Seniors Staying Connected: Via Center Coronavirus Update  
6.3.2020  
bestes@viamobile.org  
www.viamobile.org  
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/theviacenter/  
Instagram: via health fitness

In week 12 of our community’s coronavirus outbreak, there are several situations impacting our community. We find ourselves dealing with not only the virus, but also many of our citizens reacting to events in the city of Minneapolis, and the potential threat of a tropical storm. Please stay connected with family and friends, and keep up-to-date with news relating to our weather and our community’s health and well-being. Social distancing for Seniors in ALL these situations continues to be important.

CONORANVIRUS AND CRISTOBAL
PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL TROPICAL WEATHER
Tropical Storm Cristobal has formed in the Gulf of Mexico. The National Hurricane Center reports the storm “meandering” near the Bay of Campeche, Mexico. The storm is projected to approach the Gulf Coast this weekend, and we can expect rain chances to increase by Saturday and Sunday. We don’t fully know
how Cristobal will impact our Gulf Coast. However, officials are advising us to have our plans in place.

1. Follow your normal plan for tropical storms. Stock up on needed supplies, including food and medicine.

CDC Check List for Storm Preparation:
https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/before.html

2. Make sure you have a safe place to shelter and have several ways to receive weather alerts. Local news channel websites all have live weather updates.

List of Local and State Resources:
https://www.mcema.net/resources/links

3. SHELTERS. If you normally evacuate to a shelter, your location may be different this year due to COVID-19. The Mobile County Health Department is urging use of area shelters only as a last resort, but are preparing high risk shelters for 60 and older and isolation areas for those that are potentially sick. For shelter information, contact the Mobile County Emergency Management Agency:
MCEMA: 251.460.8000
https://www.mcema.net/Evacuation/Hurricane-Shelters

Additional CDC Safety and Health Guidance on Shelters:

List of “Go Kit” Items For Shelter:
https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/prepareyourhealth/PersonalNeeds.htm

DOWNLOAD MCEMA APP ON YOUR PHONE
MCEMA is an interactive mobile app to assist citizens before, during and after an emergency or disaster. The app provides features, such as weather notifications, shelters, emergency kit check lists and social media feeds.
Click Here for Download Information

THE VIA CENTER
The Via Center is now working toward a potential early July opening. Our ability to open is based on Governor Kay Ivey’s amending the Safer-at-Home Order to allow Senior Centers to re-open. The current order expires on July 3rd.
THE ARTS COMING ALIVE!
COMMUNITY OPENINGS WITH APPROPRIATE SAFETY MEASURES

Mobile Museum of Art. Tentatively reopening on June 23. Visitors will have their temperatures taken via an infrared thermometer and group sizes are limited to 10 people. Visitors are asked to wear a mask.

Mobile Arts Council’s Community Gallery. Now exhibiting the “Five” competition by students from Bishop State Community College, Coastal Alabama Community and Spring Hill Colleges, the University of Mobile and the University of South Alabama.

The Mobile Saenger Theater. No ticketed events planned before July 3rd. Wait until the new State Order to determine how to proceed with ticketed shows. For upcoming events and tickets: www.mobilesaenger.com.

City of Mobile Parks and Walking Trails. Parks and trails are open and baseball and softball team games are allowed. All city pools, splash pads, and wading pools will remain closed for the entire 2020 season.

Mobile County Parks. Chickasabogue Park and River Delta Marina and Campground. Open seven days a week with camping limited to 50% capacity, by reservation only, to allow adequate spacing.

CANCELLATIONS
City of Gulf Shores Fourth of July Fireworks. The City will celebrate, flying American flags and lighting up in red, white and blue.

More information and Updates: http://www.gulfshoresal.gov

IMPORTANT! YOUR ECONOMIC IMPACT DEBIT CARD ISSUES
If you are getting your payment by check, you may receive a debit card in the mail instead. It will arrive in a plain envelope from “Money Network Cardholder Services.” The Visa name will appear on the front and MetaBank® on the back. Information is included to explain how to use your card. Some Seniors are getting debit cards with odd amounts they’re not expecting. Try accessing/transfering only the amount your entitled to. Others are reporting issues with ATMs not accepting the card for cash withdrawals.

Assistance and Information: www.EIPcard.com
CORONAVIRUS CASES AND OUR COMMUNITY: HOPEFUL TRENDS
Looking inside the numbers, there are some encouraging trends. According to the daily Patient Characteristics report issued by the MCHD, there have been **no** deaths in Mobile county since the June 1 report. There are 118 deaths attributed to the virus, and that’s the fewest for any week since March. Seeing a reduction in cases, deaths, and hospitalizations is encouraging for our community, and we hope this trend will continue.

SAVE YOUR DATES! NEW VIA CENTER EVENTS

**GRILL & GRAB**
Under the Via Portico
Friday, June 19th from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
In honor of Father’s Day, drive through and grab a hot dog, chips and a drink.

**DRIVE THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION**
Under the Via Portico
Friday, June 26 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
We will be distributing bags of 2-3 pounds of non-perishable canned and dried goods for those in need. This is a drive-through event.

*** Both events require RSVP. Registration details will be posted/sent.
ENSURING VOTING DURING CORONAVIRUS

Alabama's Runoff Election is July 14th. With Coronavirus closures, voting advocacy groups are working to ensure all citizens can cast ballots. The Alabama League of Voters is calling on state election officials to:
- Consider the "two witness" rule when it comes to absentee ballots
- Adding early voting period
- Offering drive-up voting options to offset the 10-person congregate guidance
- Extra manpower to ensure properly sanitization during voting

Absentee applications must be received 5 days prior to the election to the office of the Absentee Election Manager in our community.

Mobile Absentee Election Manager:
Alleen Barnett
151 Government St, Mobile, Alabama, 36602
Mailing address: PO Box 7, Mobile, Alabama 36601-0007
251.574.6400
Click Here for Absentee Ballots and Information
Click Here for All Election Information

CORONAVIRUS Q & A

Will Community Protests Spread the Coronavirus?
It may take weeks for new cases to begin to show up in the data, and top officials are concerned. White House Coronavirus Task Force Deborah Birx: “I worry
terribly about the peaceful protests. We are really trying to work with each of the mayors to expand testing availability so individuals who are involved in the peaceful protests can get tested and really know their status before they unknowingly spread it to the elderly.”

Can you catch COVID-19 from swimming in Gulf Waters?
Alabama Department of Public Health: ‘The virus is transmitted by respiratory droplets from infected individuals. There is no scientific evidence that the virus is transmitted in water, fresh or salt, or through cuts or wounds. Persons with wounds should not swim due to risk factors for other infections. Further, if a person is wounded in water, they should immediately clean the wound and talk with their doctor.’

Can I get COVID-19 through my eyes or ears?
CDC: Ears are not believed to be a route of COVID-19 infection. Eyes may be a route of infection if someone with the virus coughs or sneezes nearby. Infection is also possible when rubbing your eyes with hands that have been exposed to the virus. The good news for Seniors?! Glasses may also offer added protection, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

NEW! FITNESS CLASS OFFERING
Irene’s SeniorFit 6.3.2020
40 minutes of chair strengthening and cardio.
https://youtu.be/xSH3JtTzMk or access at www.viamobile.org
Homepage/Hotlinks

*** We will post NEW classes from Gerry Lowe and Elena Boykin on Friday (6.5.2020). ***
CORONAVIRUS ON OBJECTS AND SURFACES
Confusion ensued last week, when the CDC announced Coronavirus was primarily transmitted person-to-person, not through surface contact. The CDC reminds us that the virus can live on surfaces, though person-to-person contact is more common. Frequent handwashing and avoiding touching your face until your hands are clean are what help you stay virus-free during your daily routine. Estimated times for virus lasting on surfaces:
- **Food** (takeout, produce): Doesn’t appear to spread through food
- **Metal** (doorknobs, jewelry, silverware): 5 days
- **Wood** (furniture, decking): 4 days
- **Plastics** (milk containers, bus seats, elevator buttons): 2 to 3 days
- **Stainless Steel** (refrigerators, pots/pans, sinks, some water bottles): 2 to 3 days
- **Cardboard**: 24 hours
- **Aluminum** (soda cans, tinfoil, water bottles): 2 to 8 hours
- **Glass**: Up to 5 days
- **Ceramics**: 5 days
- **Paper** (mail, newspaper): Few minutes
- **Water**: Not found in local supply drinking water
- **Fabrics, Shoes, Skin & Hair**: Not enough research to determine

BENEFITS CHECK UP FROM NCOA
Make sure you are receiving all the benefits you are eligible for. The NCOA has an updated site to check for assistance with Medication, Health Care, Income Assistance, Food & Nutrition, Housing & Utilities, Tax Relief, Veterans, Employment, Transportation and Education.

Check on Your Benefits:
https://www.benefitscheckup.org/resources/?ga=2.208498838.541259798.1588107115-1020178386.1588107115
AFRAID OF DOCTOR VISIT BECAUSE OF CATCHING CORONAVIRUS?
CONDITIONS STILL NEED TO BE TREATED
Hospitals in our area are reporting emergency department (ED) visits have declined significantly for illnesses not related to Coronavirus. In particular, heart attacks and strokes appear to be going unchecked. Some hospitals also observe a decline in fall-related ED visits. Doctors believe that people are so scared of contracting the virus, they’re not seeking help for life-threatening ailments. The bottom line is that hospitals have safety measures in place to protect from infections, and they have allocated beds for virus cases. If you are experiencing symptoms of a stroke or heart attack or if you’d had a fall and suspect an injury, it’s important to get prompt treatment that may save your life or avoid long-term complications. Don’t delay care.

SCAMS! BE AWARE OF THE SCAMS TARGETED TO SENIORS
Storm Scammers.
The passing of a bad storm that causes crooks to solicit “business” door-to-door. They’ll often say: they were “already working in the area,” claim to have “extra materials” they can use on a project; that “today’s rate” will not be the same tomorrow; need payment up front. Take a pause and consider your options.
- Always get two or three bids (and insist on references) and compare them before agreeing to any work.
- Get a written contract.
- Expect to make an upfront deposit — but typically no more than a third of the total estimate — and use a credit card, check or arrange financing.
MEDICARE: TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH
Medicare reminds you that if you’re feeling anxious or depressed, call your doctor or a healthcare professional. Medicare covers many services to support you, including outpatient mental health services, such as depression screening, individual and group psychotherapy and family counseling. Some healthcare providers and plans are reducing or waiving the amount you pay for telehealth visits during the pandemic.

