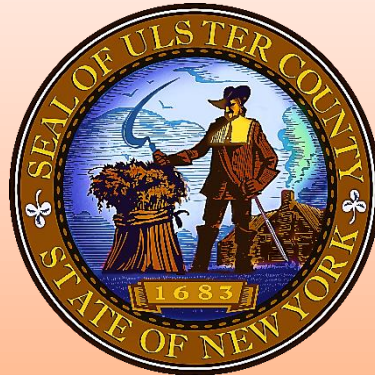


ULSTER COUNTY

OFFICE FOR THE AGING

2024 ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING



Jen Metzger, Ulster County Executive
Susan Koppenhaver, UCOFA Director

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Ulster County Office for the Aging to assist and empower older adults and their families to live as independently as possible, with dignity and purpose.

Ulster County will strive to reach more older adults and expand upon its current services by bringing them to remote and underserved areas of the County. This includes new educational health promotion, service enrollment and senior advocacy program opportunities so they can stay in, and contribute to, their community.

Ulster County Office for the Aging Staff & Contracted Individuals

3

Susan Koppenhaver, Director

Judy Riley, Deputy Director

**Ellen Scheerer, Admin.
Assistant/Nutrition Coordinator**

Robert Meci, HIICAP Coordinator

Samantha Ramage, Sr. Case Manager

Tessa Lopez, Case Manager

Enrica Fiorenza, Case Manager

Susan Frank, Case Manager

Ashley Koemm, Case Manager

Sharyn Rodney, Case Manager

**Dylan Moscoso, Caregiver
Coordinator/Case Manager**

**Gloria Ferraro, Senior Aging Services
Aide/NY Connects**

**Christine Noble, Sr. Aging Services
Aide**

**Christine Pepitone, Senior Aging
Services Aide**

Deborah Hall, Accountant

Moeen Lashari, Sr. Account Clerk

**Mary Garvey – Central Intake
(shared w/ APS)**

Claudia Berstell, Homemaker Aide

Stacey Buda, Homemaker Aide

Leland Gurrieri, Homemaker Aide

Stacey Pettigrew, Homemaker Aide

Kelley Wynans, Homemaker Aide

Leanna Wynans, Homemaker Aide

**Kelly Curless, HDM Case Manager
(Gateway Hudson Valley)**

**Lynn Leffler, Enhanced Case Manager
(Jewish Family Services)**

**Sandra Ramos, NY Connects
(Kingston WoRx/HealthAlliance)**

**Lauren Swartzmiller, NY Connects Asst.
(Kingston WoRx/HealthAlliance)**

Office for the Aging Volunteer Staff

- **11 HIICAP counselors plus the Coordinator**
- **Neighbor-to-Neighbor Volunteers**
 - **6 In-house coordinators**
 - **23 drivers**
- **Ulster Checks In/Warm Call Program**
 - **One coordinator**
 - **27 volunteer callers**
- **5 Health Promotion Educators**
- **Many volunteers in other community settings, such as People's Place, food delivery for Angel Food East and Rondout Food Pantry, exercise assistants and leader – currently 162 volunteers**

Office for the Aging Advisory Council

5

The mission of the Advisory Council is to support and guide the Office for the Aging (OFA) in its mission to help seniors age at home safely and with dignity. They help the OFA in developing, modernizing and expanding community-based services.

The Advisory Council is composed of representative members from the community, including recipients of services for the elderly, an array of social service agencies in Ulster County and rural neighborhood representation. All members are appointed by the County Executive and serve without compensation for three-year terms.

Advisory Council Members

Winifred Barnes

Donald Carragher

Katie Clayton

Joyce Greenberg, Chair

Lori Gross

Sandra Moore Giles

Sandra Nelson

Pamela Rhodes

Mary Lou Stapleton

Wilma Staubly

Stephen Weir

Sheila Wicklow

Community Collaborations

7

- **Ulster County Care Transitions Coalition**
- **NY Connects Long Term Services and Supports Council**
- **Westchester Independent Living Center**
- **Jewish Family Services**
- **Health Alliance of the Hudson Valley (WMCHealth)**
- **Ellenville Regional Hospital**
- **Age Well Kingston**
- **RUPCO, Inc. (Rural Ulster Preservation Company)**
- **RCAL (Resource Center for Accessible Living)**
- **Ulster County Emergency Preparedness Task Force**
- **MVP Health Care**
- **Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team (EMDT)**
- **Inter-Agency Council on Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking**
- **Mental Health Association in Ulster County**
- **Alzheimer's Association**
- **Integrated Ulster**
- **S.P.E.A.K. Suicide Prevention Task Force**
- **Ulster County Dept. of Social Services / Veteran Services Agency**

