

Michelle L. Bellile

From: NAMI Central Iowa <namiofci@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 3:22 PM
To: Michelle L. Bellile
Subject: SPECIAL EDITION NEWS FROM NAMI CENTRAL IOWA

[External Sender - Please Use Caution]



CONTACT NAMI CI AT 515.292.9400 OR NAMIOFCI@GMAIL.COM

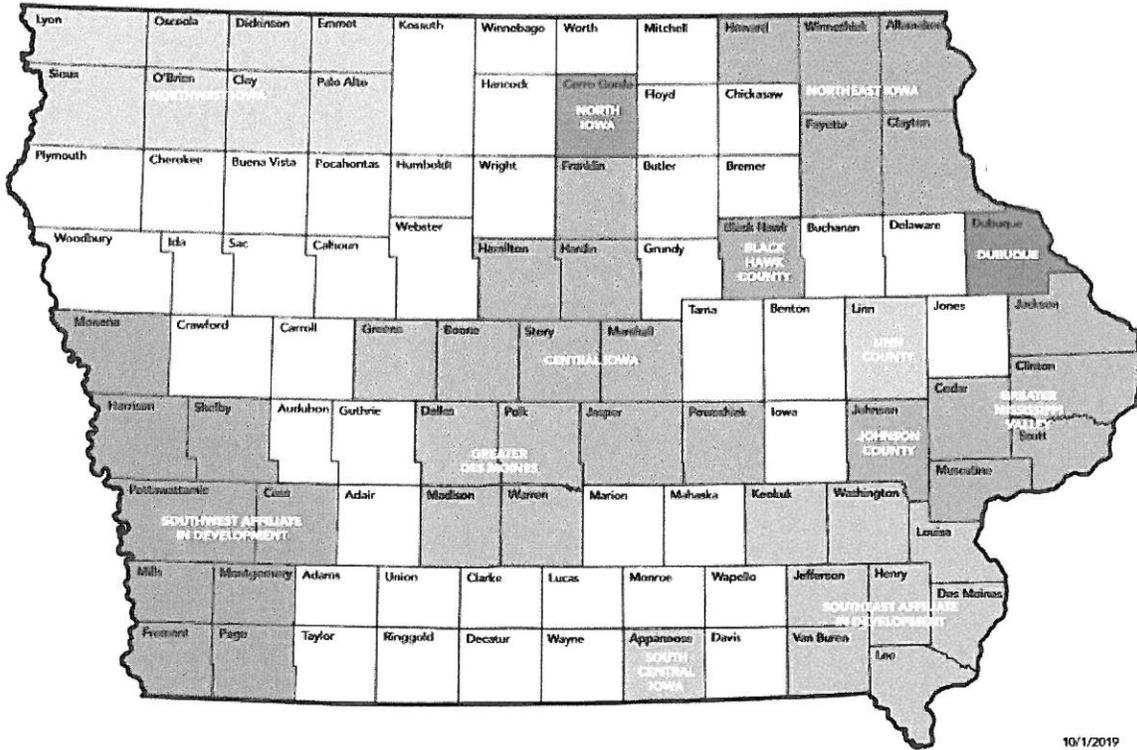


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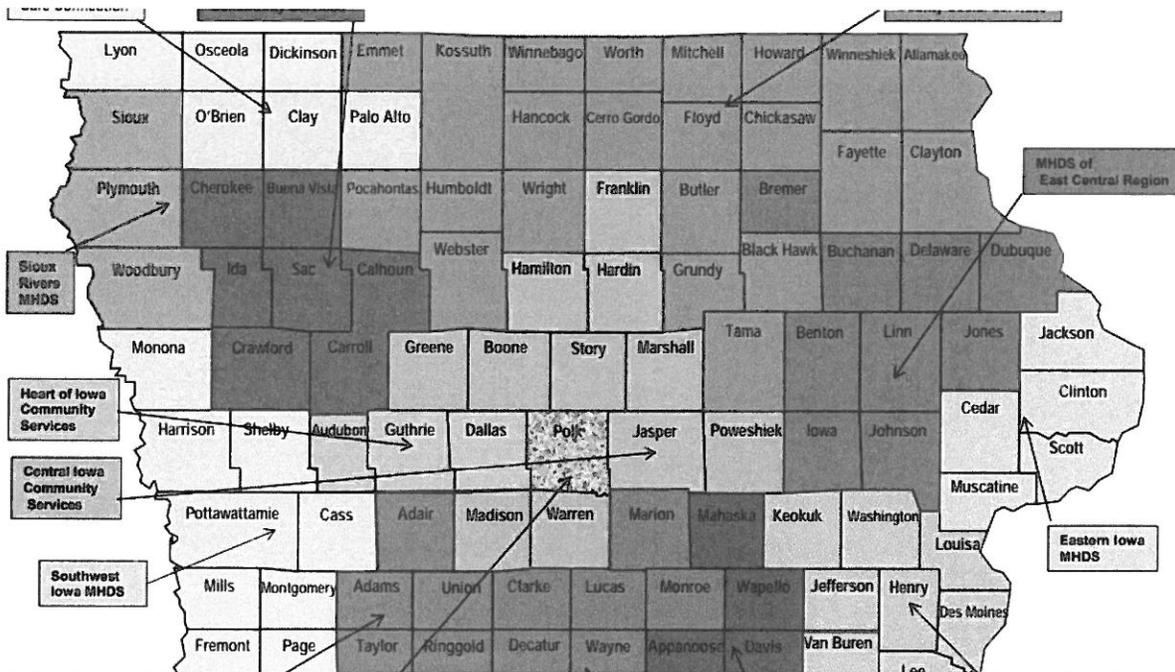
KNOWLEDGE
IS
POWER

