

senioraffairsdallas

A newsletter by the City of Dallas Office of Community Care, Senior Services



Letter from the Senior Services Staff

Winter is that time of the year when we typically gather around the fire with our loved ones to celebrate the Holidays and look forward to the start of a New Year. By now, we have begun getting familiar with new, innovative and safe ways to stay in touch with friends, neighbors and family members; be it by phone or by using other electrical devices and platforms. Safe social distancing in no way should mean isolation. The safest way to enjoy the New Year is to stay at home with those that live with you. Per the CDC, getting together with people who don't live with you can increase the chances of getting COVID-19 and/or the flu. If you would like more recommendations for safe gatherings, be sure to visit the CDC page here:

[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/winter](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/winter)

We are excited for this edition of Senior Affairs Dallas! It's packed with resources and information from our Senior Services office, the Dallas Police Department, DART, Mental Health America, the Dallas Area Parkinsonism Society, and Dallas County Master Gardener Association.

We hope this New Year is full of hope, laughter and love. Don't forget to practice social distancing, wear a mask and wash your hands accordingly, so that you and your loved ones can have a safe, healthy and happy New Year!

Senior Services Team

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DART Rides Rider Assistance Program (RAP)



DART Rides is a rider assistance program for registered residents of qualified cities or ZIP codes who are age 65 or over OR have a certified disability. The City of Dallas Senior Medical Transportation Program updated its client service model to provide clients an on-demand service in partnership with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) through its DART Rides Rider Assistance Program (RAP).

The program operates during the same hours as DART's Paratransit, fixed-route bus, and rail service (approximately 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week) and is intended for travel in the DART service area. For more information and/or to register for this program, please contact DART's Rider Assistance Program at www.DART.org or call 214-828-6717 for more information. Persons interested in applying for the service should complete an application to determine eligibility and must return completed applications to:

**DART - DART Rides
P.O. Box 660163
Dallas, TX 75266-7271**

CLIENTS MUST GO THROUGH DART'S APPLICATION PROCESS TO QUALIFY FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND:

- Be age 65 or older OR have a certified disability, but not eligible for DART Paratransit Services and
- Present proof of residency (such as a government ID, a recent utility bill or other documentation to verifying residency) and
- Have NO other means of transportation available to you (for example DART Paratransit Services)



COD OCC Senior Services Program and Senior Affairs Commission Update

The Senior Services Program partnered with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) /Adult Protective Services (APS) and The Senior Source/Elder Financial Safety Center to create an elder abuse prevention Resource Placemat. The placemat provides information on all three agencies and on elder abuse, as well as a list of senior-related resources.

Check it out here:

[Senior-related Resource List](#) or at our [City Website](#).

BECAUSE STOPPING ABUSE IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS!



Senior Services staff continues to work remotely and are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to provide referral, information and resources on a variety of senior issues and needs. For more information, call our main line at: 214-670-5227. For more information on our program and services, visit our website at:

dallascityhall.com/departments/community-care/Pages/seniorservices.

Senior Affairs Commission (SAC) Update

The Senior Affairs Commission had their last meeting of the year on Monday, December 14, 2020, with speakers from Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Dallas Police Department discussing the topic of elder abuse and its prevention.

For more information about the Senior Affairs Commission, meeting dates and times, please call 214-670-5227 or visit:

dallascityhall.com/government/meetings/Pages/senior-affairs-commission.

DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

HOW CAN I HELP REDUCE CRIME?

The Dallas Police Department is committed to reducing crime. We can't do this alone. The 2020 Violent Crime Reduction Plan is a data and intelligence driven plan that provides specific short-time strategies to deliver immediate relief as well as long-term strategies to ensure sustainable reduction in crime. The assistance and support of the community members directly affected by crime is paramount for the success of this plan. below are 5 ways you can get involved immediately.

START A CRIME WATCH

1 We will partner with your community to facilitate organizing a crime watch group. The purpose of a crime watch is so that residents can get crime stats for their neighborhood as well as safety and crime prevention information that can aid in reducing crime.

VOLUNTEERS IN PATROL

2 Volunteers In Patrol (VIP) is a neighborhood program designed to reduce crime through increased cooperation between residents and the Dallas Police Department. Residents donate their time to patrol neighborhood using their own vehicles. Contact your NPO Unit to get involved in this program.

**CITIZENS
POLICE
ACADEMY**

3

The Citizens Police Academy is a program designed to acquaint community members who are not sworn police officers with the activities of their local police department.

CALL 911

4

If you see something, say something! Our best defense in crime reduction is our residents. If you report a crime it is more likely that the person can be caught and stopped from committing that act again. You are helping to prevent someone else from becoming a victim.

**ONLINE
REPORTING
(DORS)
IWATCHDALLAS
APP**

5

To report non-emergency crimes go to dallaspolice.net. Click on, FILE A POLICE REPORT ONLINE. This is the Dallas Online Reporting System (DORS). Also, download the iWatchDallas App. Crime can be reported anonymously from your mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

For more Info: Visit www.dallaspolice.net or call 214.671.4045

TAKING CARE OF YOU THIS SEASON

Submitted by Meaghan Read, Director of Public Policy, Mental Health America of Greater Dallas (MHA)



Seasonal Affective Disorder, also known sometimes as the ‘Holiday Blues,’ is a very real part of what some of us experienced this past holiday season. In this new year, let’s commit to checking in with ourselves and our loved ones, and focus on taking care of ourselves.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH DEPENDS ON IT.

