

## COVID-19 and Eras Programming

Updated 7/29/2020

### Wellness Calls

More than 10,000 wellness calls have been placed to over 1,150 Waukesha and Milwaukee County seniors and adults with disabilities from community volunteers. Eras program staff members follow up with clients who need help with food, medication and other basic needs. Thank you to the many new and longtime volunteers who are supporting this project.

**Seeking Wellness Call Volunteers:** Some of our volunteers are returning to school or work and are unable to continue placing weekly wellness calls. If you are interested in calling a local senior once a week, please contact [Marisa.Strothenke@Eras.org](mailto:Marisa.Strothenke@Eras.org) for more information.

We are now able to add new clients to the list for receiving weekly wellness calls. Please contact our agency at (262) 522-2411 or email [Judith.Amorsen@Eras.org](mailto:Judith.Amorsen@Eras.org) more information.

### Volunteers needed for Fall Yard projects

We are beginning to recruit volunteers to help with fall outdoor projects in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. We will assign groups of no more than four people to help with a yard in October or November – once most of the leaves have fallen. Tasks include leaf raking, clearing flower beds, washing outdoor windows, and clearing first floor gutters. All CDC guidelines must be observed. Youth volunteers are welcomed with adult supervision, and we are able to provide documentation of the service hours completed. Please contact our agency at (262) 549-3368 or email [info@eras.org](mailto:info@eras.org) for more information.

### Offices

Services for seniors in Milwaukee County and Waukesha County are being coordinated by employees working from home and a small team of employees working out of the Waukesha office and Southwest office in Milwaukee County. A mask is required to be worn by staff, volunteers, and visitors at both offices.

Employees in the Waukesha and Southwest offices are working in separate offices, wipe down all surfaces throughout the day, and observe all social distancing guidelines. All other CDC guidelines are being observed, including requiring self-isolation of employees who have symptoms or report possible exposure to COVID-19.

### Current Services Offered Through Eras

- **Medical Appointments:** Eras is providing transportation to essential medical appointments through volunteers. If a volunteer cannot be found for a medical appointment, Eras can coordinate and pay for a cab to transport the client.
- **Grocery Delivery:** Volunteers are available to grocery shop for clients and deliver food pantry stock boxes to those in need of food.
- **Wellness Check-in Calls to Seniors:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteers are placing weekly wellness check-in calls to our clients to ensure they have enough groceries and medication, are aware of COVID-19 related scams, and to provide a break from social isolation.
- **Seasonal Yard Clean Up:** Volunteers were able to help clean the yards of local seniors and adults with disabilities during Spring and we are currently recruiting volunteers to help with Fall Yard Clean Up.

### Services Not Offered at This Time

To minimize contact that clients have with community members, we will not conduct in-home client assessments, grocery shopping *with* a client, friendly visiting, and minor home repairs.

### What Can the Community Do?

**Volunteer:** Volunteers are needed to deliver groceries to seniors, drive seniors to essential medical appointments, place weekly wellness calls, and help with seasonal yard work.

- **New Volunteers:** Those who have not volunteered with Eras before should visit our website and register their interest as a new volunteer. You may also call our main number at (262) 549-3348 and inquire about volunteering or [open this link](#).
- **Current Volunteers:** If you are already an Eras volunteer and would like to help out with one of these services, please contact Marisa Strothenke, Volunteer Coordinator, at [Marisa.Strothenke@Eras.org](mailto:Marisa.Strothenke@Eras.org).

**Make a Donation:** We had to reschedule our two spring fundraisers. Without these events, in addition to a reduction in community contributions, funding for our programs is a concern and a need.

- **Cab ride donations:** We will arrange taxi rides for seniors if we do not have enough volunteers. Donations will help us to pay for those rides. Donations for cab rides can be made on [our organization's COVID-19 programming donation page](#).
- **Agency donations:** Donations to support the overall programming of Eras Senior Network can be made [online as a one-time or monthly gift](#).

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding COVID-19 and Eras Programming

### Can clients still receive food through Eras?

Yes. Volunteers will not grocery shop *with* a client but can shop *for* a client. Our organization is also utilizing online shopping as a tool to help clients receive food.

### Are you still providing rides?

Rides are offered for healthcare appointments with precautions taken by both the volunteer and client to reduce the spread of illness. When a volunteer cannot be matched for a ride, we will offer to coordinate and pay for a cab ride for the client.

### Are your volunteers still serving?

Volunteers may continue to serve if they are comfortable doing so, if they do not feel sick, and if they are following health regulations (i.e. wearing a mask while volunteering in Milwaukee County).

### What steps are you taking to help keep volunteers safe while serving?

Volunteers and clients have been mailed face coverings, a recommendation of the CDC. Volunteers and clients in Milwaukee County must wear a face covering during their service, per Milwaukee County Department on Aging's Face Mask Policy. Those wearing fabric masks are to clean the mask after their shift, prior to wearing it again.

Volunteers have also received hand sanitizer to use while volunteering, with extra bottles to distribute to the clients they transport. Clients have been asked to sit in the backseat when being transported to medical appointments and volunteers have been asked to sanitize their car frequently to help reduce the spread of illness.

Prior to receiving a ride from an Eras volunteer, clients are being screened to ensure they are not exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms; clients with symptoms will not be able to receive a ride from our organization.

### **How will you fill ride requests if volunteers choose not to serve?**

Eras is utilizing funding designated for cab rides to medical appointments in both Waukesha and Milwaukee counties. Eras' shared-ride van, driven by Eras staff, will be utilized to transport clients as well.

### **Are you taking new clients at this time?**

We will help register new clients with high priority needs over the phone to ensure they can receive support. Those in need of services should call (262) 549-3348 in Waukesha County and (414) 488-6500 in Milwaukee County.

### **What is the new date for the Tapestry Dinner?**

The Tapestry Dinner has been moved to Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and will now be a virtual event. [Online registration](#) for the event and entertaining breakout sessions will begin in August.

### **How Can I Support the Virtual Tapestry Event?**

We are looking for donations of silent auction items for our online auction. To make a donation, please contact Becca Snow at (262) 522-2409 or [Becca.Snow@Eras.org](mailto:Becca.Snow@Eras.org). Ideas of items we would like to include in our auction include:

- Gift cards for future travel
- Use of cabin or vacation home
- Virtual experiences (cooking, music, yoga, meditation lessons, workout class)
- Gift certificates to favorite local restaurants and shops
- Handmade items (quilts, pottery, and artwork)
- Basket of local favorites (cheese, beer, wine, spices)
- Popular new gadgets (Alexa speaker, iPad, air fryer, Kitchenaid Mixer, Instapot)
- Fitness equipment (resistance bands, dumbbells, kettle bells)
- Gifts for kids (board games, books, electronics, toys)
- Zoom call with a local celebrity
- Tickets or box seats to a future sporting event or show (i.e. 4 Marquette tickets)

### **Will You Still Host the Santa Run?**

Yes! While we would love to gather in person and run through downtown Waukesha dressed as Santa and his elves, we are pivoting to a virtual run to reduce the spread of illness. Participants will have the opportunity to finish the run over one week, beginning on December 6<sup>th</sup> and ending December 13<sup>th</sup>. Participants get to choose their route so can run or walk from anywhere in the world!

New this year: The community will have the opportunity to [vote on a t-shirt design and color](#). Registered participants will also have the option to choose between an adult or youth-sized long-sleeved t-shirt OR an adult-sized crewneck sweatshirt. Online Registration open soon!

### **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

Please send questions to [info@Eras.org](mailto:info@Eras.org). We request that our phones be reserved for seniors requesting help.