Outpatient Information:

Telehealth Information:

Medicare Information:
https://www.medicare.gov/

DO YOU KNOW HOMELESS SENIORS OR VETERANS?
WATERFRONT RESCUE MISSION RESUMES SERVICES
The Waterfront Rescue Mission has resumed its community programs. Services include:
- Homeless overnight shelter for Men with check-in 4-6 p.m. daily
- Rescue Programs for Veterans, Chronically Homeless and the Working Homeless.
279A North Washington Ave
Mobile, AL 36603
IN THIS TIME OF INFORMATION “ON-LINE”
WHAT ABOUT SENIORS WHO DON’T HAVE INTERNET ACCESS?
We have received a lot of feedback from our Seniors who are concerned about other Seniors who don’t have internet access. Remember, if you have a computer or smartphone, you can help other seniors get on-line. Many internet service providers are offering 60 days of free internet to seniors, people who receive Medicaid, SSI, SNAP, Veterans benefits or housing assistance. How do you apply if you don’t have a phone or computer? “Connected” people help them do it! Companies can send a free starter kit with equipment and instructions of how to get it up and running.

List You Can Print Out and Give to a Friend Who Needs It

NEW RESEARCH: TREATMENTS/VACCINES
Amidst research, there are promising developments. Any medication and treatment should first be discussed with your healthcare provider.

Remdesivir. Continues to look promising after several small studies. The majority of a 53-person trial “demonstrated clinical improvement and no new safety signals were identified.” The company is increasing production to treat more than half a million patients by October. (Gilead Sciences)
**Kevzara.** Currently approved to treat immune disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. May reduce virus damage to lungs by stifling the body’s overreaction to the virus — suppressing the immune system. A clinical trial of 400 patients is underway. (Regeneron Pharmaceuticals and Sanofi)

**Baricitinib.** Another immunosuppressant drug. Currently under study with hospitalized patients throughout the country. It’s hopeful that its anti-inflammatory properties could ease symptoms. (Eli Lilly)

**Famotidine.** Common medication for heartburn. Clinical trials underway with 200 patients receiving a daily dose nine times higher than over-the-counter medication dosage. The drug is administered intravenously. (Northwell Health at the Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research)

**Chloroquine.** A derivative of hydroxychloroquine. Among the first series of drugs to be touted as a possible treatment. Approved to treat auto-immune diseases, such as Lupus and rheumatoid arthritis. Recent study in Brazil was suspended after several patients developed irregular heartbeats, and more than 20 died after taking daily doses. Serious side effects include arrhythmia and muscle weakness and the drug is toxic at high doses.

**Lopinavir and Ritonavir.** Part of what the World Health Organization calls a “solidarity study.” Currently involved in studies in 90 countries around the world. Used together, they can inhibit an enzyme that the coronavirus needs to survive. However, results so far are not promising.

**BAMA TRACKER OFFERS EXCELLENT GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF CURRENT CASES**
The Alabama COVID-19 case tracker provides easy to read and understand graphs and charts on local and state data.

[https://www.bamatracker.com/](https://www.bamatracker.com/)

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES**
Mobile County continues to lead the state cases and in deaths due to Coronavirus. It is anticipated case count will rise, as testing is expanded. Critical to opening, is our ability to have adequate hospital space, and the MCHD states we have the capacity to handle new cases. **Updated June 4 at 4:00 p.m.**
Mobile County cases: 2,321
Mobile County tests: 22,424
Mobile County deaths: 118
State-wide cases: 18,766
State-wide tests performed: 234,993
State-wide deaths reported: 651
State-wide hospitalizations: 1,929
State-wide recoveries: 11,395
Click Here for Case Dashboard

Figure 1. Last 14 Days—Number of Patients with COVID-19 Disease, by Report Date—Mobile County, Alabama, June 4, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.

CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES UPDATED
- Franklin Primary Health Center drive-through testing at Franklin Mobile Units in Mobile and Prichard.
  8:30 a.m. to either 4 p.m. or 3 p.m. depending on the location
Appointments and Instructions: 251.444.1122
- Wal-Mart (Saraland)
  Drive through. Appointment needed: www.MyQuestCOVIDTest.com
- Ladd-Peebles Stadium. Appointment: 888.872.2650
  8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Infirmary Health’s Diagnostic and Medical Clinic
  Medical evaluations daily for those with symptoms from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  Appointment: 251.435.1106. Locations: 1700 Springhill Ave & 831 C Hillcrest Rd
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care
  8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Location: 2350 Schillinger Road
- Main Street Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/
  Location: 6280 Grelot Road
- American Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/
  Or call 251.250.1403

Stay Safe, Healthy and Connected!
The Via Team

*** PREVIOUS ISSUES ***

5.22.2020

GOVERNOR IVEY ORDER: SENIOR CENTERS TO REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL AT LEAST JULY 3rd
The Via Center will now work toward a potential early July opening.
What’s Open Now With Appropriate Safety Measures:
- Entertainment venues: arcades, movie theaters and bowling alleys
- Youth sports and athletic activities: crowds and spectators allowed June 14
- Educational institutions
- Daycare facilities
- Summer camps
- Alabama Casinos Officials are planning for a soft re-open in the next two weeks. Biloxi casinos are open.
- The Mobile Saenger Theatre moving towards reopening. At-risk citizens are still encouraged to stay at home as much as possible and abide by social distancing guidelines.

Click Here for What’s the Same, Guidelines

May 22 AT 1:00 P.M.: PRICHARD SUSPENDS GARBAGE COLLECTION
A garbage collection employee has tested positive for COVID-19. Prichard Mayor Jimmie Gardner says garbage services will be suspended until all employees who have been in contact with the individual are tested and released from any subsequent quarantine.

FUN! “SOCIAL DISTANCING” SOCIALIZING AT PORTICO PARADE
This was a new experience for all of us, as more than 120 seniors drove through our portico, grabbed a grab bag and chatted with all of the staff.

Pictures of the Event are Here
A Greeting from the Via Staff is Here

HOW HAS OUR PHASED-IN RE-OPENING IMPACTED OUR COMMUNITY?
OUR HEALTH
Even though Mobile County continues to lead the state in cases and deaths, there is a reason for some optimism. MCHD Dr. Bert Eichold has said he has not seen a bump in cases since Governor Kay Ivey relaxed her last round of restrictions. "The case numbers, we're increasing the testing number of patients every day and the number of new cases is relatively flat or slightly declining. We're optimistic that we're going in the right direction."

Testing: Our testing capacity continues to increase, which increases the number of cases. A majority of cases are found at several of our nursing homes. Health professionals are doing 1,000+ tests per day. Testing indicates that about 30 people a day test positive for COVID-19. That's important because it shows the virus is still active and continuing to infect people in Mobile County. But, it is also encouraging because it shows that the overall positive rate is declining, as more people are tested.

Readiness:
Mayor Stimpson states that we are ready: our hospitals have ample capacity to treat COVID-19 patients; our testing capability continues to increase; and we now can conduct "contact tracing" with Google and Apple tech to rapidly identify and stop the spread of potential infections.

OUR ECONOMY
The bad news is Alabama has the highest unemployment rate in 37 years. There were 25,929 initial Unemployment Insurance Claims filed in Alabama in the week of May 9, 2020. This represents a 10.5% decline from the previous week, and a 978.6 percent increase from the same week a year ago. The good news is the number of people filing for unemployment dropped slightly last week. It is anticipated that this trend will continue as more businesses open and re-hire employees.

SENIORS WITH PULMINARY/CARDIAC CONDITIONS: BE CARFEUL WHEN WEARING MASKS IN HEAT
Infirmary Health Diagnostic and Medical Clinic Pulmonologist Dr. Adrian DiVittorio: “You add heat, humidity, probably months of more physical inactivity than usual because of social isolation and distancing, and now you mask up. It’s
certainly going to make it a lot more difficult to breathe which can lead to further respiratory complications.” Sweaty, wet face mask are like having a wet towel over your face and makes it difficult breathe. Symptoms of heat stroke are: hallucinations; severe tiredness; a very fast heart rate; and severe panting. Take the mask off, sit down and try to cool down and take a few breaths.

WE HAVE HAD A LOT OF QUESTIONS ON TAXES...
- State filing deadline: July 15th
- Federal filing deadline: July 15th
- If you were having your taxes done through a volunteer program (United Way/AARP/RSVP), United Way suggests sites to prepare your own taxes for free. You will need to create an account to file your taxes.
  United Way: 251.433.3624
  Tax Slayer: http://tinyurl.com/fsatsac2019
  http://tinyurl.com/fsabspot2019

STIMULUS/ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS
SENIORS MAY RECEIVE DEBIT CARD IN LIEU OF PAPER CHECK
Beginning May 19th, the US Treasury and IRS have been sending Economic Impact Payments (EIPs) by prepaid debit card, instead of by paper check. Card recipients can: make purchases at any retail location where Visa is accepted, get cash from in-network ATMs and check balance online, by mobile app or by phone. There will be activation instructions included. The debit card will provide consumer protections, including protections against fraud, loss and other errors
Seniors will receive their EIPs, even if they didn’t file returns in 2018 and 2019. The IRS is using information on the Form SSA-1099 and Form RRB-1099 to generate payments to Social Security recipients.
TRAFFIC! YOUR DRIVE ON AIRPORT BOULEVARD IS BETTER
Getting out and about during Coronavirus will be easier. Airport Boulevard traffic lights are now synchronized. The two-mile stretch of synchronized lights runs from Sage Avenue to McGregor Avenue (The traffic light system hadn’t been updated since the 1960’s). The *secret* is to drive the speed limit – if you speed, you get out of sync and you’ll catch more lights.

