

NOVEMBER 2024



Live Well. Age Well.

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# THE SOURCE

COUNCIL ON AGING

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## Our Programs

Attendant Support

Chore Assistance

Errand & Shopping Support

Information & Assistance

Legal Service

Leisure & Learning Program

Nutrition Program

Pets & Loving Seniors Program (PALS)

Pet2Vet Program

Senior Health Insurance Counseling

Social Services

Support Groups

Telephone & Visiting Support

Senior Express Transportation



## Help the COA fill Christmas stockings!

We are collecting items to fill over 400 Christmas Stockings for homebound seniors, seniors without family or seniors who are facing challenges. Items can be dropped off at the COA until November 18th.

### Suggested Items:

- ◆ hard candy and sugar free candy
- ◆ snack packages of cookies and crackers
- ◆ Jell-O snack cups and pudding cups
- ◆ applesauce (sweetened and no-sugar added)
- ◆ cookies (regular & sugar free)
- ◆ postage stamps
- ◆ small canned meats, fruit, vegetables
- ◆ toothpaste
- ◆ word search books
- ◆ winter gloves for men and women

# MEDICARE 2025

In 2025, people with Medicare will see improvements thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act and other new enhancements to the programs that protect enrollees, promote continual quality improvement, and increase competition – ultimately improving access for people with Medicare. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is committed to ensuring people with Medicare continue to have access to robust MA and Part D benefits and offerings and that their choices remain strong.

## Changes to be aware of for 2025 include:

### Medicare Part D

- **Out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs will be capped.** In 2025, individual out-of-pocket spending for covered Part D drugs will be capped at \$2,000, meaning that beneficiaries will have no cost sharing above that amount. The \$2,000 cap includes deductibles, copayments and coinsurance for covered drugs. It doesn't apply to premiums or to drugs a plan doesn't cover.
- **Coverage gap (donut hole) phase no longer exists.** Standard Part D coverage now has three phases: Deductible Phase, Initial Coverage Period and Catastrophic Coverage.
- **People with Medicare will have the option to spread their prescription drug costs throughout the year.** Starting in 2025, Part D plan sponsors will provide their enrollees with the option to participate in the Medicare Prescription Payment Plan, which allows them to pay out-of-pocket prescription drug costs in the form of monthly payments over the course of the plan year instead of all at once to the pharmacy. Part D enrollees who select this payment option will pay \$0 to the pharmacy for covered Part D drugs, and Part D plan sponsors will then bill program participants monthly for any cost sharing they incur while in the program.

### Medicare Advantage

- **Midyear statement from your Medicare Advantage plan.** The midyear statement will show available benefits that you haven't used – important since those extras are often what persuades a Medicare enrollee to sign up with a particular plan.
- In 2025, Medicare Advantage plans must evaluate how prior authorization policies impact certain at-risk populations and publicly display analysis results on their websites.

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid, 9/2024

	Medicare Part D Cap	Medicare Prescription Payment Program	MEDICARE <b>OPEN</b> ENROLLMENT October 15–December 7
Does this reform lower my prescription medication costs?	Yes, it limits the amount you will pay out-of-pocket for Medicare covered medications to \$2000 per year	No, it does not lower your costs but lets you spread your out-of-pocket drug payments throughout the calendar year	<b>You can explore Medicare coverage options by:</b> ⇒ Going to <a href="http://www.medicare.gov">www.medicare.gov</a> - Find health & drug plans ⇒ Calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227) and speaking to a real person. TTY users can call 1.877.486.2048. ⇒ Making an appointment with a Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) counselor. To schedule an appointment, call the COA at 913.684.0777.
Who is eligible?	Anyone with Part D plans through traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage	Anyone enrolled in a Part D plan is eligible, but the program is most beneficial to those with high out-of-pocket drug costs	
What do patients need to do to benefit?	Nothing, the cap is automatic	This is a voluntary program that you must opt-in through your Medicare Part D plan	
How will I pay for my prescription medications?	You will continue to pay through your pharmacy when you pick up your prescription medications	Each month, your plan will send you a bill with the amount you owe, when payment is due, and how to make a payment	



## Kansas Talking Books – A World of Accessible Reading Awaits!

Are you or a loved one experiencing difficulty reading traditional print due to age, vision loss, or other physical challenges? Kansas Talking Books is here to help. This program offers FREE access to a vast library of audiobooks, magazines, and news sources, ensuring that everyone can continue to enjoy reading. With an easy-to-use player provided by the program and an easy-to-use mobile app, users can explore anything from bestsellers to the latest magazines and more.