Comprehensive and Coordinated Service

8

The major objectives of the UCOFA plan include:

- ▶ **Securing and maintaining maximum independence in a home environment for older adults who are capable of self-care with appropriate supportive services;**
- ▶ **Preventing unnecessary or premature institutionalization;**
- ▶ **Tapping senior experience and talents to improve the community through volunteerism;**
- ▶ **Helping older adults become involved with other people in the community, thereby reducing isolation and loneliness; and,**
- ▶ **Helping older adults enjoy better health through improved nutrition, health screening and wellness programs.**

OFA Services Provided

9

- **Case Management**
- **Personal Care / Home Care Services**
- **Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)**
- **Home-Delivered Meals**
- **OFA Community Cafés**
- **Health Promotion Activities**
- **Nutrition Counseling and Education**
- **Social and Educational Events**
- **Transportation**
- **Legal Services**

OFA SERVICES CONTINUED...

10

- **HIICAP (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program)**
- **NY Connects - Long Term Services and Supports Information**
- **Caregiver Support Group**
- **Caregiver Respite**
- **Volunteer Opportunities**
- **Ulster County Older Adults Empowerment Council**

Senior Populations across Ulster County

2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				
	Total Town Pop.	Elderly Pop.		
Denning	533	113	21.20%	
Esopus	8831	656	7.43%	
Ellenville	4024	1551	38.54%	
Gardiner	5636	1191	21.13%	
Hardenburgh	227	51	22.47%	
Hurley	6126	1648	26.90%	
Kingston (city)	23210	3575	15.40%	
Kingston (town)	1116	220	19.71%	
Lloyd	10515	1848	17.57%	
Marbletown	5509	1294	23.49%	
Marlborough	8686	1457	16.77%	
New Paltz town	7045	1094	15.53%	
NPV	7169	881	12.29%	
Olive	4306	1003	23.29%	
Plattekill	10251	1793	17.49%	
Rochester	7203	1199	16.65%	
Rosendale	5907	1222	20.69%	
Saugerties	15282	2883	18.87%	
Saug V	3827	951	24.85%	
Shandaken	2784	941	33.80%	
Shawangunk	14030	1516	10.81%	
Ulster	12388	3046	24.59%	
Wawarsing	8876	1342	15.12%	
Woodstock	5822	1860	31.95%	

Office for the Aging Budget 2024

12

- **Federal funding \$ 823,813**
- **State funding \$2,680,498**
- **County funding \$1,110,170**

- **Other funding:**
 - **Contributions and donations \$52,363 (to date)**
 - **NY Connects - additional federal and state aid for long term care services \$283,888 (included above)**
 - **Transportation Grant \$10,981 (included above)**
 - **Additional: Bank of Greene County \$25,000 grant for repairs of low-income homes for older adults and Fall Prevention grant of \$1300 from Putnam County, and \$4500 grant from WMCHHealth for chronic disease management and paramedicine improvement in Western Ulster**

Annual report 2023 data

I. COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION – Two free medical transports and 1 free shopping trip per week on the Ulster County Area Transit System (UCAT) or the OFA medical van.

Number of Rides

2,827 – all rides free at this time!

Volunteer program rides completed (2023):

386

LEGAL SERVICES – Attorney Erica Halwick-Williams
Suggested Contribution to OFA \$20 - \$50.

People Served

753

INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE - The central source of information on services, program benefits and entitlements for senior citizens, their families and caregivers. Provided both by phone and in-person.

People Served 4,115

NY CONNECTS - Helping seniors and disabled people find long term care community-based services and support.

People Served 2,023

Senior Facts: Food Insecurity

- **Approximately 10.5% of Americans faced food insecurity in 2020..**
- **In 2019, only an estimated 48% of the nation's approximately 10 million eligible older adults participated in SNAP on average each month. 60 and older with lower incomes, or disabled adults are eligible for SNAP.**
- **73% of New York older adults who are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are enrolled. (2018)**

(Food Research & Action Center)

CONGREGATE MEALS - The OFA Community Cafés provide the opportunity to enjoy a nutritious noon time meal some weekdays with other seniors. Anyone 60 or older is eligible to participate. Meals are served throughout Ulster County. A contribution of \$3.00 is suggested.

