Updates, Information & Resources

**Updates from Maine Department of Labor**

Last Friday, new federal unemployment programs were enacted that expand eligibility and available weeks for unemployment benefits. The attached is a summary of the programs currently authorized, and their status here in Maine. [Click here to read the summary.](#)

[Click here to read their released statement and additional information on their website.](#)

To read posted guidance from U.S. DOL on implementation of the Family First Act (the 2\(^{nd}\) stimulus package) which deals with paid sick leave and paid family leave, [click here for more information.](#)

**National Digital Equity Center Resources**

The National Digital Equity Center based in Machias offers free classes for anyone who wants to learn how to use technology better — either for older adults who are self-isolating at home and want to engage with family and friends digitally, or people still in the workforce learning to work from home. [Click here for more information](#)

Also, please consider filling out the State of Maine Social Distancing Broadband Impact Survey. The State of Maine is interested in capturing data related to availability, affordability and reliability of your broadband service at your residence.

**Maine Notes for Seniors from Maine Health Care Association**

Maine Notes for Seniors is an initiative to encourage children who are home from school to take time to write notes, upload a drawing, or send a short video to residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We know this is a difficult and lonely time and this is a
Framing C19: Reframing vulnerability
Topic #3: Widening the circle of "we"

To come through this crisis, we need policies and practices that respond to varying - and inequitable - health, social, or economic situations. To do this, it's important that we carefully frame the needs of marginalized and high-risk social groups.

A sole focus on how the virus affects "vulnerable" groups creates distance and difference. People don't see themselves in the issue. They disengage and ignore guidance, assuming it doesn't apply to them. They blame "those people" for the situation. They become less likely support the kind of all-in, equity-focused approaches we need.

We can overcome this by placing people and places with particular risks in a broader frame before homing in on specific needs. Here are three strategies that can help.

Click here to read more

Sign up for Framing C19 updates!

Upcoming Learning Opportunities

AARP Statewide Call with Senator King, Governor Mills and Maine State Leaders, Monday March 30 at 2:30pm
AARP Maine invites you to a statewide call TODAY, 2:30 PM for a conversation with Senator King, Governor Mills and Maine State Leaders about COVID-19
Click here to register

MCOA Partner, Member & Friends Weekly Check In Call
Weekly on Tuesdays at 8:00am
https://zoom.us/j/974743577
Meeting ID: 974 743 577
Conference Call Option
1-646-558-8656 passcode 156372127#

Drop In with Dr. Susan
Starting Tuesday, March 31st, Drop-In with Dr. Susan Wehry to talk about what’s happening with COVID-19, to hear from people living with dementia and care partners about how they are dealing with the disruption, and to share some calm and common sense tips about ways to keep going and bounce back.

Dr. Wehry is a geriatric psychiatrist with extensive experience supporting older adults after 9/11 and Katrina. She is proud to serve on the board of DAA. #InItTogether

The Dementia Action Alliance invites people living with dementia and/or care partners to join Susan Wehry, MD on Tuesday afternoons, from 4-6pm New York Time. To find your time zone click here.

The below link will connect you to our free video chat - all you need is a phone, tablet, or computer with a camera. https://zoom.us/j/4567882023
MCOA Hosting Weekly Housing Check Ins
MCOA will begin hosting a regular weekly call on Fridays at 10:15am for RSCs and congregate property managers to address the needs of older residents. To join these calls, here are the connection details:
Weekly on Fridays at 10:15am
https://zoom.us/j/992754142
Meeting ID: 992 754 142
Conference Call Option
1-646-558-8656 passcode 156372127#

MCOA Members can access past recorded calls by clicking here

Local Community Volunteer Efforts

Volunteer Group Initiative:
Maine COVID Sitters: support for Maine’s Healthcare workers

Dear Healthcare worker,

First and foremost, thank you for your service to our community during the COVID-19 outbreak. We are volunteering to provide childcare, pet services, and household support to those on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A little bit about how our program works: we are a group of health care professional students (DO, MD, PA, dentistry, pharmacy, etc) in and around Portland, Maine, modeled after the MN CovidSitters. Using this intake form you can identify your needs, may they be child care, pet walking, grocery or pharmacy runs. You will then be connected with a "pod" of 1-5 students who will provide support solely to your family. This is done to distribute the responsibilities evenly among students who still have academic requirements, and promote social distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines. You will then be able to coordinate with your pod to get the services that you require. Please know that we are students and not certified childcare providers, nor are these services affiliated with our respective institutions.

We really want to thank you, and show our support to those who are on the front line of this pandemic. In medicine, it takes a village! We are excited to be a part of your village and help in the small way that we can.

We encourage you to share this information widely, so we will be able to reach any and all health care workers that need a helping hand. We are attaching a document of frequently asked questions to address any concerns you may have. If you have any additional questions or concerns, you can contact us at maineCOVIDsitters@gmail.com.

Please also see this FAQ sheet for additional information

Sincerely,
the Maine COVID Sitters Team

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Maine Council on Aging is working to share any community efforts & available resources across Maine and have started sharing on our website for easy reference. Check out the link below & share within your networks to ensure that service providers of all kinds can more easily find the services older people need during this crisis. This page is updated daily as we hear from more communities - please check back often!
Are you a part of a local volunteer effort in your community and do not see it listed at the webpage above? Please let us know about it by completing the brief survey here.