



THE COORDINATING CENTER  
INSPIRED SOLUTIONS

## The Center Line



### A Message from our CEO



By now, I am sure you have received dozens of emails about the Coronavirus, COVID-19 from doctors' offices, schools, stores, restaurants and other organizations that you frequent. I want to reassure you that The Coordinating Center is here to support you during this challenging time. Our office remains open and our coworkers are teleworking from home. For the time being visits will take place by phone or by video chat, if permitted.

For further guidance about COVID-19, check out the [CDC](#) guidelines and please reach out to your primary care physician if you are experiencing any signs or symptoms. If you or your loved one relies on in-home nursing or other in-home services, here are some screening questions you can ask:

1. Are you experiencing any flu like symptoms (e.g., coughing, fever, chills, respiratory issues)?
2. Is there anyone that you have come into close contact with experiencing any flu like symptoms (e.g., coughing, fever, chills, respiratory issues)?
3. Have you or someone that you have come into close contact with been exposed to anyone with any flu like symptoms (e.g., coughing, fever, chills, respiratory issues)?
4. Have you or someone that you have come into close contact with been

out of the country in the last two weeks?

5. Have you or someone that you have come into close contact with traveled by airplane in the last two weeks?

If the provider has answered **YES** to any of these questions, they should **NOT** enter your home.

Please remember to manage your personal health and stress by taking **deep breaths**, focusing on accurate sources of information such as the CDC, maintaining a **routine**, staying in contact with **loved ones** and **staying active**. This is The Coordinating Center's first ever client newsletter, our goal is to provide you with factual information and resources for you and your loved ones.

---

## COVID-19: Governor Hogan Updates

The Coordinating Center continues to monitor the COVID-19 outbreak and is following guidance from the Center's for Disease Control (CDC), Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and Governor Larry Hogan. Here are a few recent updates from Governor Larry Hogan:

- Today, Governor Hogan has **closed all non-essential businesses at 5 p.m. today** and has asked all Marylanders to stay home; although, he did not declare an official *Shelter in Place* order. The Federal guidelines for defining essential business (i.e., grocery stores, restaurant carry-out/delivery, pharmacies, health care, utilities, shipping, banking, other governmental services, law enforcement and emergency personnel), can be found [HERE](#).
- **Gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people**, consistent with CDC guidelines for social distancing. The Governor is asking citizens to **remain at home** and only leave the home for a critical need (i.e., to access food, medicine, and health care).
- **The Governor is asking that folks please do not hoard supplies.** All grocery stores and pharmacies will remain open and continue to restock food and other supplies. Gas stations will remain open too.
- It is recommended that only the following people use **public transportation** (i.e., buses, MARC train and the light rail): emergency personnel, front line healthcare workers and essential supply chain workers.
- **BWI Airport** is now only open to ticketed passengers and employees.
- Maryland's April 28th **primary election will be postponed to June 2nd.**
- A special general election will be held on April 28th for the **7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (Elijah Cummings District)** and conducted through a vote by mail system.
- The Maryland Transportation Authority will move to **cashless tolling** statewide.
- **Until further notice:** ALL MDOT MVA branch locations are closed on Saturdays. All branch offices will close at 4:30 p.m. daily. All VEIP testing stations are **closed**. Self-service VEIP kiosk locations are **open**. Limited Service Branches in Oakland and Prince Frederick are **closed**. For more information on how MDOT MVA is responding to COVID-19, [click here](#).
- Governor Larry Hogan is asking President Trump to extend the federal

REAL ID deadline for all states.

For more information about COVID-19 check out the Governor's website: [Maryland Unites](#) and the [CDC](#).

---

## REM Program Update

The Coordinating Center is pleased to announce that earlier this month two new partners **Medicalincs, LLC and Gant Global Services, Inc.** joined The Coordinating Center in delivering care coordination services for the REM Program. This change is due a new requirement issued by the Maryland Department of Health, which mandates that The Coordinating Center subcontract a portion of REM Case Management Services to a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE).



The Coordinating Center will continue to provide oversight of the REM program and has full confidence in Medicalincs and Gant Global Services ability to maintain the same level of high quality care coordination services. To ensure a seamless transition, Medicalincs and Gant Global Services coordinators will be assigned a phone extension at The Coordinating Center, so **you may continue to reach your coordinator at 410-987-1048.**

---

## Community Resources

### Food Distribution

The **Maryland State Department of Education** has an interactive map to help families identify meal sites at schools, community centers and other places. While this map does not capture all resources, it does offer a lot of great resources. Simply enter your zip code and select the distance (1, 5, or 10 miles) and click on Map It, to locate resources.