Number of Meals

4,321 (2023)

Home delivered meals (through contract with Gateway HV: 101,859)

Community Cafés located in:

Ellenville - Trudy Farber Building

Saugerties – Frank D. Greco Senior Center

Kingston - Ulster County Senior Hub

New Paltz Community Center

Rosendale Recreation Center

Woodstock – Mescal Hornbeck Community Center

NUTRITION COUNSELING - Nutrition counseling is provided by a registered dietitian to assist the homebound and is also available on a one-to-one basis at congregate (nutrition) meal sites.

People Served 65

NUTRITION EDUCATION - Nutrition education includes monthly informational handouts and in-person presentations at the meal sites. The information is intended to assist the elderly in making informed decisions about their diets. Nutrition information and monthly menus are distributed to congregate and homebound participants.

People Served 145

4,000 read and receive education all year through our newsletter and regular education at the congregate sites!

HEALTH PROMOTION- This Evidence-Based Programming includes Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention using A Matter of Balance and Bingocize. We work to provide these programs throughout Ulster County. Thus far we have presented many these programs around the County. We partner with Health Alliance of the Hudson Valley to help coordinate these programs.

People Served

**245 Tai Chi and 63 through 3 AMOB and
2 Bingocize**

CAREGIVER SUPPORT- Provides assistance to caregivers, including grandparents raising grandchildren in our community. Support groups, respite care, caregiving educational programs, information and referral services, and supportive literature. Also includes personal care services and home delivered meals. Partner with Jewish Family Services and Mental Health Association in Ulster County to offer these supports.

People Served

18

HIICAP - (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program) Trained volunteer counselors are available to assist the senior population with Medicare and other health insurance.

People Served

1,896

(232 clients got Medicare Savings Plans application submitted as well)

Senior fact: Millions of financially vulnerable seniors and adults with disabilities qualify for but are not yet enrolled in benefits that could help them pay for prescription drugs, medical care, food, or heat for their homes.

MIPPA: Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act

MIPPA grantees specifically help low-income seniors and persons with disabilities to apply for two programs that help pay for their [Medicare costs](#):

- The [Medicare Part D Extra Help/Low-Income Subsidy](#) (LIS/Extra Help), which helps pay for the Part D premium and reduces the cost of prescriptions at the pharmacy, and
- The [Medicare Savings Programs](#) (MSPs), which help pay for Medicare Part B.

MIPPA grantees also provide Part D counseling to Medicare beneficiaries who live in rural areas, and are tasked to promote Medicare's [prevention and wellness benefits](#).

II. IN-HOME SERVICES

23

1. CASE MANAGEMENT - This service includes an assessment and monitoring for Office for the Aging services and other entitlements. Case Managers can also assist in finding other community support services.

People Served

856

2. PERSONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM - A 24-hour emergency identification system that is worn by the senior. Subcontractor: Connect America. Most devices are now satellite and wifi capable to work with your cell phones.

People Served

over 300

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION and CONCERNS

Transportation continues to be a challenge for Ulster County. Despite our support for a full-time OFA Medical Van/Driver (our partnership with UCAT for medical and shopping trips), and our volunteer driving program (Neighbor to Neighbor), and occasional use of an OFA County vehicle for client transport, the need still exists and is growing. Through a grant from NYS Office for Aging, we are now also to use GoGo Grandparent, a ride sharing program through Uber and Lyft, as drivers are available.

Senior Facts

- **In NYS, there are over 3.2 million persons ages 65 and older which is 16% of the total population. 11.5% are below the poverty level.**
- **Per the 2020 Census, 496,142 NYS older adults (15.4%) receive SNAP benefits.**
- **In Ulster County, 21% of the population is 65 years old and over; 8.7% are below the poverty level; and 11.2% have difficulty in independent living.**

3. PCA CARE I - Housekeeping/Chore services are provided to clients who are functionally impaired and need some assistance in managing their environment in order to remain safely and comfortably in their own homes.

Subcontractors: A & T Healthcare, Anytime Home Care, Family Home Health Care, Home Health Care & Companion, Unlimited Care, and Willcare.

