pete Spuck remain committed to helping you and answering your questions. The food pantries are also available. We encourage you to allow your family members and friends to help you during this time. If you can stay at home, please do.

Heritage House  
814-849-3391  
Jodie Deal

Reynoldsville Foundry  
814-653-2522  
Pete Spuck or Mary Smith

Coolspring Center (satellite)  
814-849-3391  
Jodie Deal

Brockway Depot  
814-265-1719  
Cheryl Moore

Punxy Center  
814-938-8376  
Debbie Long

**If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others call:**

- 911
- Jefferson County Crisis 1-800-341-5040
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text

**TalkWithUs to 66746. (TTY 1-800-846-8517)**

## Coronavirus: What Older Adults Need to Know

### Older Adults at Higher Risk

The CDC has identified older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung, or kidney disease at higher risk for more serious COVID-19. According to the CDC, early data suggest older people are twice as likely to have serious COVID-19.

This is likely because as people age, their immune systems change, making it harder for their body to fight off diseases and infection, and because many older adults are also more likely to have underlying health conditions that make it harder to cope with and recover from. Age increases the risk that the respiratory system or lungs will shut down when an older person has COVID-19 disease.

The CDC has emphasized that the best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure. That's why the CDC is recommending that people at higher risk take the following actions:

- Stock up on supplies.
- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact, and wash your hands often.
  - Avoid crowds as much as possible.
  - Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed.

**“Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice. Optimism is a choice. Kindness is a choice. Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice. Whatever choice you make makes you. Choose wisely.”**

## Beware of Scams

Ignore online offers for vaccinations. There currently are no vaccines, pills, potions, lotions, lozenges or other prescription or over-the-counter products available to treat or cure Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) — online or in stores.

## Stress and coping

**Older people are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 which may result in increased stress during a crisis.**

**Fear and anxiety about the COVID-19 pandemic can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions.**

### Things you can do to support yourself

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories and social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
  - Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
  - Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
  - Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

## Remember the Seasonal Flu, Too

It's also important to remember that we are still in the middle of the seasonal flu season, which impacts older adults every year. According to the CDC, it's estimated that 70-85% of seasonal flu-related deaths have occurred in people aged 65+.

While there is no vaccine for the coronavirus, it's never too late for individuals to get their annual flu shot. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how you can protect yourself and those around you. Don't forget that Medicare covers vaccines for influenza and other diseases.

With COVID-19 and all health issues, when in doubt, the best course forward is always to consult with your doctor. Many physicians and health care providers are asking that people call or send their questions via email first before coming into the office.

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program Update:**

The Jefferson County Area Agency on Aging VITA program is utilized by many individuals in Jefferson and surrounding counties. Our volunteers are well trained and love helping everyone with filing their tax returns and seeing the refunds people are eligible for. Due to the orders by Gov. Tom Wolf we had to suspend all activities at our senior centers. It is important to limit the amount of face-to-face contact to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 especially since older adults are at a higher risk for complications if they contract the virus. Because our senior centers are closed, we had to cancel tax appointments. We are not rescheduling appointments at this time.

We encourage those that have not yet filed their 2019 tax returns to contact a local preparer for assistance. The Treasury Department and Internal Revenue Service announced that the federal income tax filing due date is automatically extended from April 15, 2020, to July 15, 2020.

We do not know if tax appointments will be able to start again once the suspension of senior center activities is lifted so we encourage you to make other arrangements.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 19, 2020**

**Department of Aging: PACE Pharmacy Program Offers Prescription Extensions during COVID-19 Mitigation Effort**

Harrisburg, PA – With the ongoing directive from Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Health to stay home and limit social interaction during the COVID-19 mitigation effort, Department of Aging Secretary Robert Torres today announced that as of March 5, the Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly (PACE) Program can help older adult enrollees with refill extensions.

“The department has fielded several calls from older Pennsylvanians who are heeding the state directive and who are concerned about potentially running out of their needed medications,” Secretary Torres said. “To help alleviate those fears, PACE is working to ensure older adults remain in their residences and receive their prescriptions when they desire them. All enrollees should be able to receive free home delivery of their medications from their pharmacies.”

Under regular circumstances, enrollees with prescriptions must use 75% of their supply before refills will be reimbursed. PACE will now reimburse refills even though the required 75% of the days’ supply has not passed – except for opioids and other controlled substances – which will be handled on a case by case basis. Enrollees wishing to receive that exception must have their pharmacy provider contact PACE at 1-800-835-8040, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to make that request. The program has traditionally not offered this exception unless an enrollee’s medications were lost or stolen. Enrollees who have difficulties obtaining their refills can call cardholder services at 1-800-225-7223.

The PACE program, funded with revenue from the lottery, began July 1, 1984 to provide comprehensive reimbursement coverage for prescription medications to qualified older Pennsylvanians. The program enrolls 250,000 older Pennsylvanians, 65 years of age and older, many of whom require multiple medications for several chronic conditions.

MEDIA CONTACT: Jack Eilber: 717-214-7510 or [jeilber@pa.gov](mailto:jeilber@pa.gov)

YOUR CENSUS ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS AND PROTECTED. 

