



PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

ADVOCACY & SERVICES SINCE 1995

The Network
News
2022
January/February
Issue #246

OREGON HIV CASE MANAGEMENT



Next Meeting
February 8th
For meeting link email
nathe@ohsu.edu

February 7th is National Black HIV Awareness Day. This is a day to acknowledge and address the impact of HIV on Black Communities.

You can learn more and get content for social media posts to promote awareness at

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/awareness/nbhaad.html>

Register for the National Black HIV Awareness Day [webinar here](#) to hear how the social determinants of health impact HIV in Black communities.



Social Security Benefits Increase in 2022

Approximately 70 million Americans will see a 5.9% increase in their Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments in 2022. Federal benefit rates increase when the cost-of-living rises, as measured by the Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index (CPI-W).

The CPI-W rises when inflation increases, leading to a higher cost-of-living. This change means prices for goods and services, on average, are a little more expensive, so the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) helps to offset these costs.

We will mail COLA notices throughout the month of December to retirement, survivors, and disability beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and representative payees. But, if you want to know your new benefit amount sooner, you can securely obtain your Social Security COLA notice online using the Message Center in your my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. You can access this information in early December prior to the mailed notice.

If you prefer to access your COLA notice online and not receive the mailed notice, you can log in to your personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to opt out of a mailed COLA notice and any other notices that are available online by updating your Preferences in the Message Center. Did you know you can receive a text or email alert when there is a new message waiting for you? That way, you always know when we have something important for you – like your COLA notice. If you don't have an account yet, you must create one by November 17, 2021, to receive the 2022 COLA notice online.

January 2022 marks other changes that will happen based on the increase in the national average wage index. For example, the maximum amount of earnings subject to Social Security payroll tax in 2022 will be higher. The retirement earnings test exempt amount will also change in 2022 and you can view that at www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/colafacts2022.pdf.

Be among the first to know! Sign up for or log in to your personal my Social Security account today. Choose email or text under "Message Center Preferences" to receive courtesy notifications.

You can find more information about the 2022 COLA at www.ssa.gov/cola

Before You Apply for Retirement Benefits: What to Know

Are you thinking about retiring and applying for Social Security retirement benefits? Our online tools can make your planning easier. Visit www.ssa.gov/myaccount to access your personal *my* Social Security account to get an instant and personalized estimate of your retirement benefits based on your earnings record. It is important that your earnings record is correct because we base your benefit amount on the earnings reported to us. If you find an error, you will want to contact us to get your information corrected. Read our publication, *How to Correct Your Social Security Earnings Record*, at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf, to learn how. You can also get benefit estimates based on different retirement ages, and choose the best retirement age for you. Don't have a personal *my* Social Security account? You can create one today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

When you're ready to apply for Social Security retirement benefits, you can complete your application online in as little as 15 minutes at www.ssa.gov/retirement. We will contact you if we need any more information. You can check the status of your application with your personal *my* Social Security account.

You can apply online for your Social Security retirement benefits, and for benefits as a spouse, if you meet all the following criteria:

- You must be at least age 62 for the entire month to be eligible to receive benefits.

- You are not currently receiving benefits on your own Social Security record.

- You have not already applied for retirement benefits.

- You want your benefits to start no later than four months in the future. (We cannot process your application if you apply for benefits more than four months in advance.)

Find more information about our online services at www.ssa.gov/onlineservices

Defend Against Scammers Who Target Your Social Security Benefits

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 or 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 should do:

- Hang up right away or do not reply to the email.
- Never give personal information or payment of any kind.
- Report the scam at oig.ssa.gov to immediately notify the law enforcement team in our 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 us, 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.
- 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 us or law enforcement about Social Security, you should hang up and report it right away to our Office of the Inspector General at oig.ssa.gov.

Congratulations to EOCIL!!