We have been successful hiring 6 of our own Homemaker staff. We were also granted an additional 2 Case Manager positions by the Legislature, and we have all Case Manager positions filled as well as one Case Manager also functioning as a Caregiver Coordinator, focusing on resources for caregivers and programs that can help them.

We have also set up two Dedicated Aides through two different licensed agencies we already have contracts with, and they work primarily on the PCA Level 2 cases.

4. PCA CARE II - Personal care services are provided to clients functionally impaired and need some assistance with personal hygiene in order to remain safely and comfortably in their own home. Subcontractors: A & T Healthcare, Anytime Home Care, Family Home Health Care, Home Health Care & Companion, Unlimited, and Willcare.

Number of Hours (PCAI & PCAII) 15,291

5. HOME DELIVERED MEALS –

Home Delivered Meals are for homebound Ulster County seniors and caregivers who are unable to prepare their own meals and have no other source for a supplemental meal. Subcontractor: Gateway Industries.

People Served 621
Number Meals
101,859 (18%
increase over 2022)



Home delivered meals can help seniors stay independent in their own homes.

Are you or someone you know, unable to take care of meal preparation?

The Ulster County Office for the Aging **Home Delivered Meals Program** provides a nutritious hot (or frozen) meal delivered to seniors at **NO** cost, Monday-Friday.

The meals served are planned by a registered dietitian and each meal provides one-third of a senior's daily nutritional needs.

Do you know someone who might benefit from home delivered meals?

Qualified seniors must be:

- ◆ 60 years of age or over
- ◆ A resident of Ulster County
- ◆ Difficulty preparing own meals



For more information, please call
Ulster County Office for the Aging
845-340-3456



The Office for the Aging gratefully accepts voluntary donations. These contributions help and maintain programs.

This program is made possible by funding from Federal, State, County and/or local contributions.



Programs, events and outreach

Ulster County has shown a strong commitment to the Ulster County Office for the Aging and their programs – we work together with County to identify those in need.

Annual Events

30

- **Holiday Cabarets (2 in 2023)**
- **Senior of the Year (2)**
- **Lunch and Learns in 2023 - 9**
- **Public Hearings – 2 – one in Esopus town Hall and one in Woodstock – 74 attended total)**
- **Senior Picnic (2 in 2023 – over 180 seniors attended)**
- **Movies at Rosendale Theater (in 2023, 3 movies)**
- **Special Bingo games – 2**

The Ulster County Office for the Aging Annual Public Hearings



Friday, October 18, 2024
1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Saugerties Public Library
91 Washington Ave, Saugerties, NY

Thursday, October 24, 2024
1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

New Paltz Community Center
3 Veterans Drive, New Paltz, NY

- *Learn about Office for the Aging Services and Programs*
- *Share your ideas and suggestions for improving services and adding programs*

Light refreshments will be served!

Please call Ulster County Office for the Aging to

RSVP at 845-340-3456





OFA
FUN



**Ulster County Office for the Aging
Volunteer Program**

is looking for

VOLUNTEERS!!

- **Transporting Seniors to medical appointments**
- **Calling homebound Seniors**
- **Ombudsman Senior Advocate**
- **Health Insurance counseling**
- **Helping in a local Library or Hospital**
- **And MUCH more!**

845-340-3456

WE WANT YOU!!

As many or as few hours as you can give.



**The County
and UCOFA
provides
many
opportunities
for seniors to
volunteer
and remain
engaged in
their
community.**

**More
Volunteers
are needed!**

The Ulster County OFA Senior Volunteer Program

- As a volunteer you may enjoy:
- Driving seniors from their home to medical appointments
- Helping in a gift shop or visitor center
- Leading an exercise class
- Becoming a Medicare Counselor and assisting people with coordinating their insurance
- Engaging with children as a tutor or pen pal
- Helping in a local library or hospital
- Mentoring a young professional
- Creating your own volunteer experience with our resources!

Volunteer Sites:

- Health Alliance Hospitals
- American Cancer Society
- Ulster County Tourism
- Hudson Valley Hospice
- Hudson River Maritime Museum
- Ellenville Hospital
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Esopus Library
- Volunteer Fireman's Museum
- Rondout Valley Food Pantry

...And many more!!