NAMI Iowa Affiliate Map

National Alliance on Mental Illness



10/1/2019



REGISTER HERE FOR FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

ZOOM CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP

Every Monday 4:30 - 6:00 pm

Every Thursday 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Every Saturday 5:15 - 6:45 pm

Every Tuesday 6:00 - 7:30 pm

REGISTER HERE for CONNECTIONS SUPPORT GROUP



PARENTS & CAREGIVES: NAMI BASICS is a FREE online educational course you can take from the comfort of you home. If you have a child (under the age of 22) with mental health conditions, this course is for you! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For more frequent updates on NAMI Central Iowa, follow us on social media.

Facebook: NAMI Central Iowa | Instagram: namicentraliowa

OR, just click the icons below to be directed to our pages!



STORY COUNTY RESOURCES

MARSHALL COUNTY RESOURCES

HARDIN COUNTY RESOURCES

HAMILTON COUNTY RESOURCES

FRANKLIN COUNTY RESOURCES

JASPER COUNTY RESOURCES

POWESHIEK COUNTY RESOURCES

WARREN COUNTY RESOURCES

MADISON COUNTY RESOURCES

Wait! There are more resources, tips, messages of thanks and yes, a few jokes! Laughter is good for your health. CLICK "View Entire Message" at the bottom of the page to view our entire newsletter. You will be glad you did!

24-HOUR CRISIS LINE & MOBILE CRISIS

IOWA WARM LINE



CARE BAGS

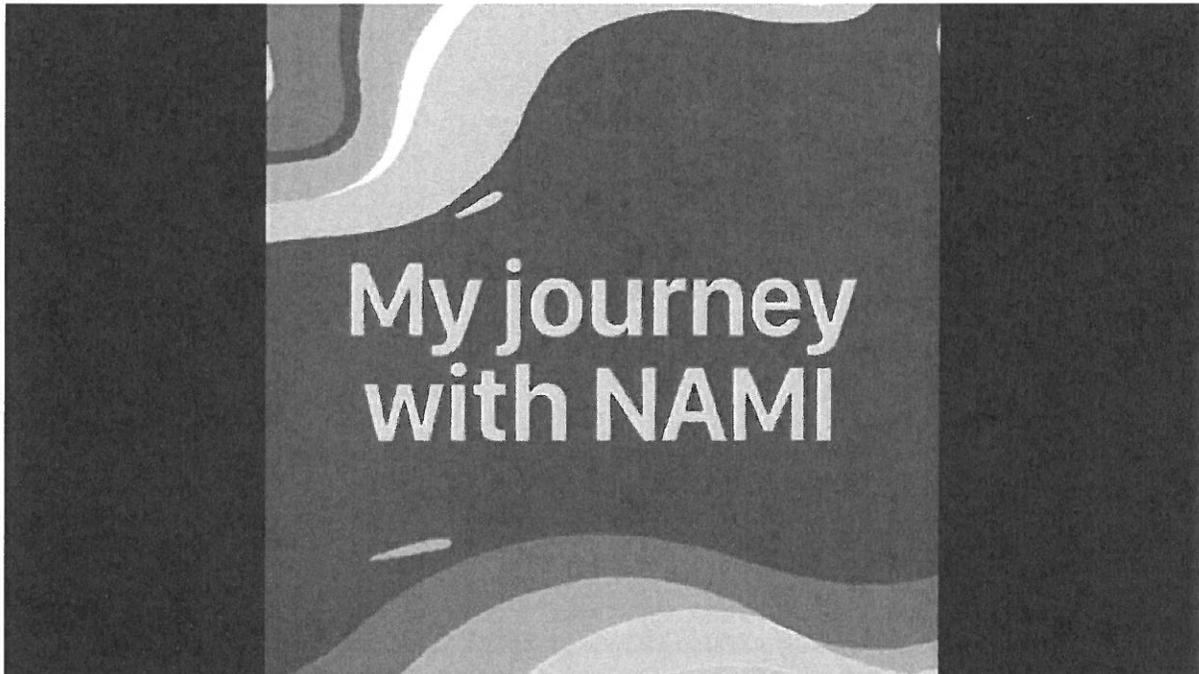
Harvest Vineyard Church is offering food bags containing dry and canned foods for families and individuals. We will have a food bag station Mondays and Wednesdays for the next few weeks. The location will be available from 12 pm -1 pm @ 320 South 17TH Street Ames, IA 50010. Pick up will be drive-through style. If you would like a food bag, follow these steps:

- 1 SCAN QR CODE TO FILL OUT FORM
- 2 GET CONFIRMATION
- 3 PICK UP BAG OR HAVE IT DELIVERED



If you cannot scan the code: e-mail- neighbor@harvestvc.org
OR call: 515-290-6881 and someone will get back to you.

