The Staff at the Via Center is wishing our community’s wonderful Seniors a SAFE and HAPPY Thanksgiving Holiday - however you celebrate it - in the time of Covid.

Seniors, please stay connected during the holiday season.

THE STORY OF THE FIRST THANKSGIVING
Do you remember the story of the first Thanksgiving? Did you know lobster was on the menu?

Click Here for the Story from the History Channel
TEST YOUR THANKSGIVING TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE
Answers are listed at the end of this issue.
1. Where was the first Thanksgiving meal held?
2. True or False - Potatoes were served at the first Thanksgiving meal.
3. Name the first President to officially pardon the turkey at the White House.
4. How did Thanksgiving lead to the modern day “tv dinner?”
5. What company canned the first cranberry sauce?
6. What is the name of, and in what city is, the country’s largest Thanksgiving parade held?
7. What causes the tired feeling we have after we eat our Thanksgiving meal?

ON A SERIOUS NOTE...THE CDC HAS ISSUED NEW SAFETY GUIDANCE

AVOID TRAVEL IF POSSIBLE
On November 19, the CDC issued new guidance against any holiday travel. If you do have to travel, check on your destination’s Covid situation.
Click Here for Destination Covid Status

CELEBRATE ONLY WITH PEOPLE YOU LIVE WITH
The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. If that’s not possible, please remember to:
1. Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils
2. Wear a mask and safely store your mask while eating and drinking
3. Avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen
4. Use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets, and disposable items like food containers, plates, and utensils

MASK UP, EVEN IF FAMILY TESTS COME BACK NEGATIVE
Better to be safe than sorry. The incubation period for Covid is up to 14 days. During this time, family members can test negative and not be showing symptoms.
Whatever the results, the CDC is urging wearing masks, social distancing and hand washing, especially if you will be around college-age and out-of-town young adults.

COVID IN OUR COMMUNITY
Recently, the Via Center’s Mobile City Council Representative and Council President Levon Manzie made the observation that some people “seem to be suffering from Covid fatigue, but Covid hasn't gotten fatigued at all.” We are seeing an increase in the number of cases, but we can’t get tired of protecting our safety and health.

![COVID-19 By Week of Report Date graph]

COVID IN OUR STATE
In the last two weeks, the rolling daily average of new cases has increased by about 50%, with one in every 364 people testing positive for Covid. One thing to keep in mind is testing decreased in the summer and early fall months. Now, citizens are again getting tested, and this leads to an increase in the percentage of tests that are coming back positive. While only 14% of the intensive care beds in state hospitals are empty, and a few people are beginning to show up with the flu, fewer Covid patients are requiring ICU space because of improvements in treatments. Of the roughly 1,400 intensive care beds that were in use statewide this week, only 368 were filled by Covid patients.
COVID IN OUR COUNTRY
More than 12 million Americans have tested positive for Covid. The daily Covid death rate has reached the highest level since May, averaging more than 1,300 deaths per day. Overall, more than 265,000 citizens have died, and hospitalizations also hit an all-time high at more than 80,000.

VACCINE/RESEARCH UPDATE

STATE HEALTH OFFICIALS:
VACCINE COULD ARRIVE IN ALABAMA NEXT MONTH FOR FIRST RESPONDERS/HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS; MARCH/APRIL FOR SENIORS AND AT-RISK
Mobile County Health Department Dr. Scott Chavers: “The state will receive 540,000 vaccines by the end of December.” Pfizer states the vaccine has a 95% efficacy rate, but Dr. Chavers says its effectiveness can only be determined by people being willing to take it. “Look at it, and make the decision that’s right for you, but there’s a lot more to this than I think people realize,” said Dr. Chavers. The first will be offered to healthcare providers and first responders. Depending on availability, the general public may not be offered the vaccine until early March or April. The elderly and those at high risk will be given priority.

Click Here for News Release

WHAT IS ALABAMA’S VACCINATION DISTRIBUTION PLAN?
Alabama’s 32-page plan is still in the Interim (development) stage. The administration team includes: the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and the Alabama Department of Homeland Security (ADHS). The following entities will have the authority to administer the vaccine: medical facilities, private doctors’ offices, public health clinics and pharmacies. The current vaccination roll-out plan can:
* Phase IA for on-site healthcare workers
* Phase IB for essential workers and those at high-risk for severe Covid illness, such as nursing home/assisted living facility residents and those 65 and older
* Phase II for other critical populations, including racial minorities, people affiliated with tribal communities, the incarcerated, the homeless, colleges/university students, rural communities, people with disabilities and the under/or uninsured
* Phase III for the general public

**Click Here for the Alabama Covid-19 Vaccination Plan (Interim)**

**FDA APPROVES FIRST AT-HOME RAPID RESPONSE COVID TEST**
The 30-minute test kit will require a prescription, likely limiting its initial use. Users will collect a nasal sample, swirl it in a vial and plug it into a portable device that interprets the results and displays whether the person tested positive or negative.

![Image of toilet paper](image)

**ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY, THEN CONSIDER STOCKING UP ON COVID SUPPLIES**
In the face of new cases, shoppers are once again panic buying paper goods and cleaning supplies. Currently, most major retailers aren’t placing a limit on toilet paper, paper towels, disinfecting wipes and hand soap, so this is the time to buy. The exception is Publix, who is limiting certain items.
WALMART COUNTING CUSTOMERS AGAIN; CONSIDER NEW APP

You may need to be prepared to wait at Walmart, as the retailer is again limiting customers to not exceed five customers per every roughly 1,000 square feet, or about 20% of a store’s capacity. Consider shopping online at [www.walmart.com](http://www.walmart.com). The store will shop for you and have your items ready to pick up. Or, get the Walmart InHome App and they will deliver your groceries and prescriptions.

[Click Here to Download Walmart InHome App](http://www.walmart.com)

"Do I Still Need to Wear a Mask Around My Grandparents if I've Already Had COVID-19?"

YES. If Seniors’ adult children or grandchildren have had Covid, they still need to wear a mask around you. While experts do think there’s immunity for some amount of time for most people after Covid infection, it’s still not known how immunity works for this particular virus or how long it lasts. Some evidence suggests that a recovered patient’s immunity may fade within weeks or months after infection.
LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER

12 DAYS OF
Via’s Virtual Christmas

SENIORS!
BE READY FOR THE 12 DAYS OF VIA’S VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS!
BEGINS MONDAY, DECEMBER 7 at 3:00 P.M.

On Monday, December 7, check your e-mail, the Via Facebook page (via health, fitness and enrichment center), website (www.viamobile.org), or Instagram (viahealthfitness) for the start of our 12 Days of Via’s Virtual Christmas give away! We will be giving away prizes each day (M-F) through December 22.

Videos will be posted daily at 3:00 p.m.

Our drawings will be virtual. Watch each days’ video post to see if you are the winner. We will arrange for pick up under our Portico. This give away is for Seniors only (ages 55 and older).

You only have to enter once by:
1. E-mailing (bestes@viamobile.org)
2. Commenting on our Facebook post
3. Replying to our story on Instagram
4. Calling 470.5229

Click Here for the 12 Days of Christmas Give Away Items
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.

Current Data:
https://www.bamatracker.com/

MOBILE COUNTY/STATE/U.S. CASES

Updated November 23 at 9:00 a.m.
Mobile County cases: 19,446
Mobile County deaths: 360 (.02% of positive cases)
Mobile County tested (diagnostic): 123,590
Mobile County tested (antibody): 3,677
Hospitalizations: 2,558
State-wide cases: 236,865
State-wide tested (diagnostic): 1.5 M
State-wide tested (antibody): 70,247
State-wide deaths: 3,472
Hospitalizations: 23,942
State-wide recoveries: 90,702
U.S. cases:
U.S. deaths:

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS - UPDATE

UPDATED TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile
ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUESTIONS
1. Plymouth, Massachusetts. Although, some historians believe Florida (60 years before Plymouth was the first meal when a Spanish fleet came ashore shared a festive meal with the native Timucuan people in St. Augustine.
2. True and False. Sweet potatoes – a staple of colony life – were served. White potatoes, however, had not been shipped to the colonies at the time.
3. President John F. Kennedy was the first to spare a turkey’s life with a quip, “We’ll just let this one grow,” in 1963. The annual White House tradition of “pardoning” a turkey officially started with George H.W. Bush in 1989.
4. In 1953, a Swanson & Sons employee overestimated demand for Thanksgiving turkey and the company had 260 tons of extra frozen birds. So, they ordered 5,000 aluminum trays, devised a turkey meal and packaged them up. In the first year of production, they sold 10 million turkey TV tray dinners.
5. Ocean Spray. Marcus Urann canned the first jellied cranberry sauce in 1912 and eventually founded the cranberry growers cooperative known as Ocean Spray.
6. Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. The parade has been rolling since 1924.
7. Don’t blame the turkey! Turkey meat contains tryptophan, an amino acid that the body needs to make serotonin, a hormone that helps you relax. But, turkey has only 250 to 310 milligrams of tryptophan in a 3-ounce serving. The real culprit? Carbohydrates in all of the side dishes that result in a metabolism crash.
Enjoy Some Videos from Our Drive-Through Veterans Day Lunch! We served more than 160 meals to those who sacrificed so much to ensure our freedom.

Via Staff and Kappa Epsilon Psi Military Sorority Volunteers
https://www.facebook.com/theviacenter/videos/765212920701813

USA Phi Mu Sisters
https://www.facebook.com/theviacenter/videos/980757989116060

USA Alpha Gamma Delta Sisters
https://www.facebook.com/theviacenter/videos/984290815395673
COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY

Governor Extends Safer-at-Home/Mask Order Until December 11
The statewide Mask Mandate has been extended, because Covid hospitalization numbers have increased slightly statewide. However, this metric has increased more slowly than Alabama saw in our mid-July peak (1,500 cases). In August and September, state hospitalizations rose to 1,200 and there is a gradual increase. Health officials are also concerned upcoming holidays/family gatherings will fuel the current wave. Notably, our statewide death rate has declined since our pandemic peak, with improvements in treatment.

Rate of Deaths Per Day

Cumulative Deaths / Cumulative Cases Per Day

Here’s What's Changed
1. The emergency occupancy rates for retailers, gyms, fitness and entertainment venues has been removed.

2. Exceptions for 6-foot social distancing rules at many businesses are now allowed— including barber shops, hair salons, gyms and restaurants – if people are wearing masks and separated by barriers.

3. Restaurants that have dividers will be allowed to increase the number of patrons allowed inside, with the 6-foot and mask requirements.

Click Here for Full Order

Click Here for Graphic Representation

**MOBILE COUNTY**

In mid-July, Mobile County saw 1,805 cases reported in a single week. By August, reports of new cases had dropped by nearly 70 percent, and our numbers continued to decrease from there, even with major holidays such as July 4th and Labor Day. The percentage of positive results among tests for Covid has remained roughly at 4 percent in October, which is the lowest the percentage has been since March.

**Increase in Cases, Hospitalizations Stable**

In the last two weeks (from November 1 to November 13), we have seen an uptick in positive cases – about 7%. At the same time, hospitalizations for Covid have remained relatively stable and are well below what would strain the resources of local hospitals. To state what we already know, Super Spreaders need to wear masks, social distance and hand wash to protect our Seniors and keep transmission rates in check in Mobile County as we enter flu season.
PERSPECTIVE ON OUR RESTRICTIONS TO LIMIT COVID SPREAD
Many U.S. states (Iowa, Ohio, North Carolina, Indiana, Utah) across the country are seeing a rise in cases requiring hospitalizations (our neighbor Mississippi is one). Overall, 40 states are seeing a rise in cases. Based on the data, not adhering to guidelines is directly linked to increased cases. More cases mean more restrictions. Some examples of what communities are now facing:
- A 10-person cap on gatherings within private homes
- Curfews on restaurants and gyms
- Moving to all-remote schools
- Suspending all youth sports

Click Here for a List of All States and Restrictions

U.S. CASES SURGE; DEATHS CONTINUE TO DECLINE OVERALL
Death rates have declined since the start of the pandemic, due to new treatments and protocols. But, Covid continues to pose a serious risk to hospitalized patients. Compared to patients hospitalized with flu, Covid patients had a higher risk for developing complications, and they were five times more likely to die from the illness. More than 67,000 Americans are in the hospital with Covid — the most since the start of the pandemic, according to the COVID Tracking Project.

VACCINE UPDATE:
FDA TO ISSUE EMERGENCY USE IN NOVEMBER

Good News, But We’ll Have to Wait for It
Phizer & Bionet
Phizer and Bionet have announced the development of a vaccine found to be more than 90% effective in preventing Covid in participants without evidence of prior infection.

**Clinical Trial Details**
The study enrolled 43,538 participants, with 42% having diverse backgrounds. No serious safety concerns have been observed. Clinical trials will continue with 164 confirmed cases to collect data and evaluate the vaccine’s performance against candidates who were given the prevention protocol.

Employees will have to be trained and storage developed. The vaccine must be stored at minus 70 degrees Celsius (minus 94 Fahrenheit) until shortly before it is injected. FYI...this is about the temperature of the South Pole in the winter. It will be transported in reusable boxes, each holding between 1,000 and 5,000 doses stuffed with dry ice and equipped with GPS-enabled sensors.

Pfizer said it expects to be able to produce 50 million doses this year in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Both companies have suggested that half of doses produced will go to the United States, as the Bionet site is in Belgium.

**Moderna**
Moderna is the second firm to reveal a positive result, with nearly 95% protection in trials. More than 30,000 participants at 100 clinical sites in the U.S are participating, which launched on July 27. Recognizing the disproportionate impact on minority populations, 37% of trial volunteers are from racial and ethnic minorities. It’s more expensive, but Moderna’s vaccine provides a major advantage over Pfizer’s, which requires ultracold freezing. Moderna said it had improved the shelf life and stability, meaning its vaccine can be stored for six months at -20C (minus 4 Fahrenheit) for shipping and long-term storage, and at standard refrigeration temperatures of 2C to 8C (28.4 Fahrenheit) for 30 days. The company could potentially manufacture 1 billion doses by the end of 2021.

**Available Supply and Distribution are Front and Center**
Companies are expected to issue a Submission for Emergency Use Authorization to the FDA next week. Health officials say that success will hinge on an untested network of federal, state and local governments, companies and health workers. Millions of doses will have to be made quickly (treatment is a 2-injection process for both vaccines) and given to the hospitals, clinics and pharmacies.

**Proposed Distribution Plan – Seniors in Phase 2**
No one knows for certain, but a complete roll-out could take as much as 12 months. In the United States, the Phase-In Plan was developed by the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine:

**Phase 1**
Health-care workers and first responders (5%)

**Phase 2**
People with underlying conditions that put them at high risk of severe Covid disease or death and *older adults* (10%)

**Phase 3**
Essential service workers at high risk of exposure, teachers and school staff, people in homeless shelters and prisons, older adults who have not already been treated and people with underlying conditions that put them at moderate risk (30–35%)

**Phase 4**
Young adults, children and essential service workers at increased risk of exposure (40–45%)

**Phase 5**
All remaining residents (5–15%)

**TREATMENT UPDATE**

**Remdesivir for Those Hospitalized**
On October 22, the FDA approved the antiviral drug Veklury (remdesivir) for use in adult and pediatric patients 12 years of age and older and weighing at least 88 pounds for the treatment of Covid requiring hospitalization. The drug is only administered in a hospital or in a healthcare setting capable of providing acute care as opposed to inpatient hospital care. The drug is the first treatment for Covid to receive FDA approval.

