

# MASHPEE



## SENIOR CENTER



January, 2021

# update



*In recognition of Martin Luther King Day, The Mashpee Council on Aging will be closed Monday, January 18th.*

### **Message from Lynne Waterman, Mashpee Council on Aging Director**

So much changed in 2020 – the world around us, our neighborhoods, gathering spaces, the places we work and call home. The turn of the calendar is the perfect time to reflect on the year that has passed and how we have grown. What did we learn and where do we go from here? The Council of Aging staff has been called upon to be creative and resilient as we find new ways to deliver services and programs in different and often more complicated ways. January is a fresh start, full of hope and potential. May 2021 bring new happiness, new goals, new achievements, and many new inspirations to your life.



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### **Mashpee Senior Center** **We are here for you!**

The doors may be closed for the public at the moment, but the COA staff is working Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 pm. If you need help with finding services, solving a problem, or need an answer to a question, we encourage you to call us at (508) 539-1440. We are here for you!

- Our Outreach Coordinators are assisting Mashpee seniors, and they have a list of helpful resources for both Mashpee seniors and their caregivers. They are answering questions and making referrals to other programs and services. Lori Nelson's email is [lnelson@mashpeema.gov](mailto:lnelson@mashpeema.gov) and Darlene Perkins' email is [pperkins@mashpeema.gov](mailto:pperkins@mashpeema.gov).
- Drop Box - a drop box has been installed on the outside of the senior center building, to the left of the main front door. If you need to drop off papers or documents to one of the COA staff, please deposit them in the box and let us know. We will be sure to retrieve them.

## **COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION**

The Council on Aging has been receiving calls from Mashpee seniors about when and how the Covid-19 vaccine will be distributed. Please be aware that the Mashpee Board of Health will advise everyone through all media outlets when the clinics are scheduled. You can also check the town of Mashpee website, [www.mashpeema.gov](http://www.mashpeema.gov), for updated information or

## INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**INCLEMENT WEATHER** - When the Mashpee schools are cancelled, the Council on Aging minibus service is cancelled. Council on Aging staff will still be working at the Senior Center, unless Town operations are closed.

We recommend that seniors line up a snow plowing service you can depend upon before the snow emergency begins. Verify that this service can plow the driveway and shovel your walkway. Make sure that you are able to leave your home safely. Make sure that services such as the visiting nurse and meals on wheels are able to access your home. We know of no service that does plowing or shoveling free of charge. For help making a plan, please call our Outreach Coordinator at (508) 539-1440.

The Mashpee Council on Aging maintains a list of seniors who are homebound, and/or frail to help the Town provide assistance to them during a civil defense emergency such as hurricane or blizzard. If you would like to be on the list, please call the Senior Center at (508) 539-1440 and request a simple registration form for you to complete and return. Should you need assistance completing the form, please call the Outreach Coordinator at (508) 539-1440.

**Mashpee Emergency Alert Sign-up** - Did you know that you could receive automated messages by phone from the Town, helping you with storm preparedness or other Town activities? If you do not already receive important/emergency messages from the Town, or if you want to edit your contact info, please go to the Town website: [www.mashpeema.gov](http://www.mashpeema.gov), and select the "Emergency Alert Sign-up" box in the upper center of the page. Then select the next signup now button to enter your contact information so local leadership may contact you with timely, important messages.

## RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

### **Coping with COVID While Caregiving A Virtual Support Group for Caregivers:**



Tuesdays at 10:00am – 11:00am  
Support Group will begin January 12th

Facilitated by an ESCCI Family Caregiver Outreach Specialist

Registration is required by calling ESCCI at 508-394-4630, extension 204



## Cape Cod Reopening Task Force

### Coping During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Cape Cod Reopening Task Force has collected helpful wellness resources for you during COVID-19.

Each month they will highlight tools to help manage this crisis and identify for you web videos, articles, discussions, and resources they have found helpful. These tools apply to those of all ages, children, adolescents, young adults, adults, and elders. For more information, please check their website. [Click Here](#)

## Vaccine Scams

### The following is a message from the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol Program

Be aware of COVID-19 vaccination scam offers. As the first Americans line up for the COVID-19 vaccine injections, so also are the scammers preparing to use this opportunity to scam you.