SENIORS STAYING AT HOME GARDENING TIPS
As we all know, there are tricks of the trade for growing beautiful, tasty tomatoes. The National Garden Bureau offers professional advice for growing tomatoes in the South and other topics.
Top 15 Questions and Answers About Growing Tomatoes:
https://ngb.org/2020/05/05/growing-tomatoes-in-your-victory-garden-2-0/
Easy-to-Build, Inexpensive Raised Bed Garden:
https://ngb.org/2020/04/17/victory-garden-2-0-raised-garden-bed/

OUR VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES – ON YOUR SCHEDULE
We don’t have a set schedule for fitness classes. We have 10 classes available at www.viamobile.org Hotlinks:
- Irene Body Sculpting: Standing & Mat Weights
- Irene SeniorFit: Cardio, Weights & Ball
- Irene Yoga: Standing & Mat
- Irene SeniorFit 8:15 a.m. format
- Jerry SilverSneakers Excel 10:00 a.m. format
- Irene SeniorFit Extended
- Irene Yoga Extended
- Irene Body Sculpting
- Irene SeniorFit Cardio
- Irene Body Sculpting with Abs
We also have a survey to find out what classes YOU want, as we expand our virtual class offering.  Survey Link Here

YOU CAN HELP! OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS DATA TO MAKE SURE OUR SENIORS’ NEEDS ARE BEING MET DURING CORONAVIRUS
The Alabama Appleseed COVID-Impact Data Collection Project doesn’t want you to be forgotten once the state fully re-opens. The organization wants to ask a few questions to help understand how this crisis has affected you. Please Take This Quick Survey Here

IF YOU GIVE BLOOD, YOU CAN BE TESTED FOR COVID-19 ANTIBODIES
The antibody test conducted by LifeSouth is authorized for use by the FDA and detects if someone has developed antibodies to COVID-19. A positive test result may indicate past exposure and some immunity to the virus. This antibody test is not a diagnostic test and will not determine if the person currently has the virus. For information and to make an appointment, visit the website: https://www.lifesouth.org/
AARP DEMENTIA CARE LIVE WEBINAR MAY 27 AT 10:00 A.M.
The webinar will be presented by Area Agency on the Aging Della Sanchez, Licensed Graduate Social Worker. It will feature questions and answers for caregivers taking care of a loved one with Dementia. Click Here to Register

HOMEOWNERS: DISREGARD PROPERTY VALUATION NOTICES SENT OUT MAY 13TH-15TH
Mobile County Revenue Commissioner Kim Hastie is asking residents to disregard “real property” valuation notices sent out to owners last week because a software error created incorrect information. Correct notices will be sent and labeled ‘Corrected Notice at the top and contain the correct ‘real property' property valuations.”

SCAMS! SCAMS OUR SENIORS NEED TO BE AWARE OF
Pre-Paid Debit Card. If you receive a pre-paid debit card for your Economic Impact Payments (Coronavirus stimulus funding), remember, it is like a regular debit card or VISA card.
Medical Insurance. Here are some examples of what Seniors are reporting:
- Someone asking for Medicare or insurance number as part of a health care “survey” or offer of free medical products or services.
- Scammers setting up fake coronavirus testing sites in an attempt to get passersby to drive up and hand over health insurance or Medicare information.
- Criminals stealing mail looking for health insurance or Medicare information.
So….only share your Medicare or health insurance information with providers you know and trust, carefully review Medicare or health insurance statements and bills,
report unauthorized charges immediately and shred/destroy all paperwork related to your medical care before throwing it away. Guard your trash!

CAN’T GET TO A PHARMACIST OR DOCTOR AND NEED TO KNOW “WHAT IS THIS PILL?”
Try the AARP pill identifier site and avoid a medication mix up. You can enter a description, shape, color and/or imprint and identify that pill you are unsure about. https://healthtools.aarp.org/pill-identifier

BAMA TRACKER OFFERS EXCELLENT GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF CURRENT CASES
The Alabama COVID-19 case tracker provides easy to read and understand graphs and charts on local and state data. https://www.bamatracker.com/

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Mobile County continues to lead the state cases and in deaths due to Coronavirus. It is anticipated case count will rise, as testing is expanded. Critical to opening, is our ability to have adequate hospital space, and the MCHD states we have the capacity to handle new cases. Updated May 22 at 4:00 p.m.

Mobile County cases: 1,904
Mobile County tests: 17,995
Mobile County deaths: 107
State-wide cases: 13,563
State-wide tests performed: 177,786
State-wide deaths: reported 537
State-wide hospitalizations: 1,561
State-wide recoveries: 7,951
Click Here for Case Dashboard

CHARACTERISTICS OF COVID-19 PATIENTS IN MOBILE COUNTY
If you are interested in a more in-depth look at the demographics of Mobile’s Covid-19 cases, the Mobile County Health Department has an information page. Information includes race, age, sex, zip code, hospitalizations data and outcomes. Characteristics of Mobile County Covid-19 Cases

5.17.2020

HERE’S AN UPDATE ON NEW OPENINGS
- Governor Ivey has lifted the restriction limiting public gatherings to 10 people.
- Churches, with social distancing
- Close-contact businesses can open, with masks for all employees when they are within 6 feet of a customer and customers spaced at least 6 feet from one another: Barber shops, Hair salons, Waxing salons, Threading salons, Nail salons and spas, Body art facilities, Tattoo parlors, Massage parlors
- Restaurants, with social distancing guidelines which will limit the number of guests. Verify before visiting, as businesses are slowly opening. Restaurant Regular Hours/Reduced Hours Listing
- Athletic Clubs, social distancing and hygiene rules
- Beaches, 6 feet of separation
- Mobile County’s Recycling Center on Hitt Road
Click Here for SD Guidelines
- Market in the Park on Saturdays in Cathedral Square
  Click Here for SD Guidelines
- WAVE transit, regular service and hours of operation
  Click Here for SD Guidelines
The Bel-Air Mall
Click Here for Open Stores and SD Guidelines
- Providence Hospital elective, non-urgent surgeries and procedures
- Infirmary Health elective surgical procedures: Mobile Infirmary (outpatient only); North Baldwin Infirmary; Thomas Hospital; Thomas Medical Center; and Infirmary Eastern Shore. All patients are required to be tested for COVID-19. Infirmary Health’s restricted visitor policy will remain in place until further notice.
  More Information

THE VIA CENTER
Staff is meeting this week to develop our strategy for a safe re-opening.

STIMULUS PAYMENTS: MAY 13TH LAST DAY TO REQUEST DIRECT DEPOSIT
People who haven't yet received a stimulus payment from the federal government have until Wednesday, May 13th deadline to get direct deposit. Otherwise, you will have to wait for a mailed paper check.

The Internal Revenue Service says individuals have until noon on Wednesday to submit bank account information for direct deposit. People who are owed money but whose bank account details aren't on file will eventually get a check in the mail, but it could take weeks.

MOBILE COUNTY RUNOFF ELECTION JULY 14TH
Sneeze shields’ going up for the runoff election in Mobile County
The deadline to submit an application for absentee ballot for the runoff election is July 9th.
Information for Getting an Absentee Ballot

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS ON TESTING
Should I Be Tested?
1. If you have symptoms
2. If you are a Senior, 65 and older
3. If you are a healthcare worker
4. If you have underlying conditions, such as diabetes, cancer, immune system issues

**How Do I Get Tested?**
1. First, talk to your doctor. If you think you need to be tested, your doctor can refer you.
2. There are 2 tests: one for antibodies (you have had it already) and one for active Covid-19. Make sure you are getting the right test.
3. See below for updated testing sites or call the ADPH: 888.264.2256.

**Do I Have to Pay for My Test?**
The CARES Act mandates all comprehensive health insurance plans must pay for 100% of the cost of coronavirus testing, as well as any visit to the emergency room, doctor's office or urgent care centers. This includes any COVID-19 test deemed appropriate by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

If you're insured by a short-term plan or another plan that isn't ACA-compliant, your insurer may not cover the costs associated with your test. Medicaid will cover the full cost of COVID-19 testing for the uninsured, as directed by the CARES Act. Medicare covers Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) tests to see if you have coronavirus and COVID-19 antibody tests.

**HOW TOUCHING YOUR FACE CAN LEADS TO CORONAVIRUS**
The virus enters your body through mucous membranes, such as your nose, eyes, and mouth. Most people touch our faces at least 20-times an hour. All the things touched during the day - door handles, gas pumps, shopping carts - are on your hands. It's a habit to you rub your nose or your eyes, or you bite your nails before you've had a chance to wash your hands after touching a contaminated surface.

**COSTCO NOW REQUIRING MASKS FOR SHOPPERS**
Costco members and guests must wear a mask or face covering while in the store. Excluded are children under the age of 2 and those unable to wear a mask or face covering due to a medical condition. Costco does allow more than two people to enter the warehouse with each membership. Special Operating Hours for Members Ages 60 or Older: Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 10 a.m.

**NEW ON CORONAVIRUS TREATMENTS AND CURES**
- The FDA has given emergency use authorization for Remdesivir, the drug for patients with severe COVID-19, clearing the way for broader use in more hospitals around the country. Data has shown the antiviral drug helped to reduce hospital stays for COVID-19 patients.
- Infirmary Health is now using plasma from recovered patients to treat coronavirus. Plasma taken from the blood of recovered patients can contain antibodies to the coronavirus that can be used to assist patients struggling to fight off the virus on their own.

ALABAMA MEAT PRODUCERS: NO SHORTAGE IN ALABAMA/AVOID PANIC BUYING
Concerns have arisen due to processing plants in states with high case counts being forced to shut down. Gov. Ivey has declared meat processing essential critical infrastructure. The Alabama Cattlemen’s and Alabama Poultry & Egg Associations state there is no widespread shortage and processors are adhering to the highest safety standards possible.

KEEP GLASSES FROM FOGGING WHILE WEARING A MASK
1. Immediately before wearing a mask, wash glasses with warm, soapy water, shake off the excess and dry. Washing glasses with soapy water leaves behind a thin film that reduces surface tension and causes water molecules to spread out evenly into a transparent layer.
2. Fit mask to prevent exhaled breath from reaching your glasses. Place a folded tissue between your mouth and the mask. The tissue will absorb the warm, moist air, preventing it from reaching your glasses.
3. Make sure the top of your mask is tight and the bottom looser, to help direct your exhaled breath away from your eyes.