Neighbor to Neighbor

*A Volunteer Program that
Provides Rides to Seniors for
Medical Appointments*



*Neighbors Helping Neighbors
To Remain
Healthy and Independent*

**Ulster County Office for the Aging
Volunteer Program
1003 Development Court
Kingston, NY 12401**

845-443-8837

LUNCH AND LEARNS 2024

IN 2024, the OFA offered Lunch and Learns on a variety of subjects at these locations:

Esopus Town Hall, Senior Hub, Highland Public Library, Town of Kingston Town Hall, Marbletown Community Center, Marlbob, Russell Brott, and Napanoch,

34 other non-lunch presentations were presented around the County, including Surrogate Court information, tabling at senior events, Vet events, other special topics requested by senior groups.

This year we were happy to co-sponsor two events dealing with death literacy and preparation: a 3 part series, in conjunction with Bevival.com, and a Death Café we sponsored in our Senior Hub.

Our colleague from the Surrogates Court offered several educational sessions about her work with wills and estate planning, and what the Surrogate's Court does.

Senior Fact:

35

- ▶ **Chronic diseases can affect a person's ability to perform important activities, restricting their engagement in life and their enjoyment of family and friends.**
- ▶ **About 41% of older New Yorkers suffer from at least one chronic condition.**
- ▶ **NYSOFA projects that the number of people age 60 and over with functional impairments will grow 11.2, and will grow over 20% by 2025.**

- **Diabetes**
- **Arthritis**
- **Heart disease**
- **Stroke**
- **Hypertension**
- **Lung disease**
- **Asthma**
- **Cancer**

These conditions can make life difficult to manage for millions of older adults, often forcing them to give up their independence.



TAI CHI FOR ARTHRITIS

AND FALL PREVENTION
(Beginner level)

Tuesdays and Fridays
1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Starting October 15, 2024
TWICE a week for eight weeks

Olive Free Library
4033 Route 28A
West Shokan, NY.

*We ask that you be willing to make the commitment
to be at this class twice a week for all eight weeks.
This is a program that builds on each class.*

MUST R.S.V.P. Space is limited!
Call 845-340-3456

Contributions are welcome and help keep programs available. Thank you. Funding for this program is made possible through NYSOFA and your contributions & is offered as part of the NYS Department of Health & Older Adult Fall Prevention Program.

What is tai chi?

Tai chi is a slow, rhythmic, and graceful exercise that promotes good health & overall wellbeing.

What are the benefits?

- Increase strength, flexibility, and mobility
- Improve posture and balance
- Reduction of pain and stress
- An alert, serene mind
- Harmony of body, mind, and spirit

Sponsored by
**U.C. Office for
the Aging**
845-340-3456



Ulster County seniors are really enjoying the evidence-based Tai Chi program that the OFA has been offering across the County including:

Landmark housing, Ellenville, Holy Trinity church, Esopus Town Hall, Olive Free Library, Pointe of Praise Church, Rondout Municipal, Phoenicia, Town of Kingston, Stone Ridge and Saugerties

LOOKING FOR A FUN, NEW WAY TO BE MORE ACTIVE?



Bingo + Exercise = Bingocize®



BINGOCIZE® is a 10-week health promotion program that combines the game of bingo with fall prevention exercise. Come play bingo and meet new people while learning about techniques to reduce falls.

© Western Kentucky University Research Foundation 2019: All Rights Reserved

COME JOIN THE FUN!
We meet every week!

WHEN:
Tuesdays and Wednesdays

BEGINS:
TUESDAY SEPT 17, 2024

TIME: 11 A.M. to 12 P.M.

WHERE:
Ellenville Senior Housing
15 Healthy Way
Ellenville, NY.

To register call the Ulster
County Office for the Aging at
845-340-3456 by September
12, 2024



Other
Evidence-based
programs began
this year:

Bingocize
and
**A Matter of
Balance**

MALL WALK

With the OFA & NY Connects



Hudson Valley Mall

1300 Ulster Ave., Kingston, NY 12401

Every Tuesday, 10 a.m. Sharp!

We meet by the **FOOD COURT** at 9:45

ALL ARE WELCOME!!

Here are some of the benefits of mall-walking:

- ❖ Malls are climate-controlled, safe and have lots of parking!
- ❖ There are water fountains, bathrooms, and benches available.
- ❖ Meet new friends and be the first to hear what's new at the OFA.



