



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES



Virginia Aging Network

Kathryn Hayfield, Commissioner

WEEKLY E-MAILING

November 27, 2018

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ACL News & Information

Here is a link to news & information from the Administration for Community Living (ACL):

<https://acl.gov/>

NASUAD Information

Here is a link to news and press releases from NASUAD:

<http://www.nasuad.org/newsroom/nasuad-news>



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Area Agency on Aging Board Minutes

Maurice Talley, Finance and Grants Management Administrator

Greetings:

I am writing this message, due to a few agencies that have sent their board minutes to me. Please ensure all board minutes are be addressed to Jacqueline Freeze - External Aging Services Auditor, Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services, 1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100, Henrico VA 23229.

Thank you!

Maurice Talley



Virginia Lifespan Respite Voucher Program

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs

Are you caring for a relative in your household who has a disability or chronic condition? Learn how to apply for up to \$400 in reimbursement for respite services.

The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services is offering up to \$400 in reimbursement per family for respite services to assist Virginians with disabilities or chronic conditions and the family members who provide their care. Priority will be given to assisting caregivers for loved ones with dementia, as well as, helping grandparents or relative caregivers providing care to a child under age 18 or an individual between the ages of 19 to 59 with a severe disability.

Respite care is care provided to someone with special needs as temporary relief to a family caregiver. Respite care can be for different periods of time, from a few hours to days or weeks.

To apply for the Virginia Lifespan Respite Voucher Program:

- You must be a Virginia caregiver of a child, or an adult, who resides full-time in your household.
- The primary caregiver for the person receiving care must apply for the funds. You may receive up to one \$400.00 benefit.
- You may not use voucher funds to reimburse household expenses or daycare; for example, so that the caregiver can go to work.
- Not everyone who applies will be approved, and those who have benefitted from the program in the past will be ineligible for the current
- program.



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To learn how to apply, visit www.vda.virginia.gov, call toll free at (800) 552-3402 or send an email to nick.slentz@dars.virginia.gov for information on the Virginia





Warning from the Federal Trade Commission: Hang Up on Spoofed SSA Calls

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs

October 29, 2018

by

Lisa Weintraub Schifferle

Attorney, FTC, Division of Consumer & Business Education

If you get a call that looks like it's from the Social Security Administration (SSA), think twice. Scammers are spoofing SSA's 1-800 customer service number to try to get your personal information. Spoofing means that scammers can call from anywhere, but they make your caller ID show a different number – often one that looks legit. Here are few things you should know about these so-called SSA calls.

These scam calls are happening across the nation, [according to SSA](#): Your phone rings. Your caller ID shows that it's the SSA calling from 1-800-772-1213. The caller says he works for the Social Security Administration and needs your personal information – like your Social Security number – to increase your benefits payments. (Or he threatens to cut off your benefits if you don't give the information.) But it's not really the Social Security Administration calling. Yes, it **is** the SSA's real phone number, but the scammers on the phone are spoofing the number to make the call look real.

What can you do if you get one of these calls? Hang up. Remember:

- **SSA will not threaten you.** Real SSA employees will never threaten you to get personal information. They also won't promise to increase your benefits in exchange for information. If they do, it's a scam.
- **If you have any doubt, hang up and call SSA directly.** Call 1-800-772-1213 – that really is the phone number for the Social Security Administration. If you dial that number, you know who you're getting. But remember that you can't trust caller ID. If a call comes in from that number, you can't be sure it's really SSA calling.
- **If you get a spoofed call, report it.** If someone calls, claiming to be from SSA and asking for information like your Social Security number, report it to SSA's Office of Inspector General at 1-800-269-0271 or <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>. You can also report these calls to the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint.



For more tips, check out the FTC's [How to Stop Unwanted Calls](#) and [Government Imposter Scams](#). If you think someone has misused your personal information, go to [IdentityTheft.gov](#) to report identity theft and find out what steps to take.

Individual and Community Preparedness from FEMA

Chip Stratton, DARS/WWRC Emergency Coordinator

Individual and Community Preparedness eBrief

November 29, 2018

In this issue:

- Winterize Your Home
- Prepare for a Power Outage
- Recognizing Frostbite
- Important Dates to Remember

Winterize Your Home

Winter weather can bring extreme cold, ice, snow, or high winds. If bad weather hits, is your home ready? Take time before winter weather arrives to winterize your home:

- Make sure your walls and attic have enough insulation. This preparation will help keep you warm in extreme cold. As a bonus, you can reduce energy waste and save on your electricity bills!



- Caulk and weather-strip your doors and windows.
- Keep indoor space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- Never heat your home with a stove.