Food Resource: Thank you Harvest Vineyard Church for providing Care Bags with dry and canned foods. If you or someone you know is in need, follow the direction on the photo above. Thank you, Harvest Vineyard Church!



Nurse Kendra shares her Capstone Project

Experience

[CLICK HERE](#) view her video message

8

**WEEKS OF
INSPIRATION
SPEAKERS SERIES**

APPEARING VIRTUALLY FROM OUR SCREEN TO YOURS

 **NAMI** Greater Des Moines



We Are Here. With You.

Moderator **Charlie Wittmack**

- April 8 **Michael Veltri**
- April 15 **Paul Long**
- April 22 **Holly Hoffman**
- April 29 **Kevin Kush**
- May 6 **AmyK**
- May 13 **Dr. Colina Poerman**
- May 20 **Kenyon Solo**
- May 27 **TBA**

tickets are absolutely **FREE**

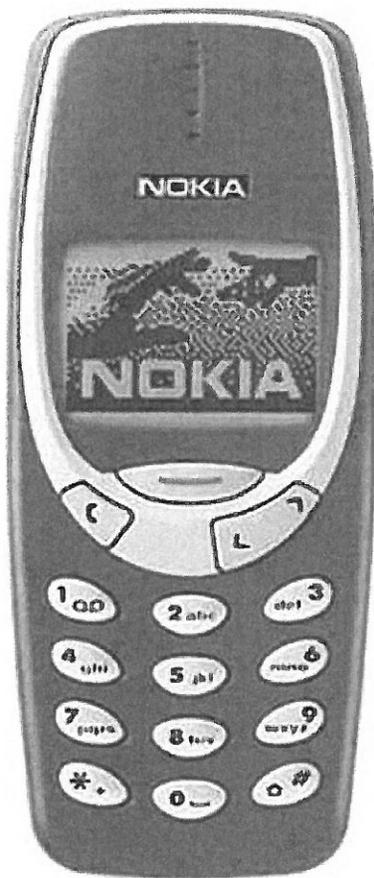
REGISTER TODAY: WeAreHereWithYou.com

**IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER
WWW.WEAREHEREWITHYOU.COM**

2020 MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM: [CLICK HERE](#)

[JOIN ONLINE HERE](#)

LAUGHTER IS GOOD MEDICINE!



**Imagine if
this
lockdown
happened 18
years ago.**

YOU WOULD BE STUCK
AT HOME WITH A NOKIA
3310 WITH 300 TEXTS,
100 MINS CALL LIMIT
AND DIAL UP INTERNET.



*Tensions are high in the produce section
as no one dares to lick their fingers*

MAYBE I SHOULD



CJH

made with mematic

GET UP FOR A LITTLE BIT!

"Alice, turn your video on. No, it's the button on the bottom. Not that one, over to your left FFS. Jan, you're on mute. UNMUTE YOURSELF!"



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.



NAMI CENTRAL IOWA NEWSLETTER

The NAMI Central Iowa Newsletter is e-published monthly or printed as requested. To make changes to your contact information contact us today. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may click the UNSUBSCRIBE link at the end of this newsletter. NAMI-CI is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. Our mission is to provide them with support, education, and advocacy. NAMICI is a United Way partner agency and is an affiliate of NAMI Iowa and NAMI National.

DONATE
 (HTTPS://WWW.UWSTORY.ORG/CIVICRM/CONTRIBUTE/TRANSACTION?RESET=1&ID=1)

VOLUNTEER
 (HTTPS://WWW.UWSTORY.ORG/VOLUNTEER)

 <https://twitter.com/UnitedWayIowa>
 <https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayIowa>
 <https://www.linkedin.com/company/united-way-iowa>



United Way of Story County (/)

Quick Links

- [Home \(/\)](#)
- [About Us \(/About-Us\)](#)
- [Our Work \(/Our-Work\)](#)
- [Partnerships \(/Partnerships\)](#)
- [Campaign \(/Campaign\)](#)
- [Young Leaders \(/Young-Leaders\)](#)

LIVE UNITED

It's a credo. A mission. A goal. A constant reminder that when we reach out a hand to one, we influence the condition of all. We build the strength of our neighborhoods. We bolster the health of our communities. And we change the lives of those who walk by us every day.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Feel symptoms?

- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of Breath

Call the McFarland nurse line at 515-500-6711 Monday-Friday 8am-5pm. After hours call 211 (partnering with IDPH), or, if necessary, 911.

Multi-lingual Hotline - 1-877-558-2609

Local clinic information:

McFarland Clini (<https://www.mcfarlandclinic.com/coronavirus>)c

Mary Greeley Medical Center (<https://www.mgmc.org/coronavirus/>)

Primary Health Care (<http://phciowa.org/covid-19/>)

Story County Medical (<https://www.storymedical.org/about-us/news/article?id=26e098ce-85be-4d46-b408-6059106775b5&Coronavirus+Precautions+at+Story+Medical%253a+Updated+March+16%252c+2020>)

Public Health information:

Test Iowa (<http://www.testiowa.com>)

TestIowa is a new initiative in partnership with state leaders and private corporations. The goal is to dramatically increase the rate of COVID-19 testing so Iowans can have better access to testing and help stem the spread of COVID-19.

