

December Moments That Matter

As the year draws to a close, December invites us to slow down, savor simple joys, and celebrate the moments that make life meaningful. Whether your month is filled with family gatherings, quiet evenings with a cup of something warm, or time spent reflecting on the year, this season offers a gentle reminder:

It's the small things that make the season bright.

Maybe it's the sparkle of holiday lights on an early sunset walk. Maybe it's the sound of familiar music that brings back wonderful memories. Maybe it's reconnecting with someone you haven't spoken to in a while. Or maybe it's simply taking a moment to appreciate how far you've come this year.

Take time this month to enjoy the traditions you love—and perhaps begin a new one. Write a note to someone who made your year better. Try a new winter recipe. Revisit a favorite book. Or reflect on the blessings that showed up in unexpected places.

No matter how you spend it, may your December be filled with peace, warmth, and moments that make your heart feel full.

Wishing you a cozy, meaningful, and joyful December!

***We wish you a Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year from
the Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.***

Medicare Costs in 2026

Part A (Hospital Insurance)

Premium-Free: Most people don't pay a premium for Part A because they or their spouse have paid Medicare taxes for at least 10 years (40 quarters).

Premium: For those who don't qualify for premium-free Part A, the monthly premium is \$565.

Reduced Premium: If you have paid for Medicare for at least 30 quarters, the monthly premium is \$311.

Inpatient Hospital Deductible: \$1,736 per benefit period. You may have to pay this deductible more than once a year if you have multiple hospital stays.



Part B (Medical Insurance)

Standard Monthly Premium: \$202.90.

Annual Deductible: \$283.

Coinsurance: You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount for most services after you meet the deductible.

High-Income Premiums: If your income is above a certain level, you will pay a higher premium.

Get help from your state paying your Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Part B (Medical Insurance) premiums through a Medicare Savings Program. If you qualify, Medicare Savings Programs might also pay your Part A and Part B deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments. Please call The PA MEDI program at 724-662-6222 to see if you qualify.

**Reminder: Applications for 2024
Property Tax/Rent Rebates are
being accepted.**

**The filing deadline has been extended
to December 31, 2025.**

**Applications postmarked by that date
will be accepted for processing.**

The Low Income Home Energy
Assistance program (LIHEAP)
provides cash grants
to help Pennsylvania families pay
their heating bills.

**The 2025-2026 LIHEAP SEASON IS
OPEN DECEMBER 3, 2025, THROUGH
APRIL 10, 2026**

Save on Your Auto Insurance!

If you're 55 or older, Pennsylvania law entitles you to at least a 5% discount on your vehicle insurance when you complete a PennDOT-approved Basic Mature Driver Improvement Course.

Find a course near you:

AAA: Contact your local office or visit www.aaa.com

AARP: Call 1-888-227-7669 or visit www.aarp.org

Drive smart. Save money. Stay safe!

~Wisdom & Warmth~

Be Your Own Greatest Encourager

Inspired by Jon Gordon

If your best friend were struggling with confidence, you wouldn't condemn them, criticize them, or make them feel worse by telling them they'll never succeed.

You'd remind them of their strengths.

You'd tell them you believe in them.

You'd point out the progress they've already made.

You'd speak life into them.

And that is exactly how you should speak to yourself.

Yes, encouragement from others matters — but encouragement from *yourself* matters even more. The voice in your own head is the one you hear the most, and it should be your greatest source of belief, confidence, and hope.

Make it a daily practice to become your own greatest encourager. Don't let anyone out-encourage you.

Let your inner voice be stronger, more positive, and more uplifting than the voices of friends, colleagues, or even family.

When doubt creeps in, remind yourself that you have everything it takes to overcome.

When negative thoughts whisper that you won't make it, speak louder about why you will.

When discouragement tries to steal your momentum, keep fueling your mind with truth and confidence.

When distractions pull you off track, reaffirm why your work and your life matter.

When past mistakes try to define you, forgive yourself and focus on the future you're building.

When you become your own greatest encourager, failure won't define you, adversity won't defeat you, and negativity won't sabotage you.

You will win the day — and the future.

— Jon Gordon

Just for fun:

What do you call an elf wearing earmuffs?
Anything you want—he can't hear you!



Have You Visited Your Local Senior Center Yet?

Your local senior center is a great place to connect, stay active, and enjoy a warm meal. Whether you're looking to socialize, try a new activity, or just enjoy some friendly company, there's something for everyone.