**Monoclonal Antibody for Seniors 65 and Older**
On November 10, the FDA approved an Eli Lily drug designed to prevent people with mild to moderate Covid from getting sicker. The drug, a monoclonal antibody, will be available to people 65 or older or those with underlying health conditions. Supplies are limited and plans for distribution are in progress.

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*Happy Thanksgiving*
CDC HAS A NEW WEBSITE WITH UPDATED VACCINE EFFORTS
The CDC recently launched a new page dedicated to vaccine planning efforts.


DON'T CANCEL THANKSGIVING: FAMILY ONLY AND CONSIDER MOVING YOUR MEAL OUTSIDE
On Monday, the CDC updated its holiday guidance, noting the virus crisis is worsening and that small household gatherings are “an important contributor.” The CDC said older adults and others at heightened risk of severe illness should avoid gathering with people outside their households. However, the CDC doesn’t recommend cancelling the holiday. Spending time with loved ones is important for health too, according to health officials. Consider:

- New outdoor traditions – meals or such as hiking as a family
- Guest lists for indoor feasts should be small enough so people can sit six feet apart while unmasked and eating
- Open the windows to keep air circulating if eating inside

SENIORS! IF YOU HAVE COLLEGE-AGED GRANDCHILDREN, THEY SHOULD TAKE A TEST BEFORE BEING AROUND YOU DURING HOLIDAYS
Mobile County Health Department Dr. Rendi Murphree: “If you’ve been on campus, if you’ve been living in an apartment while going to school, please get tested a couple days before you go home,” she said. “Know your Covid status before you go, so that you don’t inadvertently expose people back at your home – your parents, your cousins, your grandparents your aunts and uncles, because we certainly don't want you unknowingly spreading Covid at your family gathering.”

*** We have a list of testing sites on our website at www.viamobile.org and at the end of the newsletter.
VIA REMAINS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC
STAY CONNECTED BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OUR COVID PROGRAM OFFERINGS
Even though we aren’t open to the public, we continue to offer programs with all health and safety guidelines maintained.

Via Online Fitness Portal
New! Outdoor Fitness Schedule
All Current Programs Offered by Via

LAISSEZ LES BON TEMPS ROULER?
Many Mobilians are asking, “will the good times roll for Mardi Gras in 2021?” The Stripers and Polka Dots have canceled the festivities. Other groups are planning to continue, but with Covid safety and health guidelines. And, some groups - such as MAMGA – aren’t ready to make the call. The Mobile Carnival Association says for the upcoming 2021 Carnival season, most Mardi Gras organizations are moving forward with their plans. Venues have been pro-active in communicating with societies the protocols should the city still be in a Safer-At-Home mandate. Mystic societies are using these guidelines to adjust Ball plans. The look and feel of Mardi Gras celebrations will probably be different from previous years.
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT/MEDICARE WILL COVER VACCINE COSTS
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced the agency will cover the cost of any coronavirus vaccine that is authorized by the FDA through an emergency use authorization or full approval. The agency also announced it will help cover a larger portion of the cost of new Covid-19 treatments that may be coming down the pipeline for those on Medicare. For Medicare recipients, any future vaccine would be covered by Medicare Part B as a preventative vaccine at no cost to beneficiaries. Medicare Part B covers doctor visits and outpatient services such as lab tests, diagnostic screenings and medical equipment.

How Many Cases Indicate an “Outbreak”
The MCHD stipulates different categories for outbreaks with different thresholds: long-term care facility is 1 case; a community is 2 cases; and schools are 3 cases. Currently, Mobile’s latest numbers show no schools qualify for an outbreak – good news for Seniors’ adult children and grandchildren.

What is the Difference Between Antibody and Diagnostic Tests?
A diagnostic test shows if you have an active Covid infection. Currently there are two types of diagnostic tests, molecular tests that detect the virus’s genetic material and antigen tests that detect specific proteins from the virus. An antibody test looks for antibodies made by your immune system to fight Covid. Antibodies can take several days/weeks to develop after infection and may stay active for weeks after recovery. Because of this, antibody tests should not be used to diagnose Covid. Researchers don’t know if the presence of antibodies means you are immune to getting the virus.

What is a “Twindemic?”
Medical experts are concerned about a “twinemic,” the double threat of the flu and a possible surge in Covid cases. Covid cases will likely increase in the winter.
months for these reasons: 1) the virus that causes Covid is a coronavirus and other coronaviruses spread more in winter months; in winter months, the air is less humid and particles that carry the virus can linger in the air for longer; our nasal membranes are drier and more vulnerable to infection; and as the weather gets colder, people will spend more time indoors.

How close is “Close Contact” to Someone Who Has Tested Positive for Covid? On October 21, the CDC updated its definition of what counts as close contact to an individual who has Covid. Now, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Anyone who has come into close contact with a person who has Covid is advised to quarantine for two weeks.

HAVE A COVID QUESTION? E-MAIL US AND WE’LL FIND THE ANSWER FOR YOU

Covid Question

KEEPING THE CITY CLEAN DURING COVID: NEW DROP OFF RECYCLING CENTER
The City of Mobile has opened the Western Administrative Complex in Langan Park. The complex is across from the Mobile Museum of Art and behind (to the North of) the Police Headquarters off Pinehill Drive. Hours of operation are Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Saturday - Sunday 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Single Stream! Citizens are now no longer required to sort their recyclables, as more convenient recycling means more people recycle. Note: the City's recycling is a service for Mobile residents only. The City will no longer accept recyclables from businesses or those residing outside Mobile.

Click Here for a List of Recyclable Items

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM VIA!
TURKEY GIVE-A-WAY
Wednesday, December 16, 2020
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Via Center Portico

The Via Center wants to help make the season bright! Please drive-through, grab a frozen turkey for you to prepare your own holiday tradition, and check in with staff to stay connected during the holidays.

RSVP Required: You must make an individual registration, no guests.
E-mail: bestes@viamobile.org
Phone: 251.470.5229
Online: http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr-kzagbytab&oeidk=a07ehew6xd756b95f6f
COSTCO NOW REQUIRES MASKS FOR ALL MEMBERS, EVEN THOSE WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS
Costco's newest face-covering policy now requires everyone who enters its stores to wear a face mask or shield, even those with medical conditions. The previous policy (since May) didn't require those with a medical condition to wear a mask. The only exemption is children under the age of two.

COVID SIDELINES SEC FOOTBALL
Covid has struck the SEC. Four of our teams had an insufficient number of available players due to positive tests, athletes who might have been exposed having to spend time in quarantine and lacking an opponent. These Teams didn’t play this weekend:
No. 1 Alabama
No. 6 Texas A&M
No. 11 Georgia
No. 21 Auburn

It’s speculated Covid cancellations were caused by Halloween parties and several off weeks that allowed players to go home. Teams are currently schedule shuffling. Alabama, for example, will likely play LSU on December 5 and at Arkansas on December 12.
FREE AT-HOME DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FROM AAA

The AAA is offering the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. Developed by Stanford University, the program is for ages 60 and older and designed in a self-study format. Materials are sent to your home, and weekly small group calls are lead by a trained facilitator. Topics include: dealing with frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; ways to maintain and improve strength, flexibility, and endurance; managing medications; communicate more effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; and healthy eating.

Questions and Registration: Carol at 251.445.3823

DO YOU HAVE A FIRST-AD KIT IN YOUR HOME?

According to the CDC, approximately 80% of Seniors - 60 or older – have a fall or injury in their home each year. These injuries are bone fractures, head traumas, puncture wounds, poisonings, medication overdoses and burns. Having a first-aid kit on hand can be a life-saver until you can get help.
Here are the essential items that should be inside of your first-aid kit:

- Thermometer
- Antibiotic ointment and wipes
- Sterile gloves and hand sanitizer
- Band-aids, gauze, surgical tape and cotton swabs
- Medication list with dosages & frequencies
- Emergency phone numbers
- Scissors and tweezers
- Aspirin, a fever reducer and an anti-inflammatory
- Hydrocortisone and burn creams
- Cold compress
- Flashlight

Also, because it’s the season of Christmas and Hanukkah lights, be sure to have working fire-extinguishers and smoke detectors in your home. Check both monthly to make sure they are in good shape.

Click Here for How to Check Your Fire Extinguisher

Click Here for How to Install/Check Smoke Detectors

HOLIDAY SEASON VIRTUAL TOURS

Graceland – November 19
The magic of Christmas returns to Elvis Presley’s Graceland on November 19 at 6:00 pm CT with the time-honored tradition of Graceland’s annual Christmas Lighting Ceremony. This year, everyone around the world can enjoy it together as the event is presented virtually via Facebook Live on the Elvis Presley’s Graceland Facebook page.

Click Here for the Graceland Facebook Page
Virtual Christmas Lighting at The Champs Élysées, Paris – November 22
The city of Paris has had a bright idea for the festive lighting on its legendary street, the Champs Élysées. Paris is inviting people worldwide to take part in the celebrations from home. To take part, you will need to register - for free - before November 20. On November 22, you connect to your personal account to access a countdown so that you click the digital buzzer at the right time. The ceremony will kick off at 12:00 p.m. (7:00 p.m. Paris time) on Sunday, November 22, and will be livestreamed. Or, you can check it out after the event on their website.

To Register for Live Event:
www.illuminations-champs-elysees.com

COVID-SAFE IN PERSON TOUR
Bellingrath Garden & Home Magic Christmas in Lights
November 27, 2020-January 3, 2021
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
This walking tour is outside in Bellingrath Garden, and features more than 1,100 set pieces, 3 million lights and 15 scenes throughout the 65-acre Garden estate. Tickets
are being sold online to designate entry times because of precautions related to Covid requirements. Tickets range from $8 - $25 and the tour takes about an hour. The event is handicapped accessible, and wheelchairs can be rented for $5.

Click Here for Bellingrath Website/Purchase Tickets

HOW TO HANDLE HOLIDAY BLUES DURING COVID
What a year! We will always remember “2020.” We have all learned how to cope with Covid during shut downs, various holidays and even several hurricanes. Now, it’s the Holiday Season, and we need to look after ourselves and our Senior friends. Seniors staying connected is critical. Here are some tips for how to beat the blues:
1. Make sure YOU are not overly sad. Call your doctor if you have anxiety or depression
2. Comfort others who may be grieving
3. Exercise to boost mood
4. Volunteer (Covid-safely) or donate to charity
5. Use technology to visit family virtually, such as Zoom or Facetime
6. For Seniors who don’t have access to technology, have a socially-distanced social (SDS) for the holidays in your driveway or neighborhood

ALABAMA VOTES: ELECTION RESULTS
For those of you interested in final vote numbers and the status of local and state amendments, we have provided links to the information. The election has not been officially certified, so you will see “unofficial vote totals” on the Secretary of State website.
Medicare Open Enrollment: Scammers Ramping Up
According to a new Better Business Bureau ScamTracker report, Americans are getting scam calls phishing for their Medicare numbers and other personal information. This year, open enrollment runs October 15 - December 7 for Medicare
Here’s What to Watch For:
1. You receive a call (or a recorded message) from a “health care advocate” or “benefits expert” claiming to help you improve your Medicare options. Just provide some personal information, such as your Medicare ID number. People representing Medicare or ACA plans DO NOT contact you by phone, email, or in person unless you are already enrolled.
2. Decline promotional gifts in exchange for personal information. Free gifts, health screenings, or other special deals in return for your Medicare ID number or other personally identifiable information are a SCAM.
3. Beware of dishonest brokers who offer “free health screenings.” Some brokers offer this to weed out people who are less healthy. This is called “cherry picking” and is against the Medicare rules.
4. If you sense a scam or are being pressured, HANG UP. Go to official websites, where you can enroll or re-enroll.

Medicare Website
www.Medicare.gov
Marketplace Health Plans
WALMART VISION CENTER OFFERING VOUCHERS FOR FREE GLASSES
As part of the National Vision Cares program, Walmart Vision Centers are offering 25,000 pairs of free glasses through 2021. Because the Via Center is a United Way agency, we have been sent information and vouchers.

To Redeem Vouchers:
1. Vouchers will be honored at the Walmart Vision Center at 5245 Rangeline Service Road South in Mobile. Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Sunday - closed
2. Call the Vision Center to schedule appointment, let them know you have the National Vision Care voucher and if you have a valid eyeglass prescription.
3. You must have the physical National Vision Cares voucher with you at your appointment. Click on the link below to print.

To Schedule Appointment:
Ashley Czernek
251.666.1566

[Click Here for Full Program Information/Voucher]

COLOR THERAPY CAN HELP THOSE WITH MEMORY LOSS WITH DAILY ACTIVITIES
Colors are processed by our brains more quickly than words are. Color therapy can be beneficial for those with memory loss, according to Dementia/Alzheimer’s specialists. Using different colors can provide contrast in spaces and help distinguish different objects. Some examples:
- painting a door a color that contrasts with the wall makes the door easier to find
- putting colorful tape on the handles of walkers makes them easier to locate
- placing black mats in front of doors and stairs can help wandering, as they are perceived as holes and avoided

Colors and the responses associated with them:
- **RED** - Stimulates a faster heartbeat and faster breathing. If patients are not eating enough, using red plates may increase their appetites.
- **ORANGE** - Associated with sociability and happiness. Wearing orange may stimulate enthusiasm and creativity.
- **YELLOW** - Speeds metabolism. Although yellow is usually considered a cheerful color, research shows that people lose their tempers more often in yellow rooms.
- **GREEN** - Calming, tranquil color. Green is the last color those with memory loss lose the ability to see, so it’s a good color for caregivers to wear.
- **BLUE** - Associated with tranquility and creativity. It causes the body to produce the calming hormone melatonin, resulting in more peaceful sleep - an aid for dementia patients as well as their caregivers.

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**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.
**Current Data:**
[https://www.bamatracker.com/](https://www.bamatracker.com/)
MOBILE COUNTY/STATE/U.S. CASES

Updated November 16 at 9:00 a.m.
Mobile County cases: 18,565
Mobile County deaths: 340 (.02% of positive cases)
Mobile County tested (diagnostic): 118,664
Mobile County tested (antibody): 3,608
State-wide cases: 219,232
State-wide tested (diagnostic): 1,466,603
State-wide tested (antibody): 68,042
State-wide deaths: 3,249
Hospitalizations: 22,275
State-wide recoveries: 88,038
U.S. cases: 10.8 M
U.S. deaths: 243,758

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS - UPDATE

UPDATED TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile

Stay Safe, Healthy & Connected!
The Via Team

10.13.2020
Even in Trying Times... We Can Still Find a Rainbow!

Click link to see video of a double rainbow, shot by the Via staff on the Causeway.
https://www.facebook.com/theviacenter/videos/402547921146551

We begin the 8th month of our community’s Covid pandemic....
* Governor extends Safer-at-Home Order mask order until November 8
* We are experiencing the collision of Covid AND hurricanes
* Seniors remain the bedrock of the community in terms of social distancing and wearing masks and have proven to be adaptable as they have embraced the virtual world

COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY

You Can Now Visit Loved Ones
There is some good news that came with Governor Ivey’s Safer-at-Home order being extended to November 8. After a 6-months ban, family and friends can now visit loved ones. Hospitals and long-term care facilities are now allowed to admit one person at a time for visits. Mobile Infirmary, Providence Hospital, Springhill Medical Center and University Hospital are all following the new guidance and allowing visitors.

There are two exceptions for nursing homes: if the home is in a county that has a positive rate greater than 10%; or if there has been a new Covid case at the facility in the last 14 days.