# You count. Don't be scammed.



DCED-SCAM-2-EN

## PROTECT YOURSELF. PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY. PROTECT PA'S FUTURE.

The 2020 Census will determine our voice in government and the federal funds we receive for critical programs. Your participation matters. Sadly, there are those who may try to trick you with a “fake” census. Don't be scammed. Participate in the REAL Census.


### THE REAL U.S. CENSUS WILL NEVER ASK FOR:

- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Bank or credit card information
- Opinions on political issues or parties
- Mother's maiden name
- Donations or money
- Information or support on behalf of a candidate or political party

### KNOW IT'S THE REAL U.S. CENSUS

**Mail:** Make sure the return address is Jeffersonville, Indiana.

**Phone:** Call 1-800-923-8282 to verify whether the census caller is legit.

**Email:** Confirm the web address begins with “ HTTPS” and has a lock symbol.

**In person:** Check his or her ID badge for photo, U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date. Call 1-800-923-8282 for further verification.

### IN PENNSYLVANIA, EVERYONE COUNTS.

The 2020 U.S. Census will shape our state's future for the next ten years. Please don't let scammers stop you from participating.

*If you see Census Fraud, report it. Email [ois.fraud.reporting@census.gov](mailto:ois.fraud.reporting@census.gov) or call 1-800-923-8282.*

For more information, visit:  
**PA.GOV/CENSUS**

Shape your  
future in PA





**Happy April! We are back with yet another edition of the Senior Spotlight where we highlight some amazing stories from local seniors!**

I would like to introduce Donna Jensen. Donna lives in Punxsutawney but was born in Barnesboro, PA. When Donna was a little girl, she and her family moved to California where Donna was able to graduate from high school in Norwalk. Donna then moved back to PA via Greyhound bus on her 18th birthday where she was able to obtain a position cleaning and cooking for a wealthy family from Cherry Tree. Donna was able to reside on their property in a garage apartment. Donna was eventually able to obtain her college degree in Drama and taught elementary school when she moved back to the area once again. When Donna was much older in life, she decided to go online and search for positions and discovered that there was a teaching position available in Taiwan. Donna was able to land the position which was teaching Kindergarten. Donna flew out to Taiwan on 9/11/2002 exactly one year after the 9/11 attacks. In order to finance this journey, Donna states that she had to sell off a lot of her belongings. Donna enjoyed teaching in Taiwan and was there for one year. While living there, Donna learned how to make “bubble tea”. What is that you ask? It is a sweetened tea which is served usually cold and can contain creamer. Many times you can choose from several exotic flavors for this tea. The best part about the bubble tea are the “bubbles” (balls or spheres filled with flavored liquid which sit at the bottom of the glass and “pop” in your mouth once you begin to drink the tea using a very wide straw). Donna was able to utilize her bubble tea-making skills by eventually opening a shop in Punxsutawney called Connection Central which sold antiques, books as well as her famous bubble tea! I told Donna that a few years ago, I recall my one son and I ordering bubble tea from her since we both like it very much! Donna has since closed the store and is now interested in ministering to others. Donna has published a book entitled “Lethal Choices”. As you can see from the photos, Donna’s apartment and apartment door are lavishly and interestingly decorated, and Donna’s apartment contains a vintage cart which has sundae glasses on display! Thank you Donna for sharing tales from your exciting journey and we wish you all of the best!

Megan Chase-OPTIONS Care Manager

## DO YOU HAVE MEDICARE?

Do you have questions about your coverage or current plan? Do you want to know if you are eligible to save money on your prescription drug costs and/or your Part B premium? Are you currently in the donut hole and need assistance?

The APPRISE PROGRAM can help!

### What is APPRISE?

APPRISE is a free health insurance counseling program designed to help all Pennsylvanians with Medicare.

APPRISE counselors are specially trained staff and volunteers who can answer your questions and provide you with objective, easy-to-understand information.

### You may qualify for financial assistance programs!

APPRISE wants to make sure you and your friends who have Medicare know about the Extra Help and Medicare Savings Programs.

#### Extra Help

Can help lower your prescription drug co-payments and premiums, and cover the cost of the coverage gap!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have total monthly income of less than \$1,595/month; and less than \$14,610 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$2,155/month; and less than \$29,160 in resources

\*There are certain deductions taken for Extra Help. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

#### Medicare Savings Program

Can help you with the payment of your Part B premium!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,436/month; and less than \$7,860 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,940/month; and less than \$11,800 in resources

\*Medicare Savings Programs can possibly help with the payment of your Medicare Part A and Part B cost-sharing. There are certain deductions taken for Medicare Savings Programs. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

### How can the APPRISE Program help you?

APPRISE can help with:

- Medicare
- Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D)
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap)
- Plan Comparison
- Medicaid
- Screening and applying for financial assistance programs
- Medicare Appeals
- Long-Term Care Insurance

Call today to get connected to the APPRISE Program in your area.

**1-800-852-8036**

APPRISE is a free service provided by the PA Department of Aging, and is funded in whole or part by a grant through the Administration for Community Living.