Mall walk is cancelled in inclement weather

Ulster County wants to make sure seniors stay healthy and have a safe place to exercise. This Mall Walking program has been going on for nearly four years– ALL are welcome!



ULSTER COUNTY
 OLDER ADULTS EMPOWERMENT COUNCIL
 PRESENTS

Seniors Helping Seniors Stay Afloat: All in the Same Boat!

Join us to learn about the various senior groups throughout the county - how they were formed, what they do, how they support and assist each other. In addition, hear about some of the fun activities, how they socialize and help each other, and how being part of a group can help prevent seniors from being isolated and becoming a victim of various scams that target seniors.

June 13, 2024, 1:30—3:30 pm

Hybrid Event: Via Zoom & In-Person
 Ulster County Senior Hub, 5 Development Court,
 Kingston, NY

Option to watch at a local library too!

Must Register: Call OFA 845-340-3456
 or click link below for Zoom
 registration.

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM REGISTRATION](#)

Featured Speakers / Groups:

- Local SSIP Groups (Seniors Serving in Place) – both established and new
- Rhinebeck at Home
- Catskill Neighbors
- Vet2Vet – Veteran Support Groups



Ulster County Older Adults Empowerment Council

The Older Adults Empowerment Council, f/k/a Elder Abuse Prevention Task Force was formed in June 2014 by the County Executive. It is a community effort and cross departmental commitment to raise awareness of ageism and elder abuse by providing education and information to the community. This year's focus was on community groups formed by seniors, run by seniors, to assist each other to age in place

Helping seniors with Medicare

40

Do you have Medicare and Health Insurance Questions?

Do you need MEDICARE Information?

Get free help and advice about:



- Medicare Parts A, B & D
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medigap
- Medicare Savings Programs & Low Income Subsidy
- EPIC



Call Ulster County Office for the Aging

for a free HIICAP appointment

845-340-3456 or toll free 1-877-914-3456

"Your contributions help keep senior programs available" THANK YOU

Funds provided by the Federal Government

HIICAP

Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program

The Mission of HIICAP is to educate the public about Medicare, Medicare Advantage plans, and other health insurance options. HIICAP provides free, accurate, and objective information. Counseling, assistance, and advocacy on Medicare, private health insurance, and related health coverage plans. HIICAP helps people who have Medicare and their representatives, as well as people soon to be eligible for Medicare.

You can make a one-on-one appointment with a trained and certified HIICAP counselor by calling the Ulster County Office for the Aging: 845-340-3456 Toll Free 1-877-914-3456



ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

1003 DEVELOPMENT COURT

KINGSTON, NY 12401

**Ulster County
OFA helps
seniors at
locations
throughout the
county to
navigate
Medicare,
understand
their options
and get the
extra help that
they may be
entitled to.**

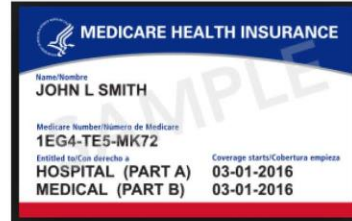
Helping seniors with Medicare – Medicare Savings Program

41

ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE OF THE AGING

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM (MSP)

You may be eligible to get help paying your Medicare premiums and you may also get help paying for Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments.



If you are a Medicare recipient and your gross monthly income is \$2,355 OR LESS
(Married income \$3,189 OR LESS)

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE!

Call the Office for the Aging to make an appointment with one of our Health Insurance counselors for free, unbiased assistance with Medicare and to find out more about the **Medicare Savings Program**.

Call 845-340-3579

Leave a message and someone will get back to you.



The Medicare Savings Program assists seniors with low incomes and retrieves their Part B deductible back for them, along with savings on the Part D plans.

**What you need to know
now and looking
ahead...**

Jen Metzger
County Executive

ULSTER COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING
1003 Development Court
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 340-3456
<http://ulstercountyny.gov/aging>

Susan Koppenhaver
Director



ULSTER COUNTY

MEDICARE FALL ANNUAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD

The annual open enrollment period to change your Medicare health
or prescription drug coverage for 2025 will be from:

October 15, 2024

to

December 7, 2024*

During the annual enrollment period you can:

- Change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Switch or drop a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Join, switch, or drop a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan

Call the Ulster County Office for the Aging for a *free* HIICAP appointment if you would like to make a change in your Medicare coverage.