How is Mobile County Doing?
The Labor Day holiday didn’t lead to a feared surge of cases. Health experts say it’s due to citizens wearing masks and social distancing during holiday activities. We also have a 14-day trend that shows daily cases declining. Health officials consider any day with 50 or less cases reported as good news. Our Super Spreaders (ages 29-45) continue to lead in cases, with 38% of all new cases.

Every death is devasting to families. However, with more education on the virus and new treatments, we do see a positive trend on this issue. The population of Mobile County is 413,210, the number of cases is 13,871 and there have been 308 deaths: we aren’t seeing a spike in the increase of deaths.

Here is a breakdown of who is contracting Covid:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Case #</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-17</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>2,066</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-49</td>
<td>5,196</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>2,895</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2,379</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALNBS Figure 5. Number COVID-19 by Month of Report — Mobile County, Alabama, March 19–September 30, 2020

COVID-19 Reported In the Last 14 Days With 7-Day and 14-Day Moving Average

7 Day Average 14 Day Average

[Graph showing COVID-19 data with months and corresponding numbers]
OUTDOOR FALL FITNESS CLASSES AT VIA BEGIN OCTOBER 19

Based on our survey results, fitness classes were identified by Seniors as a key need for physical and mental health. Now that the weather is getting cooler, the Via Center is offering a Fall Fitness program. Classes will be taught by Irene, Gerry and Elena outdoors, either under the Portico or in the courtyard. We will follow all public health guidance.

COVID SAFETY STATEMENT:
1. Classes will be held outdoors, either in the courtyard or under the Portico.
2. Staff will check your temperature before class begins.
3. You will be asked to sign a waiver.
4. You must be socially distanced, 6-feet apart, at all times.
5. Please bring your own towel and water bottle.
6. Via will provide hand sanitizer.

Click Here for Schedule or visit www.viamobile.org homepage
DRIVE-THROUGH HALLOWEEN SOCIAL
Friday, October 30
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Please join us! Swing through and grab a grilled hotdog, goody bag and a beverage and visit with the Via staff and event volunteers. A special thanks to Thrivent for supporting the event.

To register:
E-mail: bestes@viamobile.org
Phone: 251.470.5229
Online: Click Here to Register Online

POST HURRICANE SALLY RESOURCES
For those still dealing with Hurricane Sally, there are community resources available to help with your efforts.
Drop of Bagged Debris: James Seals Community Center at 540 Texas Street and Langan Municipal Park at 4901 Zeigler Boulevard. Hours – 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

FEMA Funds: Mobile received a Major Disaster Declaration, allowing individuals to apply for disaster aid from FEMA. Some of the disaster-related items FEMA will support, include home repair, household item replacement, medical and dental expenses, temporary housing assistance and funeral expenses.

To apply for assistance, you will need the following for your application: social security number, annual household income, contact information, and insurance and bank account information.  

Link to Individual Assistance Information  
https://www.fema.gov/individual-disaster-assistance  
Online: DisasterAssistance.gov  
Phone: 800.621-3362

Disaster SNAP
Alabama DHR has received federal Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits to qualifying residents in Mobile County. Benefits are intended to replace food purchased with SNAP, lost to widespread power outages. Current SNAP recipients are not eligible for D-SNAP, as extension benefits were automatically given to SNAP recipients. Approved benefits will be delivered via EBT cards. The Mobile County application period is October 13 - October 16 and October 19.

A Pre-screening Application Must be Completed  
Pre-screening application: https://dhr.alabama.gov/  
Phone: 251.450.7597 or 251.450.6955 from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Office Location: 2970 Cottage Hill Road, Suite 150, Mobile, AL 36606

MEDICARE ENROLLMENT BEGINS OCTOBER 15  
CHECK OUT MEDICARE CARE COMPARE
Medicare has launched a website to review and compare health care services all in one place. Check out Care Compare to get personalized results about doctors, hospitals, home health, rehab services, long-term care, dialysis and other services in our area. Seniors can also use the website on tablets or smartphone.

A Via Center Community Partner is available if you have questions about Medicare.
Iras Wagner, United Healthcare
Phone: 251.753.0746
E-mail: iras.wagner@gmail.com

Click Here to Access Medicare Care Compare

NEW COVID INFORMATION FROM THE CDC
Lingering Virus Droplets in Enclosed Spaces Contagious for Hours
The CDC changed its guidance on October 5 on how Covid spreads. While the virus is most commonly transmitted by respiratory droplets between people in close contact, the agency now says that “some infections can be spread by exposure to virus in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours” — also known as airborne transmission. “There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with Covid seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising,” the CDC says.

CDC Confirms What We know in Our Community:
Super Spreaders Are an Issue
Younger adults who contract Covid are likely “seeding infections” in older adults, a new report from the CDC shows. In regions that experienced outbreaks this summer, increases in the percentage of positive coronavirus test results among 20- to 39-year-olds preceded increases in adults 60 and older by an average of 8.7 days.
This suggests that “younger adults likely contributed to community transmission of the virus.” The report’s authors write: “Strict adherence to community mitigation strategies and personal preventive behaviors by younger adults is needed to help reduce their risk for infection and minimize subsequent transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons at higher risk for severe COVID-19.”

THANK YOU COUNCILMAN MANZIE (D-2):
CITY OF MOBILE PERFORMANCE CONTRACT RENEWED
A big shout out to Councilman Levon Manzie for ensuring the Via Center received our City of Mobile funding. Our Performance Contract passed as part of the 2020-2021 Budget. Councilman Manzie continues to be a strong advocate for the Via Center and the Seniors we serve, and we are grateful for that support. Also, thank you to our members who contacted elected officials on our behalf.

Even though we aren’t open to the public, we have re-tooled our programs and continue to serve thousands of Seniors through: virtual enrichment and education programs; our interactive e-newsletter, “Seniors Staying Connected: Community Coronavirus Information;” our Via On-line Fitness Portal; drive through community food distributions and Membership socialization events; information and referral; and our Neighbor-to-Neighbor check in program. We have implemented our Ready-to-Reopen Strategic Plan and are ready when the Governor updates her order.

Please thank Councilman Manzie directly:
E-mail: council2@cityofmobile.org
Phone: 251.208.7441
Mail: Mobile City Council – 9th Floor, Government Plaza, 205 Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36602
Special Thanks Also To...
We would also like to thank Mayor Stimpson, Councilwomen Bess Rich and Gina Gregory and Councilmen C.J. Small, Joel Daves, Fred Richardson and John Williams. These elected officials were also supportive of the Via Center.

THE VIA CENTER GIVING TREE CAMPAIGN
Although we are closed to the public, per the Governor’s Safer-at-Home Order, the Via Center has re-tooled its programs and services and continue to serve thousands of Seniors in our community. This year, we weren’t able to hold our traditional Annual Appeal and Cool White Linen Night fundraiser. So.....we are asking our members, supporters and community partners to participate in our “2020 Giving Tree” campaign.

In our main hallway, we will wall mount an elegant donor tree. “The Giving Tree” will have leaves of brass, nickel, copper, bronze and bronze stones at the base. Each leaf and stone will be engraved with the name and/or message of the supporter of the Via Center. We encourage everyone to give, at any level they can. A donor who can’t meet the leaf and stone threshold, will be an Acorn Donor. Your name will be placed on an acorn plaque beside the Giving Tree.

[Click Here for the Giving Tree Brochure]
Thank You to Our Current Donors (Listed Here)

Ways to Give:
E-mail: bestes@viamobile.org
Phone: 251.470.5229
Online: Online Donation Button

BE READY TO VOTE NOVEMBER 3RD
There is a 50% increase in absentee ballot requests this election cycle. If you are not voting in person due to Covid, be sure to secure your absentee ballot. If you are voting in person, confirm your polling location.

- Absentee ballot applications must be received in the office of the Absentee Election Manager no later than the 5th calendar day prior to the election.
- Absentee ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than the day prior to the election and received no later than noon on election day.
- If hand-delivered, the ballot must be in the office of the Absentee Election Manager by the close of business (but no later than 5 p.m.) on the day prior to the election.

Also, all public libraries are offering free copies, witnessing (need 2) and notarizing.

* Mobile County Voting Office Has Extended Hours
Open Saturdays 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. through election
151 Government St, Mobile, Alabama 36602
Phone Number: 574.6400
E-mail: voter@mobile-county.net

Mobile County Absentee Ballot
Check Your Polling Location/Ballot Status/Registration
https://www.mobilecountyal.gov/government/elections-voting/

COVID SAFE, DRIVE-THROUGH HALLOWEEN FUN WITH YOUR GRANDKIDS
Drive Through Trunk or Treat
Saturday, October 31
10:00 a.m. – noon
Langan Park

The City of Mobile Parks and Recreation Department is hosting a ‘reverse’ Trunk or Treat. Grandkids can wear their costumes, decorate your vehicle, and drive slowly through Langan-Municipal Park. Staff will bring the goodies for your grandchildren right to your car. Partners will also be set up along the designated route with tents and trunks full of candy and treats.

CENSUS DEADLINE EXTENDED UNTIL OCTOBER 31:
WE NEED THE FEDERAL FUNDS BASED ON OUR POPULATION
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
2. Call 844.330.2020
3. Mail in paper form

CLOSURES/CANCELLATIONS/RESCHEDULED
- Movies in the Park (Dog River Park) – Cancelled until further notice
- October Intergenerational Spooky Walk – in person event rescheduled to Friday, October 16 downtown Mobile
- Area Agency on the Aging Health Expo at the Mobile Fair Grounds – Cancelled due to Covid
- Via Center/USA Center for Generational Studies Annual Senior Conference October 23 – Cancelled due to Covid

Is it Safe for My Grandkids to Trick-or-Treat During Covid?
CDC guidance is discouraging door-to-door trick-or-treating, costume masks and parties. Costume masks aren’t a substitute for cloth masks, unless it’s made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose and doesn’t leave gaps. Local health officials suggest “moderate risk” activities, such as one-way trick-or-treating by exchanging goody bags placed at the end of a driveway or yard. And, the agency offered this advice: ‘If screaming will occur, greater distancing is advised.’
FREE AT-HOME DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FROM AAA
The AAA is offering the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. Developed by Stanford University, the program is for ages 60 and older and designed in a self-study format. Materials are sent to your home, and weekly small group calls are lead by a trained facilitator. Topics include: dealing with frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; ways to maintain and improve strength, flexibility, and endurance; managing medications; communicate more effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; and healthy eating.

Questions and Registration: Carol at 251.445.3823

THE QUILTMAKERS OF GEES BEND
Alabama Public Television is presenting an amazing journey on the quilters of Gee's Bend. This 56-minute documentary explores the extraordinary lives,
inspirations, and history of these artists, and also follows them on a poignant and sometimes very comical bus journey to see their quilts exhibited at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

View Gees Bend Segment Here

AMAZING MOUNT VERNON TOUR
This tour is brought to you by the History Channel. In this 360-degree tour, you walk the estate and explore the rooms of Mt. Vernon by clicking your mouse. You can even see the view from the Cupola. Sections of the tour are narrated for more detailed information.

https://virtualtour.mountvernon.org/

REFRESHER: SELF CARE DURING COVID
To all of those Seniors who miss their Seniors Centers being open, we know how hard it’s been on you. A lack of socialization, programs and activities you love and in-person exercise classes are missing in your life. Here’s a refresher on things you can do to make sure you are caring for yourself:

Daily Movement
Walk around your home and neighborhood
Sit down and stand up from a stable chair to keep your legs strong
Dance to your favorite music
Take advantage of the Via Center Online Fitness Portal

**Fun, Healthy Eating**
Add more color to your plate
Here’s a tip: if eating canned vegetables, rinse them in water first to lessen the salt
Drink plenty of water

**Health Tracking**
Make sure you check your blood pressure – pharmacies have BP checkers and machine available if you don’t have a doctor’s appointment

**Watch Changes in Mood**
Are you feeling overly sad or lonely? Reach out if you are.

**Stay Socially Connected**
Telephone calls, porch conversations, family/church socially distanced socials in your driveway, Facetiming, Zoom get togethers

*** If you or a friend needs to connect, the Via Center is here for you through our Neighbor-Neighbor call/check in program: 251.470.5229 or bestes@viamobile.org.

**FREE ONLINE MIND GAMES**

![Sudoku Puzzle](https://www.websudoku.com/)

**Web Sudoku**
Sudoku is a logic-based puzzle in which the player fills a 9×9 grid with digits so that every column, row, and 3×3 subgrid contains all of the digits from one through nine.

[https://www.websudoku.com/](https://www.websudoku.com/)
Boatload Crossword Puzzles
Boatload Puzzles is the home of the world’s largest supply of crossword puzzles, more than 40,000 of varying degrees of difficulty.  
https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword

Chess
If you have lost your chess partner due to Covid distancing requirements, you can play online. Register as a guest or sign up for a free account and play against the computer or a live person with a similar skill level: New to Chess, Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.  
https://www.chess.com/play/online

Arkadium Card Games
Playing cards were first invented in China around the 9th century AD (they more closely resembled dominoes that today’s paper cards), spread to India and Persia, and were later introduced in Europe in the 14th century. This website has Solitaire, Bridge (you play in an actual game), Blackjack and more. Also, tutorials to learn how to play…this may be a good time to take up a new hobby! You will have to sit through a short ad before you play, but you can “skip ad” after several seconds.  
https://www.arkadium.com/free-online-games/card/
THERE ARE SIX TYPES OF COVID NOW IDENTIFIED
A new study from King’s College London based on data from a symptom tracker app, determined that there are six distinct ‘types’ of Covid, involving different clusters of symptoms. Scientists hope the discovery, once further studied, could help predict what types of care patients might need, and give doctors the ability to predict which patients would fall into which category.

The six clusters of symptoms:
1. Flu-like with no fever: Headache, loss of smell, muscle pains, cough, sore throat, chest pain, no fever.
2. Flu-like with fever: Headache, loss of smell, cough, sore throat, hoarseness, fever, loss of appetite.
4. Severe level one, fatigue: Headache, loss of smell, cough, fever, hoarseness, chest pain, fatigue.
5. Severe level two, confusion: Headache, loss of smell, loss of appetite, cough, fever, hoarseness, sore throat, chest pain, fatigue, confusion, muscle pain.
6. Severe level three, abdominal and respiratory: Headache, loss of smell, loss of appetite, cough, fever, hoarseness, sore throat, chest pain, fatigue, confusion, muscle pain, shortness of breath, diarrhea, abdominal pain.

VIA MEMBERS CAN NOW PARTICIPATE IN USA VIRTUAL CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS
“Oyster Gardening on the Gulf Coast”
Wednesday, October 14
11:00 a.m.
Dr. P.J. Waters, with Auburn University Marine Extension & Research Center, will share the work being done to improve and protect Gulf Coast waters through oyster gardening.

Click Here to Register

ONLINE SHOPPING CRIMINALS
As Seniors turn internet for many of their shopping needs during Covid, online shopping scams are increasing.

How It Works
Scammers create bogus websites, similar website addresses to the real thing, customer service numbers, tech support numbers and e-mails. When you do a search for “Amazon customer service number” a fake number pops up. Amazon-like e-mails are also a favorite.

What You Should Do
1. Shop online with stores you trust rather than finding unfamiliar or unverified companies through a search engine.
2. Don’t rely on a web search to look up customer service numbers. Go directly to the store’s website. Or when contacting your credit card issuer, refer to the number on the back of your card.
3. Rather than clicking on a link to a store from an email message, go to your browser and type in the web address to avoid landing on a fake site.
4. Listen to your inner skeptic as you scroll through your inbox, knowing that some messages might not be what they appear to be.

