

A Letter from the Director

by **Kathy Bennett, Director**



who could not, or were too afraid to, go to the grocery store. We also started a *Telephone Reassurance program* whereby staff and volunteers are calling isolated seniors on a weekly basis just to check in and have a friendly conversation. And as I am writing this, staff is developing a *COVID Care Package* to send out to seniors that will include masks, hand-sanitizers and other items to help keep seniors safe as they venture out into the community.

These are not easy times. And I know there will be more changes and challenges ahead. But I also have hope that we will find new ways to help seniors and continue to receive assistance from more community volunteers to meet the needs of seniors in our county.

We are moving!

Effective June 29, 2020 our office will be located at 55 E. Court Street, 3rd Floor, Doylestown, PA, 18901.

When you come off the elevator, our office is located on the left side. Our phone number will remain the same.



No doubt about it. Since March we have faced many challenges, changes and losses in our world. I bet you are a little weary of dealing with so much change and instability. But for just one moment, I'd like to focus on some of the ways our staff has risen to the challenges, and has tried to meet the needs of seniors in our county in new ways.

We were surprised and blessed to see how many community members contacted us in March and April to volunteer to help seniors in any way that would be helpful. Because of their willingness to step up and step out during the COVID virus, staff was able to start a *Senior Shopping program*, matching volunteers who would shop for seniors

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Heat Alert!



Nearly everyone enjoys summertime, but it is important for older adults to remember the health risks posed by extremely hot weather. Please take the following precautions to avoid injury during extremely hot weather:

- Drink cool beverages, but avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- If your doctor limits your fluid intake, ask how much you should drink when the weather is hot.
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath.
- Wear lightweight, light colored clothing.
- If possible, stay in an air-conditioned environment, especially during the hottest part of the day. If your home is not air-conditioned, visit a shopping mall, public library or senior center to cool off.
- Avoid strenuous activity.

Please check on older friends and neighbors during hot weather. This simple act of kindness can save a life. For assistance or additional information about hot weather safety or a needed fan, please contact the Area Agency on Aging or your health department office.

Fans are available!



For those seniors, age 60 and older, who are without air conditioning and in need of a fan, you may contact our office at **267-880-5700** to obtain a free fan.

Grocery Shopping Services

For many older adults, grocery shopping during the COVID-19 crisis is not an option. Whether you have a medical condition that places you at greater risk, or have no one to assist you, Bucks



County Area Agency on Aging has developed a free grocery shopping service for those 60 and older with the help of volunteers in the community. To apply for this service you may contact us at **267-880-5700**. Our reception staff will forward your call to our information and referral department which will take your information and ensure you are provided with all the resources you may be eligible for. Our department will match those in need with an available volunteer who can provide this weekly service.



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 **LEGAL CORNER** 
Coronavirus Related
Housing Issues

Rhonda Sherrod, Esq.

Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania

Due to the current public health emergency, several temporary housing protections for homeowners and renters have been enacted. On May 7, 2020 Governor Wolf signed an Executive Order prohibiting new eviction and foreclosure actions from being started in Pennsylvania between May 11, 2020 and July 9, 2020. The Governor's Executive Order builds on prior Pennsylvania Supreme Court Orders extending back to March 18, 2020 that provided a moratorium on evictions and foreclosure actions due to failure to pay rent or mortgage. The current Order means no residential evictions for failure to pay can occur until after the expiration of the governor's order on July 10, 2020. Under different federal legislation, public housing, Section 8 and private landlords with federally backed mortgages on rental properties cannot begin eviction actions until after July 25, 2020.

Renters need to be aware that rents aren't forgiven under this legislation – you still owe rent during the moratorium and the landlord could file for eviction as soon as the order is lifted unless arrangements are made with your landlord to pay the back rent owed. Also be aware that if you are a guest in someone's home or the guest of a motel or hotel you are not protected under this order and can still be asked to leave during this period.

Renters also need to know that it is always illegal for a landlord to conduct an eviction without going to court and obtaining a court order for possession that allows an eviction to occur. An illegal evictions is when a landlord takes such actions as changing the locks without a court order, turning the utilities off, throwing out possessions or removing the windows and doors to the home and other such actions designed to force a tenant to leave. If you feel vulnerable to an illegal eviction you should keep proof that you are a tenant outside your home (for example in your car or with a trusted neighbor). Proof that you are a tenant may be a copy of your lease, a utility bill, photo identification, rent receipts, etc. If you believe you are the victim of an illegal eviction call your local police and show them proof that you are a

tenant. In some cases, an emergency petition can be filed with the courts to stop the illegal eviction. Additionally, renters can call the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Protection at **800-441-2555** if the police do not help.