And there's great news for those who want to keep up with local news and information. *The Source*, Leavenworth County Council on Ageing's monthly publication, is now available on the NFB-NEWSLINE Kansas channel! This addition means that users can listen, get COA updates, resources, and community news through NFB-NEWSLINE's phone-based and online services.

### Why Choose Kansas Talking Books?

- Free Access:** All materials are provided at no cost, including easy-to-use equipment.

- Wide Selection:** Choose from tens of thousands of audiobooks, including fiction, nonfiction, biographies, and more.

**Inclusivity:** With multiple formats, Kansas Talking Books ensures everyone has access to stories, news, and updates.

Contact Kansas Talking Books for more information at 800-362-0699 or by email at [KTB@ks.gov](mailto:KTB@ks.gov). Learn more at <https://library.ks.gov/talking-books>



### Digital Talking Book Machine

Digital Talking Book Machine (DTBM) are free to patrons. DTBMs are portable players for audiobooks stored on cartridges. The machines can run on battery or plug power. A USB port allows the machines to play BARD downloads.

### Digital Talking Book Cartridge

The cartridge, size of a cassette, can contain multiple books in their entirety, including author notes and footnotes. Cartridges are sent in the mail as "FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND OR PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED."





# Looking for a way to give back to the community?

## VOLUNTEER WITH LEAVENWORTH COUNTY

Tis the season ...for Community Service

- Do you have 90 minutes during the week? (late morning)
- Do you like meeting new people?
- Do you want to help those in our community?
- Do you drive?

If you would like to be a Meals on Wheels volunteer, contact Dawn Owens at the *Council on Aging*.

Phone: 913.684.0786

Email [dowens@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:dowens@leavenworthcounty.gov)



Want to donate to the Leavenworth Meals on Wheels Program?

Stop by the COA or call our office to find out how you can help!

## BOOKS ON WHEELS

Books on Wheels is a program that provides books, magazines and puzzles to those receiving Meals on Wheels (MOW). Once a quarter, MOW participants are able to select items from our on-site inventory. All of our materials have been donated to the COA.

Participants are able to choose from various genres, such as fiction, history, inspirational, mystery, religious, thrillers, travel & outdoors, health, and garden to name a few. Materials are delivered when they receive their meal.

This program is only made possible by the donation of books, magazines and puzzles. We are currently in need of the following: (Please ensure materials were published in the last two years.)

- Bon Appetite
- All Recipes
- Better Homes & Garden
- Bird & Blooms
- Country Living
- Good House Keeping
- Midwest Living
- Southern Lady
- Southern Living
- National Geographic
- Consumer Report
- Reader's Digest
- Sports Illustrated



Please contact Becky at 913.785.6727 if you have donations or questions about our Books on Wheels program.

# LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a Federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit.

The 2025 LIEAP application period will begin November 18, 2024, and end March 31, 2025, at 5 pm.

Learn more about LIEAP by reading through the Frequently Asked Questions - [LIEAP Frequently Asked Questions](#)

The following summary describes basic LIEAP eligibility provisions. Additional information may be obtained by calling 1-888-369-4777.