Drop by today — you might be surprised how welcoming it feels!

Amazon Prime Settlement:

What You Need to Know—and Watch Out For

With Amazon recently agreeing to pay settlements for enrolling customers in Prime without their consent, you might be wondering: **Who gets it? How? And what do I need to do?**

First, a word of caution: **This is the perfect opportunity for scammers to strike.** Expect fake emails, texts, or calls claiming to help you claim your refund. **Do not click suspicious links or share personal information.**

Always verify through official Amazon or FTC channels.

Now, here are the facts:

If you meet **all three** of these requirements, you may be eligible for an **automatic refund of up to \$51** for Prime membership fees:

1. You're a **US-based Amazon Prime customer.**
2. You signed up for Prime **between June 23, 2019 and June 23, 2025** through one of the enrollment flows challenged by the FTC.
3. You used **fewer than three Prime benefits** (like watching Prime Video or listening to Amazon Music) in any 12-month period after enrolling.

The best part? If you qualify, the refund is **automatic**—you don't need to do anything.

Stay alert, stay safe, and always confirm information through official sources.



Do You Need to Follow New SNAP Work and Reporting Requirements?

Because of the Republican budget bill passed by Congress and signed by President Trump that went into effect on September 1, you might need to report work, education, training, or volunteer hours to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) in order to receive SNAP.

SNAP recipients must report at least 20 hours of work, education, training, or volunteering per week (or 80 hours per month) if they:

- Are 18–54 years old,
- Do not have a dependent child under 18, and
- Are physically and mentally able to work.

SNAP recipients who do not meet these requirements can only receive three months of SNAP benefits within a three-year period.

DO NOT LOSE YOUR SNAP BENEFITS – CONTACT YOUR CASEWORKER TODAY

If you have questions about how to report work, education, training, or volunteer activities, you can contact your caseworker at your local County Assistance Office or call the Customer Service Center at 877-395-8930.

Pennsylvanians should also keep their address up-to-date with DHS by calling the Customer Service Center or updating their address through COMPASS, and with the United States Postal Service so they don't miss any important mailings about their benefits.

Are you a Grandparent Raising your Grandchild in Pennsylvania?

The PA Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Legal Line is here for you.



1-877-727-7529 Statewide



Pennsylvania
Department of Aging

Mobile Pantry Monthly Schedule

SANDY LAKE

Sandy Lake Presbyterian Church

1st Wednesdays

- 11am–1pm

GREENVILLE

St. John's Lutheran Church

2nd Thursdays

- 11am–1pm

TRANSFER

Reynolds Drive-In Theater

3rd Fridays

- 12–2pm

*Dates and times are subject to change.

Distributions are first come first serve to income eligible Mercer County recipients until quantities run out.

Caregiving journeys are unique, but shared experiences can help.



CAREGIVER RESOURCES

The Many Faces of Caregiving

Explore some of the common caregiver stories from others. Find reassurance, advice, and resources for your situation.

PA CareKit

pa.gov/CareKit

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): More Than the Winter Blues

As the days get shorter and there is less daylight, you may start to feel sad. While many people experience the “winter blues,” some people may have a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

The first step is to determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.

Do you have mild symptoms that have lasted less than 2 weeks?



- Feeling down but still able to take care of yourself and others
- Having some trouble sleeping
- Having less energy than usual but still able to do your job, schoolwork, or housework

These activities can make you feel better:



- Doing something you enjoy
- Going outside in the sunlight
- Spending time with family and friends
- Eating healthy and avoiding foods with lots of sugar

If these activities do not help or your symptoms are getting worse, talk to a health care provider.

Do you have more severe symptoms that have lasted more than 2 weeks?



- Social withdrawal
- Oversleeping
- Gaining weight
- Craving foods with lots of sugar like cakes, candies, and cookies

Seek professional help:



- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- Medications
- Vitamin D supplements

For help finding treatment, visit nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you or someone you know is in immediate distress or is thinking about hurting themselves, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988** or chat at 988lifeline.org.



National Institute
of Mental Health

nimh.nih.gov/sad

NIMH Identification No. OM 22-4320



Suds of Love

Don't miss a **FREE** laundry day hosted by Carelon

Take advantage of self-service washing machines, dryers, detergent, and fabric softener provided at no charge. Just bring your clothes — we'll cover the cost for the rest.



