

SCAC Monthly Reports

Month & Year: November/December 2020

1. Standing Committee: **Legislative**

Tony Cardenas, the League of California Cities, gave a presentation to the Legislative Committee. He highlighted the following items:

- COVID related shutdowns have resulted in the loss of revenue for Orange County cities. This amounts to \$3 billion. This revenue loss will affect services in 2021 as well as creating employee furloughs.
- Unfunded pension obligations are also a problem.
- The county will receive no money from the failed Proposition 15.
- Affordable housing is a major issue for the county. It is possible that the State Legislature may take up this issue. The impact of the wildfires and Covid are the other two significant statewide issues.

The Committee decided to establish an ad hoc committee to look into long terms such as No Senior Goes Hungry.

The Legislative Committee will have a new Chair and Vice Chair for the years 2021 and 2022.

Because of holidays on the 3rd Mondays of January and February, the meetings will occur on the 2nd Mondays (January 11 and February 8).

The topic for the January meeting will be the California Senior Legislature by John Pointer.

2. Standing Committee: **Health & Nutrition**

No report provided.

3. Standing Committee: **Housing & Transportation**

Committee Goals:

Before setting new goals for 2021, Housing & Transportation (H&T) committee members completed the annual report for 2020. In coordination with the Executive Committee, H&T lined up our goals with the larger goals of the Executive Committee and General SCAC. This was possible because several Executive Committee members are on the H&T committee and the H&T chair attended many Executive Committee meetings.

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The H&T committee invited excellent speakers, gaining information and insight. One of the best was Cynthia Okiada, OCSPA, who gave an update.

The Special Needs Advisory Committee was attended by Sandy Stang and Carolyn Inmon. Unfortunately, SNAC is having trouble making a quorum, but the information gained by those of us who attended was helpful.

Committee goals for 2021 included three new ideas. First, to help combat isolation and loneliness, the committee will investigate the possibility of creating more access with smaller vehicles.

Secondly, the H&T Committee will work closely with the Legislative Committee to see if any of the ideas on Housing and transportation would be appropriate as legislative proposals. Dave Tetzlaff will serve as liaison between the two committees to make this a reality.

Thirdly, the committee will move towards more action by creating some statistical goals and monitoring the movement towards those outcomes.

Long-Term Goals:

The committee worked on long-term goals in preparation for sending them to the OCBOS. The committee worked hard on the housing goal – more flexibility in Section 8 funding. We also took a final look at the transportation goal which is to increase number of parking places by recalculating the number of spaces needed as the senior population increases and providing better enforcement of the present rules and procedures for Disabled Person Parking Placards.

4. Emergency Medical Care Committee Report

No update.

5. OCTA Special Needs Advisory Committee Report

No update.

6. Triple-AAA Council of California (TACC) Report

TACC Report on the Dec. 8, 2020 meeting via Zoom for SCAC January 8, 2021 meeting

With the coronavirus, TACC meetings are held from 1:00 - 4:00 PM via Zoom quarterly. The 2021 meetings will be March 9, June 8, September 14, and December 14 from 1-4 PM. Minutes and agendas can be found on TACC's website at www.tacc.ccoa.ca.gov.

Twenty of the 33 PSAs attended the meeting with each one having submitted their TACC Report of their PSA/Planning & Service Area. Each rep is to have

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read and studied all the reports in order to learn what other PSAs are doing. To varying degrees, all PSAs are struggling with food insecurity and inexpensive housing for seniors. Transportation is a problem for seniors living in isolated rural areas.

Presentations:

- 1) Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Update by Joseph Rodrigues, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman California Department of Aging
The corona pandemic has caused staff shortages resulting in waived background checks of one's criminal records and training of only 8 hours. Fewer negative reports due to Ombudsmen not being allowed into the nursing homes. Cameras are needed in skilled nursing facilities.
- 2) Aging and Disability Resource Connection Overview and Update by David Morikawa, ADRC Program Specialist, California Department of Aging
Orange County's ADRC Advisory Committee representative is Erin Crutcher. Gregory Mathes—Community Health Initiative of Orange County.
ADRC is an interactive network of agencies creating coordinated points of entry for people having to navigate the Long-Term Services & Support system. It is person centered, i.e. what the person wants, information and referrals, counseling, and transition services from the hospital to home and from skilled nursing to the community.

7. CA Senior Legislature (CSL) Report

2021 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

Member	#	Title	Re-Submit
Baginski, Y.	SP 5	Health & Care Facilities: Reporting Communicable Diseases	
Baginski, Y.	SP 1	Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly: Emergency Disaster Plans	AB 1855
Baginski, Y.	SP 2	Health Care: Medical Goods	AB 1853
Fortunati, A.	SP 4	Property Taxes: Monthly Installments	
Horne, S.	AP 1	Senior Citizen Housing Developments: Cohabitants	AB2503
Kagan, T.	SP 7	Filipino Veterans of World War II	
Kagan, T.	SFP 1	Filipino Veterans of World War II	
Levy, J.	AP 2	San Onofre Nuclear Waste	
Levy, J.	AP 5	Nursing Facilities: Informed Consent: Anti-Psychotic Medications	
Pointer, J.	SP 6	Senior Malnutrition Awareness Day	
Rolfe, L.	AP 3	Affordable Housing for Seniors: Sharing Housing	
Wilder, D.	SP 3	Medi Cal: Long Term Care: Personal Needs Allowance	AB 2739

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MAY 04, 2021

South Lawn of the Capitol

PROGRAM FOCUS

MASTER PLAN FOR AGING – IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Overview of the implementation phase

Keynote Speaker – Director Kim McCoy Wade
Director, Ca Dept on Aging

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8. OC Strategic Plan on Aging (OCSPA)

No update provided.