LOOKING FOR MASKS?
- Local vendor list of masks and face coverings, disposable, re-usable and made-to-order
Local Vendors
- Azalea City Threads is Hope on Facebook
- Custom Ink offering free shipping on masks and hand sanitizer

Custom Ink Website

MEDICARE UPDATE
The Area Agency on Aging SHIP program is offering free and confidential counseling to Medicare recipients on: the 20+ prescription drug plans; the 19 Medicare Advantage plans; and Medigap supplemental policies. SHIP isn’t scheduling face-to-face appointments, but is available:
Phone: 251.706.4680
Email: jroberson@sarpc.org
Facebook: SARPC SHIP SMP

Medicare waiving prescription refill limits and relaxing restrictions on home or mail delivery of prescription drugs. Safety and health tips:
- Call in prescription orders ahead of time.
- Use drive-thru windows, curbside services, mail-order, or other delivery services.
- Try to make one trip, picking up all medicine at the same time.

Information on your Medicare coverage

ALZHEIMER’S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA ON-LINE EVENTS
AFA has an on-line calendar, with clickable links classes and activities, including crafts, meditation, stress relief, art classes and selfcare.

Click Here for Event Calendar

WATCH FOR SCAMS TARGETING SENIORS
The Fraud Watch Network Helpline has seen a big spike in email extortion scams, documenting more than 51,000 cases of online extortion, with victims suffering losses of $83 million. Watch for:
- Robocalls offering you respiratory masks they’ll NEVER send
- Social media posts FRAUDULENTLY seeking donations for non-existent charities, or claiming to give you stimulus funds if you enter your bank account information
- FAKE testing kits, cures, 'immunity' pills, and offers for protective equipment.

AARP MAY NEWSLETTER
https://files.constantcontact.com/f4149fc6001/545bbb75-192c-46d9-b843-3007baa2f07e.pdf

TRY AN ON-LINE COOKING CLASS
Cooking Lesson: Von's Bistro Chicken Fried Rice
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=902114200263817

BAMA TRACKER OFFERS EXCELLENT GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF CURRENT CASES
The Alabama COVID-19 case tracker provides easy to read and understand graphs and charts on local and state data. https://www.bamatracker.com/

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Mobile County continues to lead the state cases and in deaths due to Coronavirus. It is anticipated case count will rise, as testing is expanded. Critical to opening, is our ability to have adequate hospital space, and the MCHD states we have the capacity to handle new cases. Updated May 11 at 4:00 p.m.

Mobile County cases: 1,474
Mobile County tests: 12,225
Mobile County deaths: 90
State-wide cases: 10,164
State-wide tests performed: 129,444
State-wide deaths: reported 403
State-wide hospitalizations: 1,268
Click Here for Case Dashboard

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.

CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES UPDATED
- Wal-Mart (Saraland)
  Drive through. Appointment needed: www.MyQuestCOVIDTest.com
- Ladd-Peebles Stadium. Appointment: 888.872.2650
  8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Infirmary Health’s Diagnostic and Medical Clinic
  Medical evaluations daily for those with symptoms from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  Appointment: 251.435.1106. Locations: 1700 Springhill Ave & 831 C Hillcrest Rd
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care
  8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday &
  Sunday. Location: 2350 Schillinger Road
- Main Street Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/
  Location: 6280 Grelot Road
- American Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/
  Or call 251.250.1403

Stay Safe, Healthy and Connected!
The Via Team

5.12.2020

Week 7 of our community coronavirus outbreak...and we are adapting, surviving and
finding new ways to thrive! Reach out to the Via Team, or friends and neighbors if you
need some contact. Wear your mask/face covering in public, social distance and wash
your hands. Scroll through previous updates for information on all topics affecting
seniors.
WHEN WILL OUR COMMUNITY RE-OPEN?
We’re hearing a lot about a May 1 open date for our community. Here’s the latest.

STATE-LEVEL: GOV. IVEY’S NEW ORDER EFFECTIVE APRIL 30 AT 5:00 P.M.
NOW OPEN
- Individuals: stay-at-home lifted, but encouraged to stay home
- Businesses (non-high risk): subject to sanitation and social-distancing guidelines
- Retail: subject to 50% occupancy rate, social-distancing and sanitation rules
- Beaches: no gatherings of more than 10, 6 feet apart
- Medical Procedures: allowed, all COVID-19-related state rules and guidelines in place
STILL CLOSED/LIMITED
- Entertainment Venues: night clubs, theaters, bowling alleys
- Athletic Facilities/Activities: fitness centers, commercial gyms
- Close-Contact Services: barber shops, hair salons, nail salons, tattoo services
- Senior Citizens Centers – meals only
- Educational Institutions
- Non-Work Gatherings: limited to 10, 6 feet apart
- Child Daycare: 12 children per room only
- Churches: houses of worship remain closed for public gatherings
- Hospitals and Nursing Homes: visitation restricted
- Restaurants/Bars: limited to take-out, curbside
- Funeral Services: limited to 10, 6 feet apart.
- Schools: daytime “special activities” only

* Here is a great chart that covers everything: https://bloximages.newyork1.vip.townnews.com/foxl0tv.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/f/53/f5391cf0-896c-11ea-a6b8-cb4155ff9c8f/5ea85940c59fa.pdf.pdf

MOBILE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
In response to news reports about outbreaks in nursing homes, the MCHD states that more than 80% of long-term care facilities in Mobile don’t have COVID patients. There are cluster investigations going on in six long-term care centers and one detention center, but they weren’t identified.

CITY OF MOBILE
The Mayor is reviewing the new state order and will issue local guidelines soon.

VIA CENTER
We do not have an opening date yet. We will be relying on City of Mobile and local health official guidance.

VIA CENTER NEW VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES
Visit www.viamobile.org Hot Links for all of our classes. Newest offerings:
Irene’s Body Sculpting with Abs
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=703t_7h0q4&feature=youtu.be
Irene’s SeniorFit Cardio
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNShQyHp3SA&feature=youtu.be

*** VIA CENTER VIRTUAL CLASS SURVEY*
We are working with AARP to expand our virtual class offerings. Please take this quick survey and let us know what YOU want.
Click Here:
http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07eh22fz56k9ejq929/start

IRS AND VA WORK IT OUT: VETERANS WILL RECEIVE STIMULUS PAYMENTS AUTOMATICALLY
Many VA recipients typically aren't required to file tax returns, and the federal government had to work out a system for Veterans and their families to quickly and easily receive $1,200 payments automatically. Check your payment status at IRS website Get My Payment: https://sa.www4.irs.gov/irfof-wmsp/login

VETERANS RECOVERY RESOURCES EXPANDS TELEHEALTH SERVICES
Mobile’s VRR has expanded telehealth capabilities and can usually schedule same-day appointments for primary care, behavioral health & peer support.
To make an appointment:
Call VRR at 251.405.3677
Visit website at www.vetsrecover.org

SNAP: EBT CARDS CAN NOW BE USED FOR ON-LINE PURCHASES
Seniors using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program can use their cards to order on-line for home delivery for Amazon and Walmart purchases.
Walmart curbside pick-up: www.walmart.com
Amazon home delivery: www.amazon.com

CAR MAINTENANCE SAFETY TIPS DURING CORONAVIRUS
If a repair is urgent, AARP recommends these guidelines
Follow CDC guidelines and expect others to do so.
1. If you can, use a drive through service. Crack window and disinfect credit card after you pay.
2. Wear your mask and gloves.
3. Choose a facility that mandates employees wear PPE and social distance.
4. Don't touch un-sanitized items.
5. Make sure the repair shop sanitizes your car.

WE FOUND ANOTHER ON-LINE CHURCH SERVICE
Under the new state order, Churches and houses of worship remain closed for public gatherings.
*(SEE 4.17.2020 UPDATE FOR FULL LIST)*
Government Street Presbyterian Church:
https://www.gspcmobile.org

DO SOME EXPLORING! WHERE TO GET OUTSIDE IN COASTAL ALABAMA
MBK: Always practice the latest CDC guidelines while you're out in public. This means keeping a minimum 6-foot distance from others and wearing a cloth face cover that covers your nose and mouth.
Check out Mobile Baykeeper’s COVID-19 Nature & Education Resource Guide, with venues in areas, including Mobile, Theodore, the Causeway, Spanish Fort, the Eastern Shore Trail.
https://www.mobilebaykeeper.org/covid19-resources

SCAM ALERT: THOUSANDS ALREADY LOST BY OUR SENIORS
- DO NOT buy any on-line or mail type of Covid-19/Coronavirus tests. None are recommended by the CDC and any offered now are SHAMS.

MAWSS UPDATE ON CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANCE
The Mobile Area Water and Sewer System is awaiting a board decision about waiving late fees. MAWSS is not disconnecting any customers and has re-installed any customer who was disconnected prior to the pandemic. Offices remains closed to the public and the customer service department is on reduced hours from 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.. Wait time for agents by telephone are long, and MAWSS encourage using the website for some services-installation, dis-connections and payment options.

using www.mawss.com

UPGRADE YOUR HEALTH AT HOME: SENIOR CLASSES STARTIN SOON
The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission will offer the “Living Well Alabama” health education program, also known as the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP). The in-home study format provides telephone conference call support once a week for 6 weeks. You need to register ahead of time: Call Carol at 251.445.3823

CDC ADDS 6 NEW SYMPTOMS TO BE AWARE OF
This is the first time the CDC has officially added new symptoms. New symptoms reported by many people who have had the virus and indicate contacting your doctor:
1. Chills
2. Repeated shaking with chills
3. Muscle pain
4. Headache
5. Sore throat
6. New loss of taste or smell

BEST SOURCE TO FIND FOOD ASSISTANCE: FEEDING THE GULF COAST
Feeding the Gulf Coast's has updated its website, allowing a search specifically for child feeding sites, distributions, or pantries. The website also lists the hours of operation for each.
https://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/find-help

USDA INCREASES MONTHLY SNAP BENEFITS BY 40%
PHONES! EXPERTS SAY CLEAN YOUR PHONE DAILY
You can use Clorox wipes or wipes with 70% alcohol.

