Senior Update:

...The Eyes and Ears of Alameda County Seniors

California – Vote by Mail Election
Ramil Rivera, Area Agency on Aging, Program/Financial Specialist

On May 8, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-64-20, which, among other things, orders **November 3, 2020, General Election** to be conducted as an all-mail ballot election. Accordingly, all registered voters in California will receive a vote-by-mail ballot in the mail before the election. In-person locations will still be available on Election Day. The State Legislature or the Governor by Executive Order will determine the number of in-person voting locations.

For November 3, 2020 Election information, including for in-person polling place locations, call **510-267-8663** or visit:  
https://www.acvote.org/election-information/elections?id=241#

Tips to Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19
Ramil Rivera, Area Agency on Aging, Program/Financial Specialist

- **Wash your hands often:** If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid close contact:** Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don’t live in your household.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes**
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces**
- **Monitor Your Health Daily:** Be alert for symptoms.

Visit the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency – Public Health Department for more information on COVID-19 at:  
https://covid-19.acgov.org/index.page
There’s Still Time for the 2020 Census!

It’s not too late to complete the 2020 Census.

A federal judge ordered the Census 2020 to continue through October 31. This is a victory for a more inclusive and accurate Census for the historically undercounted communities that we have collectively been working so hard to reach!

What does this mean for our efforts?

1. Folks can continue to self-respond to Census 2020! Continue to share this with anyone who hasn’t responded.
2. The Complete Count Committee team will continue Mobile Questionnaire Assistance.

Current Alameda County response rate?: 75.5% county wide. This is 5% higher than the 2010 Census.

The US Census Bureau reported that 99% of Californians have been enumerated. What does “total enumerated” mean?

- The percent of housing units “counted” tells us very little about the quality and accuracy of the count.
- The “total enumerated” figure includes information collected via proxies. For example, when a person doesn’t respond to an enumerator, their neighbor could provide a portion of a Census response to that enumerator on their behalf. Then the Census Bureau would consider that person “enumerated”.
- This figure is less reliable than self-response.
- If people received a blue “Notice of Visit” by a Census Bureau enumerator or believe they’ve been counted by a proxy, they should self-respond online (my2020census.gov) or by calling 1-844-330-2020 so they are counted accurately.

Language Support:

- Chinese (Mandarin) 1-844-391-2020
- Chinese (Cantonese) 1-844-398-2020
- Vietnamese 1-844-461-2020
- Russian 1-844-417-2020
- Arabic 1-844-416-2020
- Spanish 1-844-468-2020
- Tagalog 1-844-478-2020
- Polish 1-844-479-2020
- French 1-844-494-2020
- Haitian 1-844-477-2020
- Portuguese 1-844-474-2020
- Japanese 1-844-460-2020
Don’t Let 2020 Put a Bah Humbug in Your Holidays
Regina Silbert, Advisory Commission on Aging (ACA) Commissioner

It’s hard to believe, but the holiday season is fast approaching. Of course, it has been quite a year for all of us, young and old, rich or poor, Christian or non-Christian…the year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Maybe things will have gotten better by the time you read this, or maybe we will still be social distancing, wearing masks, only shopping during senior hours, visiting our health care professionals via computer, and living in loungewear while we wait for a vaccine.

For older adults, particularly those with underlying medical conditions, this has been a particularly stressful year. We haven’t been able to go to our senior centers, attend exercise classes, hug our grandchildren, sing in our houses of worship or have large family get-togethers. Anxiety and depression have descended upon many members of our senior community. And, now, when we add to this a holiday season which will likely be different than most others we have experienced, it’s easy to see where expectations may be difficult to manage for many people.

Everyone has a vision of the perfect holiday, but when reality fails to live up to the dream we need to learn to temper our expectations and work with what we have. Set realistic expectations… if we’re still in the midst of the pandemic, there probably won’t be any large family gatherings if older adults are involved. For those seniors who are tech savvy, virtual celebrations may be the way to go. It may be feasible to have a small family dinner with social distancing, but keep in mind that masks have to come off in order to eat that beautiful meal. Weather permitting, it may be possible to have a scaled down holiday dinner outside with social distancing. Just beware of the urge to hug and kiss!

Just remember… on the whole, the holiday season is short. It helps to maintain a broader context and a longer-term perspective. Remember the good things you have in your life and recognize that this, too, shall pass. Remind yourself that family, friends and relationships are what matter most. Reflect on aspects of your life that give you joy, whether that’s going for a walk, listening to music, watching your favorite movies, reading a good book, baking cookies… whatever.