Learn more about winter weather safety [here](#).

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Prepare for a Power Outage

Severe winter weather may cause power outages. Are you ready if the lights go out? Prepare now to make sure you stay safe if you lose power.

- Make a list of anything you need that uses electricity; plan for batteries and other alternatives to meet your needs when the power goes out.
- Plan if you have medication that needs to be refrigerated. Talk to your doctor about what to do with medicine if you lose power.
- Make sure to have a flashlight and extra batteries at home.
- Have enough non-perishable food and water for your family.
- Keep mobile phones charged and gas tanks full.



For more information to prepare now, survive during, and be safe after a power outage, go to:

<https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>.

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Recognizing Frostbite

Winter is almost here! If your area experiences extreme cold, you could be at risk for developing frostbite when you spend time outdoors. It's important you know the signs if you or something you know develops frostbite:

- Redness or pain in any skin area may be the first sign of frostbite.
- Other signs of frostbite include numbness, white or gray skin, and firm or waxy skin.
- The body parts most affected by frostbite are your nose, ears, toes, cheeks, chin, and fingers.
- If you or someone you know has frostbite, go to a warm room. Soak in warm water or use body heat to warm. Don't massage or put a heating pad on frostbitten skin.
- To learn more about recognizing and responding to frostbite, click [here](#).



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Important Dates to Remember



- November – [Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month](#)

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Disclaimer: The reader recognizes that the federal government provides links and informational data on various disaster preparedness resources and events and does not endorse any non-federal events, entities, organizations, services, or products. Please let us know about other events and services for individual and community preparedness that could be included in future newsletters by contacting FEMA-prepare@fema.dhs.gov.

Contact Us

EMAIL: FEMA-prepare@fema.dhs.gov | TWITTER: [@Citizen_Corps](https://twitter.com/Citizen_Corps)



News & Events

November 27, 2018



ACL Principal Deputy Administrator Mary Lazare addresses a Medicare 101 workshop

SHIPs Help Americans Make the Most of their Medicare Options

During the last two decades, Medicare reforms including Medicare Advantage and drug coverage have offered millions of older adults and people with disabilities more choices and greater control over their health coverage. By understanding and comparing their options, Medicare beneficiaries can save money and better match their coverage to their unique circumstances and health care needs.

Yesterday, ACL Principal Deputy Administrator Mary Lazare and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Principal Deputy Administrator Demetrios Kouzoukas got an up-close view of a program helping beneficiaries make the most of their Medicare options. The Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) invited ACL and CMS to a community center in Reston, Virginia, to meet with program participants, sit-in on a Medicare counseling session, and speak to a packed Medicare 101 workshop.

VICAP is part of a network of State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) offering information, counseling, and enrollment assistance to Medicare beneficiaries. ACL funds SHIPs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Many of the participants Lazare and Kouzoukas spoke with said that before VICAP, they did not know what their Medicare options were or even where to begin finding out. They described feeling confused, overwhelmed, and stressed. They said that much of the information they did hear about Medicare came in the form of advertisements by companies trying to sell a particular product. Their feelings were summed up by Dick Titus who described Medicare as "a Rubik's cube." Each shift, be it a new policy change, diagnosis, or medication has the potential to create a new set of problems somewhere else.

"Where do you go for help?" Jorjanne Gausman, the mother of an adult son with spina bifida, asked. "You can't call the insurance company, you just



have to find some neutral place that will give you the information you need to make the right decision."

Mary Dueno agreed. She had heard about VICAP during a yoga class at her local library. At the time, she was very concerned about the costs of her medications.

"We brought in our list of medications and they put the whole list in for you and you could actually see... what plans are available and what is the least expensive," she said, describing the process. "And they help you work out, based on your income, which would be best for you."

During the last five years, the program has helped her save more than \$90,000 on prescription drugs. Many others in her yoga class also have benefitted from the program.

"We'll all tell you, without VICAP, we would not be able to get our medications, we just don't understand how to work (the process)," she said. "I don't know what we would do without VICAP."

Together, SHIP staff and volunteers have empowered millions of older adults and people with disabilities to make more informed decisions about their healthcare and realize the promise of increased competition and choice in Medicare.

"Some people have told us... why not make (Medicare) simpler by reducing the number of options," Kouzoukas, who also serves as Director of the Center for Medicare, told a Medicare 101 workshop. "We don't have to make that difficult choice when we have things like the SHIP program, because we have counselors here available to you to explain some of the complexity, who understand the ins and out, and are here to provide resources to people in the community."