WELLS FARGO OFFERS MORTGAGE RELIEF
Wells Fargo has suspended residential property foreclosure sales, evictions and involuntary auto repossessions. Additionally, the company is offering fee waivers, payment deferrals and other expanded assistance for credit card, auto, mortgage, small business and personal lending customers who contact the company.

FREDDIE AND FANNIE: MORTGAGE PAYMENTS ARE NOW PAUSED
Many seniors are behind on home payments, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. Borrowers can make partial payments or suspend payments for up to one year due to the Coronavirus. Payments would still need to be made after the financial crisis ends. Additional fees, interest or penalties are not allowed to be charged because of new federal guidelines.

WEAR YOUR MASKS! BUT....DON'T MICROWAVE OR HEAT THEM TO CLEAN
Fabric face coverings can be washed with the normal laundry. Experts recommend hot water and commercial laundry detergent. A clean mask should be stored in a plastic bag rather than left laying out in the open where it can be contaminated. While putting it on, your hands should be washed and only the ear straps should be touched.

Companies Selling Fabric Masks On-line:
Rendall Company: Donates one mask for each one sold to essential workers & nonprofit organizations.
https://rendallco.com/pages/masks
Etsy: Between $6-$15
https://www.etsy.com/market/face_mask
Love Your Melon: 1-2 week shipping time
https://loveyourmelon.com/collections/face-mask-collection
Vera Bradley: 10% off when you sign up with email
https://www.verabradley.com/us/browse-1857007494
Mothers Masks: 10% off first order
https://www.motherdenim.com/pages/mothers-protective-masks
Mobile County continues to lead the state cases and in deaths due to Coronavirus.

Updated April 28 at 4:00 p.m.
Mobile County cases: 992
Mobile County tests: 6,862
Mobile County deaths: 46

State-wide cases: 6,687
State-wide tests performed: 75,827
State-wide deaths: 242 reported
State-wide hospitalizations: 911

Click Here for Case Dashboard

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.

CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES UPDATED
- Wal-Mart (Saraland) beginning 4.30.2020
  Drive through. Appointment needed: www.MyQuestCOVIDTest.com
- Ladd-Peebles Stadium. Appointment: 888.872.2650
  8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Infirmary Health’s Diagnostic and Medical Clinic
  Medical evaluations daily for those with symptoms from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  Appointment: 251.435.1106. Locations: 1700 Springhill Ave & 831 C Hillcrest Rd
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care
  8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Location: 2350 Schillinger Road
- Main Street Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/
  Location: 6280 Grelot Road
- American Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/
  Or call 251.250.1403

4.17.2020

*It’s been almost 5 weeks since the Via Center shut its doors. Reach out to the Via Team, or friends and neighbors if you need some contact. Wear your mask/face covering in public, social distance and wash your hands. Scroll through previous updates for information on all topics affecting seniors. You are the Greatest Generation!*
MASKS! MOBILE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ORDER: RECOMMENDS MASKS/FACE COVERING FOR RETAIL CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES
MCHD Dr. Bernard Eichold: “It can be a bandanna, it can be homemade, you can have some fun with it but, again, when you get out of your car, walk into the retail operation, please cover your face to help protect others, to protect yourself.”

WHERE IS MY MONEY? CHECK YOUR STIMULUS PAYMENT STATUS THROUGH IRS SECURE PORTAL
We have tested this link – it is legitimate. You may need your 2018, 2019 tax return. You will be asked to provide: SS #, address and birthdate.

NEW VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES
We have an extended Yoga class that Instructor Irene has recorded. Visit www.viamobile.org Hot Links or Click Here for Class

MORE PEACEFUL WATCHING: LIVE AMERICAN BALD EAGLE NEST
We had some requests...So, this is a live link to an American Bald Eagle nest. Watch the Eagles
WHEN WILL WE RE-OPEN?
Continuing to social distance until our peak is reached, cases declining at area hospitals, access to more broad-based testing and weighing the needs of small businesses are part of the plans.

FEDRAL-LEVEL PLAN
Governors make final decisions, but the federal government’s plan states communities with declining infections and strong testing would begin a three-phased gradual reopening of businesses and schools, with each phase lasting at least 14 days, to prevent another outbreak. https://www.wkrg.com/health/coronavirus/trump-unveils-phased-approach-to-reopening-economy/

STATE-LEVEL
Governor Ivey’s Stay-at-Home Order remains in place until April 30th. The State Re-Opening Task Force delivered their recommendations report today. It suggests a re-opening of most essential businesses across the state (including Fitness Centers) on May 1st, with all the CDC social distancing guidelines in place at those businesses. However, the Via Center is not considered an “essential” business. Click Here for the State Plan

MOBILE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
MCHD Dr. Rendi Murphree: "90 percent of people who have laboratory confirmed COVID disease either have mild symptoms, or symptoms that can be managed at home, and that's really good, a good bit of news for our community out there." The death rate in Mobile County is starting to stabilize at around 2.5 percent of cases.

CITY OF MOBILE
The Curfew and Stay-at-Home order are in effect until April 30th. Mayor Stimpson says they are discussing the process of when and how to safely reopen businesses and get people back to work. Also, working on increased antibody testing. Mayor Stimpson’s Latest Update

VIA CENTER
Currently, we are closed until April 30th. Because we are a non-essential business and serve a high-risk population, we are not in-line for a May 1st opening. We are waiting on guidance from the Mayor's Office and local health experts.

MORE THAN 4,000 CASES IN ALABAMA: 72% OF DEATHS ARE 65 AND OLDER
Alabama is following a sad national trend, our seniors need to protect themselves through social distancing, taking advantage of senior shopping hours and hygiene guidance. Click Here for a County by County Breakdown of Cases

RESPONDING TO YOUR QUESTIONS: WHEN DO I QUARANTINE?
If a person in your home tests positive, does everyone living there have to be quarantined?
MCHD: Yes. If you have tested positive, or you know someone who tested positive, and you’ve had contact with that person, you need to self-isolate for 14 days.
AMAZING! VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOURS
The Louvre in Paris

National Gallery of Art in Washington
You'll need to install google arts and culture app on computer or phone

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington
Room-by-room tour
https://nationalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/

The Vatican Museum in Rome: The Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, and Raphael's Room
http://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/tour-virtuali-elenco.html

High Museum of Art - Civil Rights Exhibit in Atlanta
https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/civil-rights-photography/9wISPkiyouv-Lw?hl=en

CHECK WITH YOUR CHURCH FOR ON-LINE STREAMING SERVICES
Here's what we could find by visiting websites, but check with your church.
Christ United Methodist Church:
https://christunited.com/live
All Saints Episcopal:
https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsMobile
Franklin Street Baptist:
http://www.franklinstreet.org/
Bethel AME Church:  
https://www.bethelamechurchmobile.com/sermons/  
Archdiocese of Mobile  
https://mobarch.org/dailymass/  
New Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church  
https://www.newshilohchurch.com/  
Cottage Hill Baptist:  
https://livestream.com/accounts/6644811  
Dauphin Way Methodist:  
https://dauphinwayumc.org/watch-worship-online/  
Mt. Zion Baptist Church  
https://www.mtzionmissionary.org/sermons  
South Coast Church  
https://www.southcoastmobile.com/#Sermons-Watch

IF YOU NEED MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE, PLEASE REACH OUT  
The coronavirus may lead some seniors – who normally don’t need help – to need to use resources. Altapoint Mental Health is taking new patients and offering telehealth services. Call 24 hours: 251.450.2211  
Information on resources:  
Click Here

HELP SPREAD THE WORD: FEEDING THE GULF COAST LARGE FOOD DISTRIBUTION  
Date: Friday, April 24th  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Location: Hank Aaron Stadium  
* All Participants Must Pre-Register! *  
Click This Link to Register On-Line  
By Phone: Call Monday (April 20th) 251.653.1617 and choose option 7  
Website: https://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/

SENIOR BRAIN BUILDER: COUNT NUMBER OF PASSES  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo&feature=youtu.be
FREE MUSIC: 3 MONTHS FREE LISTENING AT AMAZON MUSIC
You will need to create an Amazon account if you don’t have one (it’s free and takes 15 seconds at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). And, download the program where you want to listen.
Download the desktop app
Download for Windows
Download the mobile app
Link to listen if you have account:
[https://www.amazon.com/music/unlimited/ref=as_li_ss_tl?linkCode=w30&tag=advanceal-20&imprToken=uMNShFDLKdnuv50UPKTV3A&slotNum=1](https://www.amazon.com/music/unlimited/ref=as_li_ss_tl?linkCode=w30&tag=advanceal-20&imprToken=uMNShFDLKdnuv50UPKTV3A&slotNum=1)

GOING TO THE DOCTOR, WITHOUT GOING TO THE DOCTOR:
TELEHEALTH IS A NEW NORMAL FOR SENIORS RIGHT NOW
Telehealth - using email, video conferencing and online patient portals and other technologies - to aid in the delivery of health care is now very real for seniors. Medicare and insurance companies have waived fees and expanded services for telehealth. See previous updates for information on providers and preparing for sessions.

STAY SAFE DURING YOUR TRIP TO THE GROCERY STORE
You can do these things to make your trip as safe as possible:
1. Wear a mask/face covering – Both the CDC and the Mobile County Health Department are recommending this now.
2. Shop during senior hours scheduled by stores.
3. Plan – make a list so you spend as little time in store as possible.
4. Wipe or spray cart handles with disinfectant.
5. Don’t touch your face during your trip.
6. Selecting items – there is no evidence that the virus can be contracted from handling items, however, wipe them down when you get home.
7. Pick a check-out line that has an employee wearing a mask.
8. Wipe down all items when get home.