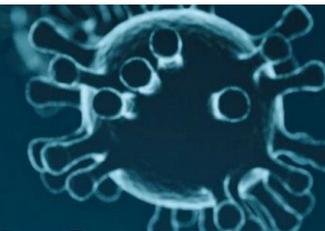
The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a federal agency, has published helpful information for homeowners whose ability to pay their mortgage has been impacted by the corona virus public health emergency. This information can be found at <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/mortgage-and-housing-assistance/>

The law around these issues is evolving. If you are having legal issues regarding your housing, contact Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania through our telephone helpline **877-429-5994** Monday through Friday from 9am – 1pm or anytime on-line at www.lasp.org. Bucks County seniors age 60 and over can contact us at **(215) 781-1111 ext. 209**.

We are all in this together!

Feeling isolated? The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging is offering a telephone reassurance service to any Bucks County senior (60+) who is feeling isolated and would welcome a chance to connect with one of our volunteers. Staying socially connected is essential to good health and has been especially challenging since the onset of social distancing practices. This program allows Bucks County residents to connect with someone new, get to know one another, and share their experience through the course of this pandemic. To join this program, call **267-880-5700** and ask to be registered for the telephone assurance program. It's amazing the difference a little togetherness can make!



A stylized illustration of a coronavirus particle, showing its characteristic spherical shape with numerous spike-like protrusions extending from its surface.

COVID-19 Consumer Tip Sheet

Tips for Protecting Yourself and Medicare

Scams related to the coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, are rapidly increasing as the public health emergency develops. Scammers are targeting older adults and those with serious long-term health conditions who appear to have a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19.

Fraudsters are attempting to bill Medicare for sham tests or treatments related to the coronavirus and are targeting individuals to illegally obtain money or Medicare numbers.

What Can You Do to Stop COVID-19 Fraud?

- Do not give out your Medicare number to anyone other than your doctor, health care provider, or other trusted representative.
- Protect your Medicare number and treat your Medicare card like a credit card.
- Never provide your Medicare number to anyone who contacts you through unsolicited calls, texts, or emails.
- Be cautious of anyone who comes to your door offering free coronavirus testing, treatment, or supplies.
- Don't click on links from sources you don't know, which could put your computer or device at risk. Make sure the anti-malware and anti-virus software on your computer are up to date.
- Be cautious when purchasing medical supplies from unverified sources, including online advertisements and email/phone solicitations.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations. If you see ads touting prevention products or cures for COVID-19, they are most likely a scam.
- Do your homework before making a donation to a charity or crowdfunding site due to a public health emergency. Be particularly wary of any charities requesting donations by cash, by gift card, or wire transfer.
- Be alert to "investment opportunities." The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is warning people about online promotions, including on social media, claiming that the products or services of publicly traded companies can prevent, detect, or cure COVID-19 and that the stock of these companies will dramatically increase in value as a result.

2020 SFMNP Application

For office use only
Application _____

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

2020 Application Form

To qualify you must be 60 or older (or turn 60 by 12/31/2020) and meet the household income guidelines.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I certify that the information I have provided below for my eligibility determination is correct, to the best of my knowledge. This certification form is being submitted in connection with the receipt of Federal assistance. Program officials may verify information on this form. I understand that intentionally making a false or misleading statement or intentionally misrepresenting, concealing, or withholding facts may result in paying the State agency, in cash, the value of the food benefits improperly issued to me and may subject me to civil or criminal prosecution under State and Federal law.

Standards for eligibility and participation in the SFMNP are the same for everyone, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

I understand that I may appeal any decision made by the local agency regarding my eligibility for the SFMNP.

By signing this, I acknowledge that my total household income is within the Income guidelines: \$23,606 for 1 person in the household; or \$31,894 for 2 people in the household and that I am 60 years old or older (or will turn 60 by December 31, 2020).

1st Participant Name (print): _____ Birth date _____
(Person checks are for)

(Signature)

2nd Participant Name (print): _____ Birth Date _____
(Person checks are for)

(Signature)

Address (print): _____

Telephone Number: _____ County you live in _____

Please circle the most appropriate identifier for each:

Ethnicity:	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	
Race:	American Indian or Alaskan Native Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	Asian White	Black or African American

If more responses are received than funding allows you will be notified by mail.