#### **Do not get scammed. You should know the following:**

- Most Medicare beneficiaries will not have to pay to get the vaccine during this public health emergency.
- If someone offers to put you on a vaccination list in exchange for money, you are being scammed. You cannot pay to get on a list.
- If someone offers to get you early access to the vaccine in exchange for your credit card or Medicare number, you are being scammed. You cannot pay to get early access to the vaccine.
- No one from Medicare or your municipal or state health department will contact you and offer you the vaccine.
- No one from a vaccine distribution site or private insurance company will call you asking for your Social Security number, your credit card number, or bank account information to sign you up to get the vaccine. If you get such a call you are being scammed.
- If you get a call, text, email, or even someone knocking on your door claiming they can get you early access to the vaccine, you are being scammed. You can report scams by call the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol Program's Report-A-Scam line at 978-946-1243 or email to [ReportAScam@MASMP.org](mailto:ReportAScam@MASMP.org).

## Cape Cod Healthcare Dementia & Alzheimer Support Programs

Cape Cod Healthcare Dementia & Alzheimer's Caregiver





Support Program will be holding their 3 part Family Education Series. All caregivers and those that would like a refresher in any or all of the class offerings are welcome. The class is free of charge and will be conducted on Zoom so you must register with your email to receive the class materials as well as the invitation.

**Class 1: Tuesday January 12<sup>th</sup>** 1:00pm – 2:30pm Orientation to Alzheimer's disease and progression; care plan overview

**Class 2: Tuesday January 19<sup>th</sup>** 1:00pm – 2:30pm Managing

challenging behaviors; why they occur and how to manage yourself and your family members

**Class 3: Tuesday January 26<sup>th</sup>** 1:00pm – 2:30pm Learning communication techniques to promote understanding and minimize behaviors

To Register call (508) 552-6080 or email Suzanne Faith at

[sfaith@capecodhealth.org](mailto:sfaith@capecodhealth.org)

## Social Security Update

**The following is a message from the Social Security Administration**



If you receive a Benefit Verification letter, sometimes called a "budget letter," a "benefits letter," a "proof of income letter," or a "proof of award letter," we have good news for you! A new standardized Benefit Verification letter is now available when you need proof of Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income, or Medicare.

In addition to name, date of birth, and the benefits received, the new Benefit Verification letter includes other identifiers to prevent misuse and fraud. This is an added benefit to you as proof of income for loans, housing assistance, mortgage, and other verification purposes.

The same standardized letter is also available if you need proof that you do not receive benefits, or proof that benefits are pending. If you are an individual representative payee, you can use the my Social Security Representative Payee portal to access the same standardized Benefit Verification letter online for your beneficiaries.

This new standardized Benefit Verification letter is another example of our commitment to improve our service to you.

No matter how you request your letter, whether calling our National 800 Number, your local office, the Interactive Voice Response system, or online with your personal my Social Security account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount), the Benefit Verification letter now contains a seamless look.

In March 2020, we temporarily closed all of our Social Security Hearing Offices due to the Coronavirus pandemic and are not offering in-person hearings. During the office closures, we are providing two flexible, safe, and secure hearing options: either a telephone hearing or our new option of an online video hearing.

## Falls Prevention

**A message from Stephanie Lattanzio, RN-BSN,  
Public Health and Wellness Town Nurse,  
Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod**

According to the National Institute on Aging, more than one in three adults over the age of 65 fall each year. Falls can result in serious injury and even be fatal. Many older adults are aware of this risk and some decrease their activity due to a fear of falling. Unfortunately, the resulting weakness from inactivity actually increases the risk. Below are some constructive ways to reduce your likelihood of falling.

- Stay physically active to keep your muscles strong and your joints, tendons and ligaments flexible. Mild strength training can also help keep your bones strong which may help prevent certain injuries if you were to suffer a fall.
- Have your hearing and eyes tested. Even small changes to vision and hearing can increase the risk of a fall.
- Educate yourself on the side effects of medications you take and take medications as prescribed. Understand which medications put you at highest risk for a fall and use caution. Always let your doctor know if you are experiencing medication side effects, especially dizziness.
- Get plenty of sleep. You are more likely to fall when you are tired.
- Limit the alcohol you drink, it may interact with medications you take and even small amounts of alcohol could affect your balance and reflexes.
- Stand up slowly, your blood pressure can drop when you stand up too quickly.
- Use an assistive device if you need help feeling steady while walking. A physical or occupational therapist can tell you which assistive devices might be most helpful, ensure correct sizing and provide education on how to use them safely.
- Be very cautious when walking on wet or icy surfaces.
- Wear non-skid, rubber soled, and supportive shoes with a low heel. Even inside your home it is important to avoid walking in socks, shoes or slippers with a smooth sole.
- Always tell your doctor about a fall even if you are not injured. A fall can alert your doctor to a medical or medication concern. A fall can also indicate the need for physical therapy, a walking aid or other assistance to help prevent future falls.
- Keep your home free from clutter and throw rugs that can be tripped over. Have railings put on both sides of stairs and install grab bars outside the tub and next to the toilet.

