

Spotlight on Aging

VOLUME XXXII, ISSUE 5

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

May 2020



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Laura Newland, Director
D.C. Department of Aging and
Community Living

Happy Older Americans Month! While we're celebrating differently than we have in past years, our appreciation for you and all of your contributions to the District hasn't changed. Here at the Department of Aging and Community Living, we celebrate you every day of the year — no matter what.

We know that during this unprecedented time, a lot has changed for all of us in our city, but our commitment to our older residents remains the same.

On April 1, Mayor Muriel Bowser issued a Stay-at-Home Order, requiring residents to remain in their homes, except to engage in essential activities, like shopping for groceries and essential household goods and going to the doctor, if telehealth can't be provided. Residents can also engage in allowable recreational activities such as walking, running and other activities set out in the Order as long as social distancing of at least six feet can be maintained at all times.

The Mayor also launched a new hotline for District residents in response to COVID-19. If you are medically required to quarantine and have no other means of acquiring essential items and food, you can call 1-888-349-8323 or visit coronavirus.dc.gov/gethelp to get them delivered to you.

In addition to making sure residents are practicing social distancing and staying home, the Mayor is reminding all of us to check-in with ourselves and to take care of our mental health. It's okay to not be okay. Call the Department of Behavioral Health mental hotline if you need someone to talk to. You can call 1-888-793-4357, 24 hours a day.

Although we can't be out in the community celebrating Older Americans Month with you, we'd still love to connect. Join us on our Call & Talk line by calling 202-724-5626. You can call us to talk about anything! My team is excited to hear about your favorite hobbies, how staying at home has been, movies you've watched, books you've read, sports you miss — anything! It gives my team a sense of normalcy when you call us because we often have similar conversations when we do our outreach. So, pick up the phone and tell us whatever you'd like us to know!

Thanks for staying home, staying safe, and keeping our communities safe. I really miss seeing you out in the community, and I can't wait for when it's safe for all of us to be at events celebrating you — together. Until then, know that we're still here for you, celebrating you, and thinking of you constantly.

Continue to practice good hygiene, good social distancing, and stay home as much as possible. And remember, join us on our Call & Talk line by calling 202-724-5626 — we can't wait to hear from you!

DACL's Call & Talk Program Keeps Seniors Connected During COVID-19



The Department of Aging and Community Living's Call & Talk Program launched in March 2020 to keep seniors connected with DACL during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program has created new friendships with DACL staff and seniors in the community.

Alice Thompson, Community Outreach Specialist Team Lead, chats daily with

Luther Bruner, 87, and Brenda Bruner, 75, from Ward 7, and even started to connect via video conference. They enjoy talking about gardening, travel, and their favorite hobbies while staying home. Mr. Bruner had a birthday in April and Alice sang Happy Birthday to him!

Call DACL at 202-724-5626 to join the Call & Talk Program.

Five Things to Do While Social Distancing

- ✓ Join DACL's Call & Talk Line (202-724-5626)
- ✓ Complete the Census (my2020census.gov, or 844-330-2020)
- ✓ Exercise (Channel 16, or <https://flattenthecurvefitnessseniors.splashthat.com/>)
- ✓ Join AroundTown DC (www.aroundtowndc.org)
- ✓ Join the DC Public Library for Virtual Story Swap (bit.ly/FridayStorySwap)



Get Tested for COVID-19

The District of Columbia is offering free, appointment-required testing for DC residents over the age of 65 with COVID-19 symptoms or history of exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 patient, and to residents with underlying conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or lung disease who also have symptoms or history of exposure to confirmed COVID-19 patients.

Symptoms may include fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, congestion, muscle pain, chills, and loss of taste or smell.