Yes, this holiday season may look quite different from any other we have experienced. That isn’t necessarily a bad thing… just be prepared to adjust your attitude and your expectations.
Eating Well While Eating Alone
Mary Louise Zernicke, Area Agency on Aging, Senior Nutritionist

Most older adults are limiting their exposure to people outside their household during COVID. This can result in feelings of social isolation and depression. This, in turn, can lead to eating poorly and a downward cycle of deteriorating health.

Eating alone is not uncommon for older adults. Statistically, most seniors eat a small breakfast and most people eat lunch alone. But dinner is typically a group meal. If you are limiting your social interactions, you might be missing company at mealtime. But you can make this situation more appealing!

Shopping can be a struggle and COVID makes it harder. If you have internet access, you can use Amazon, Safeway, Insta-cart or another vendor and get your food delivered. But delivery is usually more expensive than in-store shopping. Most grocery stores offer curb-side pick-up and senior hours. Make sure to keep a grocery list, plan meals in advance, and limit trips to the store or need for food delivery. Pantry items to keep on hand include low sodium soups, eggs, bananas, applesauce, cereal, whole grain bread (stored in the freezer), rice, cheese, yogurt, canned tuna, and juices. Lemon, garlic, onions, olive oil, and your favorite spices and herbs will make meals delicious.

Make meal preparation and cooking simple to limit your clean-up. Make food in batches, and freeze extras in single serving portions or look for recipes that are single servings. Use frozen items within a month of preparation. Add appeal to meals with herbs and spices—not salt. If you use smaller pots, you keep clean-up simpler and don’t have to lift heavy pots. Respect the sandwich—a lovely sandwich can provide both lunch and dinner. Breakfast for dinner—why not? Can you make smoothies with your vegetables? Frozen fish filets can easily provide a quality protein source. Why not make your own pizza using an English muffin?

Before you eat, a short walk can increase appetite and help you feel more connected with the world. When you sit down to eat, make it festive. Can you find a flower from the garden? Use your nice dishes! Play music or watch television while eating (although the news might give you indigestion!). Treat yourself occasionally to wine or beer, or have a sweet dessert. Can you Facetime with friends or family during dinner? And remember, if you cannot cook or shop during COVID, please contact
Eating Well While Eating Alone (Continued)

Your local Meals on Wheels program call our info line, at 800-510-2020 and they will find the program closest to you. They may suggest additional food resources as well, so you can remain in good nutritional health!

Access Social Security From Just About Anywhere
Sarah Kim-Lee, Social Security Regional Public Affairs Specialist & ACA Commissioner

You can access our programs and services from just about anywhere with your personal and secure my Social Security account. It’s easy to sign up for one, and it will give you access to important information you can’t find anywhere else. With your personal my Social Security account, you can:

- Use our Retirement Calculator to compare future benefit estimates for different dates or ages to begin receiving benefits.
- Check the status of your application or appeal for benefits.
- Review your work history.
- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most States).

If you already receive benefits, you can also:

- Get a benefit verification or proof of income letter.
- Set up or change your direct deposit.
- Change your address.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Get a Social Security 1099 form (SSA-1099).

You can even use your personal my Social Security account to opt out of receiving certain notices by mail, such as the annual cost-of-living adjustments and the income-related monthly adjustment amount notice. These notices are now available in your Message Center when you sign in to your account.

Please let your friends and family know that they can create their own my Social Security account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.
**California Fires and Local Air Quality**

What is your area’s Air Quality? When poor air quality impacts your area and becomes “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups,” older adults can be directly affected. The most common health message is to “remain indoors and keep activity levels low.”

**Airnow.gov** is a great resource to reference the current air quality in your area and to sign up for alerts.

Enter the zip code for your area and respond in accordance with the Air Quality (AQI) guidelines for your area. Stay safe and well!

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**Health, Wealth and Legacy Planning**

Ashok Desai, former ACA Commissioner

Former Alameda County Advisory Commission on Aging member, Ashok Desai is a veteran of the tech industry and a longtime Fremont resident with extensive experience in engineering management. Since retiring in 2011, Mr. Desai has volunteered his time to help seniors and financially disadvantaged in our community.

He is active within the community, including leadership roles with the Fremont Senior Citizen Commission, AARP Tax Aide, AARP District Liaison for Legislative matters at State and Federal level, HICAP (Medicare Counseling) and board member of Life Elder Care.

Based on his extensive volunteer experience, he has prepared a document containing information about retirement, healthcare and legacy planning. It is intended for those over 50 and provides a roadmap/guide to issues facing seniors as they approach retirement and senior years. A PDF copy can be accessed on Google drive at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w_08dIg-Vw8ty0xf7NHRjh1EGMULQFNO/view?usp=sharing

2-1-1 is a free, non-emergency, confidential, 3-digit phone number and service that provides easy access to housing information, and critical health and human services.

