

OUR MISSION

To promote the independence and quality of life for older adults, adults with disabilities, and their families.

Dear Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and well! We want you to know we (Bridges Staff) are still here and available to assist you to navigate through these uncertain times created by COVID-19.

In the interest of public safety and in accordance with the Governor of Illinois Shelter-In-Place Order, our group activities and presentations are suspended until further notice. Please be advised that new information will be released when available.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES are available. Although staff are not on site, we are available during our normal business hours of Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm at 815-431-8034.

Bridges Staff will confidentially answer questions and provide information, assistance, or make referrals to local, state and federal services for older adults 60+, adults with disabilities, and caregivers. Thank you for your understanding and patience during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Aly Witek

Bridges Program Coordinator



BRIDGES COMMUNITY CENTER STAFF

Program Director: Erin Hanna

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TIME TO RESPOND TO THE 2020 CENSUS

Everyone Counts! Your response directly relates to how much of the \$675 billion dollars our city, region and state will get! These dollars fund Medicare, Medicaid, Community Centers, First Responders, Supportive Housing for Seniors and more. Our local count is more important than ever for future government funding!. Please complete your questionnaire for your ENTIRE household online, by phone or by mail.

For more information, visit:

2020CENSUS.GOV

IMPORTANT UPDATES & RESOURCES

License Plate Discount & Ride Free Transit Benefit

Illinois has **extended** the **tax filing deadline** to **July 15, 2020** in response to COVID-19. As a result, the **Benefit Access Program** (*License Plate Discount & Ride Free Transit Benefit*) will continue to use **2018 income to file through July 15, 2020**.

Eligibility & Requirements:

1) Age

- You must be 65 years of age or older by December 31 of the current year; or
- You must be 16 years of age or older and totally disabled before January 1 of this year.

2) Residency

- You must live in Illinois at the time you file your application.

3) Income Limit Eligibility: your total income last year must be less than

- **\$33,562** for a **1 person household**; or
- **\$44,533** for a **2 person household** (*yourself and your spouse*)

Adult Protective Services

Alternatives.....(309) 277-0167
24 Hour Hotline (Alternatives).....(800) 798-0988

Comprehensive Care (CCU) & Homemaker (CCP)

Alternatives.....(309) 277-0167

Family Caregiver Support & Counseling

Alternatives.....(309) 277-0167

Information & Assistance

Bridges Community Center.....(815) 431-8034

Ombudsman (Nursing Home Resident Advocacy)

Alternatives.....(309) 277-0167

Home Delivered Meals for Area Seniors

Voluntary Action Center (VAC).....(815) 883-3630

IVCIL Mobile Meals.....(815)-224-3406

Food Pantry (Call ahead, curbside pick up)

Ottawa Community Food Basket.....(815) 431-0155

Salvation Army (Ottawa)*.....(815) 433-0798

Streatorland Community Food Pantry... (815) 673-3688

Salvation Army (Streator)*.....(815) 672-2746

Illinois Valley Food Pantry*.....(815) 224-3658

Marseilles Food Pantry*.....(815) 579-8922

*Delivery available with prior approval for select pantries

Transportation

North Central Area Transit (NCAT).....(815) 433-6228

Mendota Area Senior Services (MASS)... (815) 539-7700

IL Dept. on Aging Senior Help Line... (800) 252-8966

Friendship Line.....(800) 971-0016

(Non-emergency emotional support calls)

Illinois Warm Line.....(866) 359-7593

(Non-emergency emotional support, recovery, & advocacy)

Special Senior Shopping Hours

Walmart (Peru-Ottawa-Streator)—Tues, 6-7am

Kroger (Ottawa-Streator)—Mon-Tues-Wed-Thurs, 7-8am

Handy Foods (Ottawa)—Everyday, 1-3pm

Dollar General (Ottawa-Peru-Marseilles) —

Everyday, 8-9am

Dollar General (Streator)—Everyday, 7-8am

Hyvee (Peru)—Everyday from 7-8am

IL Valley Food & Deli (La Salle)—Everyday, 7-9am

Enjoy our newsletter?

