

Plainfield Council on Aging

May 2021 Newsletter



Plainfield Council on Aging
Town Offices, 304 Main St.
Plainfield, MA 01070

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Phone: 413-743-5345
shonneus@town.plainfield.ma.us

May Covid-19 Update Information

COVID-19 vaccines that are currently authorized in the United States are **very effective** at protecting vaccinated people against severe COVID-19. Until more people are vaccinated, some prevention measures will continue to be necessary for all people, even people who have been fully vaccinated. This guidance is based on CDC recommendations for fully vaccinated people.



1. What it means to be fully vaccinated:

People are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 if they have received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines or a single dose of the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine more than 14 days ago. This guidance does **not** apply to fully vaccinated individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19.

2. Gathering with other people:

- A. *Continue wearing a mask and avoiding close contact with others in public.* COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting sick from COVID-19 but experts continue to conduct more studies about whether the vaccines also keep people from spreading COVID-19. Wearing masks and social distancing help lower your chance of spreading the virus to others.
- B. *You may visit other people who have been fully vaccinated.* You may visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors in private settings without wearing masks or physical distancing. For example, if you are fully vaccinated, it is likely a low risk for you to invite other fully vaccinated friends to dinner inside your home.
- C. *Take precautions when visiting people who have **not been vaccinated**.* The Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommends following CDC guidance which says you may visit in a private setting indoors with unvaccinated people **from a single household** who are at **low risk of severe COVID-19 disease** without wearing masks or physical distancing. For example, fully vaccinated grandparents can

visit indoors with their unvaccinated healthy child and their healthy children without wearing masks or physical distancing, provided none of the unvaccinated family members are at risk of severe COVID-19.

- D. *Follow state guidance on participating in large gatherings, like weddings and concerts.* Everyone, even people who have been fully vaccinated, should adhere to current guidance on gathering limits, as well as sector-specific safety rules for activities such as concerts.

3. Isolation, quarantine, and testing

1. *You do not need to follow the Massachusetts Travel Advisory.* The advisory for all visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, to quarantine for 10 days upon their arrival does not apply to people who are fully vaccinated.
2. *Stay home and get tested if you feel sick.* While vaccines are highly effective there is still a chance you can get COVID-19 even after you get the vaccine. If you develop respiratory symptoms like runny nose, cough, or loss of sense of smell or taste, these are not side effects of the vaccine and you should consider getting tested for COVID-19 or talk to your healthcare provider. Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.

COVID-19 Weekly Public Health Report Updated each Thursday by 5 p.m.

The Weekly COVID-19 Public Health Report includes enhanced, more granular information to be updated on a weekly, or biweekly basis, including town-by-town case and testing information, cases and deaths in Long Term Care Facilities, updates on nursing facility audit results, and more. For more information, visit www.mass.gov/doc/weekly-covid-19-public-health-report



Highland Valley Elder Services Masks

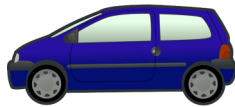
The Plainfield COA still has cloth masks available that were kindly donated by the Highland Valley Elder Services as well as N-95 masks and surgical masks. These masks are free of charge. If you would like any of these, please call Susan Honneus at 743-5345 and leave a voice message with your name and phone number indicating the number of masks you require. Sue will get back to you shortly as she checks her voicemail several times a day. You can also contact her via email: shonneus@town.plainfield.ma.org.

HCDC COVID-19 Hilltown Response is available (hilltowncdc.org/covid19) for further information and as a valuable resource.

Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) Additional Services

Contact information: (413) 586-2000, or www.info@highlandvalley.org

HVES has a variety of services available to persons 60-65 years and over. It is a very useful resource to contact for things like Meals On Wheels, stay-at-home care, money management, transportation, and homemaker assistance just to name just a few of their services.



The Plainfield Mutual Support Network

Remember, The Plainfield Mutual Support Network (PMSN) is still present if you need assistance. Our Facebook page, ([plainfield mutual aid and support](https://www.facebook.com/plainfieldmutualaidandsupport)) is open for additional information. You can also call (413) 634-1030 for requests or more information. Please leave a voicemail and we will get back to you as soon as possible.