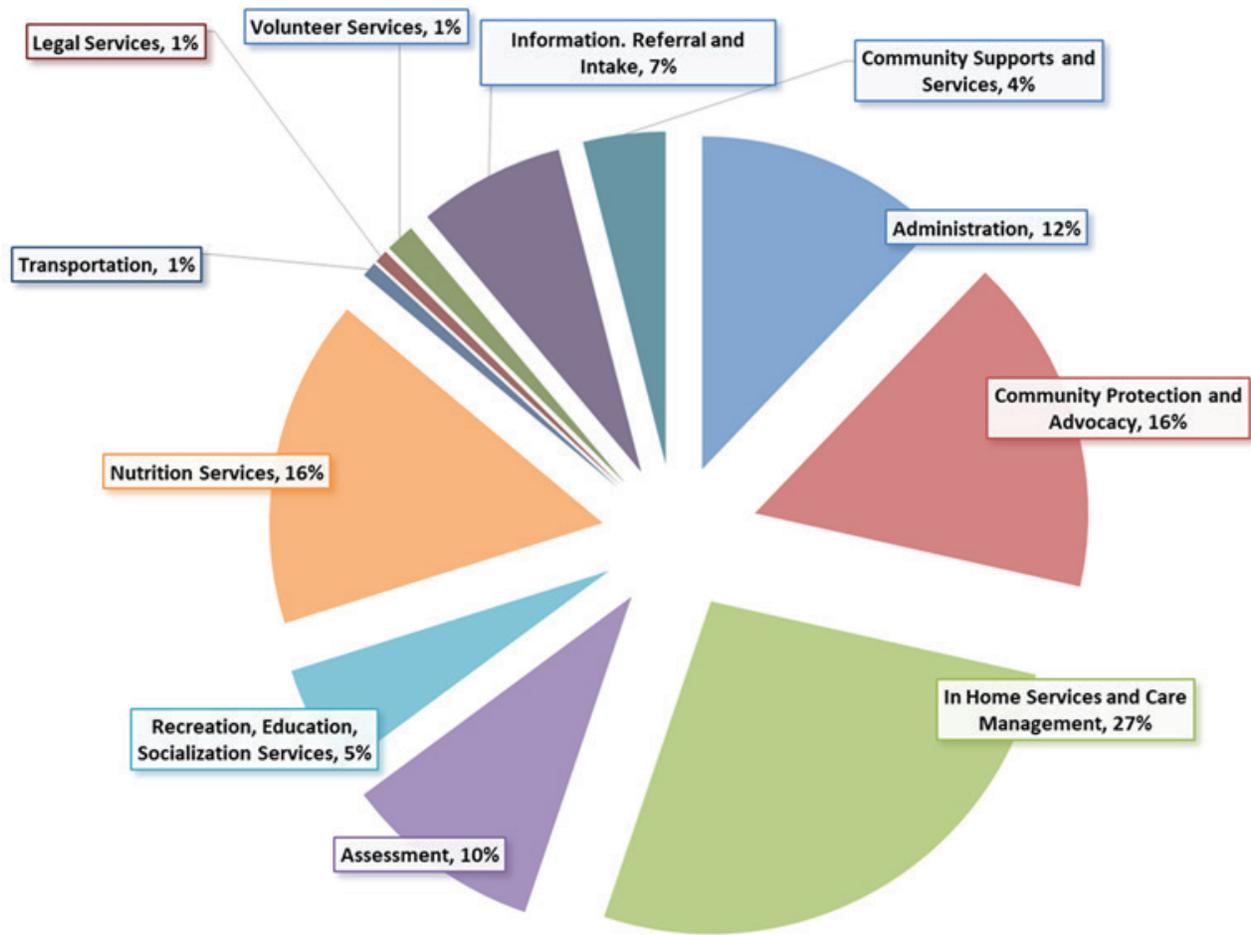
Please mail or email your completed form before September 23, 2020 to:

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging
30 E Oakland Ave
Doylestown, PA 18901
aaavouchers@buckscounty.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

AAA Budget Presented For Fiscal Year 2020-2021

The Area Agency on Aging presented its proposed budget for State fiscal year 2020-2021 on May 18. The budget addresses changes and continued growth in the number of seniors in need of the Agency's services and supports through June 30, 2021. Below is a summary of expenditures for the fiscal year.



PRELIMINARY FY 20/21 EXPENSE ALLOCATION

Administration	\$ 1,341,463.00
Community Protection and Advocacy	\$ 1,813,798.00
In Home Services and Care Management	\$ 2,976,490.00
Assessment	\$ 1,069,864.00
Recreation, Education, Socialization Services	\$ 583,297.00
Nutrition Services	\$ 1,765,424.00
Transportation	\$ 81,843.00
Legal Services	\$ 70,200.00
Volunteer Services	\$ 158,332.00
Information. Referral and Intake	\$ 785,538.00
Community Supports and Services	\$ 441,037.00
TOTAL	\$ 11,087,286.00

May 18, 2020

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging
30 E. Oakland Avenue
Doylestown, PA 18901

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
State College, PA
Permit No. 41

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging

30 East Oakland Avenue, Doylestown, PA 18901

Phone: 267-880-5700 Fax: 215-348-9253 E-mail: aging@buckscounty.org

Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-800-243-3767, available 24 hours a day

Website: www.buckscounty.org

Office Hours: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday - Friday

The Area Agency on Aging offers more than 20 programs to help older adults and their families in Bucks County. Services include:

- Information and Assistance
- Care Management
- Assessment & Care Planning
- In-Home Services
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Community Presentations
- Adult Day Service
- Employment Assistance
- Health Insurance Counseling
- Transportation
- Caregiver Support
- Outreach
- Senior Centers
- Ombudsman Services
- Protective Services
- Nutritional Services
- Legal Services

Toll-Free Numbers (when calling from within Bucks County)

Lower and Upper Bucks
1-888-942-8257

Central Bucks
267-880-5700



Please visit our Facebook page at
Bucks County Area Agency on
Aging@bcaging.