2-1-1 operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with multilingual capabilities. Alameda County 211 is committed to being the first, most essential resource to anyone who needs help.

**Phone: 211**

**Online: www.211.org**
Be A Fall Prevention Detective
Carol Powers, Emergency Medical Services, Program Specialist

We do not hear much about the falls that never happen. These are the falls that could have landed us on the ground but instead, we rally our forces and keep our feet underneath us. They are the near falls where after the stumble, we marvel at our agility and good fortune. We recount the details to others in disbelief and gratefully celebrate our precious mobility.

If near falls are happening to you often, it is a good idea to see your healthcare provider about it. Rule out a health issue as the root cause. Also, ask yourself, is my footwear providing enough stability? Are the near falls happening in areas with low light? Can I see well? Have I had an eye exam lately? Am I often distracted or in a hurry when I walk? Do I feel dizzy or off balance at times? If so, have any medications reviewed by your healthcare provider. Is there clutter in my way or tripping hazards where I go?

Be your own fall prevention detective. By figuring out the reasons for a fall or near falls, you can make changes to remove hazards and reduce your risk of future falls. To stay on your feet when something throws you off balance is a good sign. It shows that you have the flexibility and strength to keep your balance. Seek out ways to bring exercise into your daily life to move with confidence.

Now that many of us are staying inside due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever to keep ourselves physically strong and flexible. “Motion is the lotion,” as they say. Moving around is not only good for our bodies but it helps to keep our spirits up during these challenging times.

For support in your fall prevention detective work, look to the Alameda County Senior Injury Prevention Partnership (SIPP). It is “a network of public and private service agencies determined to reduce the number of preventable injuries to older adults in Alameda County and raise awareness of the need for older adult injury prevention programs.”

SIPP produces the Fall Prevention Resource Guide for Older Adults which can be found on the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging website under Senior Resource Guides. For more information, contact Carol Powers, Senior Injury Prevention Program Coordinator, Alameda County Emergency Medical Services at carol.powers@acgov.org or 510-618-2050. You too, can be your own fall prevention detective.
The Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, along with The Center for Independent Living and Community Resources for Independent Living’s, ADRC program will provide easy, uniform, and streamlined access to a broad array of services, support, and advocacy for individuals seeking long-term supports and services (LTSS) and information about LTSS.

COVID-19 Nutrition Resources:

ALAMEDA MEALS ON WHEELS
City: Alameda
Contact: 510.865.6131
Serves: All Ages

LIFE ELDERCARE
Cities: Fremont, Newark, & Union City
Contact: 510.894.0370
Serves: 60+

MERCY BROWN BAG
Cities: County Wide
Contact: 510.534.8540
Serves: 60+

SOS MEALS ON WHEELS
Cities: Oakland, Piedmont, Hayward, Castro Valley, San Lorenzo, Cherryland, Ashland, & San Leandro
Contact: 510.582.1263
Serving: 60+

SPECTRUM COMMUNITY SERVICE
Cities: Dublin, Pleasanton, & Sunol
Contact: 925.931.5385
Cities: Livermore
Contact: 925.421.4657
Serves: 60+

TRI-CITY MEALS ON WHEELS
City: Berkeley
Contact: 510.981.5250
City: Albany
Contact: 510.524.9124
City: Emeryville
Contact: 510.596.4309

Upcoming Meetings:

Advisory Commission on Aging
♦ November 9, 2020
♦ December 14, 2020

Information & Assistance Roundtable
♦ November 20, 2020

NEW! Look out for emails from the Senior Update on local senior resources, program announcements and events, email SeniorInfo@acgov.org or call 1-800-510-2020 to sign up!
Senior Resources
長者服務资源 Recursos para Adultos Mayores
Mga Mapagkukunan para sa Matanda موارد كبار
Nhạm Trợ üç Nguời Cao Niên

FREE HELP & CONNECTION PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS
Sheltering in place is critical to our safety at this time, but it can be overwhelming, and bring isolation and loneliness. Friendly conversation, social connections, entertainment and crisis support are all just a telephone call away. While we are staying safe--washing hands, not touching our face, keeping 6 feet away from others when we are outside our home--remember being connected is good for our health too!