## Persons Eligible

In order to qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. An adult living at the address must be personally responsible for paying the heating costs incurred at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or the fuel vendor.
2. The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons living at the address may not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level according to the guidelines listed below:

## 2025 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Persons Living at the Address	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$1,882.50
2	\$2,555.00
3	\$3,227.50
4	\$3,900.00
5	\$4,572.50
6	\$5,245.00
7	\$5,917.50
8	\$6,590.00

+1 \$672.50 for each additional person

## Benefits

Benefit levels vary according to the following factors:

- Household income
- Number of persons living at the address
- Type of dwelling
- Type of heating fuel

**CLICK HERE TO  
APPLY FOR SERVICES**

HAGA CLIC AQUÍ PARA  
SOLICITAR SERVICIOS

**Check your eligibility and  
apply for services including:**

- Food assistance
- Cash assistance
- Child care assistance
- LIEAP

AD ASTRAM PER ASPERA  
**Kansas**  
Department for Children  
and Families



# Thriving Through the Holidays: Six Tips for Older Adults

By: Mary Ferreri, BSN RN

Maintaining a focus on personal health and safety is especially important at this time of year. These six tips can help you have a more enjoyable, healthy, and injury-free holiday season.

**Nourish Your Body:** Maintaining energy levels while nourishing our bodies requires a balance between indulgence and eating healthily. Portion management is key, as is eating only until you are satisfied rather than full. Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, healthy fats, and protein are essential parts of a balanced diet and should be consumed moderately during the holiday season. "Eat what you love in moderation," suggests Jody Engel, a nutritionist and registered dietitian at NIH.

**Hydration Matters:** It's easy to lose track of how much water you are drinking during the busy holidays. Adequate hydration is essential for sustaining energy, increasing alertness, facilitating digestion, and protecting brain health. If you consume alcohol, drink plenty of water before, during, and after. According to Healthline, alcohol "causes your body to remove fluid at a much quicker rate than other liquids." Healthline.gov

**Stay Active:** Moving and staying active year-round is especially important during the colder months. Plan time for exercise, such as light yoga or strolling through the mall. When venturing outdoors, protect yourself from the elements by layering your clothing, and keeping your mouth and nose covered. Be mindful of icy paths to avoid falls by wearing appropriate footwear with non-slip soles. Also, consider aids like a cane or walker when needed.

**Relax and Recharge:** During this potentially stressful time of year, it's important to prioritize self-care and effective stress management for our mental and emotional well-being. Setting reasonable goals for the use of our resources (time, money, and energy) is crucial. We can decrease our stress by scheduling downtime and by practicing mindfulness including relaxation techniques like deep breathing and meditation and listening to music.

**Mind Your Medications:** Our daily routines can easily be sidetracked during the busy holidays. It's important to remember to maintain your medication schedule and doses as prescribed by your doctor. Using a pillbox with compartments for each day provides a visual reminder to take medication and avoid taking two doses at once. Don't be afraid to ask for help from a family member or friend if needed.

**Protect Yourself:** Many infections spread more rapidly over the holiday season. Other health risks, such as COVID-19 concerns, can be addressed by encouraging vaccinations, practicing hand hygiene, staying home while sick, and avoiding close contact with others who are in your close space.

The key to a safe and enjoyable holiday is balancing fun with self-care. By following these six tips to stay healthy and safe over the holidays you will thrive and enjoy the season with peace of mind, knowing you are safeguarding your health and well-being.

Happy Holidays!

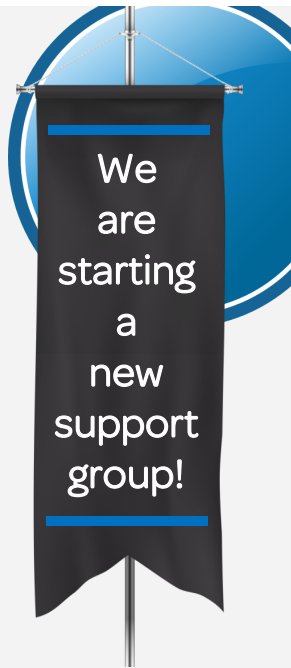
Source: [AARP.org](https://www.aarp.org), 11/2023

## PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

Meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month from 1:00pm - 2:00pm

Led by Roma Keller. No fee or registration required.