CDC Fact Sheets (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>)

COVID-19 Information in Other Languages (from the Refugee Alliance of Central Iowa) ([https://www.refugeeallianceofcentraliowa.org/covid19-information?](https://www.refugeeallianceofcentraliowa.org/covid19-information?fbclid=IwAR3wKaZRWfC40Vf1NbOzx6_iLJu8CMKjA_AWHCeEft9i0iRAzsl2ftqouzY)

[fbclid=IwAR3wKaZRWfC40Vf1NbOzx6_iLJu8CMKjA_AWHCeEft9i0iRAzsl2ftqouzY](https://www.refugeeallianceofcentraliowa.org/covid19-information?fbclid=IwAR3wKaZRWfC40Vf1NbOzx6_iLJu8CMKjA_AWHCeEft9i0iRAzsl2ftqouzY))

Iowa COVID-19 information (<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/>)

Iowa Department of Public Health - resources for underserved populations (<https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpb19saW5rX2kljoxMTQsInVyaSI>)

UWSC Partner Agency updates

Current updates from all 32 partner agencies (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_36GycTQQqvKFKyuHRkhfLXi2uCm6Rhc/view?usp=sharing)

UWSC partner agencies provide critical support to Story County in the areas of health, education, and financial stability. Most are continuing to provide services to our neighbors. Please see the link above to learn of specific changes our partners have made to be able to continue to serve you.

A few of our partners are in need of supplies to serve their members:

Emergency Residence Project (<http://www.amesshelter.org>) - 515-232-8075 - face masks, paper plates, microwaveable single serving meals, hand sanitizer, clorox type disinfecting wipes, toilet paper, paper towels, bar soap, antiperspirant, baggies or Ziploc bags, Lysol like disinfectant sprays, disposable cleaning globes, all size trash bags, cash donations, grocery, gas, or restaurant gift cards

Mainstream Living (<https://www.mainstreamliving.org>) - 515-232-8405 - surgical masks, disposable or hand-sewn

ACCESS (<https://www.assaultcarecenter.org>) - 515-292-0500 - disinfecting wipes and spray, paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap, dishwasher tabs, laundry detergent, hand soap, hand sanitizer

Food pantry and meal site needs

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z5Bz9GurnmHP9lBiTncBUUa5NeEGTqblm3yxd-Ww8-Y/edit?usp=sharing>) -

Please call ahead if you have a large donation or would like to leave it at the pantry door. Alternately, you can donate cash to UWSC's Virtual Food Drive (<http://www.uwstory.org/emergency-fund>), funds going to pantries ASAP.

Child Care

Many Story County child care programs are closed due to COVID-19. United Way of Story County is working collaboratively to figure out childcare for emergency personnel (medical staff, first responders, and other essential staff). If you need care but are not considered an "essential" service, please check in with Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral below. They also provide Child Care Guidance in Response to COVID-19 (<https://iowaccrr.org>) which provides child care vacancies and closings, information on child care assistance payments, and much more.

Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R (<https://iowaccrr.org>))

Child Care Assistance application (<https://dhs.iowa.gov/child-care>) - Child Care Assistance (CCA) is available to the children of income-eligible parents. Click the link to apply.

Call the CCR&R hotline at 855-244-5301 for help finding a child care provider.

Educational Resources

Ames Public Library (https://www.amespubliclibrary.org/databases?field_db_type_target_id%5B159%5D=159)

Although the library is closed, they have many online resources for you and your families to continue learning while schools are closed. Any new patrons can sign up for a library card and will receive a temporary barcode. With the barcode you will be able to access streaming options and downloadables (<https://www.amespubliclibrary.org/books-movies-more/stream-download>) as well as their online resources (<https://www.amespubliclibrary.org/databases>) while the library is closed. They have also temporarily increased the maximum number of checkouts for many of their streaming and downloadable services.

How to (<http://cdn.dmschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/SAMHSA-Guidance-for-Children.pdf>) Talk to Your Children About COVID-19 (<http://cdn.dmschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/SAMHSA-Guidance-for-Children.pdf>)

Story County Reads (<https://www.facebook.com/storycounty.gradelevelreading/>)

Our local Campaign for Grade Level Reading, Story County Reads, will be posting tons of educational opportunities for families. Check back soon for ideas to keep your kids minds going!

Public WiFi is available outside of two locations in Ames- Ames Public Library and Furman Aquatic Center. Click here for details.

