



Petra Community Housing The Community Connector



May 2021



Montgomery Co. Recognizes One of Our Own

On Monday, April 12, 2021, a delegation from the Montgomery County Office of IDD came to Freedom House to present Margaret Dougherty with the "Personal Achievement Award" for 2020-2021. The plaque read, "In recognition of her embodiment of the principles of Everyday Lives."

The concept of "Everyday Lives" is deeply rooted in the concept of self-determination, it promotes the belief that, with the support of family and friends, people with disabilities can and should decide how to live their lives. An everyday life is about opportunities, relationships, rights, and responsibilities. It is about being a member of the community, having a valued role, making a contribution to society, and having one's rights as a citizen fully respected. It is a vision that we should all be working toward together. Margaret has advocated for these rights for many years to enable herself and others to enjoy the life they choose.

Pet Policy Reminder

It has come to our attention that we have not actively been enforcing portions of our pet policy as stated below:

- All pets and service animals must be kept under proper control by the animal owner.**
- Pets are to be on a leash at all times whenever they are outside of the apartment;**
- Owners of pets and service animals shall assume all liability for any injury sustained by residents, guests or staff members that is caused by the animal;**
- Pets are not allowed in common areas of the building, except when transporting the animal through the corridors to the outdoors;**

Effective immediately Petra will begin actively enforcing this policy consistently with ALL residents at ALL properties. This policy was designed with the enjoyment of the community in mind, especially in regard to health, safety and liability of all involved.

If you have any questions regarding the Pet Rules contact Management 610-948-1797.

STAY ALERT! Scams are going strong...

Here are tips to help keep your information private & some of the scams to watch out for:

NEVER give ANY information over the phone to anyone who calls you. Microsoft, FedEx, Amazon, Social Security, and the IRS **will NEVER call you!** This is your first inkling that it is a scam.

If you think it is possible that one of these entities like your bank or credit card is calling you, hang up and call them back at a published number, like the number on the back of your credit card or on your bank statement.

The scarier the threats, the more likely it is a scam. Threats of arrest, cutting your power or stopping your social security are all empty threats to scare you into giving out information or money.

Getting a lot of calls from electricity providers? Call PECO at 1-800-494-4000 and tell them to mark your account **PRIVATE**. This stops PECO from giving your information to competing power companies, and reduces the calls you will receive.

Never say ANYTHING to callers you think are trying to scam you. **Just HANG UP.** Continued on back...

SCAMS continued

Some common scams currently circulating are:

“Grandparent Scam”

The person tells you they are the police or they are your grandson, and they have been arrested or in an accident. If you don't give them a credit card to pay the bail, he will have to spend the night in jail (or worse). This is a scam. The person on the other end counts on you being in a panic in an attempt to get your credit card information.

“You Have Been Selected to Win...”

They are promising a trip, a lottery or anything else. They may want you to pay taxes up front on the prize or provide proof that it is you. Don't give them anything!

“Your Social Security Number (Benefits) Has Been Suspended”

This is not possible, and is ALWAYS a scam.

Wills, Wishes, POA's & What Happens If I Don't Die?

Most residents I speak with do not have any plans for when they pass or even worse, no plans for if they become disabled. They believe the only options are expensive insurance or nothing at all, leaving all the details to their families for take care of. Anyone who has attended one of my Advanced Planning Workshops has heard me say, **"One of the greatest gifts you can give your family is letting them know what your wishes are"**. There are alternatives to high priced insurance & funerals. There is prepaid burials, cremation & free alternatives such as body donation. What a wonderful way to use your stimulus money & share peace of mind with your family.

How many times have we heard of families arguing over **what would mom have wanted?** I encourage people to have this discussion with their kids or at least with someone they trust. Take a few moments to choose your health agent or your POA so your voice is heard even when you can't speak.

There are **booklets & easy forms** that are available to complete & **you do not need a lawyer!** You may feel you don't have much but you can dictate what you want to happen with it & who you want to have it. The price of not doing this is far greater than the time it takes to complete it all. Contact me for booklets, forms & brochures. I can also be available to set up a group workshop or individual meetings as requested. **Give yourself and your family the peace of knowing what to do.**

Beverly Dalton, RSC 484-933-4955

Will My Stimulus Money Effect My Benefit Eligibility???

The commissioner of the Social Security Administration (SSA) has clarified that **Stimulus checks do not count as income**, and therefore do not impact Medicaid beneficiaries or Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) recipients, and the payments will be **excluded from resources/assets for 12 months**. The payments will not affect Medicaid eligibility.

Furthermore President Biden has proclaimed a federal public health emergency thus preventing Medicaid from **terminating any individuals for any reason through to the end of July!**

Petra Staff Updates

Main Office Staff – Staff will continue gradually transitioning back into the offices. The main office at Bard will offer Resident hours Monday through Thursday from 11am-2pm. Residents are asked not to enter the office & must wear a mask.

Resident Services Coordinators— Your RSC's will offer Resident hours on Tuesdays at Bard Complex, Wednesdays at Flag House & Thursdays at Freedom House. Please call to schedule an appointment in advance during those days.

Residents – Petra is asking **ALL INDIVIDUALS** entering the building or remaining in common areas continue to **wear a mask**.