

Senior & Disability Service Providers COVID -19 updates and Program Status

Updated Thursday, April 2

Area Agency on Aging

Reduced office hours for all of our staff, but we're staying connected with state, federal, and local leaders; making sure funds will continue to flow and sharing any updates that will augment the operations of our local partners.

Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL)

CCCIL went completely virtual on Wednesday when the order came to shelter in place. All calls are being forwarded to staff cell phones. We will continue to provide essential services via email, phone and mail.

Companion for Life

Staff is mainly working from home, but is available for service calls for current subscribers on a limited basis. Matter of Balance classes have been postponed.

County of Santa Cruz Adult Services

- Program Updates
 - **IHSS** is mandated by the State and Federal governments to conduct home visits for both initial assessments and reassessments. The State has requested that the Federal government allow home visits to be supplanted by phone contact during the pandemic. We are having social workers suspend in-person home visits until advised otherwise by the State. When an assessment is due, we have advised social workers to make contact with IHSS clients by phone to complete as much of an assessment as possible. The Governor issued an executive order that allows IHSS social workers to extend reassessment dates by 6 months (from 12 to 18 months).
 - **APS** is mandated by the State to respond to referrals with face to face contact either immediately or within 10 days (depending on circumstances). However, the State has modified this requirement during the pandemic. They have eliminated the need for face to face contact in most circumstances. That contact may be done by phone.

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Face to face contact is still required when there is an immediate danger to the client. APS supervisors are triaging requests and eliminating face to face contact as much as safely possible.

- **Veterans Services (VSO)** is not required to have face to face contact with clients. They are conducting interviews by phone and restricting access to their office to those who must either drop off, pick up, or sign necessary documents.
- **Home Safe** is a pilot program (similar to Whole Person Care) providing homeless prevention services to older and disabled adults. They do not have face to face contact requirements. They are conducting their work by telephone and other communication services including personal contact with safe distancing. The work closely with other homeless service providers including HSA and Whole Person Care
- **Long-term Care Management** is a new program with 2 Public Health Nurses and a Sr. Mental Health Client Specialist. They work closely with Home Safe to provide ongoing case management for newly housed adults with complex issues to stabilize and maintain their placements. This program is not State or Federally mandated and does not have legal mandates regarding home visits or face to face contact. They serve our most vulnerable clients with complex needs. They are working with the program supervisor to determine when face to face contact is necessary during the pandemic. They take referrals from IHSS, APS and Home Safe. They are also educating our staff on CDC guidance and safe practice.
- **Client Needs:** We have been in contact with other senior and adult service providers seeking ways to collaborate in service and resource delivery.
 - **Food Security:** We have two social workers who are contacting IHSS clients by phone to conduct food security (needs) assessments. During the pandemic they are also assessing other client needs for services and resources. They are also completing referrals to food pantries and home delivery food services.
 - **Resource Delivery:** In order to minimize contact with older and medically fragile adults who need resources, our social workers are picking up items needed by clients and delivering them to

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their homes without making face-to-face contact. We are also leveraging delivery services like Amazon for the same purpose.

Elderday

We are working with a partial closure, keeping the center open for only about 25 of the participants who would be the most vulnerable if they were at home. We are checking all participant and staff temperatures and symptoms at the door, instituting physical distancing for all participants. We are conducting "phone visits" by nurses and social workers several times a week for all participants staying at home, and may begin home visits, with appropriate precautions, in the near future.

Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program

We have shut down both programs in all four counties in which we operate. We're surveying our volunteers to see if they have any crucial needs, and to see if they would be willing to help other volunteers with things like essential shopping or errands.

Grey Bears

Healthy Food brown bags are being assembled and delivered Thursday and Friday mornings between 7:15 and 9:00am; quality control Monday-Wednesday mornings. Healthy volunteers under age 65 needed.

Health Projects Center continues to operate the **Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center and Multipurpose Senior Services Program**. Most staff are working remotely, and client interactions are now conducted by phone and soon video conference. We are still accepting new clients. Our offices are closed to the public, but we are reachable by phone and email.

HICAP is providing Medicare insurance counseling via the phone; group presentations are suspended for the time being.

Jovenes de Antaño

The congregate dining centers in Hollister and San Juan Bautista are closed until further notice. Participants who need food delivered are being added to home-delivered meals routes. The Hollister Community Center is closed to the public.

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Lift Line

Lift Line, a program of Community Bridges, is now scheduling free essential transportation for all Santa Cruz County residents over age 60 or disabled, regardless of income, who are sheltering in place. This service will allow these vulnerable populations to maintain access to essential nutrition, medical supplies and medical appointments.