A Global Disability Resource and Advocacy Center

ONTARIO
 P.O. Box 940
 1021 SW 5th Ave.
 Ontario, OR 97914
 Voice/TTY: 541-889-3119
 Fax: 541-889-4647
 Relay Service: 711
 Toll-Free: 1-844-489-3119
 E-mail: eocil@eocil.org

PENDLETON
 322 SW 3rd Street
 Pendleton, OR 97801
 Voice: 541-276-1037
 Fax: 541-889-4647
 Relay Service: 711
 Toll-Free: 1-877-711-1037
 E-mail: eocil@eocil.org

THE DALLES
 400 East Scenic Dr., Suite 2.382
 The Dalles, OR 97058
 Voice: 541-370-2810
 Fax: 541-889-4647
 Relay service: 711
 Toll-free 1-844-370-2810
 E-mail: eocil@eocil.org

BURNS
 51 W. Washington
 Burns, OR 97720
 Voice: 541-370-2810 Ext. 401
 Fax: 541-889-4647
 Relay service: 711
 T-free 1-844-370-2810
 E-mail: eocil@eocil.org

For Immediate Release

January 10, 2022

Contact Information:

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 Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)
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 Ontario, Oregon 97914
 United States of America
CrescenciaWitherspoon@eocil.org

RE: EOCIL SELECTED FOR ESCALATE INITIATIVE

EOCIL has been selected to participate in the Ending Stigma through Collaboration and Lifting All To Empowerment (ESCALATE) Technical Assistance (TA) program. ESCALATE is the first-of-its-kind national training and capacity-building initiative specifically designed to reduce stigma for people living with HIV. ESCALATE is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Minority HIV/AIDS Fund (MHAF). EOCIL is excited to take part in this movement to help end HIV.

HIV-related stigma creates barriers at multiple levels of the care continuum, from diagnosis to engagement to retention in care, leading to demographic and other disparities in care. HRSA created ESCALATE to engage HIV care providers and people with HIV in addressing inequities in HIV care directly related to HIV-related stigma. Through tailored TA, ESCALATE will increase the capacity and readiness of EOCIL to address HIV-related stigma within our organization and communities. ESCALATE will support EOCIL in creating organizational-level change towards reducing HIV-related stigma.

Meaningful Care Conference (March 29, 2022)

Register now!



EMBRACING COMMUNITY WISDOM:
**A TRAUMA INFORMED & ANTI-RACIST
LENS ON LGBTQIA2S+ HEALTH**

MARCH 29, 2022.

[Learn more about conference location and format](#)

The 2022 Meaningful Care Conference is the effort of a group of LGBTQ2S+ focused community programs and individuals who have joined together to promote culturally responsive healthcare for clinicians and social service providers working with members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. It is the intention that the knowledge shared at this conference will improve health care provision, utilization, satisfaction, and outcomes for LGBTQ2S+ consumers through expanding access to culturally competent care.

The conference continues to be one of the largest LGBTQ2S+ cultural competency trainings for medical and social service providers on the west coast, with over 400 attendees biannually. The 2022 Meaningful Care Conference is coordinated by the LGBTQ Health Coalition of the Columbia-Willamette, a community-based partnership of agencies and individuals serving the LGBTQ+ community.

Have you seen what we all have been up to?!
[Great work Oregon!!](#)



Annual Progress Report

December 2021

In the 5th year since launching the End HIV Oregon initiative, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and its many community partners moved forward towards our shared goal of eliminating new HIV transmissions in Oregon. The following describes some key End HIV Oregon activities. For additional information, please visit EndHIVOregon.org





In an effort to remain aware of all of our programmatic and staff changes in the HIV community in Oregon we would like to collect and share that information.

Programmatic & staff changes should be sent to lagermes@ohsu.edu by the last Wednesday of the month.

Partnership Project

Says Farewell to:

Claire Shepek, Legacy Medical Case Manager

Jessie Feltz, CAP/Partnership Project Housing Case Manager

You will both be missed!!

CAP

Say Farewell

Tyler TerMeer, PhD CEO Best of luck in San Francisco!

Welcomes

Leon Wolfe, he/they Service Center Coordinator

Our condolences are extended to CAP and Claudia Adler's Family on her sudden passing. May her memory be a blessing to all who knew her.



This newsletter is published by
[OHSU/ Partnership Project](#).

Our thanks to OHA HIV Care and Treatment Program for website posting distribution of the newsletter.

The editor is Julia Lager-Mesulam.

Comments/questions about this publication should be directed to:

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This issue, and issues from January 2011 on, can be found electronically [here](#)