(https://www.cityofames.org/Home/Components/News/News/5663/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook)

Financial Help

Rent/evictions

As of March 20, Governor Reynolds issued a State Public Health Emergency Declaration - "I temporarily suspend the regulatory provisions...allowing for the termination of a rental agreement by a landlord and the eviction of a tenant...in certain circumstances." Read the entire declaration here. (<https://governor.iowa.gov/press-release/gov-reynolds-signs-additional-state-public-health-emergency-declaration-will-hold>)

View City of Ames comments regarding rent/layoffs

(</sites/uwstory.org/files/Comments%20to%20renters%20and%20recently%20unemployed%20during%20the%20COVID%203-20-20%20Final.docx>) here. (</sites/uwstory.org/files/Comments%20to%20renters%20and%20recently%20unemployed%20during%20the%20COVID%203-20-20%20Final.docx>)

Legal Aid of Iowa's COVID-19 resources

(<https://www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/2020-coronavirus-outbreak-what-you-need-to-know#Evictions>)

Emergency Financial Assistance

*Please note - several of our Story County emergency financial assistance providers are experiencing changes to their delivery.

Christ Community Church (<http://www.ccames.org>)

Rent and utility assistance when funds are available. Must be an Ames resident. Documents required: Rental assistance needs photo ID, lease/rental agreement with landlord's information. Utility assistance needs a utility bill. Call (515) 232-2765 or email info@ccames.org (<mailto:info@ccames.org>).

Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance (<http://www.gnea.org>)

515-296-1449 / assistance@gnea.org (<mailto:assistance@gnea.org>) - Rent/utility/gas/food vouchers available. Good Neighbor has made a decision to move applications for assistance from in person to phone and email applications at this time. They prefer people call or email on Mondays and Thursdays, but will be monitoring email and taking calls any time they can. Food vouchers are being distributed for emergency use only at this time. Again, a phone or email application informs their decisions and pick up of the vouchers will be from a medically safe and secure location.

MICA- LiHEAP Program (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/liheap>)

Utility assistance - one time payment. LiHEAP funds are still available. The LiHEAP program regularly runs until the end of April but the state is extending the moratorium protection from April 1 to May 31. Families that apply and are approved will be protected from disconnection until May 1. Assistance is by phone only, please call 515-956-3333.

St. Patrick's "Good Samaritan" Financial Assistance Program (Nevada, IA)

515-382-2974 - Rent/utility/gas assistance. This program is for residents of eastern Story County: Must live on east side of interstate (Cambridge, Collins, Colo, Fernald, Maxwell, McCallsburg, Nevada, Roland, Zearing). Provides rent and utility assistance every 6 months (up to \$200). Provides gas assistance for work or medical appointments only every 3 months. Students are not eligible for the program. Assistance is currently by phone only, please call! Denials are not currently required; landlord and utility company information is still required for those requesting rent or utility assistance; driver's license is required for those requesting gas assistance.

Story County Community Services

(<https://www.storycountyia.gov/94/Community-Services>)

515-663-2930 / communityservices@storycountyia.gov (<mailto:communityservices@storycountyia.gov>) - Rent/utility assistance. All County services will remain operational and available to the public either online or via phone or email. The Community Services office at 126 South Kellogg Ste 001 in Ames is closed to the public as of noon on March 18.

The Salvation Army (<https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/ames/>)

515-233-3567 / cari.mcpartland@USC.salvationarmy.org (<mailto:cari.mcpartland@USC.salvationarmy.org>) - Rent/utility/other emergency assistance. All assistance is by appointment only. Starting Monday, March 30 clients can call to schedule phone interviews for homelessness prevention dollars.

St. Thomas' "Love Your Neighbor" program (<https://staparish.net>)

515-292-3810 / tom@staparish.net (<mailto:tom@staparish.net>) - Rent/utility assistance. Their office will be closed as of March 18. They will try to continue to serve "Love Your Neighbor" clients by phone, email, or mail. If a client does not have internet access to email documents, they have agreed to accept verbal documentation rather than hard copy documentation. Other than that, they are business as "unusual". Clients seeking rental assistance cannot be evicted by order of the Governor, but their overdue rent and any fees will continue to accumulate during the duration of the order.

In addition to the usual providers of emergency basic services, the following organizations are offering financial support during this time:

Ames United Church of Christ (<http://www.amesucc.org>)

Funding available to help pay the bills (rent, utilities, medical) for those experiencing income or job loss due to COVID-19. The payee needs to be able to accept a credit card via phone or the internet. Contact Pr. Eileen Gebbie at either eileen@amesucc.org (<mailto:eileen@amesucc.org>) or 515-232-9323.

Financial Help for Immigrants

Please see below under International and Immigrant Help for resources and a link to apply for the COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Immigrants (<https://forms.gle/MSa9pve9nPw9pKLC8>).

HealthWell Foundation (https://www.healthwellfoundation.org/fund/covid-19-fund/?blm_aid=19653)

The HealthWell Foundation is providing up to \$250 assistance to families, via phone applications only, with delivered food, medication, diagnostics, transportation, and telehealth as a result of COVID-19 risk or incidence. If you or anyone you know needs financial assistance for any of these supports, please call (800) 675-8416 or use the link above for more information.

Money Management

America Saves - resources on taxes, student loans, SNAP benefits, and more (<https://americasaves.org/blog/1745-where-to-get-financial-help-during-the-covid-19-crisis>)

Concerned about how you are going to pay your bills? The best step you can take is to communicate soon with those you will be owing money to in the coming weeks. This would include landlords, and mortgage, utility, loan, and/or credit companies along with others you may owe money to. You may be able to work out a plan with each of them giving you the ability to make a partial payment or perhaps temporarily suspend payments with the promise of making them up later.

