

COVID-19: Franklin County Office on Aging Plan to Protect Older Adults During this Pandemic (UPDATED)

The coronavirus can affect anyone, but it appears people 60 and older are at a higher risk for becoming seriously ill. To help protect this vulnerable population, the Franklin County Office on Aging will continue to provide essential Senior Options services that are critical to maintaining independence for as long as possible.

Effective immediately, Franklin County government offices are closed to the public. Any current Senior Options client or caregiver with service concerns is urged to contact their case manager, at 614-525-6200, Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. During this time, we ask for the public's patience, as phone wait times may increase.

All Adult Protective Services inquiries and reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation should be reported to Adult Protective Services by calling 614-525-4348.

Professionals may submit Online Referrals for Senior Options or Adult Protective Services Online 24-7. Please visit www.officeonaging.org, and select Menu/Online Referrals/ and then either Senior Options or Adult Protective Services referral link. Visit our website www.officeonaging.org for updates.

The following measures are in place to assure continuity of client services:

- Case managers have messaging for discussing COVID-19 with clients and assessing client's emotional wellness and needs (food, medication, transportation, etc.).
- Clients are triaged and assessed for risk and/or service needs.
- We are contacting all Adult Day Center client caregivers to see if caregivers have a plan in place.
- Case Managers will add any additional services identified by client (i.e., home delivered meals so they don't have to go to grocery store, or transportation as needed).
- An information mailing about COVID-19 is being mailed to clients.
- Providers have been given permission to conduct supervisory visits by phone.
- We are waiving client signatures on service tickets to reduce the spread of germs.
- We are conducting weekly teleconferences with our service providers and community partners.
- We are preparing case managers to be able to work from remote locations so that services for our clients are not interrupted.

- We have developed plans to ensure home-delivered meals are received by clients during the crisis.
- Providers and agency staff have been provided “Home Visiting Screening” instructions published by Franklin County Public Health.

AVAILABLE SERVICES

Preserving the independence and safety of older adults is very important to us. To preserve independence, Senior Options enrollment requirements will be temporarily modified to allow Franklin County residents 60 and over who are at risk due to this pandemic to have access to frozen home delivered meals, medical transportation, assistance with bathing and grooming, respite care and emergency response systems on a short-term basis. To request these services, call Senior Options at 614-525-6200, Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

SAFETY

To ensure safety, we encourage older adults and their caregivers to take these precautions recommended by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#):

- Cancel non-essential doctor’s appointments and social visits
- Schedule telehealth sessions for appointments you can’t miss
- Designate an emergency contact
- [Wash your hands frequently](#)(scrub for 20 seconds with soap and water)
- Use hand sanitizer when soap isn’t available
- Make sure you have enough groceries and household products to last you a “prolonged period of time” at home
- Prescription medication may be difficult to get ahead of time, so consider mail ordering
- Avoid nonessential plane travel
- Don’t go on a [cruise](#)— cruise ship passengers are at a higher risk of infection
- Stay at home as much as possible if you live in an area where there’s an outbreak
- In public, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated buildings
- Don't cut off contact with family or friends. Keep in touch to update them on your condition and curb boredom.
- Keep several feet of distance from people
- Wash your hands with soap after going in public
- If you need to isolate, keep in touch with family and friends
- Most long-term care facilities have [pandemic plans](#)
- Call facility staff for information on their plan
- If you’re sick, do not visit a nursing home
- If you’re visiting a nursing home in an outbreak area, get screened before entering
- Figure out an alternative mode of communication if a nursing home bans visitors

IF YOU THINK YOUR'RE SICK

- [Call your doctor](#) before going in for a test
- Don't use public transportation and stay at home as much as possible
- COVID-19 questions should be directed to the [Ohio Department of Health's](#) Call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634), 7 days a week, 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.