



Protect loved ones and others from COVID-19 and flu this winter

Delawareans should remain vigilant this winter to protect their loved ones and fellow community members from COVID-19 and the flu. The Division of Public Health recommends following these prevention strategies:

- Get vaccinated and boosted for COVID-19, including the new bivalent booster if eligible. Visit de.gov/boosters and de.gov/getmyvaccine.
- Delawareans age 6 months and older should get their annual flu shot to prevent illness, complications, hospitalization, and death. Visit flu.delaware.gov.
- Get tested for COVID-19 (de.gov/gettested):
 - 1-2 days before a large gathering
 - If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (If you have symptoms and get a negative test result, take another test 2 days later.)
 - Five (5) days after being exposed to someone confirmed to have COVID-19.
- When sick, stay home to avoid spreading germs, especially to older, very young, or immunocompromised individuals.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds or longer or use hand sanitizer.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into your inner elbow. Immediately dispose of tissues and wash hands.
- Do not cough your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- After traveling, self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms, and isolate and get tested if symptoms develop.



Follow CDC ventilation guidance to reduce risk of airborne virus particles

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website offers [ventilation \(air flow\) guidance](#) to prevent small, breathable virus particles from accumulating indoors. The fewer virus particles in the air, the less exposure individuals have to COVID-19, the flu, and other viruses.

When guests visit, the CDC recommends ventilating your home or gathering space during the visit and for at least one hour after the visit. If it is safe to do so, bring fresh, outdoor air into the home by opening doors and windows. Turn on kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans and ceiling fans. Have window exhaust fans blow air outside. Use a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaner to trap particles that people exhale when breathing, talking, singing, coughing, and sneezing.

Use heating, ventilation, and air conditioning filters and change them frequently. Be sure that filters are properly fitted and provide higher filtration. The CDC suggests using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaners. For [continuous airflow and filtration](#), turn the thermostat to the “on” position instead of “auto.”

The CDC website provides an easy-to-use [interactive ventilation tool](#) and ventilation guidance for buildings, schools, and childcare programs.



Improving ventilation can help reduce virus particles in your home and keep COVID-19, the flu, and other viruses from spreading. When guests visit and for at least one hour afterward, open windows, turn on ceiling fans, have window exhaust fans blow air outside, and use a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaner to filter air. Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

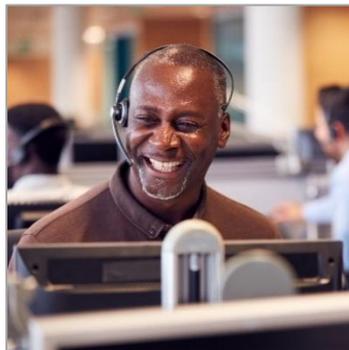
Start planning for end of COVID-19 emergency housing and food benefits

Nearly 60,000 Delaware households will be profoundly impacted when they no longer receive emergency COVID-19 benefits for food, housing, and childcare benefits when federal and state governments lift the public health emergency. The Pandemic Emergency Shelter Program that provided motel housing ended September 30.

“When these emergency benefits end, especially when enhanced food benefits go away, it will come as a shock to many households,” said Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Secretary Molly Magarik. “We are trying to connect these Delawareans to other services and urge them to prepare for the day when these additional benefits end.”

Delawareans should prepare now for the following temporary suspensions to end immediately or within 30 days after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted:

- SNAP food benefit work requirements
- TANF work requirements
- TANF time limit and sanction rules
- Temporary expansion of food benefits for eligible college students
- Waived Purchase of Care monthly childcare co-payments.



Since March 2020, the DHSS Division of Social Services (DSS) has issued monthly emergency benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

program, and General Assistance program. In September, an estimated 59,367 Delaware households received emergency supplemental SNAP food benefits ranging from \$95 to \$250, and 185 households each received between \$201 and \$819 in TANF emergency benefits. Eligible General Assistance households received monthly emergency cash benefit checks ranging from \$79 for one person to \$239 for six people.

For more information, visit [DSS's webpage of emergency benefit programs](#). To screen for and apply for benefits, go to DHSS' online application portal [Delaware ASSIST](#) or call 1-866-843-7212.

