

THE SERVICE NETWORK

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The Service Network

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For the last time:
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Executive Director
Division on Aging/ADRC



It's funny where life takes us, while not a gerontology major, I found my passion in the field of aging.

When I graduated with my MSW, with an emphasis on policy and research, the job market was not very promising. I landed in Morris County's Department of Human Services, then transferred to their Department on Aging. When the Union County Division on Aging's Executive Director Phil Perlman caught wind that I was working in Morris County but living in Union County, he recruited me to join the Union

County team. Phil obtained a grant on Elder Abuse and Neglect and I became the coordinator for the program in the absence of an adult protective services program in the county. It was a project that had to be developed with the community and through this position I met many providers, community leaders, crime prevention officers, and had the good fortune to travel to Elder Abuse conferences throughout the country as the issue was finally being recognized.

That was 35 years ago.

I held different positions at the Division on Aging so the job never seemed boring. As Project Director I handled the SSBG/Title XX grant back when these funds were not part of the Area Plan Contract. For over a year I assisted the county with their Employee Assistance Program while it was in transition, encouraged by Phil Perlman to use the opportunity to utilize my LCSW; Aging by day, EAP by night.

In time, I became the Assistant Executive Director and I further learned how connected the Aging Network was; the dedicated service providers, 20 additional county Offices on Aging, and state AAA administration and leadership, as well as the strong network of Area Agencies on Aging and the National Association of AAA's for whom advocacy on behalf of older adults and caregivers was powerful and rewarding.

I had the privilege to serve on the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's Board of Directors for 13 years, also serving on the Executive Committee as Treasurer, as well as serving on the New Jersey Association of Area Agencies on Aging's Executive Board as Treasurer. As a result, I have met many professional colleagues who in time became personal friends. I am grateful that the County of Union's leadership supported my interests and commitment to advocacy on behalf of older adults and caregivers.

I have loved working these past 35 years and feel privileged to have had the opportunity to serve as the Executive Director for 18 of them. I am not sure how those years flew by so quickly. As I close this chapter of my career I have many to thank; past Directors' Phil Perlman and Susan Chasnoff; amazing mentors who taught me the value of the Older Americans' Act and how it literally secures people's independence and dignity. They taught me the value of N4A (USAgings) and NJ4A and how there is strength in numbers; the county who supported the efforts of the Division as well as the needs of the older population in this county; the Human Services Department directors' leadership, present and past, who understood what we did and allowed the Division to flourish; the service provider network who work as a team and seem to share my passion; the Advisory Council on Aging who were a great sounding board and contributed to my overall knowledge of the needs of older adults. To all, a heartfelt thank you.

But, at the end of the day, my heroes are my staff. They have worked tirelessly and with such commitment and dedication. They have gained my respect and I hope I earned theirs.

As I pass the baton I know this Division will thrive. My best to all of you and if we pass each other again, I will consider it a gift.



It Really Happened! New Jersey Significantly Increased PAAD/ Senior Gold Income Guidelines



The income limits for the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged & Disabled (PAAD) and Senior Gold increased by \$10,000 each – allowing an additional number of older residents to receive help with the cost of their medications and Medicare Part D premiums and deductibles. The increase was effective January 1, 2022.

The NJ Division of Aging Services has mailed a letter and forms to all current **Senior Gold** members informing them of the move to PAAD that started January 1st. Members need to complete 2 forms as part of this move – the application for Lifeline and a Medicare Part D Enrollment Assistance form which was included in the letter sent to beneficiaries.

A New Jersey resident may be eligible for PAAD if the following requirements are met:

- Must be a New Jersey resident;
- Are age 65 or older or between ages 18 and 64 and receiving Social Security Title II Disability benefits;
- Annual income for 2022 is less than \$38,769 if single or less than \$45,270 if married.

The Senior Gold Prescription Discount Program (**Senior Gold**) is a state-funded prescription program with a different co-payment structure and income eligibility guidelines than those of PAAD.

A New Jersey resident may be eligible for Senior Gold if the following requirements are met:

- Must be a New Jersey resident;
- Are age 65 or older or between ages 18 and 64 and receiving Social Security Disability benefits;
- Annual income for 2022 is between \$38,769 and \$48,769 if you are single or between \$45,270 and \$55,270 if you are married.

In addition: All Medicare-eligible Senior Gold beneficiaries are also required to enroll in a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan of their choice. They will be responsible for paying the monthly premium directly to the Medicare Part D plan. They also will be responsible for paying any late enrollment penalty imposed by Medicare for each month they were eligible to enroll in Medicare Part D but did not enroll.