SENIOR SHOPPING HOURS

CARDIOIVASCULAR AND RENAL DISEASES, DIABETES AND CORONAVIRUS
These diseases are among the leading underlying medical conditions in Alabama’s coronavirus
deaths, according to the Alabama Department of Public Health.
medical-conditions-among-covid-19-deaths.html

SCAM ALERT: THOUSANDS ALREADY LOST BY OUR SENIORS
- Do NOT click any links from any text messages regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19.
- “Impact Payment” is the official term. Stimulus Check” or “Stimulus Payment” ARE NOT and indicate fraud.
- DO NOT sign over your economic impact payment check to anyone.
- DO NOT respond to phone, email, text, or social media for verification of personal or banking information “needed” to receive payment.
- NO ONE is authorized by the IRS to help you get your payment faster.
- DO NOT cash weird looking checks or call the call number to verify it.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Updated April 17 at 11:00 a.m.
Mobile County cases:594
Mobile County tests: 3,007
Mobile County deaths: 23 reported, 12 from illness
State-wide cases: 4,404
State-wide tests performed: 36,363
State-wide deaths: 137 reported, 82 from illness
Click Here for Case Dashboard

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.
CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES UPDATED
- Ladd-Peabees Stadium. Appointment: 888.872.2650
  8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Infirmary Health’s Diagnostic and Medical Clinic
  Medical evaluations daily for those with symptoms from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  Appointment: 251.435.1106. Locations: 1700 Springhill Ave & 831 C Hillcrest Rd
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care
  8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Location:
  2350 Schillinger Road
- Main Street Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/
  Location: 6280 Grelot Road
- American Family Care
  Appointment: https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/
  Or call 251.250.1403

Stay Safe and Healthy!
The Via Team

4.10.2020

Thinking of our Seniors during the Easter weekend...Wishing you happiness and blessings with family and friends – no matter how we all find the way to fellowship and celebrate during these times.

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VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASS UPDATE
We are working on body sculpting and yoga to be posted next week.
JOSEPHINE (‘JO’) AND ELBERT (‘BERT’)
SOMETHING PEACEFUL! LIVE FEED OF OSPREY NEST IN GULF SHORES. Courtesy of Alabama Coastal Foundation.
https://youtu.be/qSEC1qj5xYM

CDC NOW RECOMMENDING CLOTH FACE COVERINGS
CDC emphasizes cloth face masks should be worn by the general public to conserve surgical masks or N-95 respirators for medical workers. A significant portion of people who are infected won’t show any coronavirus symptoms. The virus can be spread by talking. Some suggestions:

Surgeon General 45-second Mask Making
https://youtu.be/tPxlYqqVJgf4
No-Sew Mask With Household Items
Advanced Mask Making – for Sewers

AL.COM COUGH SIMULATION VIDEO – AND A REASON TO WEAR A CLOTH COVERING WHEN SHOPPING
One cough from someone with the Coronavirus (who may not know they have it) can spread across two shopping aisles.

MAYOR REDUCES NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IN STORES BY 20%
DOES NOT APPLY TO GROCERY STORES (STILL 40%)
City of Mobile executive order now reduces public buildings’ occupancies to 20%. It is aimed at big box stores and grocery stores to enforce social distancing.

CITY OF MOBILE CURFEW/STAY-AT-HOME ORDER
Curfew from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Stay-at-Home order from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Exceptions: picking up medications; securing needed supplies (grocery hardware); outdoor activities with social distancing protocols; and caring for family and the elderly. Restaurants and other provider who offer take-out or delivery food and drink will be open - as they are considered essential. Curfew fine is $100 and is being enforced.
WHEN WILL THIS END?
We have learned that models and projections are subject to change, but there is a consensus that cases in our area will peak between April 18 and April 22.
CDC: Social distancing continues to play a key role in flattening the curve.
Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation information on Alabama:

HOW TO SAFELY REMOVE DISPOSABLE GLOVES
If you are not careful how you remove gloves, germs may spread.
https://www.wkrg.com/video/how-to-safely-remove-disposable-gloves/

HEALTH EXPERTS ADVISE WIPING DOWN GROCERIES
1. Wash hands first
2. Create “dirty” space and a “clean” space for new items
3. Wipe down items with a disinfectant wipe and put away
4. Wash your produce with soap and water
5. Wipe down counters
6. Throw away grocery bags or wash and sanitize reusable bags.
7. Wipe down door handles you touched while putting away groceries.
8. Wipe down phone, keys, wallet, credit cards and purse.
9. Wash hands

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Updated April 10 at 4:00 p.m.
Mobile County cases: 363
Mobile County tests: 1,631
Mobile County deaths: 11 reported, 9 from illness
State-wide cases: 2,968
State-wide tests performed: 20,605
State-wide deaths: 80 reported, 58 from illness
https://alpublichealth.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3f78sbeV0RHroYQZnriE0UDwgsqFUl8STWX_nuZHK5zcTRHtNHyGKeOvM#/6d2771faa9da4a2786a509d82e8cf0f7

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.

TESTING SITES UPDATED
- Ladd-Peebles Stadium. Appointment: 888.872.2650
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
Infirmary Health’s Diagnostic and Medical Clinic
Medical evaluations daily for those with symptoms from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Appointment: 251.435.1106. Locations: 1700 Springhill Ave & 831 C Hillcrest Rd
Greater Mobile Urgent Care
8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Location: 2350 Schillinger Road
Main Street Family Care
Appointment: https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/
Location: 6280 Grelot Road
American Family Care
Appointment: https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/
Or call 251.250.1403

SHOPPING ON AMAZON – SELECT VIA AS YOUR CHARITY
Start at https://smile.amazon.com/ and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the Via Center. * We are listed as Senior Citizens Services, Mobile, AL *

RESTAURANTS OPEN FOR CURB-SIDE/TAKE OUT
https://www.mobile.org/about/covid-19-update/local-business-updates/?fbclid=IwAR2RI3kTBjqLsbHvaQeoFtCTRrJhaglpqyAiwKy5t34_OjiP-TPMnJDXCUA

EASTER BRUNCH OPTIONS
We know the following restaurants are offering brunch options: Bay Gourmet/Crooked Crown, Blind Mule (with mimosas to go), Moe’s, Noble South, O’Daly’s, Rooster’s, Spot of Tea, Wet Willies.

FACEBOOK NOW MORE IMPORTANT AND CAN BE PRIVATE
If you are not active on Facebook, we understand your concerns. In these times, Facebook is an important way to connect and get information. You can create a private account, and you don’t have to post information about your personal life.
*** If you have an interest in a Facebook session, please e-mail the Via Team at bestes@viamobile.org. ***

DISCOUNT DRUG CARD FROM FAMILY WIZE – UNITED WAY PARTNER
Create and account (it’s very quick) and download or e-mail your discount card from the website. Let’s you save an average of 45% at Walmart, CVS, Walgreens and RiteAid, look up generics and receive alerts when drug prices are lowered.
Create an account: https://familywize.org/account/create
Find a Pharmacy: https://familywize.org/pharmacy-near-me
FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS: NO TAX RETURN FILING NEEDED FOR SENIORS ON SOCIAL SECURITY

AARP: Seniors on social security to get stimulus payments automatically. Many seniors do not have internet service and rely on tax preparers to help them file their taxes. The IRS announced April 7th that seniors who receive Social Security benefits will automatically get their payments by the method they receive their Social Security checks.

GOVERNOR’S INFORMATION WEBSITE
The website “Altogether Alabama” has a searchable link feature for accessing senior services. Enter your need, city, state and zip code.
Search for services: http://www.211connectsalabama.org/keyword-search/
Website link: https://altogetheralabama.org/

BC/BS WAIVES COST SHARING FOR CORONAVIRUS TREATMENT
BC/BS of Alabama is waiving cost-sharing requirements for coronavirus treatments. BCBS has also waived copays and deductibles for telehealth appointments and COVID-19 testing. Treatment can cost from $20,000 to $90,000.

MEDICARE URGING USE OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES
See previous update DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS BY PHONE: TELEMDICINE
To reduce risk of exposure, Medicare has further expanded its coverage of telehealth services — allowing doctors to perform dozens more additional services via telehealth. As always, contact your provider first to see if your appointment can be conducted over the phone.
Check if your service is covered: https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/telehealth

HOW IS YOUR MEMORY DOING? TAKE THIS TEST
The exercise is very simple. You are shown a series of images. If you see an exact repeat image, you click the image to capture your reaction time. It takes about 20-seconds and you get a score at the end.
https://afamemorytest.com/

SCAMS WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT FROM OUR SENIORS
- NO ONE can help you get your stimulus funds faster. Criminals are calling seniors, pretending to be from the Department of Revenue, and offering stimulus check via phone or email.
- NO ONE can give you your stimulus funds via a gift card.
- There is NO medical cure or treatment for Coronavirus.
- There are NO home test kits for Coronavirus
- ONLY give to charities you have given to in the past.
- Fraudulent letters threatening suspension of Social Security benefits due to COVID-19-related office closures are FAKE.
LET’S DO OUR PART – 2020 CENSUS
Federal funding for Alabama (Medicare, Medicaid, education, disaster relief, etc.) is $13 billion per year and is based on our population count. All participants’ information is protected by strict federal law. Here the ways we can complete the Census – it’s only 10 questions:
1. Take it online at [www.my2020census.gov](http://www.my2020census.gov)
2. Call 844.330.2020
3. Mail in paper form

103 AND BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS IN A NURSING HOME
Courage, hydration and faith helped great, great-grandmother Ada Zanusso beat the Coronavirus.

COPING WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
Many seniors are reporting Coronavirus is impacting their mental health. If you need help, reach out to your doctor or friends and family. Here are leading psychologists’ recommendations to seniors’ top concerns:
1. ‘I can’t stop worrying about COVID-19:’ Limit yourself to 30 minutes of news a day or just check the news once in the morning and the evening.
2. ‘I’m so anxious I can’t sleep:’ Write down your concerns and the steps you’re taking to protect yourself. Avoid long naps and have a wake up and bedtime routine.
3. ‘I’m angry at my parents (or someone else) for not taking social distancing seriously:’ Find out what’s behind your loved one’s reluctance. If they’re still not willing, focus on to letting go of your anger by taking slow, deep breaths or writing down your angry feelings, wadding them up and throwing them in the trash.
4. ‘I’m drinking more than usual:’ While there’s nothing wrong with enjoying a glass of wine after dinner, you need other ways to manage stress. If you find yourself coming up with reasons to drink - or wonder the next day how much you had to drink - it’s time to reach out and get some support.
5. ‘I feel sad, unmotivated and alone:’ Create a daily routine. Do things to lift your mood. Go outside. Take a walk. Schedule a specific activity each day to look forward to.
6. ‘My spouse is driving me crazy:’ Create a basic daily schedule that include uninterrupted alone time for both of you.
7. ‘I’m going crazy trapped at home:’ Find new projects or hobbies and reach out. There are family and friends in your circle that are feeling the same way.
LESS SHOPPERS ALLOWED: MAYOR TO REDUCE NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IN STORES BY 40%
A City of Mobile executive order to reduce public buildings' occupancies to 40% of what it is now will go into effect on Thursday, April 2 at 7:00 a.m. It is aimed at big box stores and grocery stores to enforce social distancing.