Housing and other resources

Housing Alliance Delaware

www.housingalliancede.org

To find a bed, contact Centralized Intake Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., by calling 1-833-FIND-BED (1-833-346-3233), texting the ZIP code to 898-211, or emailing intake@housingalliancede.org. Clients may visit any State Service Center or local shelter or day center for help contacting Centralized Intake.

Delaware State Housing Authority

1-888-363-8808, www.destatehousing.com

DEHousingSearch.com

1-877-428-8844

DEHAP Rental Assistance

1-866-935-0407, decovidhousinghelp.com

Emergency Assistance Services

Provides eligible low-income persons up to \$1,200 for rent, utilities, and emergency shelter. Division of State Service Centers
www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dssc
1-866-843-7212; DHSS_DSSC@delaware.gov

Veterans Multi-Service Center

www.vmcenter.org

1-856-293-7321

Delaware Joining Forces

Delaware.gov/djf

For military members, veterans, and families

Adult Behavioral Health

24/7 Mobile Crisis Services

Northern Delaware: 1-800-652-2929

Southern Delaware: 1-800-345-6785

Youth Behavioral Health

24/7 Child Crisis Hotline

1-800-969-HELP (4357)

Youth Prevention Helpline

302-633-2680

PBHS_Prevention_Inquiries@delaware.gov

24/7 Delaware Hope Line

1-833-9-HOPEDE (1-833-946-7333)

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

988

Help is Here Delaware

HelpisHereDE.com/



How to help those less fortunate

Vulnerable families seek food, clothing, housing assistance, shelter, and charity medical and dental care from local food banks, charities, churches, and non-profit organizations. Here are ways to help:

- Support Delaware’s non-profit organizations this holiday season and beyond.
- Support local food banks, such as the Food Bank of Delaware, and community food pantries with food, money, grocery gift cards, or volunteer hours. Also support food drives.
- Clean out your pantry and donate unexpired food. Move foods with nearest expiration dates to the front of the pantry shelves to use them first.
- Eliminate food waste by planning meals ahead, eating leftovers, and freezing extra portions. Do not over-buy or over-order.
- Clip coupons for others. Put them in a recycled box and place in a common area. Someone short on change could use the help.
- Plant to share. Next spring, gardeners can plant extra vegetables to donate to neighbors or a local food pantry after you find out what they accept.
- Clean out your closets. Donate outgrown and unwanted clothes in good or excellent condition to local clothes closets and organizations.
- Give a needful gift. Consider gifting a week or more of childcare, rent, electricity, heating fuel, gas, or bus fare. Lend rides to and from work for those who must give up their car or to help them stretch their gas dollars.
- Be patient and understanding. Impacted individuals may be stressed as they try to provide basic needs for their families. Refer Delawareans in despair to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or the Delaware Hope Line at 1-833-946-7333.

DHSS hotline protects vulnerable adults

To protect vulnerable adults from neglect, abuse, and exploitation, the Delaware Department of Social Services’ Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities launched a new 24-hour Adult Protective Services (APS) hotline:

888-APS-4302.

Callers can remain anonymous and connect with free, voluntary services and resources. Victims can also report harm.

Concerned individuals should “Make the Call” to **888-APS-4302** if they suspect these forms of harm:

- Physical abuse – inflicting physical pain or injury on a senior
- Sexual abuse – non-consensual sexual contact of any kind
 - Emotional abuse – inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress on a vulnerable adult through verbal or nonverbal acts
 - Neglect – the failure by those responsible to provide food, shelter, health care, or protection for a vulnerable adult
 - Self-neglect – the failure of a person to perform essential, self-care tasks and that such failure threatens his/her own health or safety
 - Exploitation – the illegal taking, misuse, or concealment of funds, property, or assets of a vulnerable adult for someone else’s benefit
 - Abandonment – desertion of a vulnerable adult by anyone who has assumed the responsibility for care or custody of that person
 - Additional forms of harm – mistreatment, intimidation, manipulation, or coercion.

Under Delaware law, a vulnerable adult is defined as a person 18 years of age or older who, because of isolation, sickness, debilitation, mental illness, or physical, mental, or cognitive disability, is easily susceptible to harm. In 2021, anonymous reports to APS helped protect 2,184 vulnerable adults.

For more information, visit dhss.delaware.gov/dsaapd/aps.