

# Mayor's Council on African American Elders

C/O – Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County  
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March 20, 2020  
Skype Meeting

**Members Present** – Benjamin Abe; Tricia Diamond; Brenda Charles-Edwards; Dr. Brenda Jackson; Claudette Thomas; Cynthia Winters

**Absent** –Janice Davis; Ina Howell; Paul Mitchell; Mattie Taplin (Emeritus);

**Guests** – Dedra Barrow, AARTH; Cassidy Giampetro, Hopelink; Renée Holmes, Loving Everlasting Arms

**ADS Staff** – Brent Butler, Cathy Knight, Maria Langlais, Lenny Orlov, Karen Winston

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## I. Introductions

MCAAE members shared how they are maintaining during this period of self-quarantine. Cassidy announced that one of the Hopelink coalitions – the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET) – works on emergency management issues and is following many different aspects of COVID-19 responses. They are sending out weekly updates to keep people informed about service changes, specifically for transportation services, but also includes updates on grocery delivery, etc. If you'd like to be added to the email list for updates, contact Nathan Emory at [NEmory@hopelink.org](mailto:NEmory@hopelink.org).

## II. ADS Update

Cathy provided the following updates:

### Federal

- The Older American Act (OAA) has been reauthorized until 2024.
- All Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) have been given greater flexibility in using OAA funding, due to the COVID-19 emergency.

### State

- The legislature approved funding for case management (\$2.9M) however, it was not the full amount we lobbied for (\$3.4M).
- The prescription drug bills, to cap insulin costs and curb drug prices, passed.
- Cathy thanked everyone for joining ADS in this important advocacy.

### COVID-19

- The National Assn. of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) is in the process of developing podcasts for the Aging Network. They are also working to make sure people have access to food and services.
- Maria reported that ADS is coordinating with King County on an Older Adult Task Force. Currently, they are working to mitigate reports of fear and isolation.

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- Most aging network services are still operating; however, many programs have adjusted their program models and are taking additional precautions to adhere to public health guidelines. For example, congregate meal sites shifted to home delivery and To-Go meals.
- The Seattle Foundation, in partnership with King County, City of Seattle, United Way and other regional businesses and philanthropies, has raised over \$11M for a [COVID-19 Response Fund](#). The funds will be given to agencies that have relationships and experience in serving disproportionately affected communities, which includes older adults, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee communities. Grants will be used to address economic impacts and immediate needs, provide information and support, and to counter fear and confusion. Public Health has convened a [Pandemic Community Advisory Board](#) to help get information out to their respective communities and to serve in an advisory role for the COVID-19 Response Fund.
- King County also has Equity and Social Justice grant opportunities related to COVID-19:
  - [Anti-Hate and Bias Response Fund](#) – King County will invest \$50,000 in organizations that can develop community centered public messaging in response to bias and hate incidences, with priority to Asian Pacific Islander communities.
  - [COVID-19 Community Response Fund](#) – Grants of up to \$25,000 will be awarded to community-based organizations and other stakeholders serving impacted communities.
- City of Seattle response efforts include: Coordinating assistance for food/meals, and grocery store vouchers to clients; and the Department of Neighborhoods is offering webinars to keep up with the latest information (visit [www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods))

### ADS

- All ADS staff are working remotely.
- The ADS Case Management Program services were impacted by COVID-19 from the very beginning.
- ADS is working to determine what/how to provide services differently, especially as more restrictions are placed on our communities.

Cathy asked everyone about the **challenges they are seeing in the community that ADS needs to address** and encouraged members to email her any concerns. Responses:

- Cynthia discussed concerns about a client in an adult family home and the challenges with the social isolation requirement.
- Dr Jackson reported challenges for church members who are shut-in and can't get food.
- Dr. Abe – How do organizations apply for Seattle Foundation grants?
  - Response: Organizations will be contacted directly by the Seattle Foundation; there is not a formal application process. They have identified organizations that can reach communities with greatest disparities and who may be disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- Claudette – With so many seniors at risk, how do we know if they're being served?
  - Response: If they are an ADS client, our case managers are in contact with them and are working to address needs. SHA clients are also being monitored.

- Brenda – What should we think about if we're told to shelter-in-place?
  - Response: Essential services will continue; grocery stores will remain open and are hiring people to help meet the demand; stores have special shopping hours for seniors, including Safeway, Fred Meyer, Trader Joes, Target, etc. Check websites for days and times; and many churches are providing worship services remotely (check websites for log-in instructions).

### **III. 2020 Census**

Brenda reminded everyone to complete the Census. She reminded everyone it can be completed using a cell phone or computer. At this time, it is unknown whether census workers will visit homes, if forms are not completed by June.

### **IV. April Meeting Agenda**

- Members will try using ZOOM for the virtual meeting platform. Everyone will receive directions. ADS staff, Lenny Orlov is available by appointment to assist. Email – [lenny.orlov@seattle.gov](mailto:lenny.orlov@seattle.gov)

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 17, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.