Lifeline

Lifeline is a federal program that can lower the monthly cost of phone and internet expenses. Qualified customers can receive up to \$9.25 applied directly towards their bill. You may qualify automatically under federal guidelines if you already receive benefits from SNAP, SSI, or MEDICAID or other similar federal programs. Contact the Whip City Fiber team for further details at <https://lifeline.whipcityfiber.com/> or (413) 485-1251.



Crabby Road

5-8-11



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The Plainfield Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Plainfield Council on Aging. My contribution of \$ _____ is attached.
(Please write your check to The Town of Plainfield and mail to Plainfield COA, 304 Main St. Plainfield, MA 01070)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Plainfield Council on Aging



As you take the winter sand off your lawn along with your other spring projects, here is an easy one for you to do. Check and see if your house number is visible from the street. If your house is not visible from the street, is your driveway clearly marked with a house number? Here are a few things you should consider:

- ⇒ Numbers must be at least 4 inches in height (larger would be even better) and facing the street.
- ⇒ Put numbers under lighting.
- ⇒ Use numbers with a contrasting background so they are visible at night.
- ⇒ If your driveway is long, post your house number on both sides of your mail box or on a sign pole at the end of the driveway near the road.
- ⇒ Be sure to keep the numbers visible by trimming bushes, tall weeds and trees.
- ⇒ Remember, emergency personnel from a neighboring community may not be familiar with your area. Paramedics, firefighters and police officers find you faster when your home is clearly marked.

Have a SAFE spring!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cumington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

**When I don't need it:
I see it everywhere**



**When I actually need it:
I can't find it anywhere**

Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

Personality of Money – Can We Change?

Last month I said we are all products of our upbringing. We are the result of genetics and life experiences, including seeing how our parents and peers handle money. From all this, we develop our habits and attitudes. From habits and attitudes, we move to how we manage our money, if and how we invest, how/why when we spend or save, how easily we fall prey to a scammer, even on to the mechanisms and practices we use to pay our bills.

If we have habits and attitudes about money, can we change those to improve our lot in life? This is a huge topic, but bear with me as I share a little of what I read this month about one avenue of change. Some interesting research on traumatic stress (e.g., from abuse, serious health issues, and believe it, pandemics!) shows that stress can change parts of the brain, for instance, physically shrinking an area that allows us to reason logically and to assess risk. Another region of the brain that can physically change is responsible for working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control, what they call "executive function", all of which may impact our financial practices and skills.

So can we change? Yes! All the things *They* keep telling us that are good for our overall health (physical exercise, reasonable diet, socialization, mindfulness, etc.) can work in our favor to reduce stress and so improve our brain function. We may even bring about physical changes in the brain that result in improved memory, more rational thinking, better planning, and better decisions. Thus a person may move from being an impulsive spender to being a saver, or a denier may decide to jump into the shallow end of the investing pool.

Personally,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Foot Care from Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES)



If you are a client of HVES, you may be eligible for in-home foot care. Call your Care Advisor to see if you're eligible. If you don't have a Care Advisor, call Highland Valley's main number (413-586-2000) to ask about eligibility.

May's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth

At last the long-awaited spring has arrived with tulips, apple blossoms and time to plant our vegetable gardens! Many more of us have had our



Covid vaccine shots and are beginning to make those postponed medical appointments: trips to the dentist, the eye doctor, and perhaps time to schedule knee or hip surgery. If you find the rehab process from surgery requires some medical equipment that is not covered by your health insurance, you might call your senior center to ask about their "loan closet". If your town doesn't have a senior center because they share space in a town building, call them anyway because there is a regional loan closet for our Northern Hilltowns in Cummington. If you need a walker, wheelchair, raised toilet seat, commode, crutches or quad cane, you can give your senior center a call and they will check out the Cummington "closet" to see if that item is available for loan. Likewise, if you have items to donate, the Cummington loan closet can take them.

Many items, like hospital beds or wheelchairs can be rented on a short term or extended time basis. And some health insurances, like Hospice, will cover the cost of these rentals.