Always remain diligent when it comes to your health maintenance, prevention is KEY!

<https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures>



**Capewide Rent/Mortgage Assistance Available**  
If you or someone you know needs help with rent or mortgage assistance, please contact the Housing Assistance Corporation.

Call (508)771-5400 or email  
[hac@haconcapecod.org](mailto:hac@haconcapecod.org)

## **Mashpee Police Department's Tip of the Month**



Mashpee Police Department continues to receive reports of Mashpee citizens receiving scam calls. Scammers are pretending to represent legitimate companies and are threatening owed money, lawsuits, and/or arrest warrants on individuals..

**REMEMBER, ONLY SCAMMERS**  
**will ask you to buy gift cards for payment of a bill or money owed.**

NEVER GIVE OUT ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION OVER THE TELEPHONE and be cautious when giving out personal information on the internet.

PLEASE CONTACT THE MASHPEE POLICE DEPARTMENT with any questions regarding the legitimacy of any call.

Any questions please contact  
Special Officer and Advocate **Tara Carline** at **508-539-1480 ext. 7253**

## **Directory of Service Providers For Older Adults**

On the Council of Aging website page, is a directory of service providers for older adults. Please click the link below for more information:

[Town of Mashpee - Council on Aging](#)

## **BY APPOINTMENT**

### **SHINE**

(Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)

Every day there are 10,000 baby boomers turning 65 and are now eligible for Medicare. Those new to Medicare can make



costly mistakes resulting in higher health care costs, gaps in coverage and possibly a lifetime late enrollment penalty. SHINE can help! SHINE volunteer counselors are trained and certified by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and are re-certified each year to help Medicare beneficiaries navigate the complex health insurance system free.

**The following is a message from the Barnstable  
County Regional  
SHINE office**

Now that it is 2021, let's think about your 2021 Medicare health and prescription plans. Have you had some out of pocket expenses you did not anticipate? Were your co-payments more than you thought they should be? Are you struggling with premium expenses? Do you just need someone to explain what you have for coverage? SHINE counselors can help explain your policies so you have a better understanding of what your financial obligations are. We can also look to see if you qualify for any assistance programs to help alleviate some of the out of pocket expenses. We are here to help. Don't hesitate to give us a call if you have any questions regarding your Medicare coverage.

Please call the Mashpee Senior Center at (508) 539-1440 to schedule a SHINE appointment (by phone only). If you need immediate help or have an urgent question, please contact the Barnstable County Regional SHINE office at (508)375-6762 or (508)362-5885 TTY.

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**South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc.  
(SCCLS)**

Legal Assistance



The South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc, Elder Law attorneys will provide legal services to Mashpee older adults who are economically or socially disadvantaged. Priority areas include housing, government benefits, Medicare, Medicaid, reverse mortgage counseling and general health law concerns. Consultation by a SCCLS attorney is free.

They are conducting telephone appointments for Mashpee older adults on Tuesday, January 26th. To schedule an appointment, please call the Mashpee Senior Center (508) 539-1440.

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**Department of Veteran's Services**

Veteran's Services officers (VSO) in the Commonwealth help veterans learn



Please call 508-778-1590 (Cape & Islands Veterans Outreach Center) if you would like to sign up for the Outreach Center's Veterans Food Pantry. This food pantry is for qualified veterans and their families and is open every Thursday between 9:00AM and 1:00PM. It is currently being conducted on a drive up basis at 247 Stevens Street, Hyannis, behind the VA Community Clinic. Please call prior to your visit to ensure veteran qualification and eligibility. Emergencies can call any time. This program is for veterans and their families only. Homebound veterans and dependents can call to make other arrangements to receive food. After becoming a member of the food pantry a family is allowed 2 visits per month.

## OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION



Are you interested in learning more about the outreach services of the Mashpee Council on Aging? Lori Nelson, Outreach Coordinator, will review the outreach services and programs available to Mashpee seniors, such as the telefriend program, information and referrals, application assistance, etc. She will also discuss resources other agencies offer that can help you remain independent and safe. Please call the Mashpee Senior Center at (508) 539-1440 to register for this Zoom talk.

# FILE OF LIFE

KEEP INFORMATION UP TO DATE !!  
*Review At Least Every Six Months !*

MEDICAL DATA REVIEWED AS OF \_\_\_\_\_ MO., \_\_\_\_\_ YR. Sgt. M.F.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

File of Life details medical conditions and instructions in case of a medical emergency.

This document saves lives when every second counts in a medical emergency. The File of Life benefits first responders, emergency staff at the

hospital and you. Mashpee first responders are trained to look for these critical File of Life decals. Could you provide an accurate medical history, list of medications, existing conditions and allergies in fewer than 10 seconds for you or your loved one? For the overwhelming majority of people, the answer is no. That is where the File of Life becomes critical. File of Life is an asset not only for emergency preparedness, but also for keeping medical information organized for any visit to the doctor.

### **Next Steps to Stay Safe:**

We want every senior in Mashpee to have an up to date refrigerator magnet version of the File of Life.

- If you have a File of Life in place, Great! Please review and update it as needed.
- If you need one, call or email Lori Nelson, Outreach Coordinator at the Senior Center at 508-539-1440 or [LNelson@mashpeema.gov](mailto:LNelson@mashpeema.gov) and she will give you a File for Life at no cost.

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### **Fuel Assistance Program**

The Fuel Assistance Program is an assistance program that can help you pay for heat. If you are a Mashpee senior and are interested in applying please call Darlene Perkins Part-time Outreach Coordinator, at the Mashpee Senior Center (508) 539-1440.

Fiscal Year 2021 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Number in Household	Maximum Gross Income
1-----	\$39,105
2-----	\$51,137
3-----	\$63,169
4-----	\$75,201

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### **Police Reassurance Program**

The Mashpee Police Reassurance Program is a beneficial service offered to Mashpee older adults who live alone. The program provides support to Mashpee seniors to ensure their safety and wellbeing. The program requires the senior to call the Mashpee Police Department every day between 6:00 am and 10:00 am. The dispatcher has a list of all the members of the program and will make a note if the older adult has not called in. If an older adult has not called in by 10:00 am, Dispatch will call their residence directly. If Dispatch is unable to make contact with the older adult or there is a busy signal, an officer will be sent to the residence for a wellbeing check. If you or a family member is interested in registering for the Reassurance Program, please contact the Mashpee Council on Aging Outreach Coordinator, Lori Nelson at (508) 539-1440.

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### **Greater Boston Food Bank Brown Bag Program**

## for Seniors

The Mashpee Council on Aging in partnership with the Greater Boston Food Bank continues to offer the food assistance program called The Brown Bag. This program is offered to Mashpee seniors who may need a little extra support. Participants receive a bag of groceries on the first Friday of each month. Please be assured there is no cost to you; this is a free program. A typical grocery bag weighs about 15 pounds and contains roughly \$40

worth of carefully planned nutritious food items such as: milk, cheese, ground turkey, yogurt, spinach, carrots, dried fruit, spaghetti, peanut butter and cereal based on availability. At this time, we provide home delivery. All safety precautions must be followed by everyone.

if you are interested in participating in the Brown Bag Program and If you receive other types of financial benefits, you may be eligible for the Brown Bag Program. For example, if you receive fuel assistance or SNAP (former food stamps) benefits, you are eligible for the Brown Bag Program. Contact Outreach Coordinator Lori Nelson at (508) 539-1440 for more information and to see if you are eligible.



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## VNA Town Nurse Wellness Check

A VNA nurse is available to provide free medical wellbeing checks to Mashpee seniors who are at risk. The VNA nurse will conduct an overall assessment of the home environment and will check vital signs. Someone experiencing mild memory loss, a history of frequent trips to the hospital, no support system, and/or multiple medications/conditions would fit the criteria for a medical wellbeing check. If you would like a visit, call Outreach Coordinator Lori Nelson at the Mashpee Senior Center at (508) 539-1440. Lori will explain more to you, and if you fit the criteria, she will refer you to the nurse.