[Food Distribution Map](#)

This news station has a listing of all the **free meal sites across Maryland** and Washington, D.C.

[Free Meals for Kids](#)

### Maryland Senior Call Check

Maryland Secretary of Aging **Rona E. Kramer** and **Senator Benjamin Kramer** worked cooperatively to legislate and implement a new program called **Maryland Senior Call Check**. This program is the first-in-the-nation, statewide, free program designed to help keep older adults safe while aging in their homes. All Maryland residents, 65 and older, are invited to sign up for a

daily call at a time convenient to their lifestyle.

The **Maryland Department of Aging Senior Call Check, is a FREE resource for MD residents over 65+**. Participants will receive an automated call every day. These calls will take place within a time frame chosen by the participant. If the participant does not answer their first call, they will be called two additional times in the same day. If those calls go unanswered, an alternate person, selected by the participant, will be notified. This alternate could be an adult child, a neighbor, or anyone designated as a reliable contact. The alternate will then be asked to check on the participant. For those who do not have an alternate or whose alternate is unresponsive, the state will call local law enforcement to conduct a wellness check.

Registration is also available online at [aging.maryland.gov](https://aging.maryland.gov).

- This service will provide free daily calls to Marylander's 65 and over who register.
- Participants will also receive updates regarding the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The verification and enrollment process can be completed within 24 hours Monday – Saturday.
- Senior Call Check phone lines are **open Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Saturday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**. During these hours, seniors can call toll-free **1-866-50-CHECK** (1-866-502-0560) and register.

“Our department is committed to providing our seniors who wish to age in place with the necessary resources to stay safe,” said Secretary Kramer. “This is an essential service to prevent someone from languishing on the floor after a fall or other calamity. I encourage all Marylanders 65 and older to sign up for this free program.”

For more information on this program and to register, call 1-866-50-CHECK (1-866-502-4325) or visit [aging.maryland.gov](https://aging.maryland.gov). Please help spread the word to seniors living alone at home.

## Mental Health

**Did you know?** As of January 1, 2020 Maryland Medical Assistance changed their mental health program from Beacon Health to Optum. If you or someone you know needs mental health support **call Optum at 1-800-888-1965**. Optum can assist you in identifying participating providers and answer questions about Maryland Medical Assistance Mental health Benefits.

NAMI Homefront is a free, 6-session educational program for families, caregivers and friends of military service members and veterans with mental health conditions. **Register for this training** or **learn more about this program**.

---

## Legislative Update

The Maryland General Assembly's 2020 Legislative Session **ended early this year**. This was the first time since the Civil War that Maryland has had to end Session early.

On March 2nd **Sheri Weissman**, Director of The

Coordinating Center's Autism Waiver Program and our parent representative **Salman Shamsi** testified for the Education and Economic Development Subcommittee. While The Coordinating Center and families fully support the expansion of 100 Autism Waiver slots, The Coordinating Center explained the frustration families are experiencing over the lack of direct care staff to provide respite and Intensive Individual Support Services under the Waiver that families are entitled to. To listen to the session click [here](#).



Here are a few other highlights:

### **Autism Waiver:**

- Requirement for MSDE and MDH to report on actions in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to address provider capacity, including a provider rate review (final language attached)
- HB 847 - *State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs*: Creates a position in MDOD and est. an Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs. TCC may apply to be a member of the Group as it includes *any additional members with expertise or experience in autism-related needs*.
- SB 504 - *Office of the Attorney General - Special Education Ombudsman*: Among the duties, the Ombudsman will annually collect data on calls received and report on any patterns of complaints filed by parents and recommendations appropriate and necessary for implementing special education services and procedures.

### **State Budget Approvals:** Starting July 1, 2020

- 4% increase for DDA and Home- and Community-Based Service providers; and a
- 3.5% increase for REM care coordination services.

## **Health Care Transition**

The process of changing from pediatric to adult health care—can be an especially scary time for youth and young adults with disabilities and their families. Just like other transitions during this time in an adolescent's life health care transition requires a good deal of planning.

To make this transition as smooth as possible, The Parents' Place of Maryland

has partnered with **Got Transition** (the federally-funded national resource center run by **The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health** to create a 20-minute webinar available on **PPMD's YouTube channel**. The Coordinating Center also has a variety of tools to assist with Health Care Transition. Check out **The Coordinating Center's website** and/or **speak with your Coordinator to learn more.**



