

Town of Middleborough Council on Aging

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Frequently Asked Questions:

How old do you have to be to "join" the COA?

The COA does not have "members" per se, everyone is welcome. We do have a sign up to receive the monthly newsletter in the mail and we also use "scan" cards for those who are with us often to keep track of the numbers of people served by the agency. Only Meals on Wheels and transport have limitations of 60 and over or disabled. Everyone is welcome!

How do sign up for the lunch program?

The COA newsletter published the monthly menu in each issue. We ask that people sign up at least the day before for the lunch. Some call in and book their lunches for the month. Some join us on the same weekday preceding or following their favorite activity. We ask for a \$4.00 donation for the lunch which includes a cold or hot drink, bread, the lunch and dessert (and no tax or tip). There are days when we can add people to the lunch for that day but it is always better to sign up sooner. If you need to cancel. Simply call by 9:00am of the lunch day and we can cancel the lunch for you.

How can I see the monthly newsletter?

You can call the COA and get on the mailing list to receive one at your mailbox. In addition newsletters are always available at the COA front desk and at the Town Hall. If you have a computer you can always go to www.seniorpublishing.com and type in the Town you are interested in and view a current and previous issue.

What is the Supportive Day Program?

The Day Program provides safe and nurturing care for those who can't or should not be home alone all day. We provide transportation for our participants who are greeted at the door and are welcomed in for coffee/tea and a breakfast baked goods. The program begins at 9:00 and the morning continues with exercises, trivia games, music and arts and crafts. A hot lunch is served at noon in our dining room with our community lunch program. The afternoon continues with quiet and active activities, groups and one-on-one and wraps up with a snack before the ride home. The program is available 9-3, Monday- Friday, and also ½ day schedule. The fee is \$30. for the full day. Scholarships may be available. Contact Susan Adams the Supportive Day Program Director.

How does the transportation service work?

The COA has a contract with GATRA- to run 2 different van services within Middleboro. One is curb-to-curb and one is a fixed route. To schedule a ride for the curb-to-curb service, simply call the COA by 1:00 the previous day. The van will pick up at the curb of your residence and bring you to your destination. The pick up and drop off time can be scheduled at the same time or if it is appointment, you call the COA when you are ready to be picked up. Riders must be 60 and over or disabled. A ride one way cost \$1.25 or a pass for 10 rides for \$10.00 can be purchased. Riders use the van for Middleboro medical appointments, errands and social visits. The vans transport to Hannaford supermarkets on Tuesday and Stop and Shop on Thursday.

The other van is a fixed route within Middleboro. Riders flag down the van along the route. The route includes both housing complexes, Southeast Medical Center, the downtown area, and the YMCA. Brochures outlining the route are available at the COA and on GATRA's website. Fares are

50 cents for Medicare beneficiaries, elderly and the disabled and students. Others pay \$1.00 per ride. This route is open to the GENERAL PUBLIC.

Does the COA provide rides to medical appointments that are located outside of Middleboro?

With the exception of a few specific physicians who are located in the neighboring town of Lakeville, the GATRA vans do not transport to out of town medicals. The COA recruits and coordinates a group of volunteer drivers to transport to medical appointment beyond Middleboro. To request a ride, please call the COA at least 7 days before the appointment, the more time the better. The dispatcher will contact the available volunteer drivers to set up the schedule as possible. Drivers are reimbursed for mileage by an agency- OCPC Old colony Planning Council. Those who benefit from a ride will receive a letter to ask for a donation but all contributions are kept anonymous.

I'd like to volunteer some time at the COA. How do I find out information about that?

The COA depends on its volunteers for a wide range of services including the daily lunch program, Meals on Wheels delivery, out of town medical appointments, supportive day program, grounds maintenance, decorating, instructors, newsletter mailings, and helpers for parties and special events. If you are interested in volunteering, call our Volunteer Coordinator, Susan Hotchkiss, at the COA and make an appointment. She will tell you about the openings and match your skills with the needs of the agency. You can volunteer for just a few hours or for many depending on your schedule. Volunteers are always needed.

What is the SHINE Program?

SHINE stands for Serving Health Information Needs of Elders. The Middleboro COA receives a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and houses the regional office serving 30 towns and cities. SHINE counselors are trained and certified to provide information, counseling and assistance on health insurance needs. These include Medicare, Medicaid, prescription coverage and public benefits. SHINE counselors help those who are preparing to retire evaluate their health insurance options. Appointments are required.

Does the COA offer support groups?

Yes, we offer a HUGS group- Hearts Understanding Grief, a Diabetic Support group, and a group for vision impaired.

What is Senior Tax Work Off Program?

This program allows eligible volunteers to provide work for a Town Department in exchange for up to a \$750.00 tax abatement on their primary residence property tax. Applications are due by November 1 and the work is scheduled starting in January and ending by September. Applications are available at the COA front desk and on this Town's website.