



Encore

AN UPDATE FOR OUR OLDER ADULT RESIDENTS
2024 | VOL. 3

From Your Oakland County Executive

Hello Friends,

As we prepare for the holidays and look forward to 2025, I'm extending wishes for a joyous season full of family and friends, as well as warmth and laughter.

And I'd like to let you know about all the great things we're doing in Oakland County that will benefit you and your families.

This newsletter is full of fun facts, stimulating events and opportunities to learn more about the history of the county. Some highlights in this edition:

- How to help prevent falls during the cold and icy winter months.
- How to identify and beat the holiday and winter blues.
- The best spots to play pickleball indoors.
- Options for public transportation.

It's part of our mission to ensure all of our residents, including the growing older adult population, know about the resources and programs that are available throughout the county. These programs can help you experience a more active, engaged life and allow you to choose the best living options for your situation, whether it's staying in your home or looking for a more supported, easier-to-manage household.

And, if you don't already have this number in your contacts, jot down the Oakland County Older Adult Services hotline: (248) 858-0593. Also, visit OakGov.com/OlderAdults to find out more about what we're doing for you.

With gratitude,



Oakland County Executive
David Coulter



All ways, MOVING FORWARD



OAKLAND COUNTY VETERANS *Ride for Free*

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency has awarded a \$530,000 grant to Oakland County to extend the "This Ride's on Us" initiative for another year and continue providing free door-to-door public transportation for veterans and their caregivers. These free rides take people everywhere from doctor's appointments and grocery shopping to visits to community events and senior centers.

The program launched earlier this year through a collaboration with Oakland County Veterans Services office and local transportation providers. More than 2,750 free rides for veterans were delivered in just four months. The grant will support services through Sept. 30, 2025.

The program has helped people like Frank Withers, a retired Army Sergeant from Waterford, who uses it for all of his travel, including visits to the Waterford Senior Center.



"The bus brings me to places like this here and makes my problems non-existent for a little while. And that's good for my mental health," Withers said during a recent trip to the senior center.

The Veterans office previously offered free rides to their county offices for several years so that former service members could meet with counselors about the benefits they earned through their active duty. However, they consistently heard that transportation for day-to-day tasks was a challenge for many of the 53,000 veterans in the county, more than half of whom are older than 65 and many of them with disabilities.

That was the genesis of the "Veterans Ride Free" concept and the pilot project was launched.

"They're not so stuck in their house anymore. They can go to a senior center and interact with other seniors," said Garth Wooten, Division Manager of the county Veterans Services. "This is a quality-of-life program not only for the veteran but also for their families."

All the local public transit providers in Oakland County – North Oakland Transportation and Western Oakland Transportation authorities, People's Express and OPC Social and Activity Center along with the SMART system – participate in the Veterans Ride Free initiative.

To book a ride, veterans can call (248) 419-7984 and provide proof of military service through DD214 discharge papers.

"This has already helped so many Oakland County veterans and I'm thrilled that we can continue this vital service," said Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter. "Our goal is to eliminate any barriers to transportation for our veterans who have sacrificed so much in service to us all."

SPOTLIGHT ON: Auburn Hills Community Center

With the help of an Oakland County grant, cooking classes are now offered in the newly renovated kitchen in the Auburn Hills Community Center

The recent upgrades will give visitors the chance to work with Oakland University's Wellness and Health Promotion Program and receive both cooking and health education classes. Staff members say these opportunities will help promote healthier habits, with the goal of decreasing the number of chronic diseases their older adult members face.

Jackie Monroy, program coordinator of Recreation and Senior Services, said the kitchen renovation has sparked a lot of interest and excitement.

"Our first three classes sold out without needing any additional advertisement," she said. "We're excited to work with local partners for not only educational, but fun classes, too."

Though the renovated kitchen is one of Auburn Hills Community Center's latest features, there

are a wide variety of programs offered that are especially popular with older adults, such as cardio drumming, instructional pickleball and fiber arts.

Monroy said the center's staff prides itself on getting to know every one of its 1,000 members personally and encourages them to take advantage of the programming "We know when one of our members misses one of their regular days," she said. "We are a very small, cozy, and intimate center," Monroy said.

The AHCC's mission also helps support livable communities with a special emphasis on helping older adults remain in their homes. The Senior Home Assistance Repair Program connects volunteers with older adults who need assistance with home maintenance so they can continue to age in place.

For more information on services and classes offered at the center.