**RESEARCH/VACCINE UPDATE**

**Vaccine Makers Sign Safety Pledge**
In the race to develop a vaccine, pharmaceutical companies are seeking to reassure citizens that all safety protocols are being followed. Recently, vaccine makers signed a safety pledge for their Covid vaccine programs. “We, the undersigned biopharmaceutical companies, want to make clear our on-going commitment to developing and testing potential vaccines for COVID-19 in accordance with high ethical standards and sound scientific principles.” Companies signing the pledge are: AstraZeneca, BioNTech, Moderna, Pfizer, Novavax, Sanofi, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson and Merck.

**Vaccines Under Development In the U.S That Could Stop Covid**
There are more than 30 companies working a vaccine, including those in Germany, Russia, Canada, the United Kingdom, India and China. These are the U.S. companies that are the closest to development.

**Moderna (Phase III ongoing)**
Vaccine Summary: A series of 2 antibody injections
As of October 2, more than 28,000 participants have been enrolled in the study that includes a series of 2 antibody injections. The company said it could produce approximately 20 million doses of the vaccine by the end of the year and between 500 million and one billion doses during 2021.

**Johnson & Johnson, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Phase III ongoing)**
Vaccine Summary: Uses an inactivated version of the common-cold virus to carry genetic material into cells, prompting the body to pump out proteins found in the coronavirus to draw an immune response.
In late August, J&J unveiled a plan for its Phase III trial in 60,000 participants in 28 U.S. states, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, South Africa and Ukraine.

**Pfizer and BioNTech (Phase III ongoing)**

**Vaccine Summary:** Elicits strong immune response, including the production of the immune cells known as T cells.

As of October 5, more than 36,000 participants have been enrolled and more than 28,000 have received both shots of the two-dose vaccine. Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said that the company should know by the end of October if the vaccine works.

**AstraZeneca Partners with University of Oxford (Phase III ongoing)**

**Vaccine Summary:** Uses a weakened version of the common cold that contains some genetic material from the coronavirus, prompting immune response.

A Phase III trial with 30,000 participants started in the U.S. in late August. AstraZeneca said it has the capacity to deliver over two billion doses of the vaccine potentially by the end of the year.

**Novavax (Phase III ongoing)**

**Vaccine Summary:** Coronavirus proteins that are encased in nanoparticles, plus a chemical known as an adjuvant that helps enhance the body's immune response to the shot.

On September 24, the company began a placebo-controlled Phase III trial in with 10,000 individuals between the ages of 18 and 84 years. The Department of Health and Human Services has said that if the vaccine is successful, it will be given to Americans at no cost. The shot is one of several participating in the federal government's Operation Warp Speed drug and vaccine accelerator

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**SENIOR THOUGHT…**

Now that I'm older, here's what I've discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and all-bran.
3. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
4. Funny, I don’t remember being absent-minded.
5. If all is not lost, then where the heck is it?
6. It was a whole lot easier to get older, than it was to get wiser.
7. Some days, you’re the top dog, some days you’re the hydrant.
8. I wish the buck really did stop here; I sure could use a few of them.
10. Accidents in the back seat cause kids.
11. It is hard to make a comeback when you haven’t been anywhere.
12. The world only beats a path to your door when you're in the bathroom.
13. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he’d have put them on my knees.
14. When I’m finally holding all the right cards, everyone wants to play chess.
15. It is not hard to meet expenses. They’re everywhere.
16. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
17. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter. I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm "here after".
18. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
19. It is a lot better to be seen than viewed.
20. Have I sent this message to you before? or did I get it from you?!
State-wide cases: 163,465
State-wide tested (diagnostic): 1,196,452
State-wide tested (antibody): 59,957
State-wide deaths: 2,653
State-wide recoveries: 71,240
U.S. cases: 7.64 M
U.S. deaths: 213,000

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS - UPDATE

UPD ATE D TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile

Stay Safe, Healthy & Connected!
The Via Team

*** PREVIOUS UPDATES ***
9.3.2020
FIRST.... A LABOR DAY REMINDER!
Help your family and friends stay safe and keep YOU Covid free during Labor Day festivities. That means masks, social distancing and washing hands.

MCHD Tips

HOW IS MOBILE COUNTY DOING?
Cases are Down Overall
Cases are down, by both the 7-day average and 14-day average. We also are continuing to see daily cases below 100, which the MCHD says is a good trend.

Our Peak Has Passed
It appears our peak in cases has passed. Click Here for a chart that shows our progress from March 26 – September 3. It shows our “peak” was from August 1 – August 11. Public health experts look at this trend as a sign the statewide mask mandate in working.

Super Spreaders Ages 25-49 Leading New Cases
And finally, Super Spreaders continue to be the fastest growing Covid group. We all need to remind them to “Mask Up.”
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND SPORTS AFFECT ON CASES
We know increased cases increase transmission rates, because the younger and healthier may not show symptoms. From August 25 to August 28, there were only 64 reports of cases (high school and college). Health officials and educators are being proactive, suspending activities and launching contact tracing on both potential and confirmed cases.

OUR STATE MAKING PLANS TO DISTRIBUTE VACCINE, POTENTIALLY APPROVED IN NOVEMBER
Alabama is preparing its distribution chain and delivery system for a Covid vaccine, estimated to be ready in two months. The CDC sent guidelines to states directing them to get ready for a mass distribution beginning in November. Who will get the
vaccine first, how long it will take and other details have yet to be worked out. Initially, there may not be enough vaccines for all Alabamians to receive it. Alabama State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris said state officials have updated the 2008 Mass Vaccine Distribution Plan and fixed all issues.

**CHRONIC FATIGUE MAJOR CONCERN FOR POST COVID PATIENTS**

Researchers and doctors are learning more about the long-term effects of Covid on those who have recovered. Lung issues can persist, and be so severe, they can force those impacted to stop and catch their breath after the simplest of tasks. Chronic fatigue can last weeks or months after initial symptoms have abated. According to the CDC, 35% of patients report they are continually dealing with fatigue.

**MAKE SURE YOU ARE READY TO VOTE ON NOVEMBER 3RD**
Can I Use a Face Shield Instead of a Mask?
John Hopkins Hospital: No. Health officials don’t recommend the clear plastic barriers as a substitute for masks, because there’s no research on whether they keep droplets from spreading. However, if you want extra protection, wear a face shield in addition to a mask. Face shields protect your eyes and keep you from touching your face. If you do wear a reusable face shield with your mask, the CDC says you need to clean it after each use.

Can I get COVID from Ordering Takeout? If the virus can be spread by touching contaminated surfaces, why isn’t it spread by eating contaminated food made by someone sick?
UAB’s Infectious Disease Division: Not typically. The risk of getting Covid from food, treated drinking water, or food packaging is very low. There is no evidence Covid is foodborne-driven or food service-driven. Covid transmission is respiratory and person-to-person.

MEDICARE PART D MODEST COST INCREASE
Medicare participants will see modest increases in the costs of prescriptions under Medicare Part D in 2021. The cost-sharing chart below outlines what you will pay for prescription coverage in each phase, including:
- A deductible of up to $445 (varies by plan)
- 25% of the costs of their prescription drugs in the Initial Coverage Period (or up to $1,032.50 if in a plan with no deductible)
- Up to a total of $6,550 out-of-pocket before the beneficiary reaches the Catastrophic Benefits Period. Once they hit this threshold, the Medicare beneficiary will pay either 5% coinsurance or $3.70 copay for generic medications, and $9.20 for brand-name drugs.
Also, Medicare announced all Telehealth services are now permanently covered. COST SHARING CHART HERE
SAVE UP TO 45% ON MEDICATIONS: DISCOUNT CARD THROUGH UWSWA AND FAMILYWISE
This card provides discounts on medications through Walgreens, CVS, Walmart and Riteaid. So easy to use! Access the Familywise website and:
1. Enter drug name and zip code, discounts and locations will be listed
2. Print your free card or use the smart phone App
3. Present to pharmacy
Current top discounted medications: Aluterol Sulfate, Amoxicillin, Cialis, PredniSONE, Adipex-P, Zithromax, Keflex, Protonix, Lipitor, Fexmid

Click Here for the Familywize Website
Click Here to Get Your Card
Click Here to Download App on Your Smart Phone

Website: https://familywize.org/
Phone: 433.3624
CAREGIVER RESPITE STIPENDS FOR UNPAID CAREGIVERS

Assistive Technology (AT) can be more helpful than you realize: voice activated devices (like Alexa and Echo) that can order medication, groceries and control t.v., lights, and telephones. These can help you care for a loved one. *The first 10 unpaid family caregivers who register and attend may qualify to receive a respite stipend or a caregiver care package.*

Workshops
Smart Solutions Assistive Technology Workshop for Caregivers
- September 15 @ 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Smart Solutions CEO Kevin Braswell will present a virtual, total home assistive technologies and provide resources to access AT financial waiver assistance.

**RSVP by September 11:**
E-mail: bhuey@ucphuntsville.org
Phone: Brittnay at 256.859.8300
https://alabamarespite.org/event/smart-solutions-assistive-technology-workshop-for-caregivers/

EVERY WEEK BRINGS A NEW SCAM

State officials warn there's a new phone scam circulating: callers posing as Covid Contact Tracers are trying to get credit card or bank account information from you. In common scams, the criminal says, "I'm calling from your local health department to let you know you have been in contact with someone who has Covid.”

Legitimate tracing calls might be preceded by a text message, notifying patients of an upcoming call from the health department. Then, in that initial call, the legitimate tracer will seek to confirm an address and date of birth, especially if you are the Covid-positive patient. Legitimate Contact Tracers will NOT: 1) ask for social security, bank account or credit card numbers 2) send you e-mail links 3) be referred to you by another Covid patient – all patient information is confidential.
ALABAMA POWER OFFERS PAYMENT PLANS/EXTENDS CUT OFFS BRANCHES RE-OPEN SEPTEMBER 28
Alabama Power has extended the deadline for payment plans/cut offs and waiving late fees for customers affected by Covid to September 28. Branch services will also resume on September 28 and standard business operations include:
1. Responsibly reopening walk-in services at Alabama Power business offices
2. Continuing to work individually with customers on payment assistance resources
3. Using multiple channels to notify customers behind on payments and providing options to maintain service
Alabama Power:
https://www.alabamapower.com/
Customer Service: 800.245.2244

PET OWNERS: MCHD OFFERING $12, DRIVE-THROUGH RABIES SHOTS
Clinic will be held on September:
- 5th (Saturday), 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., City of Mobile Animal Shelter, 855 Owens St, Mobile
- 11th (Friday), 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Mobile County Animal Shelter, 7665 Howell’s Ferry Rd, Mobile
- 12th (Saturday), 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Pet Supplies Plus, 803 Hillcrest Rd, Mobile
- September 19 (Saturday), 8 a.m. to noon, Eddie Smith’s Country Store, 14045 Celeste Rd, Chunchula
26th (Saturday), 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., B&B Pet Supplies, 5035 Cottage Hill Rd, Mobile

More Information:
E-mail: mbryant@mchd.org
Phone: 251.690.8823

Full Announcement

INTERESTED IN WALKING? JOIN WALKING CLUB MOBPACERS
The MobPacers club was birthed out of Covid quarantine 2020. It has been proven that walking with others keeps you motivated, improves your accountability and helps you meet new people with similar goals. Anyone can join the club, and the group meets and walks in the evenings in the Midtown area.

Connect to MobPacers Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/groups/182800493069744/media/photos
Labor Day Blueberry Delight  
Very easy (our staff makes it), gorgeous presentation and few ingredients.  
Full Recipe Here:  
https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/patriotic-dessert/

Show Stopping Red, White & Blue Fruit Salads  
A healthy choice, easy to prepare and looks beautiful. You can use them for breakfast or desserts. Use whatever fruit you want, because it’s all about the presentation!  
More Details on Preparation Here:  
https://twohealthykitchens.com/red-white-and-blue-fruit-salads/

MOBILE SYMPHONY “SOCIAL DISTANCE” SEASON OPENS IN OCTOBER  
Tickets for the Mobile Symphony Orchestra’s new season are now on sale. The
socially-distanced season opens October 17 at the Saenger Theatre. Each concert weekend will include four performances: Saturdays at 6:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. and Sundays at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. The Saenger will be sanitized between performances, and only 400 attendees will be admitted during each concert.

Ticket Information:
Phone: 251.432.2010.
https://mobilesymphony.org/

SHARING THE TORCH!
USA LIVE STREAM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INSITUTE IN OCTOBER
The Center for Healthy Communities and USA Community Engagement is once again co-sponsoring the Community Engagement Institute sponsored by the UAB Center for Clinical & Translational Science. Lauren Simmons, the youngest trader and second African-American woman at the New York Stock Exchange, is the keynote. The Institute is a half-day virtual symposium focusing on issues related to health equity and social justice. A panel featuring speakers from different backgrounds and generations will further explore issues of working across generations to work for health equity and social justice.

Date: October 2, 2020
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Location: Streamed via Facebook and YouTube
RSVP Here to Receive Viewing Instructions
WHERE IS OUR FALL WEATHER?
DURING COOLER TIMES OF DAY, TIPS TO START YOUR FALL GARDEN

1. Find your average first frost date.
   Click Here for Frost Chart

2. Check “days to harvest” on each crop.
   Use this handy Fall-Harvest Planting Calculator that calculates from your “frost-free days” and tells you when to plant typical fall crops in your area.
   Click Here for Planting Calculator

3. Make some room in your garden.
   Remove spent vegetable plants that have stopped producing to give your garden some room. Try Foodscape!
   Use fall vegetables to augment your landscaping. Kale, spinach, mustard, and many fall crops will bring a new fall-inspired look to your landscape or even containers.
   Click Here for Foodscape Tips

4. Look for plants too.
   Brussel sprouts, broccoli, and cauliflower are often easier to grow and mature from transplants rather than seeds.

5. Water and keep cool.
   Remember to keep the seeds moist by watering often and putting down mulch. If the heat and sun get too extreme, add a lightweight summer fabric.

Online Resources:
https://ngb.org/2020/08/21/fall-vegetable-garden/
RESEARCH/VACCINE UPDATE

HAVE YOU HEARD THERE’S A VACCINE?! THIS IS WHAT WE KNOW

There has been talk that a vaccine has been discovered. Here are the facts:

- Currently, there is no approved vaccine
- This week, the CDC sent an “urgent” request to states to prepare for a coronavirus vaccine delivery by November 1. A state getting ready entails governors fast-tracking permits/licenses for new distribution sites. The CDC is waiving all requirements that would prevent facilities from becoming fully operational by November 1."
- There are 3 vaccine clinical trials in the final stage. More than 30,000 volunteers are participating and the studies will conclude by the end of the year. The CDC’s Data and Safety Monitoring Board could fast track the process for quicker approval because “the data is so good right now that you can say it’s safe and effective.” (Dr. Anthony Fauci).

FDA AUTHORIZES CONVALESCENT PLASMA AS TREATMENT

Data published in The American Journal of Pathology this month showed high-antibody plasma transfused in patients critically ill with Covid within 72 hours of hospitalization was effective in reducing mortality rate. Benefits have only been verified for severely at-need hospitalized patients.

FDA GREENLIGHTS NEW $5 FAST TEST

Test-maker Abbott says it will finalize manufacturing and start sending 50 million doses of the rapid antigen tests to states in early September. This will ease the country’s testing bottleneck by greatly increasing overall capacity and the speed at which results arrive. Your health care provider still must administer the test, but it can be done in their office.

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.