COVIA
Activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online. Social Call program offers friendly callers. 877-797-7299

MON AMI
National volunteer phone bank matches seniors with younger volunteers for friendly conversations to build a kinder, more cohesive community. 650-267-2474

24-HOUR FRIENDSHIP LINE
24-hour warm-line/friendly conversation, ongoing outreach calls, crisis support and referrals for people aged 60 years and older and adults living with disabilities. 888-670-1360

CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES
24-hour crisis line offers support to people of all ages and backgrounds during times of crisis and to those feeling hopelessness. 800-209-2131

ARE YOU IN NEED OF OTHER SUPPORT?
The community is full of resources to help. Food deliveries, transportation, caregiver services, legal assistance and more. All you need to do is call one of the following:

ALAMEDA COUNTY INFORMATION & REFERRAL MULTI-LINGUAL HOTLINE
Dial 211

AREA AGENCY ON AGING INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE LINE
510-577-3530 or 800-510-2020

FREMONT SENIOR HELP LINE
For Fremont, Newark, Union City & Hayward 510-574-2041
SUPPORT IS ONLY A PHONE CALL AWAY IN YOUR LANGUAGE

中文 (CHINESE)
如果您正在照顾年长的亲人，社区拥有足够的资源来支持您。欲与家庭照护者联盟/湾区联系，请致电1-415-434-3388或1-800-445-8106。欲与阿滋海默症协会联系，请拨打24小时咨询专线1-800-272-3900。欲联系当地长者资讯与协助专线，请致电1-510-577-3530或1-888-510-2020

TIẾNG VIỆT (VIETNAMESE)
Việc trú ẩn tại chỗ hiện rất quan trọng để bảo vệ an toàn, tuy nhiên chúng ta không nhất thiết phải đơn độc. Để trở chuyển thanh minh và giao lưu kết nối, gọi Mon Ami (1-650-267-2474). Nếu quý vị cần trợ giúp giải quyết khủng hoảng, gọi ban Dịch Vụ Trợ Giúp Khách Phục Khủng Hoàng (1-800-309-2131).

ESPAÑOL (SPANISH)

TAGALOG (TAGALOG)

فارسی (FARSI)
مانند در خانه در این دوره از زمان برای حفظ ایمنی بسیار حائز اهمیت است. اما لازم نیست تنها بمانیم. برای بهره مندی از مکالمات دوستانه و ارتباط و معاشرت اجتماعی، با شماره (1-650-267-2474) تماس بگیرید. برای دریافت کمک و پشتیبانی در شرایط بحرانی، با خدمات پشتیبانی شرایط بحرانی (Crisis Support Services) به شماره (1-800-309-2131) تماس بگیرید.
Caregiver Resources

FREE HELP & CONNECTION PROGRAMS FOR CAREGIVERS OF SENIORS
For those of us who are caring for a loved one who is older, it can be challenging and sometimes overwhelming. While keeping our loved ones safe is a priority, it’s important to take care of ourselves too.

ALZHEIMER’S ASSOCIATION
Offers confidential, professional support, information and referrals to people living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia for caregivers, families and the public. Open 24/7/365 1-800-272-3900 www.alz.org

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF LIFE/CARE PARTNERS
Provides free cultural support to connect to resources and life care planning. 510-577-3517

FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE BAY AREA
This Caregiver Resource Center offers free and low-cost services to help you provide the best possible care to your loved one, while also focusing on your own health and well-being. 415-434-3388 or 800-445-8106 www.caregiver.org/

ACTIVITIES AND CONNECTION FOR OLDER ADULTS
Friendly conversation, social connections, and entertainment are just a phone call away.

24-HOUR FRIENDSHIP LINE
24-hour warm-line/friendly conversation, ongoing outreach calls, crisis support & referrals for people aged 60 years plus & adults living with disabilities. 888-670-1360

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TAGALOG (TAGALOG)

فارسية (FARSI)

TIẾNG VIỆT (VIETNAMESE)

ភាសាខ្មែរ (CAMBODIAN)
បុគ្គលិកព័ត៌មានពិគ្រៈសិនការជូនអតិថិជនរឹងមិញ្គ�ម្មវិធីអនុវត្តន៍ ប្រការិកក្នុងប្រទេសប្រកួត រ៉ុមអាកាសសារ ព្រៃរីននិងព្រៃរីន។ ព្រៃរីននិងព្រៃរីនរីនព្រៃរីន Family Caregiver Alliance/Bay Area បាន 1-415-434-3388 ឬ 1-800-445-8106 ព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីនប្រការិក ក្នុងប្រទេសប្រកួត បាន 1-800-272-3900 ព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីនព្រៃរីន ១-៨៨៨៧ ៣៥៣០ ឬ ១-៨៨៨៧ ៣៥៣០ បាន 1-888-510-2020។

ESPAÑOL (SPANISH)
Si cuida a un ser querido que es mayor, la comunidad está llena de recursos para apoyarlo. Llame a Family Caregiver Alliance/Bay Area al 1-415-434-3388 o al 1-800-445-8106. Llame a la línea de ayuda 24/7 de la Asociación de Alzheimer al 1-800-272-3900. Llame a la Línea de Información y Asistencia de la Agencia del Área al Envejecimiento al 510-577-3530 o al 1-888-510-2020.