Auburn Hills Community Center
3350 East Seyburn Drive
(248) 370-9353
auburnhills.org/community/community_center



Easy Holiday Recipe

Some foods nourish the body, while others, like this delightful bread pudding, are perfect indulgences for special occasions, such as the upcoming holidays!

Chocolate Chip Bread and Butter Pudding

- 8 slices chocolate chip brioche loaf, available in bakeries or online
- 1 ¾ cups heavy cream
- 5 ⅓ ounces semisweet chocolate
- 3 ½ ounces superfine sugar
- 3 ounces butter
- 3 large eggs
- Confectioners' sugar

1. Butter the sides and bottom of an ovenproof dish.
2. Cut the brioche slices into small triangular pieces, and place in the dish.
3. Place a large mixing bowl on top of a pan of simmering water.
4. Melt the chocolate, butter, sugar and cream in the bowl and stir gently.
5. Beat the eggs together in a separate bowl. Mix the beaten eggs with the chocolate mixture and pour over the brioche.
6. Place the ovenproof dish into the fridge to chill. Leave overnight, if possible.
7. Pre-heat the oven to 300°F and bake for 25-30 minutes.
8. Remove from the oven and dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Check out this decadent dessert, along with several more holiday recipe suggestions from AARP. 4 Holiday Dessert Recipes to Make This Year (aarp.org)

HOUSING OPTIONS for Older Adults



Are you or a loved one looking to downsize? Don't want to maintain a house or can no longer age in place? Good news...there are many living arrangements to consider!

Your budget, cost of living in your area and the services you need will be important factors when deciding on where to call home.

THE MI CHOICE WAIVER PROGRAM

Helps adults who meet specific medical and financial criteria, determine if they can receive Medicaid-covered services like those provided by nursing homes but in their own home or another residential setting. Services can include adult day care, chore services and private-duty nursing.

To learn more about the waiver, call Ageways (800) 852-7795
Easterseals/MORC at 800-75-SEALS

Affordable Independent Living Communities

Affordable independent living communities designated for older adults offer more budget-friendly options in standard apartment settings. Because of demand, if you are eligible for this type of housing and there are no open units available, you'll be added to a waitlist. Requirements are:

- 62 or older
- Income must be less than 50% of the median income in your area
- Pay up to 30% of your adjusted gross monthly income toward the rent

You may also be eligible for Michigan's Housing Choice Voucher program. Contact the following approved agencies for more information: Busch Housing Services at (248) 524-1901 or Community Management Associates at (877) 796-8883.

For general housing information, call (248) 858-5402 to speak with a HUD-certified housing counselor with Oakland County's Neighborhood & Housing Development Division. They can also guide older adults through programs that provide rental assistance, reverse mortgages, subsidized housing and more. You can also contact AgeWays at (800) 852-7795.

Independent Living Communities

Independent living communities are an option for older adults who can care for themselves and want to live in their own apartment or condo. Each independent living community varies in offerings and costs. Some of these communities offer transportation, 24-hour emergency response services, housekeeping, and home health care aides. Some communities feature hotel-like amenities such as movie rooms, swimming pools, salons, and barbershops.

Adult Foster Care (AFC)

AFC are licensed residential homes for people with a developmental or physical disability, mental illness or age-related conditions like dementia. They provide room, board, food, supervision, protection and personal care in accordance with the resident's assessment plan. This can include medication administration, social activities, and assistance with activities of daily living. AFC homes can house up to 20 adults.

Home for the Aged (HFA)

HFAs are licensed facilities that provide room, board, food and supervised personal care to adults 55+. Personal care can include medication reminders, assistance with eating and bathing, and social needs support. They can house 21 or more residents unless they are attached to a licensed nursing home. Residents may receive services from outside hospice or home health agencies.

When selecting an AFC or HFA, it is important to visit the home/ facility, interview the provider, review the services, and confirm the cost. To search for AFCs or HFAs, use the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)'s search engine at adultfostercare.apps.lara.state.mi.us or contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' Oakland County office at (844) 464-3447.

Memory Care

Memory care units/centers provide specialized staff for residents living with a form of dementia such as Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia and frontotemporal dementia. These units provide dementia-specialized social activities, round-the-clock personal care, medication management and monitoring to ensure residents don't leave. Memory care facilities can be a separate wing of an assisted living facility or its own building. For more

information, contact Ageways at (800) 852-7795 or the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116.