Current Data:
https://www.bamatracker.com/
MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Rated
Updated October September 3 at 4:00 p.m.

Mobile County cases:
Mobile County deaths: 268 (.02% of positive cases)
Mobile County tested (diagnostic): 84,237
Mobile County tested (antibody): 2,757
State-wide cases: 129,285
State-wide tested (diagnostic): 955,290
State-wide tested (antibody): 54,557
State-wide deaths: 2,233
State-wide recoveries: 51,154
U.S. cases: 6,087,403 (total population – 328 million)
U.S. deaths: 185,092

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS

UPDATED TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile

Stay Safe, Healthy & Connected!
The Via Team
COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY
MASKS FOR ALL ALABAMIANs UNTIL AUGUST 31
Governor Ivey has extended mandatory masks/face coverings (in public, close contact) until August 31.
Click Here for Full Statewide Order
“The virus is stupid, and we are smart. The virus only exists to infect people. If we make smart choices, we can defeat it at every turn.” (Member, Mobile COVID-19 Unified Command)

In Mobile County’s population of 419,210, we have 10,895 cases, 229 deaths (sadly) and a 36% presumed recovery rate. In relation to our overall population, these numbers seem low to many people. However, we need to continue to educate our friends and families. The opportunity for our community to be “smarter than the virus” has not changed: everyone needs to wear a mask in public; wash their hands, avoiding crowds and staying home if sick.

Click Here for Tips to Share With Others

MOBILE COUNTY SEES DECREASE IN CASES IN LAST 14 DAYS
Masks and Social Distancing Still Critical
The Unified Command, comprised of the Mobile County Health Department (MCHD), Mobile County Commission and City of Mobile, reports a decrease in cases in the last two weeks: from 271 on 7.30 to 72 on 8.12. “We have had a downward trend over the last 14 days. We believe the masking is having an effect and people are taking it more seriously. Without a vaccine or an accepted treatment to deal with this disease, every measure we can take helps to
keep Mobile County residents safe.” In early July, the percent of laboratory tests positive for the novel coronavirus was 22 percent in Mobile County. The percent positive laboratory tests for COVID-19 has declined since then, with the previous week’s figures coming in at 16 percent.

How to recognize COVID symptoms in grandchildren
Dr. Sean O’Leary, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases Vice Chair: "It's not fair to say that this virus is completely benign in children.”

As kids are developing more and more contacts, we are seeing the numbers go up. Covid symptoms in children are typically the same as adults: congestion, cough, fever and loss of smell and taste. Other key signs can include:
- difficulty in breathing
- rash, especially one that is quickly spreading
- lack of energy and trouble staying awake
In general, look for your grandkids falling asleep all the time, being exhausted, not drinking or eating, or not able to do the activities of daily living. Then, it’s time for you or parents to contact the doctor.

QUICK TESTING!
RAPID RESPONSE SALIVA TEST RECEIVES EMERGENY USE AUTHORIZATION FROM FDA ON SATURDAY
A saliva-based Covid test could be fast, cheap (about $10) and a “game changer,” the FDA says. The test was created by researchers from the Yale School of Public Health and can produce results in less than three hours. SalivaDirect doesn't require a specific swab or collection device, and the accuracy is equal to results from traditional nasal swabbing. It can also be used with reagents (substance or compound added to a system to cause a chemical reaction) from multiple vendors. Yale says the SalivaDirect tests could become publicly available in the coming weeks. We’ll keep you posted when our community can get access.
STIMULUS UPDATE
CURRENTLY, NO STIMULUS CHECKS FOR SENIORS
President Trump’s Executive Orders signed on Saturday do not provide any funding for a second round of stimulus checks. Funds for federal programs need to be authorized through legislation passed by Congress. To get those, Americans may have to wait for Congress to pass its much-debated relief package. In the absence of an agreement between the U.S House and Senate, the four Executive Orders provide Americans financial relief in a number of areas:
1. Defer student loan payments through the end of the year
2. Provide a payroll tax holiday for those making under $100,000 through the end of the year. * This is a concern for Seniors, as payroll taxes fund Social Security benefits for 65 million Americans. *
3. Provide some eviction protections for renters and homeowners
4. Provide $400 weekly unemployment payments, 25% of which states are being asked to cover. This will be funded by up to $44 billion from the Disaster Relief Fund.
Many experts have already noted that these relief measures may be difficult to implement and could face legal challenges.
COMMUNITY DRIVE-THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION FOR SENIORS
Tuesday, September 15 * 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Via Center Portico
1717 Dauphin Street (Midtown)

2-3 bags of breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks for Seniors.
The event is limited to 200 and RSVP is required by each individual. To keep everyone safe and healthy:
1. Masks required for all passengers in vehicle.
2. Groceries will be placed in trunk or cargo area

Registration required by Monday, September 14 at 5:00 p.m.
Online registration:
http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=kzagbytab&oeidk=a07eh93tiba282c429b
By Phone: 251.470.5229
By E-mail: bestes@viamobile.org

MEMBER LABOR DAY GRILL & GRAB
Friday, September 4 * 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Via Center Portico  
1717 Dauphin Street (Midtown)  

Please join us! Drive through, grab a bag lunch of grilled hamburgers and hotdogs, and visit with the Via staff. Everyone in your vehicle needs to wear a mask. This event is supported by Modern Woodmen of America, and we thank them - and our member volunteers - for their community involvement.

Registration required by Thursday, September 3 at 5:00 p.m.  
Online registration:  
http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=kzagbytab&oeidk=a07eh93xbuo07756d75  

By Phone: 251.470.5229  
By E-mail: bestes@viamobile.org  

✔️ Education  
✔️ Enrichment  

DO IT YOURSELF (DIY) DISINFECTANT WIPES  
Disinfectant wipes are getting even harder to find! Chances are you already have the ingredients at home to make your own. Mix the following in a jar and use with wash cloths (reusable).  
Clorox Wipes:  
1 cup water, 2 teaspoons bleach, 2 teaspoons dish soap  
Lysol Wipes: 1 cup water, 6 tablespoons 91% isopropyl alcohol, 2 teaspoons dish soap  
Gentle Disinfecting Wipes:
1 cup water, 6 teaspoons white vinegar, 2 teaspoon dish soap or baby shampoo

Note: DON’T mix the following chemicals.
Bleach + Vinegar = Toxic Chlorine Gas
Bleach + Ammonia = Toxic Chloramine Vapors
Bleach + Rubbing Alcohol = Chloroform
Hydrogen Peroxide + Vinegar = Peracetic Acid

HEALTHIER CHOICES: ONE MAIN INGREDIENT AND THREE EASY RECIPES
These recipes provide a healthier, keto alternative. They are made with ground beef, which is a budget pleaser.
- Loaded Burger Bowls
- Zucchini Taco Boats
- Spaghetti Squash & Meaty Marinara

Click Here for Recipes

TAKE A LOOK AT THE MOBILE VIRTUAL ARTWALK HELD AUGUST 14
Now that the virtual event has premiered, you can experience it anytime! The Virtual Artwalk team has put together a highlight reel of all of action downtown:
- Art and cooking demonstrations
- Live gallery tours
- Mask fashion show
- Mobile Symphony Orchestra

Click Here for the Artwalk Recap:
https://www.facebook.com/MobileArtsCouncil/videos/619487928986327/

RESPONSE INHIBITION AND SELECTIVE ATTENTION
Say these colors out loud:

*Blue*  *Green*  *Black*

*White*  *Orange*  *Pink*

*Gray*  *Yellow*  *Red*

How’d you do? This exercise challenges your ability to respond quickly to a task, while suppressing incorrect impulses. Practice keeping your brain on track even when it’s pulled in two directions by playing the Color Match Game.

Play the Color Match Game Free Until August 20:

COMMUNITY CANCELLATIONS, CLOSURES AND CHANGES
- Area Agency on Aging has cancelled the 2020 Senior Expos for Mobile and Baldwin Counties planned for October
- The Alabama Beverage Control Board now restricts alcohol sales, ceasing all sales at 11:00 p.m. for restaurants, bars and country clubs. The goal is to reduce social gatherings and transmission rates of Super Spreaders.
- WAVE riders are asked to consider limiting their trips for only purposes deemed essential. Buses are cleaned daily. For additional information: 251.344.6600 or www.thewavetransit.com

FROM UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST ALABAMA: TAX PREPARATION OFFERED AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS AND DATES
Volunteers are scheduled to be available to provide free tax preparation services. Income maximum is generally $56,000, and returns can be prepared for tax years 2016-2019. Returns can also be prepared for people who don't have to file, except to claim their stimulus payments if they haven't already done so.

Link to List of Schedules for Locations. Note: Some of these locations may not be accepting additional appointments, so be sure to check this. http://www.supersaas.com/dashboard/landing/free_tax_appointments

Link to Complete Your Own Taxes with Volunteer Support: https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/Free_Tax_Appointments/Do_Your_Own_Taxes_With_Our_Help
MAKING MASKS FUN FOR GRANDKIDS GOING BACK TO SCHOOL
We’ll now be wearing masks until at least August 31, and we’ve had requests for additional mask options for grandkids. Baldwin County and the Archdiocese of Mobile Catholic Schools opened on August 12. Mobile County opens September 1, with initial classes on-line only for nine weeks.

Click Here for Grandkid Mask Sizing Chart

Vistaprint
A good fit for older kids and tweens. Masks are $13 and filters are available. “Cool” print options. Reasonable shipping. VP sends great coupons for future purchases! Via orders from VP, and we always have 20% and 25% coupons on hand.

https://www.vistaprint.com/masks/all/kids/

Disney
Disney character options. Masks come in child’s small and medium. 4-packs are $19.99.

Disney Masks

Green Sprouts
Reusable face masks for children and youth. 15% off first order. Shipping @ $4.00. $12.99 and discounts based on how many you buy: 10 get 5% off, etc. You could consider a group purchase.

https://greensproutsbaby.com/collections/safety?sscid=71k4_wrcnk

Sanctuary Clothing
Kids ages 2-10. 15% off first purchase. 5 pack Kids Fashion PPE masks for $25. Unisex masks come in an assortment of patterns: dinosaurs, heritage camo, pink camp and baby leopard.

More Seniors are using phones and laptops to stay connected during Covid. Public Wi-Fi networks aren’t secure if they don’t require a password to connect to them. It’s safer to use your service provider’s network rather than public Wi-Fi, even if it means incurring charges.

**How a Data Thief Works:**
- Scammers set up an “evil twin” network - a Wi-Fi network that looks like the one you are expecting to use - hoping you’ll connect to it.
- Scammers set up a “man in the middle” attack to get between you and the Wi-Fi access point to intercept data. Once in, they steal passwords and other sensitive information from your device.
- Scammers set up fake Wi-Fi access points that require a credit card for you to connect to them. Then, they steal your credit card information.

**Here’s What You Can Do:**
- Ask staff for the exact name of their establishment’s public Wi-Fi network. This way, you are sure you are connecting to it and not a look-alike.
- Limit your activity on public Wi-Fi to activities such as browsing news, sports and weather. Avoid doing anything that requires a username and password.
- If you are a frequent public Wi-Fi user, look into signing up for a virtual private network (VPN) to keep your data protected, even on unsecure public Wi-Fi networks.
What Do I Do If I Have Been Exposed to Someone Who Now Has Covid? Think 6/15/14. MCHD Dr. Rendi Murphree says if you were within 6 feet of someone who has tested positive or has symptoms, and you were around them for at least 15 minutes, you must quarantine at home for 14 days. If you develop symptoms while you’re in quarantine you must stay home at least 10 days or until you no longer show symptoms for 24 hours. You can’t “test out” of quarantine, and you shouldn’t get tested unless you have symptoms. Even if you do get tested and it is negative, you must stay quarantined.

Is My Mask on Backwards?
Please don’t think we are being patronizing on this issue. A lot of the information we present is to help you educate your family and friends. If you’re using a disposable mask how do you know if you’re wearing it backwards? With the many conversations about face masks, misinformation about proper use continues to spread: like the claim that traditional blue and white medical face mask should be reversed depending on health of the person wearing it.

Totally false. The blue side is waterproof—keeping droplets from other people penetrating your mask. The white side is absorbent, so if you cough your droplets are trapped in your mask.

LATEST NEWS:
RESEARCH, VIRUS INFORMATION AND CDC UPDATES

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION UPDATE: 6 VACCINES IN PROCESS
According to the WHO, six vaccines are currently in phase III trials. More than 100 vaccines are in development and many have showed positive results, raising hopes that one will be ready to be rolled out within the next 12 months. The U.S. government has signed contracts with six vaccine-makers. The next hurdle is companies ramping up to produce/deliver hundreds of millions of doses.
CDC NEW GUIDANCE: AVOID MASKS WITH VENTS, VALVES
Everyone wants to be comfortable in their mask, and valves and vents can make it easier to breathe and avoid foggy glasses. However, masks keep respiratory droplets from reaching others to aid with source control. Masks with one-way valves or vents allow exhaled air to be expelled out through holes in the material. This can allow exhaled respiratory droplets to reach others and potentially spread the COVID-19 virus.

CDC RECOMMENDS TWO LAYERS FOR CLOTH MASKS/FACE COVERINGS OVER BANDANAS, CLOTH COVERINGS
The Covid pandemic and the need for community face masks has raised questions about whether you can just throw a scarf over your face, or whether you should use a better designed cloth mask. Loosely folded face masks and bandanas provide minimal stopping capability for the smallest aerosolized respiratory droplets.

CDC EXPLAINS RANGE BETWEEN INFECTED SYMPTOMS
Dr. Anthony Fauci (CDC) said a new study could explain the symptom range people experience with Covid: no symptoms at all, a mild case, hospitalization or death. The study found that the immune systems of half of its subjects appeared to remember past exposure to other types of coronaviruses, including the common cold. That exposure built immunity and allowed them to respond more quickly to Covid once it appeared. The findings also offer new insights that could help in developing a vaccine by looking at T cells which help fight the virus.

Full Study Published in Science Magazine:
https://science.sciencemag.org/content/early/2020/08/04/science.abd3871

RUSSIA CLAIMS VACCINE; U.S. SCIENTISTS SCEPTICAL
Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the country has approved a vaccine against Covid. Putin said that the vaccine is safe and effective, and Russia plans to start mass vaccinations in October. Immunologists say there is no way to be sure that the vaccine is safe or effective, and that Russia seems to be cutting corners. New vaccines must normally pass three tests (trials) before they can be used widely and that hasn’t happened.
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.
Current Data:
https://www.bamatracker.com/

MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Even though we have an increase in cases/transmissions, our death and hospitalization rates are not spiking. In several weeks, we should know if the City and statewide face covering mandates decreased our number of cases. Updated August 13 at 4:00 p.m.

Mobile County cases: 10,895
Mobile County recoveries: 3,983 (36.6%)
Mobile County deaths: 229
State-wide cases: 101,496
State-wide tested: 798,501
State-wide deaths: 1,821
State-wide recoveries: 41,523 (41%)
U.S. cases: 5.2 million (total population – 328 million)
U.S. deaths: 165,148

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS

UPDATED TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile

Stay Safe, Healthy & Connected!
COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY
MASKS FOR EVERYONE
Governor Ivey: “We're pleading with the, people of Alabama to wear a mask.”

Until July 31, everyone in the state older than 6 has to wear a mask in public areas while interacting within 6 feet of people from another household. Since July 11, Alabama’s positive tests have increased to 16.6 percent. Exceptions: people with certain medical conditions, outdoor exercise and for some work-related activities.