MOBILE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT DATA ON FIRST CASES
The MCH is releasing some limited information on our first 50+ cases to provide a better picture of who the disease is impacting locally.


SOCIAL SERVICES HOTLINE
For information regarding shelters, food pantries, help with utilities and other social needs, call 2-1-1. There is a wait time. Or, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 251.706.4680

SOCIAL DISTANCING IS LIFE-SAVING FOR SENIORS
CDC: New data shows that 1 in 4 (25%) of people with coronavirus show no symptoms. If you go out in public, maintaining 6-feet from others is critical. The CDC is considering issuing new guidance that all people, not just those who are sick, wear masks.

AIRBONE: RESEARCH CONFIRMS CORONAVIRUS SPREADS IN AIR
University of Nebraska: Coronavirus spreads through the air and lingers in rooms long after patients have left. U.S. scientists found high levels of the virus lurking in the air in rooms long after patients had left. Traces of the coronavirus were also discovered in hospital corridors outside patients' rooms, where staff had been coming in and out.

SHOPPING/STORE UPDATES
Costco: Will allow no more than two people to enter the warehouse with each membership card. This new rule is effective Friday, April 3. Now closing at 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Limitations on toilet paper and cleaning supplies.

https://www.costco.com/covid-updates.html

SAMS: Early senior shopping Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 a.m. -9:00 a.m. for ages 60 and up. Free Curbside Concierge Pickup Service: pull up and an associate will take your list, gather your items and bring your order out to your car.

TAP WATER IS SAFE, DON'T HOARD BOTTLED WATER
Bored? Check to see if you have state unclaimed property
More than $125 million has been paid in the last five years. Each year, unclaimed or abandoned assets are turned over to Alabama Unclaimed Property by financial institutions and businesses that lose contact with the owners. These assets may be in the form of cash, stocks, bonds, insurance benefits or even valuables from safe deposit boxes. All you need to enter is your name, address and zip code.
https://alabama.findyourunclaimedproperty.com/

AL power suspending late fees and disconnections
Late payment fees and disconnections of service due to non-payment for those impacted by the Coronavirus.

Doctors appointments by phone: Telemedicine
We have mentioned that many insurance companies and Medicare are now using “telemedicine.” The government has temporarily expanded telemedicine services for Medicare beneficiaries to cover virtual visits. Virtual visits include video chats, phone calls and e-mail. Here’s some advice about preparing:
1. Write down a list of your symptoms and concerns; be specific.
2. Write down a list of all medications (prescription and non-prescription).
3. Check your technology. Ask a millennial for guidance.
4. Find a quiet space.
5. Allow 10-15 minutes before the video/phone call to collect your thoughts.
6. Tell your doctor everything – confidentiality rules are still the law.
7. Agree on a treatment plan and write it down.
8. Make sure to verify billing and insurance.
9. Don’t forget prescriptions (called in, e-mailed, etc.)

Coronavirus site on Facebook to combat misinformation
https://www.facebook.com/coronavirus_info/

Scam alert: Here’s what our seniors have reported
1. Treatment and cure: There is no known treatment (herbal, natural, etc.) or cure for coronavirus. Period.
2. Help getting stimulus funds: Companies/individuals offering to help you get federal stimulus payments more quickly are lying. There is no process for this, other than the system the government has set up. See previous update for stimulus payment process information.

When will this end? Model predicts April peak in Alabama
The coronavirus outbreak won’t peak in every state at once. Based on models from the CDC, Alabama should see our cases level out between April 13 and April 20. This is called “flattening the curve.” The model is based on computer data and things could change.

CDC: The most important way to stop the spread is through social distancing and washing your hands.


REMINDER: VIA CENTER OFFERING VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES
Our fitness classes are geared towards seniors and help you stay connected and remain physically and mentally healthy. Visit www.viamobile.org Homepage Hotlinks for listing: SeniorFit; SeniorFit Extended and SilverSneakers Excel Chair.

Stay Safe and Healthy,
Via Center Leadership and Staff
3.27.2020
GOVERNOR ISSUES STATEWIDE NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESS CLOSURE
The order goes into effect on Saturday, March 28 at 5 p.m.. This includes entertainment venues, fitness centers and commercial gyms, close-contact activities and retail stores.

UPDATE ON EFFORTS TO RE-OPEN VIA CENTER: NO DATE SET YET
We are following health guidelines that advise no gatherings of 10 people or more for our seniors, a high-risk population. In addition to working on securing gap funding and SBA loan assistance to offset our $40,000 closure shortfall, we are cleaning and disinfecting EVERY surface of our 42,000 sq. ft. facility (floors, carpets, equipment, furniture, doors and handles, kitchen, etc.) See what it currently looks like: http://viamobile.org/images/April6.pdf

DURING CLOSURE, VIA OFFERING VIRTUAL CLASSES
Visit our website homepage Hotlinks for Irene’s Senior Fit and Gerry’s SilverSneakers Excel Chair. More offerings coming soon.

* FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS FOR INDIVIDUAL SENIORS *
It is anticipated the legislation will be finalized in Washington by the end of the week. Seniors collecting Social Security benefits for retirement, disability or Supplemental Security Income will be eligible for stimulus checks, based on their tax returns or Social Security Administration data.
- Individual filers are eligible for $1,200 and joint filers are eligible for $2,400.
- For those not required to file 2018 or 2019 tax returns because of social security benefits, tax returns aren’t required to claim the money. The government can use information from a Form SSA-1099, Social Security Benefit Statement, or Form RRB-1099, Social Security Equivalent Benefit Statement.
- Payments will be made “as rapidly as possible” and no later than Dec. 31, 2020.
- Payments will be made via direct deposit to an account that the person has authorized for tax refunds or federal payments on or after Jan. 1, 2018. Payments can be mailed if no account is on record.
- Notice will be sent to the person’s last known address within 15 days of payment informing them of the method and amount of payment.
- A phone number will also be provided so people can call the IRS in the event they did not receive it.

SOCIAL SECURITY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
This will also be a good site to check for information about federal stimulus payments.
https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/
TIME WITH GRANDKIDS – ALABAMA SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR THE REST OF SCHOOL YEAR
Alabama joins Kansas, Oklahoma and Virginia by cancelling school through the end of the semester.

CHECK IT OUT! MISSING MOVIES & BOOK FROM VIA’S LIBRARY? MOBILE PUBLIC LIBRARY HAS OPTIONS FOR YOU
The Mobile Public Library is closed, but it is offering library cards by phone good for 90 days. Here are some great ways to use the library (you will need your “card,” password and pin):
- Kanopy: Watch library movies via streaming on phone, computer and other devices
- Universal Classes: 500 offerings
- Hoopla: all the e-books the library has to offer
Check it out: https://www.mobilepubliclibrary.org/covid-19/

YOUR WATER QUALITY IS SAFE!
Mobile Area Water and Sewer System: “Despite the coronavirus pandemic our water will continue to flow and be safe for you and your loved ones. There is no need to boil your tap water, buy bottled water, or alter your normal water usage habits. Our plants treat water for pathogens and viruses like COVID-19.”

UNITED WAY TAX PREPARATION UPDATE
Federal and state filing deadlines extended to July 15th. United Way is no longer offering face to face tax preparation. UW suggests these sites to prepare your own taxes for free.
http://tinyurl.com/fsatsac2019
http://tinyurl.com/fsabspot2019

ON-LINE SHOPPING: DELIVERY, CURB SIDE PICK UP OPTIONS
If you want to limit your time in public, consider shopping on-line, instore/curbside pick up or delivery. Fees may be waived when you buy at a certain level and some stores have discounts for first-time orders. You will need to create an account, but it’s fairly simple.
- Target: In-store pick up or same day delivery
  https://www.target.com/store-locator/find-stores
- Greer’s: In-store/curbside pick up or same day delivery
  https://www.greers.com/shop
- Rousses: In-store pick up and excellent on-line digital coupons.
  https://www.rouses.com/shop/
  https://www.rouses.com/coupons/
- Publix: In-store/curbside pick up or same day delivery
  https://www.publix.com/shop-online
- Winn Dixie: In-store pick up and delivery. We love the “Winn Dixie” bonus rewards card!
NEW VIRUS SYMPTOMS BEING PUBLICIZED
- American Academy of Otolaryngology: “Evidence is rapidly accumulating from sites around the world that loss of smell is a significant symptom associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.”
- American Academy of Ophthalmology: “Viral conjunctivitis may be a symptom of the COVID-19 virus. A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, found “conjunctival congestion” or red, infected eyes in 9 of 1,099 patients (0.8%) with a confirmed diagnosis of coronavirus.”

CORONAVIRUS NOT JUST AN “OLD PEOPLE”’ DISEASE
According to White House Coronavirus Task Force Response Coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx, data shows severe coronavirus infections are not just affecting older Americans. Twenty percent of virus patients between the ages of 19-40 are requiring treatment for serious illness and have no underlying medical conditions.

UPDATE FROM MEDICARE
The Medicare Team: If you do need to see your doctor, please call them first. They may be able to use telehealth services for common office visits, mental health counseling, and preventive health screenings. More information at www.medicare.gov

YOUR FAMILY’S HEALTHY MILLENNIALS CAN GIVE BLOOD
Donors should make an appointment at www.redcrossblood.org or www.LifeSouth.org. Multiple times and locations are available in South Alabama. Donors will need a photo ID.