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)

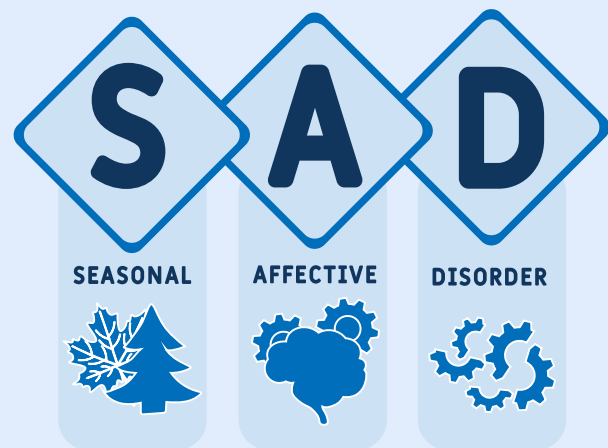
SNFs, also called nursing homes, provide medical and personal care services. When a person is discharged from a hospital but needs continued inpatient treatment and rehabilitation, most live temporarily in SNFs. For more information, contact Ageways at (800) 852-7795 or the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116. To compare Medicare provider nursing homes or inpatient rehabilitation facilities, visit medicare.gov/care-compare.

In some cases, veterans can receive skilled nursing care in residential communities specifically for veterans. For more information about VA benefits, call the Oakland County Veterans' Services at (248) 858-0785 (Pontiac) or (248) 655-1250 (Troy). You may also contact the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center at (313) 576-1000.

Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs)

CCRCs offer independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing care, all on one campus. Where you live on campus depends on how much assistance you need. Some residents may transition from the independent living to assisted living or a skilled nursing facility due to illness, injury or the effects of aging. As CCRCs offer a continuum of care, some may require an entry fee with others requiring a rental fee. For more information, contact Ageways at (800) 852-7795 or the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116.





Winter Blues or Seasonal Affective Disorder?

The cold season can bring about mild and extreme changes in moods.

When daylight hours shorten in Michigan, many people notice they have less energy, poor sleep habits or hygiene, or are just feeling blue. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, if these feelings are mild and only last for two weeks, it may just be the winter blues.

Research offers numerous recommendations for older adults coping with the winter blues. Here are some tips from the University of Michigan Medical School:

1. Get into bright light as soon as you wake up. Open your curtains or blinds and soak in the sun.
2. Movement is important for both physical and mental health. Consider working out indoors, whether it's yoga, Tai Chi or light aerobics.
3. Try to get some fresh air, whether that's sitting on your porch bundled up with a warm beverage or taking a stroll around the neighborhood. Just be sure to watch for slippery conditions.
4. Reach out to friends and family and set up times to have phone or video calls. It will give you both something to look forward to.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, if you experience more severe symptoms like weight

gain, withdrawing from friends and family, and oversleeping, it may be seasonal affective disorder (SAD). If you or a loved one suspect you have SAD, consult your healthcare provider about treatment options like vitamin D, light therapy, talk therapy, or the possibility of antidepressant medications.

Oakland County's older adult population has grown significantly over the years, leading many individuals aged 65 and older to experience a decline in their social circles. Oakland County is dedicated to helping older adults stay engaged, active, and healthy - both physically and mentally - long after retirement.

During the winter months when it's more difficult to visit friends and family, it's important to find other ways to check in with them.

Struggling with depression or anxiety? Contact Oakland County Health Network at (248) 464-6363 for mental health services. Need a listening ear? Call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Warmline at (888) 733-7753 available daily from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m.

Pickleball

Where to Find a Game This Winter

Don't let the temperature stop you from staying active during Michigan's chilliest season. Many communities offer indoor courts for people to practice their dinks, drops and serves all season.

New to the game?

Invented in 1965 as a children's game, pickleball has become popular with all age groups. Pickleball blends other racket/paddle sports such as table tennis, tennis and badminton to create a fun, competitive sport for all abilities and skill levels.

Pickleball is played on a badminton-sized court with two teams either as doubles or singles.

Health Benefits of Pickleball

Playing pickleball can provide many physical and mental health advantages for all who play.

A study by the University of North Georgia revealed that pickleball players reported the benefits of physical activity and social interactions outweigh any risk of injury while playing, they also experienced reduced falls off-court, and less fear of falling. Another study from Bologna University and the University of Cork found that exercises or sports that require the player to stay focused in an unpredictable environment, like tracking and hitting a pickleball, can improve both memory and perception.

Before picking up a paddle, consult your health care provider to make sure you are medically cleared to play pickleball.

For a court near you, see the list below:

Auburn Hills Community Center
3350 East Seyburn Drive • Auburn Hills
(248) 370-9353.

Deer Lake Athletic Club
6167 White Lake Road • Clarkston
(248) 625-8686
adulttennis@deerlakeathleticclub.com.