Click Here for Safer at Home Statewide Order
Click Here for Safer at Home Statewide Order FAQs

WILL IT WORK? ONLY IF EVERYONE PARTICIPATES
The CDC – now unequivocally – recommends wearing masks and states it can halt outbreaks in 4-6 weeks. There are 26 states who now have statewide mask mandates. On average, they report a 25% decrease in transmission.
Here is a List of Those States

RESOURCES FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
We have resources for families and friends to find masks at www.viamobile.org, including police precinct distribution sites (one per citizen) and local vendors.

FOR SENIORS’ FRIENDS AND FAMILIES:
RECAP ON WHY MASKS ARE IMPORTANT
We need our Super Spreaders (ages 29-45) to wear masks. Here’s a quick list of talking points for why masks are so important:

1. **No Symptoms.** 40% of the Covid infected have no symptoms (CDC). The good news: Super Spreaders are not reporting harsh symptoms. The bad news: They are spreading to others who face harsh symptoms and a higher death rate.
2. **Droplets/Spit.** Cough/sneeze droplets vaporize, can travel 24 feet and remain contagious by air for at least 3 hours (National Institutes of Health).
3. **At Risk.** Ages 29-45 are now the highest transmission rate for infection.
4. **Personal Responsibility.** The statewide order doesn’t force businesses to require masks, it’s an owner decision. Local and state leaders aren’t relying on police for enforcement. So, that brings us back to Personal Responsibility.
5. **Lock Down.** Mobile may have to go back into a stay-at-home, lock down if we don’t reduce transmission rates.
MEDICARE SCAM: NO FREE MASKS BEING OFFERED FOR YOUR NUMBER
If you have received robocalls, text messages or emails offering free face masks, they are a SCAM! Also, social media posts about free COVID-19 testing kits, cures and or protective equipment are a SCAM. If anyone reaches out to get your Medicare Number or personal information in exchange for something, tell them to pound sand.

*** JULY 24 FOOD DISTRIBUTION REGISTRATION NOW CLOSED
MORE THAN 200 SENIORS HAVE SIGNED UP

We have a huge turnout expected, and we are so happy that we will be able to help so many Seniors on Friday. If you, or someone you know, wasn’t able to register, e-mail bestes@viamobile.org or call the Via Center at 470.5229 and we’ll make sure you/they are on the list for our next food distribution.

DO MASKS CAUSE LOW OXYGEN LEVELS AND IMMUNE ISSUES?
No. Many health organizations have weighed in on this, including the CDC, National Institutes of Health and the World Health Organization. There is no scientific evidence wearing masks weaken the immune system. Masks are designed to be breathed through, and there is also no evidence that low oxygen levels occur or the immune system is weakened from breathing your own air. There is some
evidence, however, that prolonged use of N-95 masks in patients with preexisting lung disease could cause build-up of carbon dioxide levels in the body.

**WHY ARE CASE NUMBERS HIGHER, BUT DEATH RATE LOWER?**
Covid deaths have fallen to levels not seen March, while infections have been surging for more than a month. Here are the likely possibilities:
- Heat and humidity reduce size of droplets and make infections less severe
- Younger patients are getting sick and their symptoms less severe
- Better protections at nursing homes, resulting in fewer cases
- Better treatments, including preventing need for ventilators and drugs like remdesivir and dexamethasone
- More tests identifying the infected, so they don’t unknowingly spread it

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**CUTE MASK OPTIONS FOR YOUR GRANDKIDS**
Remember to consider local vendors, but these sites provide new varieties of cuteness and some reasonable deals.

**Amazon (Amazon Smiles).** Select Senior Citizens Services as your charity, and Via receives a 5% donation of your eligible purchases. Cute prints and 10-pack, disposables for under $10.

- [Amazon GK Mask Options](#)

**Zazzle.** Reasonably priced, but be prepared for shipping fees. You can join their Zazzle Black Club – 30 day free trial – and get free shipping.

- [Zazzle GK Mask Options](#)

**Caribbean**

**Etsy.** Selection of washable, double-layer cotton masks for $13.50, but shipping is costly. Spend $35 and you get free shipping.

- [Etsy GK Mask Options](#)

**Ebay.** This looks like the best bet for bargains. Thousands of prints to choose from and reasonable shipping.
TROPICAL STORM GONZALO – KEEP AN EYE OUT
Keep an eye on the weather. Tropical Storm Gonzalo now is projected to become the Atlantic's first hurricane of 2020. It’s still a long way away, but the forecast track is concerning.
Click Here for the Latest Updates from the National Hurricane Center

SENIORS: YOUR FEEDBACK IS NEEDED
The Mobile County Health Department has released a county-wide survey to gather information from Mobile County residents on the impact of Covid in your community.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W9PZC6L

EATING OUT: DON’T SIT NEAR RESTAURANT AC VENTS
Better safe than sorry, say public health officials. A recent study, published in Emerging Infectious Diseases, found that 9 people in Wuhan, China, were infected with the virus simply by sitting near an air conditioning vent in a restaurant. Living in the hot, humid South doesn’t help. Harvard Medical School: “As people go indoors in hot weather and the rebreathed air fraction goes up, the risk of infection is quite dramatic.” Put some distance between yourself and AC vents anywhere you eat or shop.

NATIONAL ISSUES THAT AFFECT OUR COMMUNITY
Covid and Our Money: National Coin Shortage
Seniors are a group who like to give exact change, and we are now facing a national coin shortage. Fewer coins are circulating due to staying at home and online shopping. Grocery and convenience stores warn they may not be able to provide coins as change when customers pay in cash. CVS is now encouraging customers to pay with exact change. You can expect the chain to offer customers to donate their change to charity, or get your change on a gift/loyalty card. This will impact Seniors on fixed/lower incomes, as many don’t have credit or debit cards, or can’t afford to donate their change.

Mail Delays Expected from USPS
For Seniors who still mail letters and packages the “old fashion way,” there are some new rules that may delay packages. USPS continues to lose money, and new rules will eliminate overtime and extra package pick-ups. This means once a carrier leaves a plant, they will not return for additional loads - mail will wait until the next day for delivery.
MORE MONEY? NEXT COVID PACKAGE BEING CRAFTED IN D.C. SENIORS SHOULD BE INCLUDED

If there is a second stimulus check, and you receive Social Security, you will get a second stimulus check. This includes SSI and SSDI. Any second stimulus check likely would at least follow the CARES Act for this provision (Forbes). For the national package to pass, Congress and the White House have to agree. There is a looming July 31 deadline due to existing benefits running out. Here’s an update on where they are in the process:

**House of Representatives Has Passed a Bill**

Heroes Act: One time – not recurring – payment. Individuals earning below $75,000 would be paid $1,200, while those on up to $99,000 would get a tapered amount. Married joint tax filers with a shared income below $150,000 would receive $2,400. Also included is $450 back to work bonus.

**Senate Plans**

The Senate wants to keep the price tag to $1 trillion, and is creating its own bill. Senate leaders have indicated they are in favor of more citizen stimulus payments, but support a lower cap for benefits. We’ll know about the Senate’s decision soon, due to their recess.

**White House Thinking**

Approved unemployed beneficiaries won’t automatically qualify for $600 a week. Unemployment payouts won’t total more than 100% of what a worker would usually bring home. This will ensure there’s an incentive to get the unemployed back to work (US Secretary of the Treasury Steven Munchin).

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**MASKS REQUIRED TO SHOP**

- Walmart. Starts July 20, in all stores in and Sam’s Clubs.
COVID FATIGUE
Aren’t we all tired of Covid? We miss our routines and social gatherings, we want people to wear their masks and the case news seems to be getting worse. We’ve heard from our Seniors that there’s up days and down days, but the most important things are to 1) keep being social 2) stay connected to friends and family and 3) exercise/walk outside - early in the morning! and 4) don’t let yourself become too down – that’s dangerous. Consider this to boost your spirits:

Buy a Fun Mask
Use your masks to express yourself. Just because your face is covered, doesn’t mean your personality should be.

Smile With Your Eyes and Voice
Next time you are out and about, smile with your eyes and use inflection in your voice. We practiced eye and voice smiling in the mirror and it really does work.

Talk About It: Start a Social Distancing Social Group
Start a group that meets weekly, has a snack or meal together and can share experiences. Via can help you by publicizing your group. E-mail Barbara at bestes@viamobile.org.

Ignore People You Disagree with on Social Media
Don’t get caught up trading posts with people you disagree with. It will just make you more frustrated.

American Psychological Association
Additional Mental Health Resources
CANCELLATIONS/CLOSURES
- 2020 Annual National Shrimp Festival October 8-11 in Gulf Shores
- The Mobile Saenger Concert Series we reported in the 7.10.2020 issue has been cancelled.

NEW CLASSES AVAILABLE
Irene Yoga 7.13.2020
Irene SeniorFit (Ball, Weights & Band) 7.8.2020
Coming Soon:
Irene Aerobics (Cardio work-out) 7.20.2020
Irene SeniorFit “Christmas in July” 7.22.2020

If you would like information on the Via Online Fitness Portal or membership, email bestes@viamobile or call 251.470.5229. Your health insurance carrier may cover the cost of your membership, or memberships average $14 per month.

Via Fitness Portal

PANDEMIC GRANDPARENTING
The latest research shows that 40% of grandparents are a key support structure in their family units (Parenting Magazine). You may have had to forgo much of your one-on-one with your grandchildren, but you still play an important role. Nothing provides comfort to grandkids experiencing anxiety during Covid like treats from a Grandma-Nana-Gigi-Granny. So, keep doing your baking and cooking. Use video calls to see your grandkids. And, letters are still a great way to communicate. By
encouraging letter writing, you can keep in touch and help them work on their writing skills and spelling in the absence of classroom instruction.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY VACCINE TRIAL SHOWS BOOST IN IMMUNE RESPONSE LASTING FOR TWO MONTHS

In April about 1,000 people participated in the trial at Oxford University. In research published in July, scientists found their experimental COVID-19 vaccine produced a dual immune response in people aged 18 to 55 that lasted at least two months after they were immunized (Lancet Journal). Neutralizing antibodies are produced — molecules which are key to blocking infection. In addition, the vaccine also causes a reaction in the body’s T-cells which help to fight off the coronavirus. The experimental COVID-19 vaccine caused minor side effects and will be tested in larger trials, 10,000 people in the U.K. and 30,000 people in the U.S.

US AND PFIZER REACH DEAL TO PRODUCE MILLION OF VACCINES DOSES

Preliminary data released this week by Pfizer and BioNTech stated its Covid-19 vaccine appeared safe and elicited antibody and T cell immune responses in a Phase 1/2 trial. The companies can start a Phase 3 trial of the vaccine in late July if they receive regulatory approval. If the vaccine is successful and receives EUA or licensure, nationwide delivery would begin in the fourth quarter of 2020, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. The Pfizer doses would be free and would be delivered to locations determined by the US government.
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.

Current Data:
https://www.bamatracker.com/

MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CASES

Even though we have an increase in cases/transmissions, our death and hospitalization rates are not spiking. In several weeks, we should know if the City and statewide face covering mandates decreased our number of cases. Updated July 23 at 10:00 a.m.

Mobile County cases: 6,797
Mobile County recoveries: 2,869 (44.1%)
Mobile County deaths: 176
State-wide cases: 72,696
State-wide tested: 618,011
State-wide deaths: 1,357 (.018 death rate – 4.9 million citizens live in Alabama)
State-wide recoveries: 32,510

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS

UPDATED TESTING SITES
Click Here for Information and Testing Sites in Mobile
*** PREVIOUS ISSUES ***

7.10.2020

In week 17 of our community’s coronavirus outbreak, we are now wearing masks and talking about Super Spreaders and Silent Spreaders. Seniors are a group that has been protecting themselves and the community by wearing masks and social distancing. Our elected and health officials have recently mandated face coverings to ensure others help to protect the community as well. The Greatest Generation is a generation of leaders!

COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY
WHAT’S BEHIND THE MASK?
Face coverings are required in the City of Mobile, the police jurisdiction and unincorporated areas of Mobile County. Mayor Stimpson summed it up this way, “In this battle against an evil enemy, we all have a part to play. You can do your part by wearing a face covering. Just as our parents and grandparents sacrificed to help America turn the tide in World War II, the simple act of wearing a mask can help us prevail over COVID-19.”

Since June 25, Covid cases have risen from 9-13%. We are not experiencing an increase in fatalities, or a rapid increase in hospitalizations. Originally, health officials attributed the increase to additional testing. However, there are now so
many people with Covid in Mobile County, contact tracers (who track everyone the infected person has come in contact with) can’t keep up. MCHD Dr. Rendi Murphree says we continue to see incredibly high numbers of cases reported each day, and our epidemic curve is starting to get "sort of an exponential look to it." In addition, Super Spreaders (ages 25-49) are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing.

To end with some positive news: Every death is tragic, but our death rate remains low at 3.2%. Mobile County’s recovery rate is more than 50%, and the national recovery rate is 44%. Across Alabama, cases are rising, but the death rate is not.

See How Alabama Compares to Other States:
CDC National-State Statistics

ALABAMA COVID-19 RISK INDICATOR MAP

THE VIA CENTER
The recent news from the Governor’s Office didn’t allow us to re-open, but every month we remain hopeful. Our ability to open is solely based on Governor Kay Ivey’s amending the Safer-at-Home Order to allow all Senior Centers to re-open. We are continuing to implement our Ready-to-Open Strategic Plan.
You will see some changes when you come back, such as plexiglass at the Welcome Desk. We are now working toward a potential early August opening. The current order expires on July 31st. We are hopeful the face covering ordinance will reduce our transmission rates and give us the good news we all want!

CLOSURES DUE TO COVID CASES
- Bob’s Diner – through the end of July

FACE COVERING INFORMATION
Here are links to information the Via Center has compiled on our website relating to the new face ordinance passed by the City Council. The ordinance passed on July 1st and is in place for 30 days from the date of passage.

Information on Exemptions, Acceptable Face Coverings and Penalties
Local Mask Vendors
City of Mobile FAQs on New Ordinance
Mobile Police Precincts Providing Masks

RUN-OFF ELECTION VOTING IS JULY 14
Make sure you are ready to vote. If you were not able to secure an absentee ballot, and are voting in person, here are some resources:
Sample Ballots:
Mobile County Democratic
Mobile County Republican
Confirm/Check Your Polling Location:
Can You Catch Covid-19 Twice?
Most scientists agree that patients gain some immunity to the virus after the first infection. There is a possibility of a second infection, but symptoms appear to be less intense.

Should You Wear a Mask in Church – Even With 6-Feet Social Distancing?
Legally, you don’t have to. However, health experts recommend it. The City of Mobile FAQs states: “Places of worship should consider having employees, volunteers, and attendees wear cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth to help protect against the spread of the virus.”
MCDH Dr. Rendi Murphee: People attending religious gatherings should absolutely wear a cloth face covering, even if services are shortened and physical distance is maintained.

CITY OF PRICHARD NOW REQUIRES FACE COVERINGS
Effective July 7th, Prichard residents and guests must wear face coverings. The first offense will result in a warning, and second-time offenders will be fined. The City of Prichard will be distributing free masks to citizens who need them.
TWO MINUTES! EPA APPROVES LYSOL TO KILL COVID
The EPA has approved 2 Lysol products as the first to effectively kill novel coronavirus on surfaces. Lysol Disinfectant Spray and Lysol Disinfectant Max Cover Mist meet the EPA’s criteria for use against Covid based on laboratory testing. Both products kill the virus two minutes after contact. A recent study conducted by the CDC found that people said they were cleaning more frequently because of the pandemic, however, only about half said that they really knew how to clean and disinfect their home safely.