845-340-3456 or toll-free 1-877-914-3456

**If you are happy with how you currently receive your Medicare Coverage, there is no need to do anything!*

www.ulstercountyny.gov

**Health Insurance
Information
Counseling and
Assistance (HIICAP)**
assists seniors with
questions about
Medicare, (including
seniors approaching
Medicare age) get
the help they need
to navigate their
insurance options.

**Open Enrollment is
Oct 15-Dec 7**



THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

November 14, 2024

12:00 pm

Rosendale Recreation Center



Space is limited – to register please contact OFA at 845-340-3456

SAVE THE DATE

HOLIDAY CABARET

DECEMBER 6th @ 12PM

Hurley Reformed Church Hall

Reservations can be made after Nov. 1



Ulster County Senior Hub



Join us for lunch at the

ULSTER COUNTY SENIOR HUB

Mondays and Wednesdays at noon

Enjoy good food and socialization!

Located near OFA/Veteran Services Agency
5 Development Court, Kingston, NY

View the lunch calendar at:

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/aging/menu>

Call Gateway Industries to make a reservation
at least 24 hours in advance at **845-331-2180**

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!



- ▶ **Community Café
(Mondays & Wednesdays)**
- ▶ **Gentle Chair Yoga
Mondays (9:30-10:30)**
- ▶ **Fitness & Fun for All
Wednesdays (10:30-11:30)**
- ▶ **Game Day - Wednesdays
(1:00 pm)**
- ▶ **Chess Club - Mondays
(11:00 am)**
- ▶ **Craft Corner - 3rd Friday
of Month**
- ▶ **Space available for
senior group meetings**

PROGRAMMING COMBATTING ISOLATION!!

Animatronic animals – COVID brought the realization that so many people were isolated in their homes. The OFA has known of this concern for many years, and the effects of loneliness and the effects it can have on health. One of the solutions were these lovely creatures who won't ever have to be fed or walked but can bring some comfort and combat loneliness to those living alone, homebound. These are not children's toys. We also have Walker Squawkers, who not only are very cute, but serve to remind those using mobility devices to be sure to use them every time they get up to walk!

TECH CLASSES: As we become more dependent on technology, from everything from shopping to medical appointment, to reaching out to family and friends, we noted a great need for tech teaching. Being able to educate yourselves on a great many things made these classes essential to our older adults who may be hesitant to embrace technology and how it can help them. We have been very successful instituting tech classes at our Senior HUB. The classes teach you all about your devices, such as smartphone, tablets, and laptops that you can bring to the class and work out your issues. Our instructors are very knowledgeable and looking for new places to teach their classes.

Ulster County Office for the Aging 4 Year Strategic Plan

Each AAA is responsible for preparing a Four Year Plan with annual updates which identify and prioritize the needs of older residents of the county and what services will be provided to meet those needs. The UC AAA is in year 1 of their 4 year plan.

This plan serves as a “blueprint for action” and represents a commitment by the AAA to fulfill its roles as a primary planner/advocate for services on behalf of older adults.

GOAL 1: Further the vision of the Older Americans Act to cultivate innovative approaches reflective of local needs and preferences

Through our regular workdays, involvement in many community groups, monthly public presentations and constant updating of materials, we constantly work toward and surpass this goal. Our educational program help as we receive feedback from the older adults themselves to help shape programming, education, exercise, etc. We visit across the county to ensure all voices are heard.

GOAL 2: Enabling Seniors to live safely at home as long as possible with high quality of life through the provision of home and community-based services

We accomplished parts of this goal when we hired our own homemakers (we currently have 6), who care for folks at home, allowing them to remain safely in their homes. Our Case Management team assists hundreds of families each year to find the best way for them to age in place. We have contacts for seniors wishing to joining mutually supportive groups to help each other, transportation, education, estate planning, just to to name a few, to help age in place as safely and as log as possible.

GOAL 3: Create an age-friendly New York where home and community-based services are accessible and available to those who most needs them, when they need them.

This is an ongoing goal as we have many choices for seniors to stay active through exercise, evidence-based programming, Medicare and MSP counseling and regular public information presentations. Ulster County also is working on age-friendly initiatives, such as walkable areas, accessible public spaces, transportation changes which will help more folks in their locale, and the OFA has two (2) full-time and one (1) part-time NY Connects staff to help with resources and create many outreach opportunities to learn about resources.