Lift Line is removing any barriers that would prevent seniors and disabled persons from getting access to essential services during this challenging time. Lift Line will provide no cost rides to grocery stores, pharmacies and necessary medical appointments without requiring an application prior to scheduling services during this order.

Lift Line's essential transportation services will end when the County of Santa Cruz shelter in place order expires and regular service requirements resume. Additionally, to protect all riders, Lift Line reserves the right to refuse service to individuals showing any signs of being sick. Participants maybe requested to wear masks and may experience delays in service as to allow us to apply social distancing in our operations.

Seniors over 60 and person with disabilities can follow the process below for obtaining and scheduling essential transportation:

- Call Lift Line to schedule an essential ride at 831-688-9663, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturday - Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If possible, please call one or two days in advance. Lift Line will respond to same day scheduling according to availability.
- Transportation times will be scheduled according to availability between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. 7 days a week.
- Scheduled rides have a grace period of 10 minutes before the scheduled pickup time and 20 minutes after.

Meals on Wheels of Santa Cruz County

All congregate dining centers are closed until further notice. Participants who need food delivered are being added to home-delivered meals routes. Shelf stable meals are being made available to homeless seniors.

Ombudsman/Advocacy Inc.

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Advocacy, Inc. staff are working remotely to the best of their ability. Anyone who has to go into the office is coordinating with other staff, so there are no more than two people present at the same time. There is a cleaning procedure posted, and staff will clean everything they touch before they leave for the day.

The Ombudsman Program is still in operation. We have halted all General Facility Visits. We will attempt to meet with any resident where there are allegations of abuse, but we are in the process of working out how to handle less serious cases via phone or video conferencing. Experienced ombudsmen are entering some facilities using PPE, increased infection control procedures, and social distancing to the best of their ability. The ombudsman volunteer training is still going forward (at this time), starting on 3/26. We have a large classroom reserved at the Community Foundation, and we still expect a few students, so social distancing can still take place. New Volunteers will not be visiting facilities until the visitation restrictions are lifted.

Project SCOUT

We've shut down all of our tax sites for the time being. Those needing tax assistance should email/phone Eduardo Santana to make arrangements for volunteer tax preparation via phone or online. The U.S. Treasury (Mnuchin) announced today the **tax filing deadline is being moved to July 15th**, aligning with the Franchise Tax Board's decision earlier.

Senior Citizens Legal Services (SCLS)

SCLS is available by telephone and scheduling phone client intakes. Phones are not answered live, but the voice mails are immediately forwarded to multiple office staff who route the message, set appointments, or call back. Phone calls will be returned within 24 hours. The SCLS is closed for in person communication. SCLS staff is working from home as much as is practical.

Senior Network Services Information & Assistance

Senior Network Services Information and Assistance Program is available by telephone on a reduced schedule. Phone calls will be returned within 24

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hours. The agency is closed to the community for face-to-face appointments.

Senior Outreach is doing peer counseling by phone for individuals and working on tele-health platforms for support groups. **I-You Venture** has had to suspend all visits and activities in care facilities.

Volunteer Center

In response to COVID-19 the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County has designed and developed a new program to meet the needs of our most vulnerable seniors and health compromised older adults in our community. The **Grocery Shopper Program (GSP)** is a vetted, volunteer-based program that aims to provide food, grocery shopping and medication pickup services to the most at-risk group of the COVID-19 virus. Our staff are working to screen, recruit and train volunteers. These volunteers will receive grocery requests from participants and will attempt to purchase and deliver (using approved social-distancing guidelines) grocery items and pharmacy medications to the individual. Our goal is to serve low-income seniors age 60+ and older adults that are health compromised. First priority will be to serve those that do not have access to a computer to purchase groceries and those that do not currently have the support of family or friends. We will have Americorps phone tech support for seniors who have computers and need help navigating the various online shopping platforms. GSP has begun supporting our Volunteer Center Transportation participants and will begin to offer this to participants of our senior service provider network on April 1. On our website there is a page dedicated to the program with a client request form that you can fill out on behalf of individuals that you work with.

Website: <https://scvolunteercenter.org/programs/grocery-shopper-program/>

Call: 831.427.3435

Email: transportation@scvolunteercenter.org

Additionally, we are still seeking volunteers to support the program. If you know of individuals who may be interested in volunteering please share this link with them: [GSP Volunteer Interest](#)

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Watsonville Senior Center

The Senior Center has closed the facility doors to the public, and employees. The Center will remain closed until the Shelter in place has been lifted at the State and County level. It may be months before we are open to the public. Agency staff is able to go into their office to answer calls, and grab your belongings during this time. Once we are given the ok to work from the facility, staff will be inviting our community partners to come back to work out of their offices.

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