BRAIN GAME: PUZZLES
If you like puzzles, you will love this site. The Jigsaw Puzzle site has 30,000 puzzles, ranging from 100 to 1,000 pieces. The site is easy to use: the puzzle you select breaks apart, and you put the pieces back together just like a real puzzle. Click Here to Pick Your Puzzle

DRIVE THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION
*** Registration Closes at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 22 ***
Under the Via Portico
Friday, July 24 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Individual registration is required and will be considered a family for distribution. We will be distributing 2-3 pounds of non-perishable food items for those in need. **Register On-Line Here**
Call 251.470.5229

**BRINGING SENIORS FITNESS EVERY DAY!**
**VIA ONLINE FITNESS PORTAL**
Thousands of our community’s seniors are fighting social isolation and keeping mentally and physical fit from home. If you would like information on the Via Online Fitness Portal or membership, email bestes@viameobile or call 251.470.5229. Your health insurance carrier may cover the cost of your membership, or memberships average $14 per month.
**Click Below for Class/Instructor Samples**

- **Gerry Silver & Fit Excel**
- **Irene SeniorFit**
- **Elena Beginner Pilates**
Our course offerings (new classes added weekly):
1. Irene SeniorFit
2. Irene SeniorFit (Ball, Weights & Band)
3. Irene SeniorFit (Cardio, Weights & Ball)
4. Irene SeniorFit (Cardio Emphasis)
5. Irene SeniorFit (Cardio & Strength)
6. Irene SeniorFit Extended
7. Irene Yoga (Standing & Mat)
8. Irene Yoga Extended (filmed in Japanese Garden)
9. Elena Stability Ball (Strength)
10. Elena Beginner Pilates
11. Elena Stability Ball (Cardio, Core, Strength)
12. Gerry Silver & Fit Excel (Beginners)
13. Gerry Silver & Fit Excel (Amped Up)
14. Gerry SilverSneakers Excel (Amped Up Coordination)
15. Irene Body Sculpting (Ab Emphasis)
16. Irene Body Sculpting (Shoulders, Back, Arms)
17. Irene Body Sculpting (Standing & Mat, Weights)
18. Irene Body Sculpting (Full Body)

COSTCO AND TARGET UPDATE
Masks are now required at both stores, per the City of Mobile ordinance. However, we do have some good news:
- Costco is bringing back free food samples and relaxing the restriction on the number of customers allowed in the store at one time.
- Target is now accepting customer returns on all merchandise.
Come on….We have to celebrate life’s small steps forward at this time, right?!

MOVIES, MUSIC AND COMEDY
MOBILE SAENGER ANNOUNCES SUMMER SERIES
For seniors who are looking for some cool summer activities (with masks and social distancing of course), the Mobile Saenger has a full schedule of movies and live performances.

- Citizen Kane with Orson Wells is showing on July 26th
- Our seniors will love “Elvis & Jailhouse Rock” on August 8th
- The grandchildren will love “Frozen” on the huge Saenger screen on August 8th
- Our Veterans will enjoy “The Bridge on The River Kwai” on August 23rd

For those in scooters or wheelchairs, the Saenger offers a free ticket for your companion.

Click Here for the Full Schedule and Viewing Times:
https://www.mobilesaenger.com/

MOBILE COUNTY COMMISSION – DISTRICT 2 RECYCLING EVENT JULY 11
Recycle electronic, scrap metal and tires on Saturday, July 11 from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 1113 Hubert Pierce Road. You must bring proof of residency, wear a face mask and practice social distancing.

More Information:
Stop Litter Mobile!

MEDICARE EXTRA HELP PRESCRIPTION PLAN
If you have enrolled or can enroll in Medicare Part D, and you have limited income and resources, you may be able to get ‘Extra Help’ with your prescription drug costs. This benefit is known as Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) or Extra Help. Depending on your income and resources, you will have low or no deductible and premiums and no coverage gap (also called the doughnut hole). You will pay much less for your prescriptions - an average savings of $4,900 per year.

Click Here for Qualification and Details:
FDA: MAKE SURE YOUR HAND SANITIZER IS SAFE
More than two dozen hand sanitizers sold by the Mexico-based company 4E Global (many carrying the Blumen label) contain high levels of methanol, or wood alcohol, and have been recommended for recall. The FDA said it has seen an increase in products containing ethanol, also known as ethyl alcohol, that tested positive for potentially poisonous methanol contamination. Wood alcohol is used in antifreeze and fuel production. Exposure can also cause nausea, headaches, dizziness, agitation, amnesia, coma and seizures (CDC). Reminder, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol is recommended.

Click Here for Product List:
FDA List

HOW TO GET ON FACEBOOK - PRIVATELY
Don’t miss out on friends, family and valuable Covid information because you are not on Facebook. The fastest growing group of FB users is seniors. You can have a private page, you don’t have to post anything you don’t want to, and it’s free. We want to thank our Community Partner Crowne Health Care and Kristen Brown for this easy to follow 10-minute Facebook tutorial – created with seniors in mind.

Click Here to View Tutorial:
Facebook for Seniors
SENIORS USING GOOGLE MAPS: NEW APP FOR AVOIDING CORONAVIRUS HOTSPOTS

Google Maps will now alert users about restrictions, health checks and service updates related to Covid that could impact their travel plans. The app is available for iOS and Android devices and is part of the directions screen. When you type in an address that relates to an area affected by Covid, you receive special notifications. Here’s what the app can help you with:

- **Restriction Alerts** - if you are entering an area impacted by certain restrictions, such as mask mandates or social distancing regulations
- **Testing Alerts** - When you are driving to a medical facility or coronavirus testing center, you can receive alerts reminding you of eligibility and facility guidelines
- **Public Transit Alerts** – if you are using your map to find public transportation, you will receive alerts from local transit agencies with reminders of regulations, like mask requirements or other mandates impacting transit services

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AFA OFFERING FREE DIGITAL MEMORY SCREENINGS

The Alzheimer’s Foundation of America (AFA) announced that it will be providing free, confidential memory screenings digitally through its National Memory Screening Program every Monday and Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (ET) starting July 8th. Screenings will be conducted one-on-one through secure videoconference in real-time. Appointments can be made by calling AFA at 866-232-8484. The free program is open to everyone: there are no minimum age or insurance requirements.

[Click Here for AFA Memory Screening Information](mailto:memoryscreening@afa.org)
WORKING SENIORS IMPACTED BY COVID: PROGRAM FOR RENT ASSISTANCE
Hancock Whitney Bank is providing up to $500 in rental assistance to low and moderate income households impacted by Covid, payable within 1-2 days. The United Way of Southwest Alabama is assisting with client intake and assessment.
Qualification criteria:
1. Result of job loss, furlough or layoff
2. Reduction in hours of work or pay
3. Have earned less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) prior to COVID-19 pandemic or March 9, 2020.
4. Have completed the client data form and provided documents
5. The rental unit must be located in Mobile County - in Hancock Whitney’s footprint.
6. The rent must be considered current by the landlord after receipt of the grant payment and/or payment agreement reached.
The grant will be calculated based on the amount rent owed and the tenant’s ability to pay a portion of past due rent.
More Information:
UWSWA Trista Stout-Walker
Phone: 251.400.7770 or 251.431.0119
E-mail: twalker@uwswa.org

WHAT TASTES LIKE SUMMER? WATERMELON!
During the summer, watermelon is the favorite “must-have” way to beat the summer heat. Take your garden up a notch by enjoying the fun and excitement of growing watermelon. You won’t believe what you have been missing! Growing
Watermelon can be done successfully in all parts of the country. Watermelon breeders answered 15 FAQ on growing watermelons, including tips on soil, pest control and watering. These answers will help you grow refreshing watermelon this season.

Watermelon Tips:
Everyone Can Grow a Melon

VIA CENTER DONATION: BUY ON AMAZON AND SELECT US
When you buy online at Amazon.com, the Via Center will get a donation. Amazon will donate 5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the Via Center. If you haven’t shopped online at Amazon, they have an endless selection merchandise, health products, clothing, home good, electronics – anything you need. It is user friendly, they have excellent reviews to help you make your decisions and are very competitively priced.
* We are listed as Senior Citizens Services, Mobile, AL *
Start Here to Make Via Your Charity

EVEN DURING COVID, MOBILE MOVES FORWARD
CITY CODE AND ZONING
Even as we deal with the on-going Covid pandemic, our City’s planning for the future moves forward. One of the most significant projects is our effort to adopt a new zoning code that will implement the vision for the map of Mobile. This complete overhaul, known as the Unified Development Code (UDC), addresses many issues important to you and reflects modern planning and zoning best practices. The UDC works to:
1. Ensure the protection of your investments, property values, and quality of life so that our neighborhoods continue to thrive.
2. Ensure citizens’ existing neighborhood protections remain in place, with a distinction between urban and suburban guiding site standards.
Learn More About What’s Planned for Mobile:
RESEARCH UPDATE: POTENTIAL VACCINE AND CURE
There are 160 candidate vaccines, and 21 are already being tested on people (World Health Organization). Here are the vaccine trials/candidates in the US that researchers say we should keep an eye on:

**Operation “Warp Speed” at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.** Dr. Paul Goepfert, director of the Alabama Vaccine Research Clinic at UAB said he believes January is a plausible target. UAB is working with two other drug companies, one beginning this month to test the immune responses to a potential vaccine under development by Pfizer and AstraZeneca.

**Johnson & Johnson (New Brunswick, N.J.)**
Status of clinical trials: Testing in people (Phase 1) to begin in July.
Vaccine uses a common-cold virus to deliver part of the coronavirus into cells to stimulate the immune system to fight off an infection.

**Merck (Kenilworth, N.J.)**
Status of clinical trials: Testing in people (Phase 1) to start later this year.
Vaccine related to the company’s existing Ebola vaccine.

**Pfizer (New York City)**
Status of clinical trials: Phase 1/2 in the US and Europe, Phase 2b/3 in late July.
A messenger RNA vaccine that codes for the spike protein found on the surface of the coronavirus.

**Novavax (Gaithersburg, Md.)**
Status of clinical trials: Phase 1/2 in Australia and US, Phase 3 later this year.
Vaccine candidate uses protein nanoparticles, together with a proprietary compound, to generate and enhance the immune response.
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.
Current Data:
https://www.bamatracker.com/

MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CASES
Even though we have an increase in cases/transmissions, our death and hospitalization rates are not spiking. In several weeks, we should know if the face covering mandate decreased our number of cases. **Updated July 10 at 4:00 p.m.**

Mobile County cases: 4,651
Mobile County tested: 11,651
Mobile County deaths: 142
Mobile County Hospitalizations: 319
State-wide cases: 49,892
State-wide tested: 491,600
State-wide deaths:1,077
State-wide hospitalizations: 6,745

MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS

TESTING SITES UPDATED
- American Family Care Clinic - Mobile (Festival Centre)
  900 Montlimar Drive, Mobile, AL 36609
  (251) 250-1403
- American Family Care Clinic - Mobile (Tillman’s Corner)
  5235 Rangeline Service Road South, Suite A, Mobile, AL 36619
  (251) 220-7281
- American Family Care Clinic - Saraland
  1097 Industrial Parkway, Saraland, AL 36571
(251) 250-1519
- Family Health (MCHD)
Keeler Memorial Building Downtown Mobile 251 North Bayou Street
251-410-6243
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care will test symptomatic AND asymptomatic patients at their West Mobile location. 2350 Schillinger Rd. Mobile, AL 36695
(251) 633-0123
- Main Street Family Care - Mobile
6280 Grelot Rd. Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 288-5606
- Mobile Civic Center (moved from Ladd-Peebles Stadium) for anyone with a medical referral and a scheduled appointment. Cash price is $75. To request an appointment, please call 1-888-USA-2650.
- Compass Urgent Care, with Doctor O.
6901 Airport Blvd, Mobile, AL 36608
(251) 634-2273
- Kids Street Urgent Care
280 Grelot Rd Ste 100, Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 288-5606
- Mostellar Medical Center
12701 Padgett Switch Rd, Irvington, AL 36544
(251) 824-2174
- Franklin Medical Mall (Franklin Mobile Unit)
1303 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave Mobile, Alabama 36603
Testing by appointment only
Monday - Friday from 8:30am – 4pm
- A.J. Cooper Municipal Complex (Franklin Mobile Unit)
216 E. Prichard Ave Prichard, Al 36610
Monday - Friday from 8:30am-3:00pm

Stay Safe, Healthy and Connected!
The Via Team
*** PREVIOUS ISSUES ***

6.25.2020

VIA CENTER GRILL 7 GRAB
HAPPY FATHER’S DAY! (AND GRANDFATHERS TOO)
We had a great day, with our members, Fathers and Grandfathers driving through the Via Portico, grabbing a hotdog lunch, getting a gift from AARP and chatting with staff. Wishing everyone a special day with friends and loved ones.

[View Pictures of Some of Our Fathers and Grandfathers Here](#)

COVID AND OUR COMMUNITY
HOW ARE WE DOING?
Every day brings new statistics – some good and some bad – and that makes it hard to answer the question, “How is Mobile doing handling COVID?” It’s a good time to take a look at longer term trends to gauge our success.
Deaths: The number of deaths in Mobile County has gone down, or stayed the same, since the week of May 3rd. That’s good news.

Decline/Increase in Number of Cases (March 19 – June 16): Our cases continue to increase (cases surging). In fact, our numbers are significantly higher than our average over the past few weeks. The MCHD say it not entirely due to increased testing, but also transmissions. That’s why you are still hearing the “Safer at Home” recommendation.

Age of Those Infected. Seniors 50 and older continue to make up 45% of all new cases. So, social distancing and face coverings are still critical for seniors – and those they interact with.

Hospitalizations: The total number of those hospitalized remains steady at 263, which is less than 10 percent of total infections. We have adequate space to treat COVID cases. That’s good news.

TIGHTENING: WE ARE DOING THE RIGHT THINGS IN MOBILE
Even though we’ve had an increase in cases, national research studies predicting hundreds of new daily COVID-19 cases in Mobile County were wrong. Mobile is, in fact, one of the areas experiencing the biggest tightening of cases this week: no rapid surge in cases attributed to safety measures as Mobile re-opens. MCHD Rendi Murphree attributes this to citizens doing a better job of following public health guidelines. “We do believe that the social distancing, the restriction of movement, the restrictions on businesses – we believe those things have worked in Mobile County,” she said. “And we had a really tough start. We had lots of cases in the beginning when testing first became available.”

So….keep 6 feet from others, wash your hands often and wear a mask in public. The state’s amended Safer at Home order remains in place through July 3.

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. Seniors are still at high risk, and Mayor Stimpson doesn’t think the Governor has confidence to relax any additional restrictions at this time.
BRINGING SENIORS FITNESS EVERY DAY!
VIA ONLINE FITNESS PORTAL UP AND RUNNING
The Via Center has launched our Online Fitness Portal for members. Our own certified instructors (Irene Callaway, Gerry Lowe and Elena Boykin) teach SilverSneakers, Senior & Fit and Silver Sneakers chair-based exercise classes. Other classes include Yoga, Stability Ball, Body Sculpting and Strength Training. Seniors have taken more than 3,000 of our exercise classes since we began uploading them in March. If you would like information on the Via Online Fitness Portal or membership, email bestes@viameobile or call 251.470.5229. Your health insurance carrier may cover the cost of your membership, or memberships average $14 per month. Check out our course offerings:

Via Center Online Fitness Portal

GOOD NEWS ON OPENING OUR BEACHES AND COVID CASES
Baldwin County COVID case count is low, despite cell phone data showing large gatherings. The beaches in Baldwin County showed a spike in cell phone “pings” between March 1st and June 12th, which includes the Memorial Day holiday.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE ADLINE CLARK: SUPPORTING SENIORS
A special thank you to District 97 Representative Adline Clarke! Representative Clarke has assisted the Via Center in applying for Alabama CARES funding to help ensure we have adequate resources for cleaning, disinfecting and safety/health supplies to be Ready to Re-open when new guidance is issued. She has always been a supporter of the Center and the seniors in our community we serve.