Free testing is available at United Medical Center in Ward 8 and the University of the District of Columbia—Bertie Backus Campus in Ward 5. An appointment is required and must be scheduled through the Testing Triage Call Center by calling 1-855-363-0333. The Call Center hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

People who are eligible for free tests at these sites also include:

- Healthcare facility workers with COVID-19 symptoms or history of expo-

sure to laboratory confirmed COVID-19 patient and employed within the District of Columbia

- District residents with an order for testing from their healthcare provider

- First responders with symptoms or history of exposure to laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient and employed within the District of Columbia

- Critical infrastructure workers with symptoms who are employed within the District of Columbia

- District residents who do not meet any of the above categories but have symptoms

- Healthcare facility workers and first responders who are employed within the District of Columbia

DACL joined AARP's COVID-19 Senior Telephone Town Hall

The Department of Aging and Community Living would like to thank AARP for hosting the April COVID-19 Senior Telephone Town Hall.

On behalf of Mayor Bowser, Director Newland provided updates on the District's response to COVID-19, including information on testing sites and the importance of staying home during this unprecedented time. DACL's Clinical Director, Dr. Heather

Stowe also joined the call, and discussed the importance of recognizing the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation during COVID-19.

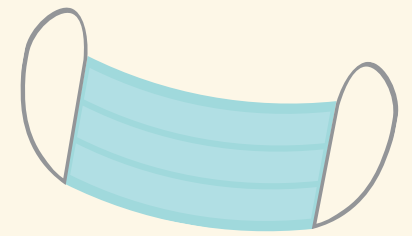
Our Adult Protective Services (APS) team continues to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If anyone has any suspicions that an elderly person or vulnerable adult may be abused, neglected or exploited, they should call the APS hotline at 202-541-3950.

Minimize Your Exposure to COVID-19 – Wear a Mask

The Mayor extended the emergencies and issued new health and safety requirements in an effort to protect vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The new order clarifies that face masks are required for:

- hotel workers, guests and visitors;
- individuals using taxis, ride shares, private transportation providers;
- workers and customers of food sellers; and
- strongly encouraged for workers and individuals using public transit.

Individuals living, working and visiting Washington, D.C. should contin-



ue to stay at home, only leaving for essential purposes. If leaving their residence, all individuals must continue to social distance from others not in their household, and should wear face coverings if visiting essential businesses, such as grocery stores and pharmacies.

Masks are not a replacement for social distancing. Non-essential businesses remain closed, and D.C. students will continue to learn at home.

Maintaining Your MENTAL HEALTH

Need someone to talk to; we're here to help! Certified clinicians are available for you 24/7. Call the Department of Behavioral Health mental health hotline: 1-888-793-4357.

Tips for Reducing Anxiety:



Reach out for help; your mental health is important.



Exercise regularly.



Limit time spent in public places.



If working from home or in self-quarantine, arrange your space so it's calming. Make sure you shower and get dressed like you're going to work.



Moderate news intake.



Practice deep breathing exercises or other methods of meditation.

CORONAVIRUS.DC.GOV



DC HEALTH
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

TESTING FOR COVID-19

Public Testing Sites

- 1 United Medical Center (UMC)**
For an appointment, call 1-855-363-0333.
- 2 GW University Medical System**
For an appointment call, 202-741-2765.
- 3 Children's National Health System**
For an appointment, visit bit.ly/childrensnationaltesting
- 4 All Care Family Medicine & Urgent Care**
For an appointment, call 202-787-1979.
- 5 Mary's Center**
For an appointment, call 1-844-796-2797.
- 6 Unity Health Care**
For an appointment, call 202-469-4699.
- 7 Whitman-Walker Health**
For an appointment, call 202-745-7000.
- 8 Medstar Health**
For an appointment, visit MedStarhealth.org/eVisit.
- 9 Sibley Memorial Hospital**
For an appointment, call 443-997-9537.
- 10 UDC-CC- Bertie Backus Campus**
For an appointment, call 1-855-363-0333.



Additional Member Specific Testing Sites

- 11 One Medical**
Location: 1690 36th Street, NW
For an appointment, call 202-695-7576.
- 12 Kaiser Permanente**
Location: 700 2nd Street, NE
For an appointment, call 202-346-3000.

CORONAVIRUS.DC.GOV



DC HEALTH
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Spotlight on Aging

Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living for D.C. senior residents. Advertising contained in the Beacon is not endorsed by the D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living or by the publisher.

500 K St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 724-5626 | www.dcoa.dc.gov

Director
Laura Newland
Editor
Darlene Nowlin
Photographer
Richard Williams