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## SNAP

Do you need help buying fresh, nutritious food? You may be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps. Did you know that the average monthly amount in SNAP benefits received by Mashpee residents is \$136. Would you like information on income, and documentation needed to apply? If interested on applying for SNAP call the Mashpee Senior Center to speak with Part time Outreach Coordinator Darlene Perkins at (508)539-1440 ext. 3506 or go on line to

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/snap-application-for-seniors-1/download>

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## Telefriend Program

The Mashpee Senior Center has volunteers who would be happy to call Mashpee older adults who want to talk or need a social connection, while trying to remain safe at home during the pandemic.

If you would be interested in a having a volunteer call you to chat, please contact Outreach Coordinator Lori Nelson at (508) 539- 1440, who will tell you more about this no cost service.

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### **Free Incontinence Product Distribution:**

The distribution of incontinence products at the Mashpee Senior Center is provided each month. This program is for low income Mashpee seniors (both men and women). During this time, appointments are now necessary for all product distribution. If you are eligible for this program, please call Outreach Coordinator Lori Nelson at (508) 539-1440.

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## **TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS**



**Mashpee Council on Aging (COA)  
Minibus Service**  
To schedule a ride,  
call the Mashpee Senior Center at (508)539-1440

The minibus operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between the hours of 9:00 am – 1:30 pm. Due to COVID-19 concerns; trips are restricted to grocery stores, pharmacies, medical/dental appointments, the post office and the bank. (Ride requests for this service must be made a minimum of 48 hours in advance).

Trips for medical/dental appointments within the towns of Sandwich and Falmouth are also offered on a limited basis during the minibus operating days and hours. (Ride requests for this service must be made at least two weeks prior to your appointment date).

Please be aware of the following guidelines and precautions that are in place so that we all can operate as safely as possible:

- Prior to your ride, the COA driver will ask you health-screening questions. If you are not feeling well or if you are running a temperature, it is your responsibility to notify the COA driver and to cancel your ride request.
- In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, only one passenger will be permitted to ride on the bus at a time.
- All passengers are required to wear their own facial covering from the time of boarding until the time of exiting the bus.

To reserve your ride, call the Mashpee Senior Center at (508) 539-1440 and leave the following information: Your name, address, telephone number, along with the date, time and destination of your request. The driver will get back to you to inform you that your ride is confirmed.



**The Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA)** has been providing public transportation services since 1976 to residents and visitors for all 15 Cape Cod communities. CCRTA services include: Year round **Fixed Route Bus Service** routes. **Dial-A-Ride Transportation (DART) Service** is a daily general public service that is door-to-door, ride-by-

appointment, transportation service. This service is available to all Cape Cod residents for any purpose. In addition, **Boston Hospital Transportation** is a transportation service to Boston area hospitals that runs Monday through Friday (no holidays), by reservation. For more information about the CCRTA please call toll free (800)352-7155; local number (508) 385-1430; or TTY(800)439-0183 or visit its website: <http://www.capecodtransit.org/>.

If you know a Mashpee senior or caregiver who would be interested in these updates and may not be receiving them currently, please ask them to email me and I will include them to the list.

Thank you,

*Phyllis Govoni, Editor*

[coaofficeassistant@mashpeema.gov](mailto:coaofficeassistant@mashpeema.gov)

### **Mashpee Council on Aging/Senior Center**

26 Frank E. Hicks \* Mashpee, MA 02649

Phone: (508) 539-1440 \* Fax (508) 539-2791

Website: [www.mashpeema.gov/council-aging](http://www.mashpeema.gov/council-aging)

e-mail: [coa@mashpeema.gov](mailto:coa@mashpeema.gov)

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DISCLAIMER: The Mashpee Senior Center offers many legal, financial, recreational, medical screening or other services and/or activities by volunteer or nominal-cost practitioners. Seniors participating in these services do so with the understanding that the Mashpee Council on Aging, the Mashpee Senior Center, the Town of Mashpee or its employees do not assume any legal responsibility for any advice or services rendered by such volunteer or nominal practitioner. Any act or advice or service by outside providers at the Council on Aging should not be presumed to be endorsed and sponsored by the Council on Aging.