

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wolf Administration Reminds Family Caregivers About Resources Available to Help Them During COVID-19 Pandemic

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Departments of Aging (PDA) and Human Services (DHS) today reminded Pennsylvanians who serve as caregivers for either a family member or a close friend that there are resources available to help them as the number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise.

“Family caregiving has many faces in Pennsylvania. They are adults taking care of aging parents or other relatives, grandparents raising grandchildren, or a non-relative caregiver, such as a close family friend, raising a child whose parents cannot care for them,” said Secretary of Aging Robert Torres. “No matter whom they are caring for, all caregivers may need some type of support, whether it’s emotional, financial or legal. With the COVID-19 emergency, the need for such assistance may even be greater.”

PDA offers resources for caregivers of adults and children. It oversees the Caregiver Support Program (CSP), which helps to ease the stresses of caregiving. All of these resources can be found [here](#). Improving and increasing support for caregivers in Pennsylvania is one of PDA’s objectives in its State Plan on Aging, which went into effect on October 1.

In September, the PDA and DHS jointly announced the launching of [KinConnector.org](https://www.kinconnector.org), a resource designed to help kinship care families connect to services and supports that can help children and their caregivers. KinConnector also runs a helpline that can be reached by calling 1-866-KIN-2111 (1-866-546-2111) and supports callers needing assistance in English and Spanish.

“We know that this year has been a tough time for many, and it is okay to feel stressed or anxious. But whether you are a grandparent caring for your grandchildren, someone who lost their job due to the pandemic, or someone who just needs extra assistance to make ends meet, know that you do not have to go through this time alone,” said DHS Secretary Teresa Miller. “DHS offers many resources to help you through these hard times, and nobody should feel like they should have to go without food or health insurance because they are struggling. I encourage all Pennsylvanians who may need help to reach out – we are here for you.”

Earlier this year, DHS launched the statewide Support & Referral Helpline – a free resource staffed by skilled and compassionate caseworkers available to counsel Pennsylvanians struggling with anxiety and other challenging emotions. The helpline caseworkers can help counsel and refer you to community-based resources that can further help to meet individual needs. Pennsylvanians can contact the statewide Support and Referral Helpline at 1-855-284-2494. For TTY, dial 724-631-5600.

Pennsylvanians can also apply for programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and other public assistance programs online at www.compass.state.pa.us. Those who prefer to submit paper applications can print from the website or request an application by phone at 1-800-692-7462 and mail it to their local County Assistance Office (CAO) or place it in a CAO's secure drop box, if available. Dropping applications off at a CAO using the drop box can help avoid an application delay due to postal service delays. While CAOs remain closed to the public, work processing applications, determining eligibility, and issuing benefits continues.

For more information on resources available for kinship families and grandparents raising grandchildren, visit www.dhs.pa.gov.

Learn more about other programs offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging [here](#).