GOAL 4: Ensure the rights of older New Yorkers and prevent their abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The Office for Aging is involved in many community committees and groups addressing these issues, offers scam and abuse presentations throughout the year, offers legal and court advice to help with estate planning, is participating in the Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team to address instances of neglect and financial exploitation, and other education on many of these topics regularly. The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers (MIPPA) program is coordinated with NY Connects outreach and OFA events. In addition, multiple collaborations with organizations around the County.

GOAL 5: Empower older New Yorkers to stay active and healthy through Older Americans Act services and those offered under Medicare.

The OFA has already started expanding its Fall prevention offerings through a Federal a grant-funded program, and also through a second grant program allowing for chronic disease improvement in rural areas. All Grant funding comes both from State and Federal funding and are all evidenced-based programs which are proven effective in whatever their subject matter is through testing and production. We were able to offer dozens of older adults the opportunity to take Tai Chi classes, Bingocize, and A Matter of Balance to educate them to avoid falling and improve a health lifestyle. Medicare is supportive of these programs and recognizes their worth. Several staff have become trainers for A Matter of Balance, volunteers help run Bingocize, and out Tai Chi instructors have presented many opportunities for this important practice to be used by many older adults in their daily lives.

GOAL 6: Integrate COVID-19 lessons and adaptations into standard practice, while preparing the aging network, and those served by the network, to successfully respond and adapt to future emergencies and disasters.

The OFA will continue to offer emergency preparedness courses and assist people with technology education to help them better connect virtually through social media, use email, etc. That will allow them to receive information vital for self-preparation and disaster safety. OFA has regular tech classes both in Kingston and in the community at various sites. Several staff are involved with County preparedness groups, and we have introduced Blooming Health, a communication platform that could potentially reach all our constituents should they choose to opt into it through email or phones.

GOAL 7: Promote equitable access to older adults in greatest social and economic need throughout all programs and services administered.

The OFA has already targeted and offered much programming in some of the most rural areas of Ulster County and will continue to do so and spread presentations as far as possible. All staff promote all programs wherever we go, and some programs address specific economic needs, although open to all. Case Management ensures that those with the least ability to pay are managed first, unless there is an urgent need in a family we can address. The OFA ensures that all corners of the County have equal programming, and we strive to reach the most vulnerable in all we do.

Goal 8: Support continuation and growth of state and local policy, programs, and investment that compliment and expand upon Older Americans Act programs.

Our 5 County caucus is helpful in sharing area ideas and concepts. Our Ulster County legislature and government has been supportive of new programs, and helpful in assisting with new staff and programs. Involvement with Federal grant program has also been instructive in forming future directions and programming as well.

Goal 9: Family Caregivers will be recognized, assisted, included, supported and engaged through a variety of programs so that they can care for their care receiver at home or as long as possible.

The OFA has been fortunate enough to have been able to hire a Full Time Case Manager who will also function as a Caregiver Coordinator, helping those with urgent and long-term solutions to caregiving at home. The OFA also recently implemented a Group Respite program onsite, giving caregivers a break, and helping them with resources they may need. The OFA is also partnering with the Mental Health Association to provide caregiver support groups.

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Goal 10: To expand access to technology teaching to older adults in rural areas through onsite education and training.

With the help of a small grant, the OFA has begun offsite Tech teaching in various areas of the County, as requested by constituents, to help make digital equity a reality in this County. Many older adults have difficulties with technologies, and the OFA has recruited several knowledgeable volunteers to help train older adults on the use of their equipment, both for information and connection purposes. The OFA uses its Senior Hub for many programs, but the tech teaching is weekly, has different subjects, and has been well-attended and helpful to many. This teaching will also be offered in the future to many other areas in the County.

Goal 11: To develop a workable, duplicable Group Respite program structure that can be established in other areas of the County and sponsored by interested parties.

The concept of Respite is a much-needed reality, and one the OFA is striving to help resolve, even in a small way, to benefit caregivers. Through the Caregiver Coordinator, each person seeking Respite for their loved one will be assessed and we can direct them to our program or other resources and help them get what they need if we can. The Group Respite program has been a success in other counties and towns, and a much-needed tool for caregivers. Once the program is successful and grounded, we would approach interested parties in the community and share the structure, paperwork, and teach them how to set up their own group respite, and ideally, have them all over the County if that is possible.

Questions?

ULSTER COUNTY

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