Farmington Hills Community Center
Costick Activities Center
28600 11 Mile Road • Farmington Hills
The Hawk
29995 West 12 Mile Road • Farmington Hills
(248) 473-1830.

Hunter Community Center
509 Fisher Court • Clawson
(248) 589-0334.

Oakland Fieldhouse
2139 Austin Avenue • Rochester Hills
(248) 807-7650.

Jack & Patti Salter Community Center
1545 East Lincoln Avenue • Royal Oak
(248) 246-3180.

Wessen Indoor Tennis Club
121 Branch Street • Pontiac
(248) 253-9300.





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Avoid Slips and Falls on Snow and Ice



Falls can be life-altering for older adults because broken bones can trigger the start of more serious health conditions or long-term disabilities. In Michigan, 1,379 older adults died from falls in 2021, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.*

Michigan's winters bring additional hazards such as icy driveways, slippery steps and slushy parking lots, making falls more likely.

Here are some tips for older adults to decrease the chances of falling.

1. Talk to your primary care physician. Ask your doctor to review your medications for side effects that cause dizziness or drowsiness. You might also ask about osteoporosis screening and vitamin D supplements for improved bone health. If you have fallen in the past, tell your doctor.
2. Visit your eye doctor. Have your eyes checked at least once a year and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed. If you have bifocal or progressive lenses, you may want to get glasses with only your distance prescription for outdoor activities. Sometimes bifocal or progressive

lenses can make things seem closer or farther than they are.

3. Stay active. Build up your balance, strength and flexibility. Practice at home with Tai Chi, balance on one leg using a wall or chair for support, climb stairs, lift light dumbbells or simply walk around the neighborhood. Reach out to your senior center or AgeWays at 800-852-7795 for local fall prevention programs.
4. Reduce obstacles. Use salt to melt ice or cat litter for added traction on slippery surfaces. Ensure stair railings are firmly in place. Install bright lights over stairways and thresholds.
5. Upgrade your footwear. Purchase ice cleats to slip over your boots or shoes for improved traction. These are available online or at sporting goods stores. Consider getting an ice gripper tip for your cane. For year-round safety, wear non-skid shoes.

For more information about fall prevention, talk to a health care professional or call AgeWays at (800) 852-7795.

*<https://www.cdc.gov/falls/data-research/index.html>



UPCOMING EVENTS

Magic of Lights

Pine Knob
33 Bob Seger Drive
Clarkston

Now-Jan. 4

Wiser Whisker's Senior Social

Avocato Catfé & Adoption Center
38437 Grand River Avenue
Farmington Hills

Dec. 25, Jan. 1, Jan. 8, Jan. 15, Jan. 22 and Jan. 29

The Big, Bright Light Show

Main Street
Downtown Rochester

Now-Jan.19,
5 p.m.-Midnight

Oakland County Farmers Market

2350 Pontiac Lake Road
Waterford

May-December | Tue. Thu. Sat.
January-April | Saturdays only

Detroit Zoo's Wild Lights

8450 West 10 Mile Road
Royal Oak

Now-Jan. 7

Lunar New Year Celebration

Hawk Community Center
29995 West 12 Mile Road
Farmington Hills

Jan. 25

For more events and links to details visit:
OakGov.com/Community/Older-Adults/Events



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Important NUMBERS

Nurse on Call:
(800) 848-5533

Oakland County
Older Adult Services:
(248) 425-8897

AgeWays Nonprofit
Senior Services:
(formerly Area Agency on Aging 1-B)
(800) 852-7795



Oakland County Parks Free Entry Day
Dec. 24-25 and Dec. 31-Jan.1

Free Entry Days are valid at Addison Oaks, Highland Oaks, Independence Oaks, Lyon Oaks and Dog Park, Orion Oaks and Dog Park, Red Oaks Dog Park and Rose Oaks.

Parks with Free Entry Daily: Catalpa Oaks, Pontiac Oaks, Red Oaks Nature Center, Springfield Oaks and Waterford Oaks.

About ENCORE. This triannual newsletter magazine, proudly funded by Oakland County, is dedicated to serving and empowering the older adult community across the county. Published three times a year, it provides valuable resources, community news and health tips, designed to enrich the lives of our older adult residents. Through this initiative, Oakland County is committed to fostering a strong, connected, and informed community for our older adults, ensuring they stay engaged and well-supported. ENCORE is distributed to households with older adult residents. If you have questions, please contact Danisha Weathersby at weathresbyd@oakgov.com or (248) 425-8897.

All ways, MOVING FORWARD