It is always a good idea to speak to someone at your senior center to see if you might get other support services, like meals, help grocery shopping, or a friendly visitor, as you rehab from surgery. And if you've had your Covid shots, you may be able to help if someone needs a ride to a medical appointment or help with grocery shopping.

It's time to reconnect and lend a helping hand to a neighbor as we come out of a long winter.

Senior Farm Share



2021 Enrollment begins May 1!

If you're over the age of 60 and meet income eligibility requirements, you are eligible to apply for a Senior Farm Share!

What it is: Ten weeks of fresh, local produce delivered to participating Senior Centers and Councils on Aging. Shares are valued at \$135, and participants pay a one-time fee of \$10 during enrollment. Many sites accept SNAP/HIP payments for this \$10 fee. If you participated last year, an application will be mailed to you from CISA. If you would like to participate this year, please contact us at 413-296-4007, email coa@townofchesterfieldma.com or write to COA, Box 7, Chesterfield MA, 01012, and we will mail you a new application. **Applications will be accepted until June 1st.**

**THIS TOO
SHALL PASS.**

**IT MIGHT PASS
LIKE A KIDNEY
STONE.**

but it will pass.

**I'VE LEARNED
SO MUCH FROM
MY MISTAKES,
I'M THINKING
OF MAKING
A FEW MORE.**

**"The world's favorite season is the spring.
All things seem possible in May."**

- Edwin Way Teale



**"The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day.
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
a cloud come over the sunlit arch,
And wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March."**

- Robert Frost



**"The country ever has a lagging Spring,
Waiting for May to call its violets forth,
And June its roses--showers and sunshine bring,
Slowly, the deepening verdure o'er the earth;
To put their foliage out, the woods are slack,
And one by one the singing-birds come back.**

**Within the city's bounds the time of flowers
Comes earlier. Let a mild and sunny day,
Such as full often, for a few bright hours,
Breathes through the sky of March the airs of May,
Shine on our roofs and chase the wintry gloom--
And lo! our borders glow with sudden bloom."**

- William Cullen Bryant, *Spring in Town*, 1850

"Never yet was a springtime, when the buds forgot to bloom."

- Margaret Elizabeth Sangster

**"It's spring fever.... You don't quite know what it is
you do want, but it just fairly makes your heart ache,
you want it so!"**

- Mark Twain

"Every spring is the only spring - a perpetual astonishment."

- Ellis Peters



Hilltown Mobile Market
FRESH, LOCAL, HILLTOWN-GROWN
www.hilltownmobilemarket.info

Blandford, Cummington, Huntington & Worthington
July 22-October 8, 2021

The Hilltown Mobile Market is back for a third season this summer and fall! Starting in July, we will bring our colorful veggie van to Blandford, Cummington, Huntington, and Worthington each week for twelve weeks, stocked with the freshest Hilltown-grown produce from our neighborhood farms.

Come and get your local lettuce, squash, potatoes, peaches, and so much more! We welcome many forms of payment including cash, credit, debit, SNAP, HIP, WIC, and Senior FMNP Coupons. You can also sign up for a Hilltown Community Farm Share to guarantee your pick of the week's harvest for as little as \$5 per week! Registration begins April 1st.

For more information, visit:
hilltownmobilemarket.info
or call or email Seva Water at
sevat@hilltowncdc.org or 413-824-1840

*The market is supported by
Healthy Hampshire,
Hilltown Community Development and the
Hilltown Community Health Center.*



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Plainfield COA

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HOME IMPROVEMENT



If you're going to hire a Home Improvement Contractor...

- Make sure they're registered or licensed with the state
888-283-3757 www.mass.gov/consumer;
- Make sure the payment schedule is broken into 3 payments: 1/3rd at the start of the project, 1/3rd in the middle and 1/3rd when the work is complete;
- Make sure the contractor takes out the building permit in their name;
- Make sure you check the contractor's references;
- Make sure you have a written contract;
- Make sure you have a copy of the contractor's insurance;
- Make sure you check to be sure there are no complaints against the contractor.

If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the

Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit

Greenfield
(413) 774-3186
Northampton
(413) 586-9225

Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General