The key is to make sure to communicate with those expecting a payment before the payments are due in order to show good faith but also to find out what your options are for partial or delayed payments. In all cases do not make promises you can not keep. Document the agreements you have reached so that you don't have to count on your memory at a later date. Finally, follow through on your promises.

Check the other resources on this page to see if there is a program that will either help with a critical bill or free up money so you can pay the critical bill such as utilizing a food pantry.

ISU Extension Family Finance Specialists (<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/finance>)

Family finance program specialists are providing free, one-on-one financial conversations. Financial educators are available to talk about options for revising a budget, prioritizing bills, paying down debt and connecting lowans with community resources to stretch reduced incomes. Lowans can connect with a family finance specialist by phone or email. The conversations are free and confidential. Click the link above for more info.

Federal (http://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) Student Loan Forbearance (http://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

To provide relief to student loan borrowers during the COVID-19 national emergency, federal student loan borrowers are automatically being placed in an administrative forbearance, which allows you to temporarily stop making your monthly loan payment. This suspension of payments will last until Sept. 30, 2020, but you can still make payments if you choose. Click the link above to learn more.

Food/Hunger

Story County is the most food insecure county in all of Iowa. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we know our local food insecurity will grow. In the link below you can find information on a variety of food resources, including food pantries county-wide (and their changes during this time), school district food resources during COVID-19, and other food resources available to you. If you have any resources to add, updates, or questions, please contact Anneke Mundel (<mailto:amundel@uwstory.org>), Community Impact Director at UWSC.

Story County food resources (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qWHaz-FqZybF9SXcKfI0giBJW2r0605-M2gy13BTZw/edit?usp=sharing>)

United Way staff will keep this as up to date as possible.

Apply for SNAP Benefits (<https://dhs.iowa.gov/food-assistance>)

The Department of Human Services has increased the April and May SNAP benefits to the maximum allowable amount for current and newly eligible individuals, suspended the food assistance work requirements, and added new online options at Amazon and Walmart for individuals using their Food Assistance EBT card to purchase food. Read more here. (http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/DHS_COVID19_FoodAssistance_Release.pdf?032720202018)

Apply for WIC (<http://signupwic.com/>)

Struggling to provide healthy food for your young child during the COVID-19 crisis? The WIC Program aims to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care. Most WIC programs are enrolling people by phone or online. Use the zip code locator linked above to find a phone number to call.

Apply for the Senior Supplemental Food Program - Commodity Boxes (</sites/uwstory.org/files/Elderly%20Guidelines%202020.doc>)

The Senior Supplemental Food Program serves persons 60 years of age or older. This does not include disabled people under 60 years of age. A person must reside within the geographical boundaries of Polk, Warren, Jasper, Dallas, Story and Boone Counties. A person must meet the following income eligibility guidelines established by the USDA. Foods received monthly: shelf stable milk, non-fat dry milk, rice or pasta, ready-to-eat cereal, farina, or oatmeal, peanut butter or dry beans, canned meat or fish, bottled juices, canned fruits, canned vegetables, and cheese. Click here for the Story County delivery schedule. (</sites/uwstory.org/files/SFP%20Delivery%20Schedule%202020.pdf>)

International and Immigrant Help

Multi-lingual Hotline - 1-877-558-2609

Resources for Immigrants and Internationals (<http://drive.google.com/file/d/1db2xcFOLrMPXqwWg4d3dVaYWz3hdYDVj/view?usp=sharing>)

This list of resources for immigrants and other internationals provides resources (financial, ELL classes, COVID-19 information) in Story County, Iowa, and beyond. If you know of resources that should be included, please email Anneke Mundel (<mailto:amundel@uwstory.org>). Please also be sure to check above under the Financial Assistance resources listed above.

Recursos para Inmigrantes y Personas Internacionales (</sites/uwstory.org/files/Recursos%20para%20Inmigrantes-United%20Way.docx>)

Esta lista de recursos para inmigrantes y otras personas internacionales es actualmente en el proceso de desarrollo. Favor de volver a visitarnos pronto, como seguiremos agregando recursos disponibles en el condado de Story, en Iowa, y en los alrededores. Si usted conoce recursos que debemos incluir o si tiene preguntas, favor de mandar un email a Anneke Mundel (<mailto:amundel@uwstory.org>). ¡Se habla español!

Application for Financial Help (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ejkidxrS0W9ytZpCSHyHawCTXxlkNLcjXwqEjdfR86>)

Community partners have come together to set up a COVID-19 emergency fund specifically for Immigrants. Funding will provide emergency assistance for rent, utilities, gas, and other necessities like prescriptions. Please note, rent dollars will be provided directly to the landlord and utility payments will be provided directly to the utility company.

To be eligible, you must: Live in Story County, be an immigrant, have an immediate expense that is past-due, due now, or due within the next 7 days.

Paper applications in both spanish and english are available at St. Cecilia's Narthex or Rosita's Mexican Store. You can also apply online with the link above.