EAT A RAINBOW
AARP: To boost your immune system, eat a rainbow. Squash, sweet potatoes, carrots, beets, cabbage, brussels sprouts, broccoli, kale, collards, turnips and rutabaga are all proven to be immune system boosters.

RESTAURANTS OPEN/CLOSED FOR BUSINESS
https://www.mobile.org/about/covid-19-update/local-business-updates?fbclid=IwAR2RI3kTBjqlsbHvaQeoFtCTRjhaqlpqyAiwKy5t34_OjiP-TPMnJDXCUA

EASY TO USE ON-LINE BRAIN GAMES
Crossword Puzzles: Really cool and easy to use. Links you directly to hundreds of puzzles you can complete online, on your computer or other devices. https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword
Mind Teasers: Easy sign up and a quick Fit Test to create your own profile. The site sends 3 quick games a day based on personalized training insights. [https://www.lumosity.com/sign_up](https://www.lumosity.com/sign_up)

SCAM UPDATE
Better Business Bureau: Con artists are impersonating the CDC and the World Health Organization in phishing emails, e-mails that you click and infect your computer with a virus or steal your personal information. There are no FDA approved vaccines or drugs to prevent coronavirus on-line or in stores, period.

NUMBER ONE RECOMMENDED STRESS RELIEVER IS EASY TO DO
Go on a walk....now......today!

BE AWARE: POLICE ENFORCE HEALTH ORDERS ON GATHERINGS
Alabama's Attorney General: Any person or group willingly breaking state health orders can be charged with a misdemeanor and fined up to $500. Groups of more than 25 people, or any size group that can't maintain 6 feet between persons, are prohibited.

IN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTIONS...
- Mosquito Transmission. World Health Organization: Coronavirus not transmitted through mosquitos
Other myths debunked:

REMINDER: USING ALCOHOL TO CLEAN?
CDC: Must be 70% by volume. Be sure to check the bottle before you buy.

MOBILE HOUSING BOARD CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC
Call for assistance: 434-2200

CORONAVIRUS COST TO CITY OF MOBILE
Executive Director of Finance Paul Wesch: COVID-19 could cost Mobile estimated $7 million a month in revenue from loss of business over two months, April and May. However, the good news is city has a surplus to weather the storm and it doesn't expect to borrow money, or have drastic furloughs of employees or make cuts in services.

HOPE: EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW – BUT UPROVEN – VIRUS VACCINES

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO READ THROUGH TO THE END...A SMILE!
Residents and Veterans quarantined in Baldwin House in Daphne sing “God Bless America.”
https://www.facebook.com/thebaldwinhouse/videos/2537548809840980/
FIRST COVID-19 CASE IN MOBILE COUNTY
Mobile County Health Department: Child treated and isolated at home. Department contacting those who were around the child to determine if they need to be tested.

* UPDATE * - TAX DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JULY 15TH *
PERSONAL INCOME TAXES – STILL DUE APRIL 15
Alabama Association of Non Profits: payments owed have been given a grace period of 90 days. National groups that help seniors with tax prep are lobbying for a filing deadline extension. We'll keep you posted.

NEW HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY POLICIES
- Blue Cross & Blue Shield: waiving early medication refill limits on 30-day prescription maintenance medications
- Cigna: through 5.31.2020, customers with immunosuppression, chronic conditions or who are experiencing transportation challenges can be treated virtually by in-networks
- Humana: https://www.humana.com/
- Aetna: offering a $0 copay for telemedicine visits until 6.4.2020.
- United Healthcare: https://www.uhc.com/
- Viva Health: https://www.vivahealth.com/Download.aspx?ID=35456&Type=doc

MEDICARE INFORMATION
Covering all COVID-19 related expenses at 100%
https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-coronavirus

SENIOR SHOPPING
- Walmart: customers 60 and up can shop daily from 6 a.m. – 7 a.m.
- Publix and Publix Pharmacy: Starting 3.24.2020, Tuesday and Wednesday from 7 a.m. - 8 a.m. for 65 and up.

SOME FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS LIMITING LOBBY HOURS
Check with your local financial institution. Many are moving to drive-through service and appointment-only operations.
- Regions Bank: branch lobbies appointment-only as of 3.19.2020
  https://www.regions.com/Locator
- Wells Fargo: some locations closed temporarily
  https://www.wellsfargo.com/locator/
- PNC: reduced hours of 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. https://apps.pnc.com/locator/#/search
- Century Bank: all branch locations open for drive-up services only during our normal business hours

SILVER SNEAKERS OFFERING ON-LINE CLASSES
SilverSneakers is offering instructor-led, virtual classes to keep members engaged and healthy.
1. Go to the SilverSneakers website
2. Log-in. If you don't have an account, you will need to create one. You will need your health card information.
3. Click Videos on the top of the webpage

SCAMS
- Alabama Power: Does **not** call customers and ask for payment over the phone.
- Bureau of Consumer Protection: There are **no** products that prevent or cure the Coronavirus. Learn more or report: [http://www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)
- Robocalls to sell coronavirus cleaning products: Hang up
- E-mails from charities: Call the charity office directly to confirm
- Medicare: Guard Your Card!

ALL BARS AND RESTAURANTS CLOSED IN ALABAMA
27 states have similar closures

VISIT MOBILE LIST: TAKE-OUT/CURBSIDE PICK UP
[https://www.mobile.org/about/covid-19-update/local-business-updates?fbclid=IwAR2RI3kTBjqlsHvaQeoFtCTRjhaqIpqyAiwKy5t34_OjiP-TPMnJDXCUA](https://www.mobile.org/about/covid-19-update/local-business-updates?fbclid=IwAR2RI3kTBjqlsHvaQeoFtCTRjhaqIpqyAiwKy5t34_OjiP-TPMnJDXCUA)

ALL BEACHES CLOSED IN ALABAMA
Governor Kay Ivey: includes sandy shoreline abutting the Gulf of Mexico, public and private, and beach access points

HOW LONG WILL THIS GO ON?
We’re all asking that question, and experts are saying there is no good answer right now. Much of the situation depends on citizen behavior.
AP: [https://apnews.com/67ac94d1cf08a84ff7c6bbeec2b167fa](https://apnews.com/67ac94d1cf08a84ff7c6bbeec2b167fa)

YOUNG AND HEALTHY? HERE’S WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR GRANDMA
- Practice physical distancing and **social** connecting
- Call and check on elders
- Honor all public health warnings – what you do impacts your family
- Do shopping and errands

FOOD AND SUPPLY AVAILABILITY AND DISTRIBUTION
We included this as a result of a Town Hall Q & A with federal officials.
Feds: There is no issue with our county’s supply chain. Guidance is for one-week of food supplies, toilet paper and paper towels. *This excludes special quarantine situations and medications.*

HOW TO MAKE HAND SANITIZER
- **Quick Gel:** Mix 3 parts isopropyl alcohol to 1-part aloe vera gel
- **Spray:** Mix 12 ounces of alcohol, 2 teaspoons of glycerol, 1 tablespoon of hydrogen peroxide, 3 ounces of distilled or boiled (then cooled) water.
3.18.2020 Update

SYMPTOMS
- Include fever, cough and shortness of breath.
- Emergency symptoms include: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath; persistent pain or pressure in the chest; new confusion or inability to arouse; bluish lips or face.

PHONE/INTERNET PROVIDERS
- AT&T: Suspending the termination of wireless, home phone or broadband service when customers can’t pay their bills because of coronavirus disruptions. Also waiving related late fees.
- Verizon: Waiving late fees and suspending service termination for customers “negatively impacted by the global crisis.”
- T-Mobile: Providing unlimited data to all current customers who have plans with data for the next 60 days. It will also provide additional data to mobile hotspot users.

UTILITY COMPANIES
Alabama Power and Spire will not interrupt service or discontinue service for any customer whose income has been affected by this coronavirus health crisis.

SENIOR SHOPPING HOURS
- Target is now offering specific hours just for seniors and those at high-risk. Each day, from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at all their stores.
- Dollar General is offering the first hour of each shopping day. Check with your local DG to confirm store hours.

U.S. SENATE RUN-OFF ELECTION HAS BEEN RE-SCHEDULED
The new date is July 14th.

STOCK UP IF YOU ARE CONFINED TO HOME
Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.

DISINFECT YOUR I-PHONE!
Use a 70 percent isopropyl alcohol wipe or Clorox Disinfecting Wipes. Don’t use bleach. Avoid getting moisture in any openings, and don’t submerge your iPhone in any cleaning agents.

SOCIAL DISTANCING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN
For seniors and others at risk because of pre-existing medical conditions, everyone needs to be aware of who they have been around. Put simply, the idea is to maintain a distance between you and other people — in this case, at least six feet.
Seniors are asking if they can leave their homes. Absolutely. The experts were unanimous in their answer to this question. It’s O.K. to go outdoors for fresh air and exercise — to go for a
walk, work in the yard. The point is not to remain indoors, but to avoid being in close contact with people.

**STAY SOCIALLY ENGAGED – BE AWARE**
If you are staying at home, do not disconnect from others. Unfortunately, this is the time for criminals to take advantage of our seniors. Get your information from trusted sources: local news casts, newspapers, the Mobile County Health Department, the Alabama Department of Public Health and the CDC.

**TAKING SENIORS A MEAL**
Should you take a friend who in hunkered down a meal? Experts say “yes,” with these guidelines (Source: Take Them a Meal):
- Don't take a meal if you or anyone in your household is sick.
- Wash your hands and counters before preparing and delivering a meal.
- Arrange to drop the meal off on the recipient’s porch.
- During the meal delivery, don't touch the door or family pet.
- Don't take containers you want returned
- Send drinks, tea, honey, lemons, cough drops, household supplies with your meal
- Avoid high-sugar content meals – sugar has been shown to reduce
- Don't send meals with excessive sugar - sugar reduces our immune function. Send healthy proteins and soups made from bone broth.

**ALABAMA POWER RECOMMENDATIONS WHILE YOU ARE HOME**
- Replace air filters in heating, ventilation and air-conditioning units.
- Set the thermostat and then forget it. Changing the temperature often during the day is more likely to increase energy use.
- Ensure air-conditioning vents are unobstructed and opened to full capacity.
- Use natural lighting early/late in the day to reduce energy use.

###