



WEEKLY E-MAILING
January 31, 2023
Table of Contents

[Helpful Links](#)

**[Biden Administration Announces it Will End Public Health
Emergency](#)**

[DARS New Legal Services Developer](#)

[2023 Commonwealth Council on Aging Best Practices Awards](#)

[SNAP Emergency Allotments Will End in February](#)

[AARP Community Challenge Grants](#)

[VA Center on Aging/DARS Annual Update on Aging](#)

Helpful Links

ACL News & Information

Here is a link to news & information from the Administration for Community Living (ACL):

<https://acl.gov/>

ADvancing States (NASUAD) Information

Here is a link to state technical assistance from ADvancing States:

<http://www.advancingstates.org/state-technical-assistance/enhancedtechnical-assistance>

Biden Administration Plans to End COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs & Services

The Biden Administration has signaled that it plans to end the COVID-19 national emergency and public health emergency (PHE) on **May 11, 2023**. This announcement came as a part of an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Statement of Administration Policy, in response to a bill and resolution being considered by the U.S. House of Representatives.

The statement can be found here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SAP-H.R.-382-H.J.-Res.-7.pdf>

DARS New Legal Services Developer

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs & Services

Nancy Walsh joined DARS as its Legal Services Developer on January 25, 2023. Nancy is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law and holds a Bachelor of Arts from UVA, with a major in English and economics. She is licensed to practice law in Virginia and holds inactive licenses in Massachusetts and the District of Columbia, where she worked as a litigation associate in private practice and a staff attorney for a federal agency.

From 2012-2021, Nancy served as the Director for Professional Practices at the Virginia Department of Education. In that role, she investigated, prepared, and presented licensure cases to the Superintendent's Investigative Panel and Virginia Board of Education. She also conducted outreach and training to a range of constituents to ensure compliance with and understanding of complex laws and regulations governing the revocation of licenses and the investigation of misconduct. Prior to her position at VDOE, Nancy worked in licensure and administrative proceedings at the Virginia Department of Health Professions and was a high school English teacher before attending law school.

Nancy's legal background and varied professional experience will serve her well in her new position at DARS. She looks forward to working with and serving as a resource to legal services providers and area agencies on aging (AAAs) throughout Virginia.

2023 Commonwealth Council on Aging Best Practices Awards

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Senior Policy Analyst/Regulatory Coordinator

The Commonwealth Council on Aging is sponsoring the 2023 Best Practices Award Program targeted to organizations serving older Virginians and their families. The awards will be given to innovative programs and services that assist older adults to age in the community. The Commonwealth aims to recognize creativity in services, such as livable communities, home and community based supports, transportation, housing, caregiver supports, intergenerational programming, and more. The Council believes the door is wide open for creative best practices.

Complete instructions, nomination forms, and information on previous Best Practices Award winners are posted on the DARS Aging Boards and Councils website under "News and Information" found here:

<https://www.vda.virginia.gov/boardsandcouncils.htm>.

Nominations for the 2023 awards must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2023.

The Council is pleased to support the following awards to the top winners: 1st Place, 2nd Place, and 3rd Place. The Council will also recognize up to three honorable mention programs. Award winners will be notified in late March.

The Council thanks Dominion Energy and AARP Virginia for their ongoing commitment to and support of this initiative.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

For Immediate Release | media@dss.virginia.gov

SNAP Emergency Allotments Will End in February

RICHMOND, VA (January 26, 2023) – The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) will release the final issuance of emergency allotment benefits to [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) households in February, in accordance with the requirements of the [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#). The new law recently passed by Congress ends VDSS' authorization to continue issuing benefits through the temporary federal program, originally established in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The last issuance of benefits will be automatically loaded onto SNAP customers' Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards on **Thursday, February 16**.

SNAP households began receiving the temporary emergency allotment benefit in March 2020 through the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (2020). Per federal guidelines, states were required to request a monthly waiver to issue these benefits. VDSS submitted this request each month for the duration of the period emergency benefits were available to continue providing additional food benefits to SNAP households. Since March 2020, the Commonwealth has issued more than 2.1 billion dollars in emergency allotments and raised the monthly issuance to the maximum allowable amount for over 900,000 individuals in Virginia. According to the [USDA Food and Nutrition Service](#), emergency allotments have already ended in 17 states.

