

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of November 15th

Note: the Office for the Aging and all OFA Senior Friendship Centers will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 25th.

Senior Friendship Centers will also be closed on Friday, November 26th – but the Office for the Aging will be open that day.

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program will receive their meals in advance of the holidays.

MORE DEVELOPMENTS IN 2022 FOR MEDICAID LOOK-BACK RULES

We've been following developments in New York State's new Medicaid "look-back" law ever since it was announced in April 2020, near the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The state law applies to the process of applying for a Medicaid-funded home care program for qualifying seniors, whose families may be transferring assets in anticipation of making a new application. Thanks to the

ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, more changes are expected in 2022 and maybe even 2023.

The law was to have originally taken effect in October 2020, but the State Department of Health has repeatedly pushed back the law's effective date, in response to federal law barring states from restricting Medicaid eligibility during the ongoing public health emergency, as declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The nationwide emergency declaration was extended again by HHS last month. It was the seventh extension thus far, and the emergency declaration now runs through January 13, 2022. Whether extensions continue beyond that date depends on HHS – and therefore, on the path taken by the pandemic.

So Where Are We Now?

At some point in 2022 or 2023, after the nationwide emergency is declared to have passed, New York State will phase in a 2 1/2 year (30 month) look-back and transfer penalty for community-based home care.

Whenever the look-back does take effect, it will apply to home healthcare services, private duty nursing services, personal care services, and assisted living program services, with other services possibly included later by the State Department of Health.

The look-back will *not* affect current home care recipients, who are “grandfathered” in.

Can't This Be Simpler?

We can help make it simpler. Please contact OFA with any questions about home care needs and we'll have the most up-to-date answers available for you. There's plenty you can do in the meantime:

- Make sure financial transactions are documented in detail. For advanced planning, contact an elder law attorney.
- Keep family informed as to the location of important documents.
- Have designated power(s) of attorney and healthcare proxies in place and

review them regularly. OFA hosts regular forums covering senior legal issues, and OFA contracts with private attorney Paul Weinberger to provide legal assistance to seniors who might otherwise be unable to afford it. Contact OFA for more information.

SAVE THE DATE - CAREGIVER CONFERENCE RE-SCHEDULED (Wed 5/25/2022)

The annual Caregiver Conference that was to have taken place this month has been postponed to Wednesday, May 25th, 2022. In anticipation of pandemic precautions possibly lingering into next year, organizers are preparing for an event with a sheltered outdoor option.

The daylong, free event is taking place at The Grandview, 176 Rinaldi Blvd., Poughkeepsie. Registration for this event through the Alzheimer's Association is anticipated to begin on Monday, April 25th, 2022.

Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, telephone 845-486-2555, email: ofa@dutchessny.gov website: www.dutchessny.gov/aging

VA HUDSON VALLEY'S WALK-IN COVID-19 VACCINE CLINICS NOW OFFERING BOOSTERS TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS

Following CDC recommendations for those that would most benefit from the COVID-19 booster, the VA Hudson Valley Health Care System is now providing booster shots for Moderna and J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccines to eligible veterans, as supply and capacity permits.

BOOSTER SHOT ELIGIBILITY

For individuals who received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the following groups are eligible for a booster shot at six months or more after their initial series:

- 65 years and older
- Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings
- Age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions
- Age 18+ who work or live in high-risk settings

For people who received a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, booster shots are recommended for those who are 18 and older and who were vaccinated at least two months ago.

The VA Hudson Valley Health Care System is administering Moderna and J&J/Janssen COVID-19 booster shots at the following times and locations:

CASTLE POINT VA MEDICAL CENTER – (STARTED 11/9)

Tuesdays & Thursdays ● 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Multipurpose Room, Bldg. 19, Room 100

MONTROSE, FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL - BEGINNING 11/11

Thursdays ● 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Social Hall, Bldg. 15, Room 16

VA HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY CLINICS are by appointment only.

Eligible veterans can also call 845-831-2000 ext. 217666 to schedule an appointment for their booster shot. Scheduling staff will assist in getting a convenient time for them.

Individuals can also receive their booster shot at no cost outside of VA by locating a vaccine site at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) - Search for COVID-19 vaccine locations. They'll need to bring their CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card for their appointment.

Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some people may prefer the vaccine type that they originally received, and others may prefer to get a different booster. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots.

For more information about the status of vaccination throughout Dutchess County, visit www.DutchessNY.gov/COVIDvaccine.

OTHER RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

November is Military Appreciation Month, and the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) is passing along information on resources for area veterans and their families, and those who support them.

- Veterans Administration (federal) - www.va.gov

Mobile care – www.mobile.va.gov

- New York State Division of Veterans Services – www.veterans.ny.gov
- Dutchess County Division of Veterans Services – www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Veteran-Services/Veterans-Services.htm

or 845-486-2060

- American Legion - www.legion.org
- Veterans of Foreign Wars “Help A Hero” Scholarship – application due November 15th, 2021: [click here](#)
- National Veterans Foundation Lifeline for Vets – 1-888-777-4443
- VA Suicide Hotline – 1-800-273-8255

VA Hudson Valley Health Care has launched a single toll-free number, 800-877-6976, to connect Veterans to dedicated and aligned clinical and administrative staff 24/7.

Whether you have served, have a family member who has/is serving, or know someone who has/is serving, this month is a great time to remember the sacrifices made.

What else can you do? Here are a few suggestions:

- Adopt a military family for the holidays.

- Volunteer or donate services to military organizations.
- Send a Card! Many of us know a military member or veterans who is away from home, hospitalized or living in a retirement community away from family. Sending a card is a small gesture that can make a huge difference! If you don't know a veteran in this situation, contact a local VA hospital and ask about how you can send a card to brighten a stranger's day.

Here's the contact information for VA facilities at Castle Point (Dutchess) and Montrose (Westchester):

Castle Point – 845-831-2000 or [click here](#)

Montrose, including FDR Hospital – 914-737-4400 or [click here](#)

VOLUNTEERS WANTED AT “TRI-TOWN” AND ELSEWHERE

The Office for the Aging has many volunteering opportunities available throughout Dutchess County, especially when it comes to the newly-reopened OFA Senior Friendship Center at the “Tri-Town” site, 1576 Main St. (US 44) in Pleasant Valley. The Tri-Town center serves seniors in the LaGrange/Pleasant Valley/Poughkeepsie area and neighboring communities.

Tri-Town is looking for on-site volunteers to spend time with our seniors, and for drivers for our Home Delivered Meals program. Volunteer drivers can obtain mileage reimbursement if they use their own vehicles for deliveries.

A printable volunteering form with a full explanation of volunteering opportunities is available at www.dutchessny.gov/aging.

While OFA Friendship Centers are closed on Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving, along with Christmas and New Year's Day, many local volunteer organizations are operating during the holidays and can often use all the help they can get. The Dutchess County website maintains a list of volunteering opportunities available within the county at www.dutchessny.gov/Business/volunteer-opportunities.htm .

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME AND "SUNDOWNING"

Last week's Daylight Saving Time clock shift may have affected those with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, especially if they've shown "sundowning" behavior in the past.

Adjusting to earlier darkness can worsen sundowning issues, according to upstate-based Lifespan of Greater Rochester.

Sundowning or sundown syndrome is a neurological phenomenon associated with increased confusion and restlessness in persons with dementia. It's also known as "late-day confusion," but for some it can happen at any time of the day. As a result, caregivers may notice changes in behavior including increased anxiety, agitation, pacing and disorientation. Lifespan provides a few factors to note, and coping strategies, noted below.

Factors that contribute to sundowning include:

- Alterations of the 'internal body clock' (especially noticeable at daylight saving time)
- Exhaustion at the end of the day (both physical and mental)
- Reduced lighting and increased shadows
- Feeling overwhelmed by too much sensory input or perhaps a lack of stimulation (not enough activities or attention)
- Pain

Coping Strategies for Caregivers:

- Keep the home well-lit in the evening. Adequate lighting may reduce the agitation that occurs when surroundings are dark or unfamiliar. Also, close blinds or drapes to minimize shadows or reflections.
- Reduce clutter, noise, or the number of people in the room.
- Try to distract with a favorite snack, activity, or music. If the person needs to walk or pace, let them.
- Make a comfortable and safe sleep environment. The person's sleeping area should be at a comfortable temperature. Provide nightlights and other ways to keep the person safe, such as appropriate door and window locks. Door sensors and motion detectors can be used to alert family members when a person is wandering.
- Maintain a schedule. As much as possible, encourage the person with dementia to adhere to a regular routine of meals, waking up and going to bed. This will allow for more restful sleep at night.
- Avoid stimulants. Reduce or avoid alcohol, caffeine and nicotine, which can all affect ability to sleep. Discourage watching television during periods of wakefulness at night, as it can be stimulating.