Have topics you would like to see in future editions?

Ideas for activities, classes or programs you want offered?

Know someone who wants to receive our newsletter?

We **WANT** your feedback!

Call us at 815-431-8034

Check out our **NEW** website: <https://bridges.alternativesforyou.org/>

MEDICARE & YOU

Medicare & Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Here is a summary of the coverage provided by Medicare:

- Y Medicare covers the lab tests for COVID-19. You pay no out-of-pocket costs.
- Y Medicare covers all medically necessary hospitalizations. This includes if you're diagnosed with COVID-19 and might otherwise have been discharged from the hospital after an inpatient stay, but instead you need to stay in the hospital under quarantine.
- Y At this time, there's no vaccine for COVID-19. However, if one becomes available, it will be covered by all Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D).
- Y If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, you have access to these same benefits. Medicare allows these plans to waive cost-sharing for COVID-19 lab tests. Many plans offer additional telehealth benefits beyond the ones described above. Check with your plan about your coverage and costs.
- Y Scammers may use the coronavirus national emergency to take advantage of people while they're distracted. As always, guard your Medicare card like a credit card, check Medicare claims summary forms for errors and if someone calls asking for your Medicare Number, HANG UP!

More information is available from the official Medicare website:



OR
1-800-MEDICARE

Medicare and Social Security can be confusing, whether you are **new** to **Medicare** or **not** !

Bridges staff are certified **Senior Health Insurance Program** (SHIP) Counselors who can help you navigate Medicare, and other benefit programs.

Our staff can provide all the necessary assistance, to resolve Medicare related issues by providing information, application assistance, advocacy, and referrals.

To learn more about how we can help you navigate, contact us!

IMPORTANT

COVID-19 Emergency Funds

Alternatives has funding *available* to assist older adults (60+) with **emergency needs** and **supplies** during this COVID-19 crisis.

Funds can be used for any older adult, who has an **emergent need** for: food, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene items, medical supplies, transportation or any other critical items they are unable to obtain due to lack of access or being isolated in their home. **Funds available on first come basis.**

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance contact us!

815-431-8034 (Bridges)
OR
1-800-798-0988 (Alternatives)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL BRIDGES 815-431-8034.

Are you a caregiver to.....

- ✿ An older adult age 60 and over?
- ✿ An adult age 18-59 with a disability?
- ✿ Or a grandparent raising a grandchild?

Contact us to learn about resources!

Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders (ADRD) Supportive Gap-Filling Service

The Supportive Gap Filling service provides limited funds that persons with dementia or a related disorder (diagnosed or undiagnosed) and/or their primary caregivers may spend on services and supports that enhance their ability to live in the community.

Funds can be used to purchase goods, supplies, or items to meet the care recipient or caregivers needs. However eligibility is subjected to program guidelines and cost limitation per individual. Examples: care related services, seat risers, wanderer alarms, wheelchairs and monitors etc.... Funds available on first come basis.

If interested, please call 815-431-8034.



LISTEN TO MUSIC

Stress is a natural part of life. We all may be feeling more stress than usual due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the effects it has had on our lives. A healthy response to stress is to find ways to reduce and relieve it. Music is a very enjoyable, convenient and practical way to reduce stress.

According to <https://www.verywellmind.com/>, "Music can affect the body in many health-promoting ways, which is the basis for a growing field known as music therapy. However, you can use music in your daily life and achieve many stress relief benefits on your own."

"One of the great benefits of music as a stress reliever is that it can be used while you conduct your regular activities so it really doesn't take time away from your busy schedule. Music provides a wonderful backdrop for your life and you can find increased enjoyment from what you're doing while reducing stress from your day."

**So remember to turn on your favorite tunes today—
Listen to the Music and Stress Less!**