Households will permanently return to pre-pandemic allowances beginning March 1, 2023, and receive their regular SNAP benefit amounts on their usual day of issuance (on the 1st, 4th, or 7th day of the month). To further awareness of this change, VDSS has mailed letters directly to SNAP households. Additionally, to support Virginians during this transition, VDSS has also created a dedicated [webpage](#) for more information and resources. Beginning January 28, households may contact the temporary information line at 1-855-635-4370, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. TTY assistance is available by calling 800-552-7917 or 866-246-9300. SNAP participants can contact their [local department of social services](#) or visit [CommonHelp](#) for questions or account information.

For assistance with applying for food benefits, visit the [VDSS SNAP webpage](#). To access information regarding resources statewide and in your local community, please contact [2-1-1 Virginia](#) or visit the [VDSS food and other nutritional assistance page](#).

AARP Community Challenge Grants

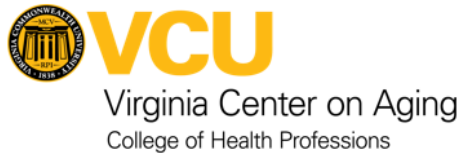
Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Senior Policy Analyst/Regulatory Coordinator

AARP's 2023 Community Challenge grant application is now live. These small grants are meant to fund quick projects that can make communities more accessible and livable for people of all ages. AARP is accepting applications across three opportunities. **Flagship grants** are meant to support public places, housing options, digital connections, or civic engagement. **Capacity- Building microgrants** are meant to support walkability and community gardens in communities. Finally, **Demonstration grants** are to be used for replication of promising practices in transportation and implementing accessory dwelling unit (ADU) designs.

Grant applications will be due **March 15, 2023 by 5:00 p.m. ET.**

A free application technical Assistance webinar will be held on **Wednesday, February 8, 2023 from 2:00 pm to 3:00 p.m. ET.**

[Click here](#) to register for the webinar and learn more about this funding opportunity



Annual Update on Aging in Virginia

Thank You!

The Virginia Center on Aging and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services presented the Annual Update on Aging on Wednesday, January 25th. With 350 people in attendance, we were excited to share our work and demonstrate how it advances the health, well-being and equity for the elders of today and tomorrow.

If you were able to join, we greatly appreciate your attendance and participation. [The webinar recording and presentation slides are posted on our website.](#)

Resources

- [Virginia Center on Aging](#)
- [Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services](#)
- [State Plans for Aging Services \(DARS\)](#)
- [Geriatric Training & Education Initiative](#)
- [Brain Health Lab at VCU Gerontology](#)
- [Virginia Memory Care Project Survey](#)

DARS Response to Housing-Related Questions

In response to the housing-related questions that were submitted during the webinar.

Housing, as many know, is a tough nut to crack. The Older Americans Act has not historically provided substantial funding for State Units on Aging or AAAs to directl

address housing needs. Some AAAs have found innovative ways to offer housing services for older adults in partnership with other organizations or through funding opportunities provided by other federal and state agencies. A number of these efforts have been highlighted by the Commonwealth Council on Aging's annual [Best Practices Awards](#).

When thinking about housing needs more broadly, a potential strength of the aging network is its built-in ability to provide vital wraparound services that can prevent homelessness and support aging in place by helping older adults maximize their resources. If you are an older adult, or if you know of or work with an older adult, who is on the cusp of or currently experiencing housing instability, we would encourage you to [reach out to your local AAA](#) and/or take advantage of [No Wrong Door's Virginia Easy Access website](#) to identify possible programs and services that could help. Some possible programs and services that AAAs and Virginia Easy Access can connect older adults to include:

- Home-Delivered and Congregate Meals provided by AAAs and assistance applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to support access to nutritious meals and groceries
- Medicare Counseling Assistance to help find the best Medicare Part D plan through the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP)
- Information about the Affordable Connectivity Program, which provides affordable internet access
- AAA transportation services to get to important medical appointments
- Information about Senior Cool Care or the Energy Assistance Program, which can help with providing cooling units or with heating and cooling expenses
- AAA in-home services that can support light or heavy housework needs

This is just a snapshot into the ways in which AAAs and Virginia's No Wrong Door System is working to address the needs of Virginia's elders. DARS looks forward to continuing this important conversation with you as we look ahead at the next four years and beyond.

Lastly, DARS would like to highlight the robust [library of needs assessment materials](#) that are currently available for the public. We encourage you to dig into the statewide reports or those specific to your locality or region. It is the agency's hope that the reports and findings will be used and shared widely.