For more information on the PAAD and Senior Gold drug programs, or to obtain an application, call the Union County Division on Aging at 908 527 4870, toll free at 888 280 8226, or for Spanish 908 528 4863.

For information on programs and services for seniors call the Union County Division on Aging/ADRC toll free at 888 280 8226, 908 527 4870, or for Spanish call 908 527 4863



Register for Emergency Alerts

Winter is here! Hopefully we will not have 'bad weather' but now is an excellent time for residents to sign up online for Union County First Alert by visiting ucfirstalert.org.

This free service will enable you to receive emergency updates by text or email on your mobile devices. Keep up with local news reports by tuning in to your radio, television, or online weather reports. Residents with special needs and their families should sign up for [NJ Register Ready](http://NJRegisterReady), a state initiative that helps to identify people who may need additional assistance.

For more information call the Division on Aging
908 537 4870 Spanish 908 527 4863
Toll Free 1 888 280 8226

Receive Alerts  



New Jersey American Water Helping Customers in Need

During these unprecedented times marked with financial uncertainty for many, New Jersey American Water assists their customers with their commitment to communities to keep water flowing.

The H2O Help to Others Program offers financial assistance for water and wastewater customers who qualify by being the recipient of a grant of up to \$500.00 to help pay the water bill for indoor water use only. This would not apply to water for outdoor purposes such as sprinkler systems.

Customers may also qualify for a Service Charge Discount on their monthly fixed service charge for water; the discounts are also available for wastewater customers.

Monthly Income Guidelines

# of People in House	Total Combined Income
1	\$3,220.
2	\$4,355.
3	\$5,490.
4	\$6,625.

For each additional person add \$1,135.

For additional information contact New Jersey SHARES at 1 877 652 9426

VITA/AARP Tax Assistance

Free assistance in the preparation of federal and state Income Tax Returns, using the simple tax form, is available for taxpayers of every age at local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and AARP sites. Once again, due to COVID, you must make an appointment to receive help.

For information for a site nearby call the IRS at 1 800 906 9887 or online at IRS Site Locator at www.irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep

Tax Counseling for the Elderly

Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) is an AARP tax-aid program primarily for individuals 60 years or older. TCE has counselors who specialize in questions about pension and retirement related issues that are unique to seniors.

For more information contact the National AARP office at 1 888 227 7669

The VITA/AARP site listing is active from January 1 through April 15 each year

MyFreeTaxes

MyFreeTaxes is a free online tax preparation and filing tool for anyone who earned less than \$66,000 in 2020. Using this online service to file federal and state tax returns is cost free.

For more information go to: <https://myfreetaxes.com/>

Tax Counseling for Military Personnel

Tax Counseling for Military Personnel is a VITA program that is administered by the Armed Forces Tax Council (AFTC). Marines, airmen, soldiers, sailors, guardsmen, and their families worldwide receive free tax preparation assistance at offices within their installations. These Vita sites provide free tax advice, preparation, and assistance to military members and their families who are trained and equipped to address military-specific tax issues.

Where is My Return?

Individuals can check the status of their tax refund using Where's My Refund? Tool or by calling 1 800 829 1954 for automated refund information.

2022 LIHEAP/USF Income Guidelines

Monthly Pre-Tax Income

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>LIHEAP</u>	<u>USF</u>
1	\$3,348	\$ 4,293
2	\$4,379	\$ 5,807
3	\$5,409	\$ 7,320
4	\$6,439	\$ 8,833
5	\$7,470	\$10,347
6	\$8,500	\$11,860
7	\$8,693	\$13,373
8	\$8,886	\$14,887

Union County COVID In-Home Vaccination Program

The County of Union has partnered with Mobile Medical Services & Technology to provide homebound vaccines to county residents unable to attend events in the community. Mobile Medical Services & Technology can typically schedule a home visit in five days or less of receiving an appointment request.

The Union County Commissioner Board strongly urges residents who have not been vaccinated to get their jab as soon as possible.

To schedule a COVID-19 vaccination at your home call 1 833 256 2478

Mobile Medical Services & Technology are providing boosters in the home only for those who are immunocompromised, regardless of age, free of charge.

Celebrate endings—for they precede new beginnings...Jonathan Lockwood Huie

Happy New Year from the Union County Division on Aging



L to R back row: Luis Ramirez Natalie Zarrillo Anna Maria Owens Jacqueline Bragg Kathleen Malkiewicz Donna Farrell Maria Valera
Rahel Lubow Elaine Montes

L to R middle row: Fe Casera Fran Benson Neelie Barreuco Ann Marie Laface front & center: Nellie Strochak



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