



RETIREE CONNECTION



Keeping Pinellas County Government Retirees Plugged In

OCT 2020

The Annex Building, 400 S. Fort Harrison Ave. in Clearwater, remains CLOSED due to the pandemic. Please call Human Resources' main number if you have questions - (727) 464-3367.

2021 Annual Enrollment is Coming!

The 2021 Annual Enrollment period will be from Sunday, November 1 through Saturday, November 21. *No action is needed by you at this time.*

Annual Enrollment provides you the opportunity to review your current benefit elections and determine if you want to make any changes for the upcoming year. Changes made during Annual Enrollment will be effective on January 1, 2021.

View the web page [2021 Annual Enrollment for Retirees](#). Information will be mailed to your home in **late October** with details about the 2021 benefit plan options and cost of coverage. If you have recently moved, please contact Employee Benefits at employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org or by phone at (727) 464-4570 to update your address to make sure you receive this important information.

What You Need to Know

Medicare Advantage Plan (MAPPO) Members

UnitedHealthcare will continue to administer the Medicare Advantage coverage and prescription drug program for Medicare eligible retirees and dependents.

Dental Plan Members

Cigna will continue to administer the dental PPO and HMO plans. Please note that the HMO plan is only available to Florida residents. There are no plan changes for 2021.

Point of Service Plan and Consumer Driven Plan with Health Savings Account (HSA)

Non-Medicare Eligible Members
and

Traditional Medicare Supplement Plan Members
(no new enrollees in this plan)

As in 2020, UnitedHealthcare will administer the medical plan and Express Scripts will manage the prescription drug benefit.

NEW

Life Insurance Plan Members

There will be a new vendor for 2021. Information will be provided in late October.

Vision Plan

EyeMed will be our new vision vendor for 2021. Information will be sent to your home and new cards will be mailed to your home by January 1st.

What to Expect Next

You will receive more detailed information about Annual Enrollment in late October.

Review the information carefully so you can make an informed decision. We will provide contact information for all benefit plan providers also.

Pinellas County Benefits

400 S. Fort Harrison Ave.

Clearwater, FL 33756

(727) 464-4570 | Fax 464-5291

employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org

Dealing with Loneliness? Try Writing

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Manager

If you're a regular reader of the newsletter (if you're new, welcome!), you probably recall we have written about loneliness a few times. Some may think loneliness and isolation are just a part of life. In fact, loneliness and isolation not only impact mental well-being, but may also negatively affect physical health. Individuals lacking in strong relationships are at a higher risk for developing arthritis, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease among other illnesses. There may also be a connection to cognitive decline, dementia and Alzheimer's. For essential information on loneliness including research, statistics and coping strategies, please refer to the lead article in the [May To Your Health 2019 issue](#) and the [June issue](#) of this publication.

Additionally, people who feel lonely may believe there's a stigma and are therefore uncomfortable reaching out to someone for help, whether it's someone they know and trust, or a behavioral health professional.

We may not talk openly about loneliness, but it is much more common than one might think, and if you are lonely, you are not alone in your pain.

Loneliness vs. Isolation

Important to note, loneliness and isolation are not quite the same. One can be surrounded by many people on a regular basis and still feel lonely if they don't have deep, meaningful relationships with others. Isolation is physical separation from others (hello, COVID-19!) which can lead to loneliness. Of note, some prefer their

own company versus the company of others and don't necessarily feel lonely even if they're isolated.

Try Writing It Down

Regardless, we have been struggling with loneliness for some time. Whether or not it's emerged during the pandemic, there are ways to combat it. One way to do so is in the act of expressive writing.

Putting pen to paper can help us feel better and actually improve health and promote healing. The process of writing down feelings calls for self-awareness, introspection and acknowledgement of emotions. It also organizes our thoughts. In this way, we not only become much more connected with ourselves, but are more likely to work through negative feelings.

Expressive writing can mean connecting with others by writing letters, a book, or blogging. It can also mean journaling for oneself. Writing for others creates social connection. By sharing thoughts and feelings, we connect with those that may also be feeling the same way, or may support us in our struggles. There is no requirement to be a great writer. In fact, learning or sharpening a skill is beneficial for intellectual stimulation, which also has health benefits (think of it as exercise for the brain!)

To learn more, read this [Harvard Medical School blog post](#). If you're interested in exploring additional research, you can start by reading this article [The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health: A Review of Current Literature](#).

FRS Contact Center Implementing New Phone System

From the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and the Division of Retirement Contact Center.

The Division of Retirement's Contact Center has implemented a new phone system to reduce call wait times and improve customer service.

The new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system offers customers self-service options to quickly resolve issues without having to speak to a representative, such as:

- Requesting an estimate at their normal retirement.
- Requesting a copy of an IRIS Form 1099-R or Pension Income Verification Letter.

These items and more will be delivered by mail to a caller's address on file or delivered electronically

through a caller's FRS Online inbox depending on the delivery preference selected.

The IVR phone system also includes an innovative call back feature, providing callers the option to schedule a call back from a representative at a specific later time or receive a call back as soon as a representative becomes available.