In 2017, an army of dedicated volunteers and staff in the SHIPs across the country provided 142 million hours of one-to-one assistance to almost 2.8 million Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers. SHIPs also hosted 95,000 outreach events including interactive presentations, participation in community and health fairs, and more than 14,000 enrollment events. In addition to enrollment support, SHIPs can help those eligible for Medicare navigate Medicare benefits, coverage rules, written



notices and forms, appeal rights and procedures, programs to help people with limited incomes pay for their health care, Medigap plans, long-term care insurance, and more.

According to VICAP Program Coordinator Mari de Leon, VICAP's Medicare counseling services save about 200 beneficiaries \$1.6 million a year in Fairfax County alone. These results are accomplished by the equivalent of 1.5 full time staff members.

Fall is a particularly busy time for SHIPs because of [Medicare Open Enrollment](#), offering a brief window when Medicare beneficiaries can select or change their Medicare Advantage and prescription drug plan.

"The most important thing is to shop every year," Kouzoukas told the workshop, noting that he gives the same advice to his own family.

During the roundtable, participants agreed saying they come back to VICAP every year to make sure they are still in the best plan. One couple learned this lesson the hard way. In 2016, VICAP helped them enroll in a prescription drug plan that saved them \$2,100. Assuming that the plan was still their best bet, they stuck with the same plan in 2017, only to discover too late that changes in the plan's drug formulary would cost them an extra \$7,000. This year, they made sure to return to VICAP and enrolled in a new plan that will bring their costs back down.

Both beneficiaries and staff were clear about what they saw as VICAP's secret to success, it was all about the personal touch. "Everyone here is in it because they have the heart for it, the heart to help the beneficiaries." VICAP Program Director Pam Smith told Lazare after the event.

De Leon, who was the lead VICAP counselor for Fairfax County, was singled out for praise. "We're not just numbers to her, we're people and that makes a big difference... It just gives you such comfort knowing there's someone that's there," Dueno said. It came down to the difference between "actual people I can look at and know their names" and an automated phone recording, she added before narrating the phone experience, "Press 1. OK. Then press 2. Then check this for that..."..



As the event was concluding, Gausman said she wanted to take a moment to thank De Leon one more time for all she had done to connect her family to programs and resources.

"I actually feel like I can die in peace because I know that my son is being taken care of now, and that was not going to happen until you reached out to us," she said with emotion in her voice. "It's huge what you've done for just one human being in Fairfax County and I will be grateful to you all the days of my life."

The deadline for this year's Medicare open enrollment is December 7, [find the SHIP in your state](#).

VICAP participants share their experiences. Left to Right: Dick Titus, Janet Titus, ACL Principal Deputy Administrator Mary Lazare, CMS Principal Deputy Administrator Demetrios Kouzoukas, Geraldine Dunne, James Dunne, Jorjanne Gausman.





November 29, 2018

New ACL Funding Opportunities for CDSME and Falls Prevention

The Administration for Community Living's Administration on Aging announces two new funding opportunities in the areas of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) and Falls Prevention. Both opportunities are designed to develop capacity for, bring to scale, and sustain evidence-based self-management or falls prevention programs for older adults and adults/older adults with disabilities.

The grants under each opportunity are being competed using two options: Capacity-Building and Sustainable Systems. Applicants may only apply under one funding option (Capacity-Building or Sustainable Systems).

These grant opportunities close on January 29, 2019.

For more information on the CDSME opportunity, visit:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=309656>

For more information on the Falls Prevention opportunity, visit:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=309713>





December 7, 2018

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads our nation's observance of Older Americans Month. We are pleased to announce the 2019 theme, *Connect, Create, Contribute*, which encourages older adults and their communities to:

- Connect with friends, family, and services that support participation.
- Create by engaging in activities that promote learning, health, and personal enrichment.
- Contribute time, talent, and life experience to benefit others.

Communities that encourage the contributions of older adults are stronger! By engaging and supporting all community members, we recognize that older adults play a key role in the vitality of our neighborhoods, networks, and lives.

Older Americans Month 2019 will include suggestions, resources, and material to celebrate older Americans and the communities of which they are a vital part. Visit oam.acl.gov in early 2019 for ways to get started, and starting now, promote the observance on social media using #OAM19 and #ConnectCreateContribute.

Everyone benefits when everyone can participate. We encourage you to connect, create, and contribute for stronger and more diverse communities this May, and throughout the year.

Link to DARS Independent Living Monthly Newsletter

Rhonda Jeter, MS, CRC, Director of Independent Living

Past issues of IL News Notes are available on the DARS Intranet:

<https://intranet/docrepo/DARSCILDocViewer.html>