Solicitud de Asistencia Financiera (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ejkidxrS0W9ytZpCSHyHawCTXxlkNLcjXwqEjdfR86>)

Socios de la comunidad se han juntado para establecer un Fondo de Emergencia de COVID-19 para Inmigrantes. Financiamiento provee ayuda de emergencia para alquilar, servicios públicos, gasolina, y otras necesidades (recetas médicas, etc). Pago de alquilar estará mandado directamente al dueño del domicilio y pagos de servicios públicos estarán mandados directamente a las compañías de servicios.

Para calificar para ayuda, usted debe: Vivir en el Condado de Story, ser inmigrante, tener gastos inmediatos (alquilar, servicios públicos, gasolina, u otras necesidades básicas) los cuales están vencidos, vencen ahora, o vencen en los próximos 7 días.

Se puede encontrar solicitudes en papel en español e inglés en Narthex de St. Cecilia o en la Tienda Mexicana Rosita's. O, haga su solicitud online en <https://forms.gle/s3zG32cyx5bLs6Mf9> (<https://forms.gle/s3zG32cyx5bLs6Mf9>).

Internet/Phone

Keep America Connected Pledge

AT&T, CenturyLink, Mediacom, Sprint, T-Mobile, TracFone, Windstream, and more have each signed on to the FCC pledge to not terminate internet service due to inability to pay caused by the Coronavirus, to waive late fees, and to open up their WiFi hotspots if they have any. Click here for a full list of providers. (<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-363033A1.pdf>)

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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- National Mental Health Consumer's Self-Help Clearinghouse is a nationwide directory to locate local consumer-driven mental health services, including resources such as Clubhouses, crisis prevention/respite services, drop-in Centers, employment resources, housing, peer case management and support. The website maintains search function for directory of local CDS (consumer-driven services).
4. Take control and incorporate preventative measures
- Wash your hands. See the CDC's list of preventative measures.
 - Avoid watching, reading or listening to news reports that cause you to feel anxious or distressed. A near-constant stream of news reports can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. Instead, seek CDC updates and practical guidelines at specific times during the day.
 - Be supportive to others. Assisting others in their time of need can benefit the person receiving support as well as the helper.

I'm quarantined or working from home – lonely and isolated even further – what can I do?

What you can do while working from home

- To help overcome uncertainty, normality and routine that mirrors life's daily patterns and practices can be helpful. If working from home, we encourage you to create a structured, dedicated work environment and build in self-care as well as daily benchmarks of achievement.
- Structure and routine may be helpful for people with mental health vulnerabilities, especially during times of uncertainty. We encourage you to maintain a regular routine with the work hours that are usually worked, including keeping up with morning rituals. Dressing in regular work attire and taking regular breaks, including lunch time, may also be helpful.
- Research tells us that seven percent of communication is accomplished through our words, including email. 38 percent is voice and a staggering 55 percent is body language and visual. For people with mental health vulnerabilities, and even for those with extroverted personalities, the lack of face time can be challenging. Using technology to simulate this can offer a solution to bridging this gap. Be mindful of opportunities to integrate video into your conversations with colleagues. Consider using the video function on Skype or Teams for internal and external meetings.

- TheTribe Wellness Community: www.support.therapytribe.com
 - Free, **online peer support groups** offering members facing mental health challenges and/or difficult family dynamics a safe place to connect. Support groups include Addiction, Anxiety, Depression, HIV/AIDS, LGBT, Marriage/Family, OCD and Teens.
- SupportGroups.com: <https://online.supportgroups.com/>
 - Website featuring 200+ **online support groups**.
- For Like Minds: www.forlikeminds.com
 - **Online mental health support network** that allows for individuals to connect with others who are living with or supporting someone with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and stressful life events.
- 18percent: www.18percent.org
 - Offers a free, peer-to-peer **online support community** for those struggling with a wide range of mental health issues.
- Psych Central: www.psychcentral.com
 - Offers online mental health resources, quizzes, news, an “Ask the Therapist” function, and **online support communities**.

I don't have health insurance or a regular doctor – how can I get care?

Because of various causes (lack of access to health care, lack of medical insurance, homelessness, etc.) patients with serious mental illness die earlier, have more medical illnesses, and receive worse medical care than those in the general population. This is particularly challenging with an epidemic such as COVID-19 affecting a community.

What you can do:

- To begin with, you may wish to consult your local NAMI Affiliate regarding low-cost health clinics in your area. To find your nearest NAMI Affiliate, click on your state through the [Find Your Local NAMI](#) menu.
- Federally funded health centers can also be a good resource for those without health insurance or with a limited budget. You pay what you can afford, based on your income. Many of these centers include mental health services. Find a [federally funded health center](#) near you.

My business is suffering as a result of the Coronavirus. What assistance programs are available to help?

Contact your state's department of Public Health or Small Business Services website for local programs that may be set up to provide financial assistance to small businesses impacted by COVID-19. In some areas, businesses may qualify for low-interest loans and employee retention grants.

