



## **SENIORS STAYING CONNECTED**

Seniors Staying Connected: Via Center Coronavirus Update  
3.20.2020

This is a difficult time for everyone, with routines disrupted and new information coming out daily. The Via Center may be closed, but we are staying connected to our Seniors.

### **LINKS FOR RAPIDLY CHANGING INFORMATION**

Current Alabama Cases

<http://alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/2019-coronavirus.html>

### **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.

### **CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE**

If you think you may have symptoms, the Alabama Department of Public Health has set up a hotline: 888.264.2256.

### **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

### **\* UPDATE \* - TAX DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JULY 15<sup>TH</sup> \***

#### **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  
[Detailed Instruction Are Located Here](#)

## 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>
- 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=IwAR2RI3kTBjqslsbHvaQeoFtCTRrJhaglpqyAiwKy5t34\\_OjiP-TPMnJDxcUA](https://www.mobile.org/about/covid-19-update/local-business-updates/?fbclid=IwAR2RI3kTBjqslsbHvaQeoFtCTRrJhaglpqyAiwKy5t34_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.

AL.com: <https://www.al.com/news/2020/03/how-long-will-this-last-be-ready-for-months-of-social-distancing-experts-say.html>

AP: <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.

<https://www.wired.com/story/how-to-make-hand-sanitizer/>

We have additional information/e-mail sign up on our website at [www.viamobile.org](http://www.viamobile.org).

*Stay Safe and Healthy,  
Via Center Leadership and Staff*

\*\*\*\*\* PREVIOUS UPDATES \*\*\*\*\*

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 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **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 is 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.