THIS YEAR, LET’S COMMIT TO:

- Talking about our feelings
- Staying active
- Eating well
- Keeping in touch
- Asking for help
- Taking a break
- Laughing
- Doing something we enjoy
- Skipping perfectionism

RECOGNIZE SOME OF THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER:

- Feeling depressed most of the day
- Losing interest in activities
- Feeling sluggish or agitated
- Difficulty concentrating
- Oversleeping (hypersomnia)

If you or someone you love is experiencing any of the listed signs, it may be an excellent time for a Mental Health screening. Mental Health America of Greater Dallas offers access to a free screening tool that can help you identify whether it is time to seek help or not.

VISIT:

www.mhadallas.org/help to take advantage of our free, confidential screening tools TODAY!

MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF GREATER DALLAS

624 N. Good-Latimer #200

Dallas, Texas 75204

214-871-2420

www.mhadallas.org

STRUGGLING WITH BALANCE, COORDINATION OR TREMORS?

Submitted by: Leisha Phipps, MSW, Program Director, Dallas Area Parkinsonism Society

The Dallas Area Parkinsonism Society (DAPS) is a nonprofit organization that provides FREE exercise, speech, support groups and educational series throughout Dallas and its surrounding cities to those who are impacted by Parkinson's disease. Since 1978, DAPS has grown to provide these services to over 20 locations in and around Dallas.

DAPS SERVICES:

- All services are free and open to the public
- All services are currently online, 7 days a week via Zoom
- Available to care partners, friends or family
- Recorded classes and programs available at: bit.ly/DAPSYoutubeChannel



TYPES OF CLASSES:

- Exercise – improve balance, coordination, flexibility and strength
- Speech – strengthen your voice with exercises taught by speech therapists
- Support Groups – available to care partners and individuals with PD
- Educational Series – learn from specialists in the movement disorder field

DALLAS LOCATIONS (Currently online due to COVID-19/TBD when in-person classes will resume):

- East Dallas
- Preston Hollow
- Downtown Dallas
- North Dallas
- South Dallas *coming soon!

According to the Parkinson's Foundation, approximately 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with PD each year. However, many individuals do not receive a diagnosis and may not be aware of the available treatments, services and support groups.

If you or someone you know could benefit from DAPS, please call us at: 972-620-7600 or email daps@daps.org

HOW TO HELP YOUR PLANTS SURVIVE FALLING WINTER TEMPERATURES

By Carol Gonzales, Dallas County Master Gardener Society



Dallas County
Master Gardener
Association, Inc.

While winter brings us fairly moderate temperatures here in North Texas, we still have

to contend with occasional freezing temperatures and sudden cold snaps. These drops in temperature can injure or kill exposed plants, so here are some strategies to help protect your plants during the winter.

LIGHT FREEZE

RANGE BETWEEN 29°-32°F

This will damage delicate or tropical plants, so they should be taken indoors. If those lower temperatures don't last too long, you can protect other potted plants by moving them closer to the house and covering with fabric or tarps. When in doubt to the expected severity of the temperature, move potted plants indoors.

MODERATE FREEZE

RANGE BETWEEN 25°-28°F

This can damage most plants in your landscape except for the hardiest. Since drought-stressed plants are more prone to freeze damage, make sure to thoroughly water plants in advance of freezing temperatures. Watering just before a freeze helps keep the soil warm during the temperature dip.

SEVERE FREEZE

TEMPERATURES BELOW 24°F

This can prove fatal to many plants. When a moderate freeze becomes extended, or if a severe freeze is forecasted, it's time to not only give your landscape a good watering, but to devise some covering for your plants and beds. The main thing to remember is to cover them completely to the ground, because it's the warmth of the earth that keeps them warm.

Fabric wraps, cardboard boxes, or big trash cans and plastic bins can help your more frost-susceptible shrubs and plants. These methods will shield the plants from cooling effects of the wind and frost and will entrap the warmer air surrounding the plant. Applying a very heavy layer of mulch or straw inside of the plant covering can also help to insulate the plants. For larger flowerbeds, a thick covering of leaves can also help with frost protection.

If your plants do experience frost damage, do not prune away the damaged leaves and branches. They may help to cover and protect the rest of the plant from future freezing. Wait until spring and the threat of frost is over before pruning frost-damaged plants.

This is a great time to plant pansies, flowering kale and cabbage, dianthus, cyclamen, and other cool-season annuals. They can usually take any cool weather North Texas can muster. For more comprehensive information about protecting your landscape from freezing temperatures, check out [this Texas A&M AgriLife article](#). For general information about gardening in North Texas, check out the Dallas County Master Gardeners Association website at: dallascountymastergardeners.org or [visit us on Facebook](#).

ABOUT THE DALLAS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

The Dallas County Master Gardener Association (DCMGA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting horticulture education and volunteer service throughout the county. It is a component of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, an agency of Texas A&M University. See some of our research, education and demonstration gardens at: dallascountymastergardeners.org/index.php/all-projects.

Special Thanks

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