General financial assistance

- Need Help Paying Bills: www.needhelppayingbills.com
 - *Provides information on assistance programs, charity organizations, and resources that provide help paying bills, mortgage and debt relief (financial, rent and government assistance).*

- Aunt Bertha: www.auntbertha.com
 - *An online resource that connects users to free and reduced cost local resources such as medical care, food, housing, transportation and much more. Website also offered in Spanish.*

- 211 / www.211.org
 - *Dial 211 from any phone (mobile or landline) or visit www.211.org to search for contact information by zip code; service refers callers to appropriate agencies/community organizations that offer emergency financial assistance; available in most areas. Website also offered in Spanish.*

- HelpWhenYouNeedIt: www.helpwhenyouneedit.org
 - *An online service that connects users to over 350,000 listings nationwide of private and public resources for food pantries, stores that accept food stamps, assisted living facilities, domestic violence and homeless shelters, mental health & substance use treatment, free clinics, legal and financial assistance.*

- Help with Bills: www.usa.gov/help-with-bills
 - *Provides information about government programs that help with bill payment, temporary assistance, jobs/unemployment, credit, etc. Website and Helpline also offered in Spanish.*

- Needy Meds: (800) 503-6897 / www.needymeds.org
 - Offers a Helpline and website information on financial assistance programs to help defray cost of medication. Website also offered in Spanish.
- RX Assist: www.rxassist.org
 - Provides up-to-date directory of free and low-cost medicine programs and other ways to manage medication costs.
- RX Hope: www.rxhope.com
 - A free patient assistance program to assist people in need obtain critical medications.
- USARX: www.usarx.com
 - Provides coupons online for downloading/printing and can be brought to the pharmacy to see if it will give consumer a lower price or beat their copay.
- Blinkhealth Prescription Assistance: www.blinkhealth.com
 - Individuals (with or without insurance) pay upfront for medication online and then take a voucher to their pharmacy. Accepts calls 8 a.m.-10 p.m. M-F, 9 a.m.-7p.m. weekends (EST); Spanish language option on patient assistance line.

Are people who have a mental illness at a greater risk of contracting COVID-19?

This is inconclusive. While laboratory studies have shown that healthy mice had a reduced immunosuppressant response to the antipsychotic medication, Risperidone, this data has not been proven in studies on humans. **A greater risk is having a mental health setback by stopping or changing medications than catching COVID-19.**

Is there a vaccine or cure for COVID-19?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. Self-neglect or poor personal hygiene are common signs or symptoms of serious mental illness and pose a greater risk of exposure to germs and their spread.

I lost a loved one to Coronavirus. Where can I find support?

Many grief support services are offered through organizations at the community level. A good place to start is to contact your local NAMI Affiliate. To find your nearest NAMI Affiliate, click on your state through the [Find Your Local NAMI](#) menu. Additional options include:

- Most local hospices offer free or sliding scale grief therapy or can refer individuals to grief support in their area. [The National Hospice and Palliative Care Association](#) maintains a list of hospices across the country.
- [Grief Share](#) hosts free, in-person grief recovery support groups across the country.
- [PersonalGriefCoach.net](#) is a website that acts as a portal linking people who are grieving after a death by suicide to an extensive online directory of resources and information to help them cope with their loss, including a link to [suicide bereavement support groups directory](#).

I'm a smoker. Am I more likely to catch COVID-19? What should I do?

Due to weakened respiratory systems, smoking increases the severity of diseases such as influenza and MERS (another coronavirus). COVID-19 is a disease that mostly affects the lungs. Also, individuals who are chronically exposed to second-hand smoke may also be vulnerable to respiratory infections.

What you can do:

If you are a smoker, consider quitting smoking immediately. Consult your doctor about smoking cessation programs or over-the-counter aids like nicotine gum or patches, which can be purchased at most pharmacies without a prescription. Additionally, [Quitline.org](#) is a website that contains links to nationwide Smoking Cessation Programs, information on How to Quit Smoking for Free, Quit Smoking Free Patches and more.

How does homelessness increase risk of contracting COVID-19?

People with mental illness can experience times of homelessness, which places them at greater risk. People living outdoors often do so in close quarters and lack the ability to maintain basic hygiene, including precautions such as hand washing.

What you can do

Incarcerated people have Constitutional protections under the Eighth Amendment, including the right to medical care/attention as needed to treat both short-term conditions and long-term illnesses. The medical care provided must be “adequate.” Communication with jail/prison administration is key and should start early by those who are incarcerated and/or their families.

If an incarcerated loved one is not receiving adequate care, families and caregivers may be their best advocate:

- Contact the medical staff at the facility (note: contact may be limited/difficult due to confidentiality regulations.)
- If a family member is permitted to bring medication to the jail (dependent on jail policy), bring the individual’s current medications and all relevant records to the facility. Be sure the medication is in the original pharmaceutical packaging with dispensing instructions.
- If your loved one is being denied treatment:
 - File a formal complaint directly with the facility in question.
 - Contact the state’s Department of Corrections office if the issue remains unresolved.
 - Contact your state’s Governor.
 - Contact your state’s protection and advocacy agency, which is responsible for protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities.
 - You can also contact your state’s affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).
 - Consult the American Bar Association’s Find Legal Help search function where you can locate the legal referral service for your area.

I’m the aging parent of an adult child living with a serious mental illness. I want to be sure they are taken care of.

What you can do

Visit the [NAMI Online Knowledge Center](#) to learn about [Creating a Long-term Care Plan for a Loved One Living with a Serious Mental Illness](#)