9. Social Security Administration

Social Security Administration

2021 Social Security 1.3 Percent Benefit Increase

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 1.3 percent in 2021, the Social Security Administration announced today.

The 1.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2021. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 31, 2020. (Note: some people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits). The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$142,800 from \$137,700.

Social Security and SSI beneficiaries are normally notified by mail starting in early December about their new benefit amount. Most people who receive Social Security payments will be able to view their COLA notice online through their personal *my Social Security* account. People may create or access their *my Social Security* account online at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

Information about Medicare changes for 2021, when announced, will be available at www.medicare.gov. For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2021 are announced. Final 2021 benefit amounts will be communicated to beneficiaries in December through the mailed COLA notice and *my Social Security's* Message Center.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/cola.

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Social Security Benefit Tax Statement

Tax season is approaching and replacing your annual Benefit Statement has never been easier. The Benefit Statement, also known as the SSA-1099 or the SSA-1042S, is a tax form we mail each year in January to people who receive Social Security benefits. It shows the total amount of benefits you received from us in the previous year so you know how much Social Security income to report to the Internal Revenue Service on your tax return.

If you live in the United States and you need a replacement form SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S, simply go online and get an instant, printable replacement form using your personal *my Social Security* account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. A replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S is available for the previous tax year after February 1.

If you don't have access to a printer, you can save the document to your computer or email it to yourself. If you don't have a *Social Security* account, creating one is very easy to do and usually takes less than 10 minutes.

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Standardized Benefit Verification letter

We are excited to announce the release of a new, standardized Benefit Verification letter.

People receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits can obtain their letter by using their personal *my Social Security* account. You can use the letter as proof of income for loans, housing assistance, mortgage, and other verification purposes.

Please create your personal *my Social Security* account to access your new Benefit Verification letter online in a safe, quick, and convenient way without needing to contact us. People not receiving benefits can use their account to get proof that they do not receive benefits, or proof that benefits are pending, in the same standardized letter. Individual representative payees can also use the new *my Social Security Representative Payee Portal* to access the new Benefit Verification letter online for themselves or their beneficiaries.

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You can access your Benefit Verification letters at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. If you don't want to use your personal my Social Security account, you can call our National 800 Number to speak with a representative or to use the Interactive Voice Response system. You can also contact your local office.

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Warning Against Scams

Scammers are always finding new ways to steal your money and personal information by exploiting your fears. The most effective way to defeat scammers is to know how to identify scams and to ignore suspicious calls and emails.

One common tactic scammers use is posing as federal agents and other law enforcement. They may claim your Social Security number is linked to a crime. They may even threaten to arrest you if you do not comply with their instructions. **Here are three things you can do:**

1. **Hang up** right away or do not reply to the email.
2. **Never give personal information**, money, or retail gift cards.
3. **Report the scam at oig.ssa.gov** immediately to Social Security's law enforcement team at the Office of the Inspector General.

You should continue to remain vigilant of phone calls when someone says there's a problem with your Social Security number or your benefits. If you owe money to Social Security, we will mail you a letter explaining your rights, payment options, and information about appealing.

There are a few ways you can identify a scam call or email. Remember that we will never:

- Threaten you with benefit suspension, arrest, or other legal action unless you pay a fine or fee.

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- Promise a benefit increase or other assistance in exchange for payment.
- Require payment by retail gift card, cash, wire transfer, internet currency, or prepaid debit card.
- Demand secrecy from you in handling a Social Security-related problem.
- Send official letters or reports containing personally identifiable information via email.

If you do not have ongoing business with our agency, it is unlikely we will contact you. Again, if you get a suspicious call claiming to be from Social Security, you should hang up and report it right away to our Office of the Inspector General at oig.ssa.gov.

Information about Reaching Social Security during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can only enter our offices if you have an appointment.

Generally, we will schedule an in-person appointment in dire need situations. Dire need exists when you:

- Are without food or shelter, including utilities or are without medical care or coverage and need to apply for or reinstate benefits.
- Currently receive benefits and have an urgent need for payment to meet expenses for food, shelter, or medical treatment, and you cannot receive the payment electronically.

If you believe you qualify for an in-person appointment, call your local office. You can look up the phone number for your local office by accessing our [office locator](#). Please note that appointments may not be immediately available, depending on local health and safety conditions and staffing.

We offer many secure and convenient [online services](#), where you can:

- Apply for Retirement, Disability, and Medicare benefits.
- Check the status of an application or appeal.
- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most areas).
- Print a benefit verification letter and much more.

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Although you can do most of your business with us online, we know that service channel isn't right for everyone. You can still count on us by phone. If you have a critical situation and we cannot help you with by phone or online, we may be able to schedule an appointment for you.

If you need help, please don't wait until we can see you in person. Call us now and get the help you need. We also understand that getting medical and other documentation can be difficult due to the pandemic, so we are continuing to extend certain deadlines wherever possible.

Orange County Social Security general information phone lines:

Anaheim	(866) 657-3133
Brea	(866) 593-2757
Garden Grove	(877) 669-3115
Mission Viejo	(888) 306-9878
Fountain Valley	(877) 304-1566
Santa Ana	(888) 366-6146

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