FIRST TIME: CROWN HEALTH CARE HAS NO POSITIVE TESTS
Crown Health Care of Mobile says no residents or employees on-site have tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the outbreak. The facility received extra-deep cleaning by the Alabama National Guard and a private firm with cleanup expertise. As residents received two negative tests indicating recovery from the virus, they were moved to the deep-cleaned units, helping to create COVID-free environments.

UPDATE: NEW DATA ON OUR NURSING HOME COMMUNITY CASES
We’ve all been concerned about the health and safety of seniors in nursing home communities. We’ve seen pictures of loved ones visiting through windows and residents holding up signs in greeting. You now can view the number of COVID-19
cases in southwest Alabama nursing homes, published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

[Click Here for Article and Links]

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**IRS: NEW INFORMATION ON ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS**

The IRS has issued new guidance for issues related to Economic Impact Payments.

**Lost, stolen or damaged checks or pre-paid debit cards:** You can initiate a trace on your payment by calling 800.919.9835 or submitting a Form 3911. If the check wasn’t cashed, the IRS will cancel the original check and issue a new one. If the check was cashed, the Bureau of Fiscal Service will provide a claim package that includes a copy of the cashed check. The agency will compare your signature with the signature on the check to determine if you should receive a replacement check.

[Click Here for Form 3911: Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund]

The agency also advises you to keep your Notice 1444. That’s the letter that should arrive within 15 days of your payment, and you can use it for your file your 2020 tax return.

Stay up-to-date on information from the IRS:

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**HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE PROTESTORS TO GET TESTED TO PROTECT FAMILY AND LOVED ONES AT HIGH RISK**

Health experts are growing more concerned about the impact protests could have when it comes to spreading the virus. The CDC fears transmissions could contribute to a possible spike in cases. Refer to the TESTING section at the end of this update for testing sites and information.
DRIVE THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION
*** Registration Closes at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16 ***
Under the Via Portico
Friday, June 26 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
We will be distributing 2-3 pounds of non-perishable food items for those in need.
Register Online Here
Call 251.470.5229

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ALZHEIMER’S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA WEBINAR:
DIET AND COGNITIVE DECLINE
Learn the many impacts your diet can have on your body, especially in relation to Alzheimer's Disease, other dementia-related illnesses and cognition. Includes live Q & A Session
Date: Tuesday, June 23rd
Time: 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. EST
Click Here to Register Online

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VETERANS AND FAMILIES:
MILITARY APPRECIATION LUNCHEON BROADCAST JULY 2
The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a special broadcast, including awards presented by all branches of the military and recognition of distinguished JROTC & ROTC cadets. The event features a keynote address by Governor Kay Ivey. Reservations required.
Date: July 2
Time: 12:00 p.m.
Cost: $15 for Chamber members/$20 for nonmembers. Includes the broadcast code and a $15 gift certificate to a participating Chamber member restaurant of your choice, including Briquettes Steakhouse, Chicken Salad Chick, Foosackley’s, Lucky Irish Pub and Grill, Simple Greek, Sonny’s BBQ and Taco Mama.
Contact: Mallory Tyson at 251.431.8621 or REGISTER HERE

FREE FRESH PRODUCE FOR SENIORS AND FAMILIES
The Area Agency on Aging is providing free produce and other groceries for seniors and families on Tuesday, June 23rd and Tuesday, June 30th. There are no income restrictions.
Location: Central Presbyterian Church, 1260 Dauphin Street
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Line-up across the street at the Alabama School of Math and Science parking lot.
Information: 251.706.4680

CITY OF MOBILE LIST OF FOOD RESOURCES
Local churches and non-profit organizations providing help. 
Click Here for City of Mobile Food Resources
FROM MEDICARE: INCREASE IN NUMBER OF STOLEN MEDICARE INFORMATION DUE TO COVID
Scammers are committing Medicare fraud by telling you they'll send a Coronavirus test, masks or other items in exchange for your Medicare Number.
1. Guard your Medicare Number.
2. Check your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) for errors.
3. Only give your Medicare Number to participating Medicare pharmacists, primary/specialty care doctors or Medicare employees.
4. Medicare will never call you to verify your Medicare Number!

REMEMBER: HAVE YOUR VOTING PLAN IN PLACE FOR JULY 14TH
CHECK YOUR VOTING LOCATION
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
Check Your Voting Location
STAY CONNECTED! LONELINESS LEADS TO MEDICAL ISSUES
We remind our seniors to stay safe, healthy and CONNECTED. A 2018 study Cigna found 54% of 20,000 Americans surveyed reported feeling lonely. The number is now 61%. And, loneliness has hit epidemic proportions for seniors during COVID. The Mayo Clinic has found loneliness causes sleeplessness, weight gain, anxiety and cognitive decline. "Imagine a condition that makes a person irritable, depressed and self-centered, and is associated with a 26% increase in the risk of premature mortality.” (Source: The Lancet Journal) Combat loneliness by calling or e-mail a friend several times a week, walking with neighbors and participating in senior events, like Via Center Portico events. Even if YOU are NOT lonely, check on friends and loved ones.

FLOWER/PLANT DISCOUNT FOR SENIORS!
Blair’s Nursery and Gifts is offering a 15% discount on Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for seniors 55 and older. Some exclusions may apply. Blair’s: 9001 Dawes Lane North, Mobile, Alabama 36619, 251. 666.5687 and https://www.blairsnurseryandgifts.com/
SAFETY TIPS FOR 4TH OF JULY: BE COVID SMART
We all know our social distancing guidelines. However, here is a 4th of July Refresher:
1. **Our Celebration Food.** Clean and sanitize surfaces (60% alcohol solution) and wear gloves. No evidence that COVID-19 is spread by food. However, people sharing utensils and congregating around food service areas can pose a risk.
2. **Our Celebration Gatherings.** The smaller the better. Keep appropriate space (6 feet) between attendees. Public health officials encourage outdoor gatherings.
3. **Our Celebration Attire.** Transmission primarily happens when respiratory droplets are released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. Wear your mask.
4. **Our Celebration Love.** Share the love by washing your hands and asking everyone else to wash their hands. Health officials say this is most important! Anything on your hands can end up on your face. Especially, because you will be touching your face when you adjust your mask (because they’re hot and itchy!).

When to Wash your Hands:
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal
- After touching garbage

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CDC SAFETY RECAP ON RUNNING CELEBRATION ERRANDS
1. Stay home if sick.
2. Use online services when available.
3. Wear a cloth face covering when running errands.
4. Use social distancing (stay at least 6 feet away from others).
5. Use hand sanitizer after leaving stores.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when you get home.
4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS OPTIONS
Reminder that the City of Gulf Shores has cancelled July 4th fireworks over coronavirus concerns.
Online Fireworks Broadcast:
- PBS “A Capitol Fourth” will be live on PBS July 4th. Most stations will air the concert at 8:00 p.m. ET/7:00 p.m. CT and repeat the program at 9:30 p.m. ET immediately after the live broadcast. Link to Broadcast Information
- New York Macy’s 4th of July Fireworks. Begins at 9:20 p.m. ET and will be televised on NBC and NBC Online: https://www.nbc.com/live?brand-usa

JUNE 23 VIRTUAL SCREENING BY LIFETIME TV:
STOLEN BY MY MOTHER: THE KAMIYAH MOBLEY STORY
Q & A WITH ACTRESS NIECY NASH
In the summer of 1998, Gloria Williams (played by Nash) walked into a Jacksonville, Florida hospital posing as a nurse and took newborn Kamiyah Mobley. Gloria renamed the baby Alexis and raised her as her own. Years later, the story began to unravel. Actress Niecy Nash will answer questions from viewers.
Date: Tuesday, June 23rd
Time: 4:00pm
Register Here. Viewing link will be emailed.
COVID Q&A

Does your blood type play a role in your likelihood of getting COVID?
The DNA testing company 23andMe announced preliminary data from its ongoing study of 750,000 people provides evidence the “O” blood type appears to be protective against the virus. “O” blood types are between 9-18% less likely than individuals with other blood types to have tested positive for COVID.

Is a COVID carrier a carrier for life?
ASHD Dr. Karen Landers: “No. There is not a "carrier state" for COVID-19. Some persons who have COVID-19 may have a positive PCR for as long as 30 days, but this does not necessarily mean that they are contagious.”

UPDATE: PROGRESS ON RESEARCH AND A POTENTIAL CURE

Dexamethasone. A study pending publication by the University of Oxford has found that the steroid drug dexamethasone reduces deaths by up to 1/3 in severely ill patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

Remdesivir. The FDA has issued an emergency use authorization for Gilead Sciences’ antiviral drug remdesivir after preliminary results from an international clinical trial found that patients with severe illness who received the drug recovered faster than those who received a placebo.

Chloroquine & Hydroxychloroquine. The FDA has revoked the emergency use it previously issued for chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine to treat people hospitalized with COVID-19. In a statement the agency said the drugs are “unlikely
to be effective” in treating the disease, and that “in light of ongoing serious cardiac adverse events and other potential serious side effects, the known and potential benefits of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine no longer outweigh the known and potential risks for the authorized use.”

TIME TO TACKLE STRAWBERRIES
We have featured tomatoes and peppers, so now it’s time to add strawberries to your garden set up. Strawberries are a fun addition that can easily be grown in gardens, containers, and window boxes. Think strawberry shortcake, strawberry pie, or eaten straight from the garden! Here is a link to 15 Frequently Asked Questions on growing healthy strawberries.

NEED A CHALLENGE? TRY THE EBB AND FLOW GAME
Focuses on task switching is in process of adapting to changing circumstances. Good luck! The staff found it really challenging.  

REDUCED HOURS FOR STATE COVID-19 HOTLINE
Based on a reduction in telephone call volume after hours, the Alabama Department of Public Health has reduced hotline hours to 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. seven days a week.
- General Information: 800.270.7268
- General Information Email: covid19info@adph.state.al.us.
- Testing Sites: 888.264.2256, callers are asked for their zip code to help locate the site nearest them.
- ADPH website: https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov

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/

MOBILE COUNTY 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 18 at 4:00 p.m.

Mobile County cases: 2,834
Mobile County tested: 29,863
Mobile County deaths: 130
Mobile County Hospitalizations: 2,373
State-wide cases: 27,796
State-wide tested:322,124
State-wide deaths:801
State-wide recovered: 15,974
MOBILE COUNTY CASE CHARACTERISTICS


TESTING SITES UPDATED
- American Family Care Clinic - Mobile (Festival Centre)
900 Montlimar Drive, Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 250-1403
- American Family Care Clinic - Mobile (Tillman’s Corner)
5235 Rangeline Service Road South, Suite A, Mobile, AL 36619
(251) 220-7281
- American Family Care Clinic - Saraland
1097 Industrial Parkway, Saraland, AL 36571
(251) 250-1519
- Family Health (MCHD)
Keeler Memorial Building Downtown Mobile 251 North Bayou Street
251-410-6243
- Greater Mobile Urgent Care will test symptomatic AND asymptomatic patients at their West Mobile location. 2350 Schillinger Rd. Mobile, AL 36695
(251) 633-0123
- Main Street Family Care - Mobile
6280 Grelot Rd. Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 288-5606
- Mobile Civic Center (moved from Ladd-Peebles Stadium) for anyone with a medical referral and a scheduled appointment. Cash price is $75. To request an appointment, please call 1-888-USA-2650.
- Compass Urgent Care, with Doctor O.
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.
For more information: 251.470.5229 or bestes@viamobile.org

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/xSH3JItzjMk or access at www.viamobile.org
Homepage/Hotlinks

We will post NEW classes from Gerry Lowe and Elena Boykin on Monday (6.8.2020).

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.


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
251.433.1847
Email: info@waterfrontmission.org
Website: https://mobilerescuemission.org/

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 online. 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.

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**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/

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**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
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
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 though 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 creat 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 sinc 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/

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](#)

**Lifesouth**

**Community Blood Centers**

**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/](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/destroty 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.
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
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 TARGETEING 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/](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 UPDTAED
- Wal-Mart (Saraland)
  Drive through. Appointment needed: [www.MyQuestCOVIDTest.com](https://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/](https://www.mainstreetfamilycare.com/coronavirus-testing/)
  Location: 6280 Grelot Road
- American Family Care
  Appointment: [https://www.afcurgentcare.com/patient-resources/covid-19/](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.

**OPEN?**

**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:  

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

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](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](http://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](https://rendallco.com/pages/masks)

**Etsy**: Between $6-$15
[https://www.etsy.com/market/face_mask](https://www.etsy.com/market/face_mask)

**Love Your Melon**: 1-2 week shipping time

**Vera Bradley**: 10% off when you sign up with email

**Mothers Masks**: 10% off first order

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**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH CASES**

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](http://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

OPEN?

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.

FEDERAL-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 30**th. 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 30**th. 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://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/](https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/)

The Vatican Museum in Rome: The Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, and Raphael's Room
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:
http://www.bethelamechurchmobile.com/sermons/
Archdiocese of Mobile
http://mobarch.org/dailymass/
New Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church
http://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. 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=w50&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.
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 UPĐTAED
- 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
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/tPxlqvyJgf4
No-Sew Mask With Household Items
Advanced Mask Making – for Sewers

ALCOM 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=IwAR3f78sbeV0RNHoYQZnrjE0UDwgsqFUl8STWX_nu3HK5zcTRHtNHyGKeOvM#/6d2771faa9da4a2786a509d82c8cf0f7

CORONAVIRUS HOTLINE
Alabama Department of Public Health hotline: 888.264.2256.

TESTING SITES UPDATAED
- 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

amazon smile
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=IwAR2RI3kTBjqLsbHvaQeoFtCTRjHaglpqyaJwKyi5t34_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 an 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: TELEmedicine
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
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.

Stay Safe and Healthy,
The Via Center Team

*** PREVIOUS ISSUES ***
4.3.2020

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
Alabama Department of Environmental Management: EPA drinking water regulations require water systems to remove or kill pathogens. Water supply is safe – you can drink form the tap.

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: TELEMDICINE
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 MIS- INFORMATION
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*

*** PREVIOUS ISSUES ***

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/

LINK TO CITY OF MOBILE CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION
file:///C:/Users/beste/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/S9J7WJ5W/CA%20032620%201.pdf

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!
  https://www.winndixie.com/shoponline
- Walmart: In-store/curbside pick up. Reserve a time to pick up on-line
  https://grocery.walmart.com/?adid=150000000000039636430&veh=wmt

LINK TO SENIOR SHOPPING HOURS

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 MILLENIALS 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=IwAR2RI3kTBjqlsbHvaQeoFtCTRrJhaglpqyAiwKyi5t34_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

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

**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!**

**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
- Robocalls to sell coronavirus cleaning products: Hang up
- Emails 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=IwAR2RI3kTBjqlsbHvaQeoFtCTRJhaglpqyAiwKy5t34_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/67ac94d1cf08a84ff7c6bbee2b167fa

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/

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 RESCHEDULED
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.

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