**LEARN.  
CONNECT.  
SUPPORT.**



## ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION®

### EMPOWERED CAREGIVER

Presents *The Empowered Caregiver Series* at the COA.

The series teaches caregivers how to navigate the responsibilities of caring for someone living with dementia. Caregivers can register with the COA for individual courses to meet their needs or complete the entire series. Topics include:

**November 12<sup>th</sup>: Building Foundations of Caregiving** explores the role of caregiver and changes they may experience, building a support team and managing caregiver stress.

**November 19<sup>th</sup>: Supporting Independence** focuses on helping the person living with dementia take part in daily activities, providing the right amount of support and balancing safety and independence while managing expectations.

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>: Communicating Effectively** teaches how dementia affects communication, including tips for communicating well with family, friends and health care professionals.

**December 10<sup>th</sup>: Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors** details common behavior changes and how they are a form of communication, non-medical approaches to behaviors and recognizing when additional help is needed.

**December 17<sup>th</sup>: Exploring Care and Support Services** examines how best to prepare for future care decisions and changes, including respite care, residential care and end-of-life care.

\* You will receive activities to apply person-centered care approaches to your own caregiving situation.

## VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE VITA

### Looking for a volunteer opportunity in your community?

The Leavenworth County COA is looking for volunteers for the 2024 tax season.

The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals. The VITA program has operated for over 50 years, and specializes in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors.

VITA services are not only free, they are also a reliable and trusted source for preparing tax returns. All VITA volunteers who prepare returns must take and pass tax law training that meets or exceeds IRS standards. This training includes maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all taxpayer information.

A tax background is not required. Training will be provided in January 2025. The VITA program runs through the end of March.

If you are interested or need more information, please contact Jessica at 913.684.0733 or [jpontbriant@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:jpontbriant@leavenworthcounty.gov).

**VOLUNTEER**  
*you can make a difference!*







To be added to our email distribution list, please contact us @[seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov)



For our full events and activities calendar, visit our homepage @[Council on Aging](#)



**FOLLOW US ON**  
**FACEBOOK**  
f  
CLICK HERE TO BE DIRECTED TO OUR PAGE.

## SENIOR EXPRESS TRANSPORTATION

We are available to assist with your transportation needs for seniors age 50 and better, as well as persons of any age with disabilities. Services include shopping and business (bank/post office) trips once per week, and hairdresser appointments as well as transportation to medical trips and for work. As always, reservations are required, and taken on a first call, first serve basis, for all trip purposes. Accessible vehicles available.

A fee is required per trip per person.

- ◆ \$2.50 per one-way trip within the County, including drive-thru business trips.
- ◆ \$10.00 per one-way trip to the Parallel Corridor, including Providence Medical Center and the Legends-area medical plazas.\*
- ◆ \$15.00 per one-way, out-of-county medical trips within a 50-mile radius of Leavenworth.\*

For current service status and to schedule your trip, call 913.684.0778.

## AGING RESOURCES

- Adult Protective Services.....1.800.922.5330
- Emergency Respite:  
Country Care.....913.773.5517  
Medical Lodge.....913.772.1844
- Guidance Center.....913.682.5118
- Kansas Aging and Disability Resource Center  
.....855.200.2372
- Leavenworth County Health Department  
.....913.250.2000
- Medicare ..... 1.800.633.4227
- Poison Control Center.....1.800.222.1222
- Property Fraud LV County.....1.913.684.0424
- Social Security Office .....1.800.772.1213
- Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging  
..... 913.573.8531

## A LITTLE HUMOR



**What do you call a rude gobbler?**

*A jerky turkey!*

**What do you do when you lose the turkey recipe card?**

*You wing it!*



To best accommodate all of our clients, the COA is set to take payments and donations online through **PayPal**.

Scan the QR code or in PayPal search for **Leavenworth County Council on Aging** or use **@LVCOA**



Some services are funded in part by the Older Americans Act and are provided without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origins or sex. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with the Area Agency on Aging @ 1.888.661.1444

This informational brochure is published by:  
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