Lastly, the IVR phone system includes an optional call survey, providing callers the opportunity to provide immediate customer satisfaction feedback to help drive future service improvements for customers.

Call FRS at (866) 446-9377.

Flu Shots and COVID-19

If you could do something now that takes 10 minutes and it would protect you and your family, would you do it?

It is CRITICAL that everyone gets a flu shot this year.

Flu Shot Q&A

Question	Answer
Who should get the flu shot?	Everyone over 6 years old, including those vaccinated last year.
Why bother? I never get the flu.	It protects not just you but everyone you come in contact with.
I don't want to be exposed to any virus by going somewhere to get a shot.	Plan ahead. Make an appointment, wash your hands before and after, and wear a mask.
Is the shot expensive?	Under the County health plan, flu vaccination is covered at 100%.
Won't the shot make me sick?	The flu vaccine can not cause the flu but you can feel mild side effects.
But I can still get the flu even after getting the vaccine.	You can; however, the symptoms will be milder.
Will the vaccine protect me from COVID-19?	It does not offer protection against the COVID-19 virus.
If I have flu-like symptoms, how will I know if I have the flu or COVID-19?	The loss of taste/smell may indicate COVID-19 but the only way to really know is to get tested.



Where can I get a flu shot?

At your network physician's office, pharmacies, convenience clinics, and some grocery stores. Some offer gift cards.

For more information, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov/flu.

9/9/20



REPCO News

REPCO will resume our monthly meetings at **12 noon on November 9, 2020** at our annual picnic. The picnic will be at Eagle Lake Park and the menu will be fried chicken, Greek salad, baked beans. Iced tea, lemonade and water will also be provided. Attendees may bring a dessert. The cost will be \$5 per attendee payable at the picnic. RSVP to Rudy Garcia at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

Join a Simulation Lab to Help Train 911 Operators



Pinellas County's Regional 911 is seeking volunteers to participate in a simulation lab operation that would create a real-world scenario for telecommunicators to learn from. This position is ideal for individuals who have prior fire or EMS experience and anyone seeking to experience the complex environment of a 911 call center. The application process is easy. [View more details.](#)

Have You Visited the FRS Website Lately?

Check out the [Alerts & Hot Topics](#) page. There's information on:

- 2020 Required Minimum Distributions
- Legislation
- Annual Fee Disclosure Statement
- the Latest Quarterly Newsletter/Fund Performance Report

and more.

You can also download the latest newsletter and find past issues on the [Newsletters](#) page.

No Excuses: Home-Cooked Meals in 10 Minutes or Less

Let's face it, sometimes eating healthy is hard because there's not a lot of time for making a home-cooked meal. These days it's fairly easy to find healthy, quick recipes on the web, whether you're cooking for one or for a larger group.

First things first, though. You can't make a healthy meal if you don't have "the stuff" handy, right?

- Beans, brown rice, quinoa, whole grain tortillas, old fashioned oatmeal and other grains won't spoil if you store them in a sealed container in a cool, dry place. Buy a variety and keep them on hand. If a recipe calls for brown rice but you run out, you can often substitute another grain in a pinch.
- Fresh produce and lean protein are a little trickier. Be realistic about how much fresh fruit and veggies you'll actually eat, rather than overspending and throwing it out when it spoils. Keeping frozen veggies on hand is not only a great option for convenience, but if you run out of fresh produce, you've always got a back-up. Plan meals that call for fresh produce first to prevent food waste.
- Like grains, many dishes may call for a certain kind of protein, but substitutions often work. If you've got all the ingredients for a healthy chicken fried rice but all you have in the freezer is shrimp, go for it! If you're buying fresh meat, fish and other seafood fresh, avoid spoilage by freezing what you don't use. Portion the protein into separate freezer bags rather than freezing it all together. When you're ready, pull out one perfectly portioned bag and you're good to go. Bonus points for adding your seasonings and marinades into the freezer bag ahead of time.

Here are a few [ideas to get you started](#), but the options are limitless.

Retiree Resources

Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare MAPPO
(800) 457-8506
(includes Rx and behavioral health)
UHCRetiree.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431
DavisVision.com

Human Resources
Helping U Succeed

Non-Medicare and Traditional Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare
(888) 478-4752 myuhc.com
- ◇ Express Scripts (866) 544-9221
Express-Scripts.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431
DavisVision.com

Dental Plans:

- Cigna (800) 244-6224
myCigna.com

Florida Retirement System (FRS): (866) 446-9377

myfrs.com

Pinellas County Retirement Information:

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/retiree



COVID-19 Webinar Videos are Online

[COVID-19 Testing](#) - Nurse Amy Hertog helps you navigate the options and find testing sites.
(32 minutes)

[COVID Fatigue](#) - Learn how to recognize and manage COVID fatigue with Jane Grannis.
(26 minutes)

[Strategies for COVID-19 Prevention](#) - Nurse Amy Hertog talks about masks, cleaning and handling public places.
(27 minutes)

[Coping with Anxiety During Transitions](#) - Nurse Amy Hertog shares coping strategies to manage anxiety
(17 minutes)