- Plan more active days. A person who rests most of the day is likely to be awake at night. Discourage afternoon napping and plan more challenging activities such as doctor appointments, trips and bathing in the morning or early afternoon. Encourage regular daily exercise, but no later than four hours before bedtime.

- Be mindful of your own mental and physical exhaustion. If you are feeling stressed by the late afternoon, the person may pick up on it and become agitated or confused. Try to get plenty of rest at night so you have more energy during the day.

Stay calm, find out if there is something that he or she needs, avoid arguing and remember to offer reassurance that everything is going to be okay.

Other aging news online:

November is National Family Caregivers Month. More here:

<https://www.alz.org/events/nadam>

Looking for veteran-owned businesses?

<https://www.veteranownedbusiness.com/?fbclid=IwAR0OXevwQSAbwC1rYeFNmjahWC3oGyc8gnunB2pXH5NnTWQ6NOk7wjv6x9w>

With the oldest baby boomers closing in on 80 years of age, and fewer children to take care of them than during previous generations, is there a long-term-care crisis on the way? <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/08/aging-baby-boomers-raise-the-risk-of-a-long-term-care-crisis-in-the-us.html>

89 meatless Thanksgiving recipes:

https://www.bonappetit.com/recipes/vegetarian/slideshow/vegetarian-thanksgiving-menu?utm_source=nl&utm_brand=spotlight-nl&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_mailing=thematic_spotlight_110821_1&utm_medium=email&bxid=5ce26a424c17c4c64607b7a&cndid=21991033&hasha=b2946d7b42377b4841b3ffa8671b2edb&hashb=ba91f3a063159a5c023d7932d9b913dadf31574d&hashc=f0cf0a8a5b7325e0660e56c41aa6b7ce5658c27c483fece30d7a8bcf02463554&esrc=thematicseed&sourcecode=thematic_spotlight&utm_term=Thematic_Spotlight

Great news if you're fond of putting bird feeders out during colder months:

<https://www.timesunion.com/ HUDSONVALLEY/outdoors/article/Songbird-disease-disappears-as-it-came-16601884.php>

Looking for good local reading? Scenic Hudson's "Viewfinder" is worth a look:

<https://www.scenichudson.org/viewfinder/>

There are clams...presumably the non-edible kind...whose lifespans exceed

humans' by a lot: [https://www.lifespan.io/news/is-immortality-](https://www.lifespan.io/news/is-immortality-possible/?fbclid=IwAR19Vsgl8uGq5ILINFUsXTgHv0yJCLynqIx6JLEDRhGhxI0vcLo4-soiZGY)

[possible/?fbclid=IwAR19Vsgl8uGq5ILINFUsXTgHv0yJCLynqIx6JLEDRhGhxI0vcLo4-soiZGY](https://www.lifespan.io/news/is-immortality-possible/?fbclid=IwAR19Vsgl8uGq5ILINFUsXTgHv0yJCLynqIx6JLEDRhGhxI0vcLo4-soiZGY)

The Dick Van Dyke Show turns 60 this year: [https://www.culturesonar.com/the-](https://www.culturesonar.com/the-dick-van-dyke-show-60-years-of-that-ottoman/)

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This week in senior birthdays:

11/15: Singer/songwriter/actress Petula Clark (89)

11/16: NASCAR driver Terry Labonte (65)

11/17: Singer/songwriter Gordon Lightfoot (83)

11/18: Author/poet Margaret Atwood (82)

11/19: Talk show host/actor Dick Cavett (85)

11/20: Novelist/playwright Don DeLillo (85)

11/21: NBA Hall of Famer Earl "The Pearl" Monroe (77)

And our Bad Joke puts the Thanksgiving theme in play:

Q: If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?

A: Pilgrims.