Wednesday, December 10th 2025 10:00am-3:00pm

**Sharon Coin Laundry
149 South Irvine Avenue
Sharon, PA 16146**



Since 1999, Carelon has managed behavioral health services as part of the HealthChoices program. Carelon manages behavioral health services for Medical Assistance (MA) recipients in 11 Western Pennsylvania counties: Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Crawford, Fayette, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Washington, and Westmoreland.

For more information about Carelon, visit: <https://pa.carelon.com/>



Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

ADULT DAY SERVICES

220 N. Buhl Farm Drive, Hermitage, PA 16148

For every person enrolled in an adult day care program,
two people get their lives back:
the Individual and the Caregiver.

Visiting a Center will prove that life does not end with a diagnosis.
Adult Day Services can serve as the cornerstone
of community-based long-term living.


Adult Day Care Programs are designed
to serve adults experiencing a decrease in
physical, mental and social functioning.

The Adult Day environment
recognizes and attends to emotional and intellectual needs,
as well as physical needs.



If you think this program
can help you and your loved one,
call 724-981-7950 or email adc@mercercountyaging.org.

Open Monday through Friday.





CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

***MERCER COUNTY AREA
AGENCY ON AGING, INC.***

Are you caring for an aging person?

Please consider joining the Caregiver Support Group. The support group will provide education, support, and resources to caregivers.



**Feeling isolated,
burnt out, or
stressed with
caring for your
loved one? Come
join our support
group!**

**Meetings held the
second
Wednesday of the
month at 5:00pm**

**Please call to reserve
your seat by calling:**

(724)458-6844

Support Group Meetings

Location:

**Grove City Senior
Community Center
301 South Broad Street
Grove City, PA 16127**

WE'RE HIRING!



Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Are you looking to make a difference?
Consider joining our team and make a difference
in the lives of older adults in Mercer County.

Full-time and part-time positions available:

- **Assessor**
- **Long-term Care Ombudsman/ PA MEDI Counselor**
- **Protective Services Investigator**
- **Senior Center Aide (Grove City & Greenville locations)**

**If you are passionate about improving the lives of others,
we want to hear from you!**

**For more information about our mission, services or job
offerings, check our website at
www.mercercountyaging.org or scan the QR Code.**

**Call 724-662-6222 or email
admin@mercercountyaging.org
We can't wait to meet you!**



Senior Resources

AARP (www.aarp.org)— The National site for AARP a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people, ages 50 and older. Call 1-888-687-2277

Benefits Checkup (www.benefitscheckup.org)— An online questionnaire to help search for a list of all state and federal benefits.

COMPASS (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Application for Social Services [www.compass.state.pa.us])— Enables Pennsylvania citizens to apply for social service programs online. Call 1-800-692-7462.

Medicare (www.medicare.gov)—The official government site for Medicare consumer information. Call 1-800-633-4227

Mental Health Services

Do you need to talk to someone about loneliness or depression?

Locally:

Mercer County Crisis:

724-662-2227

Community Counseling Center Warm Line:

724-981-1741

1-866-853-7758


National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

Dial 988 –or- 1-800-273-8255

Veteran Crisis Line: Call 988 then press 1.

Don't forget to check our website!

www.mercercountyaging.org

PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY 		
Call: 800-225-7223	PAGE	PACENET
Age 65+		
PA Resident for at least 90 days		
Individual Income	under 14,500	between 14,500- 33,500
Married Income	under 17,700	between 17,700- 41,500

Local Volunteer Opportunities:

Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
724-662-6222

American Red Cross 1-800-422-7677

Meals on Wheels 724-342-2042

United Way of Mercer County 724-981-1884

Mercer County Food Bank 724-981-0353

MCAAA, Inc. Contact Information:

www.mercercountyaging.org



Administration / Care Management / Older Adult Protective Services

133 N. Pitt Street, Mercer, PA 16137
724-662-6222

Greenville Senior Community Center

45 Alan Avenue, Greenville, PA 16125
724-588-3155

Grove City Senior Community Center

301 S. Broad Street, Grove City, PA 16127
724-458-6844

McQuiston Center by the Park

29 Railroad Street, Sandy Lake, PA 16145
724-376-3608

Shenango Valley Senior Center and Adult Day Care

220 N. Buhl Farm Drive, Hermitage, PA 16148
724-981-7950