



# A G E N D A

## Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council

### In-Person Meeting

April 14, 2023

9:30 A.M.

[www.officeonaging.ocgov.com](http://www.officeonaging.ocgov.com)

#### Location:

Easterseals

1063 McGaw Ave, Suite 100

Irvine CA 92614

**\*\*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for this meeting should notify the Orange County Community Service office 72 hours prior to the meeting at (714) 480-6450\*\***

**This agenda contains a brief general description of each item to be considered. The Council encourages your participation. If you wish to speak, you may do so during Public Comment. To speak during Public Comment, complete a Speaker Request Form(s) identifying the items and place them in the Speaker Request basket prior to the beginning of the meeting. Once acknowledged and prompted by the Chair, you may begin to speak. Except as otherwise provided by law, no action shall be taken on any item not appearing in the agenda. When addressing the Council, please state your name for the record prior to providing your comments.**

This agenda contains a brief description of each item to be considered. Except as provided by law, no action shall be taken on any item not appearing in the agenda. Members of the public who wish to speak on an item(s) may complete a Speaker Request Form(s) identifying the items prior to the beginning of the meeting. To speak on a matter not appearing on the agenda, but under the jurisdiction of this Advisory Council, you may do so during Public Comments. Speaker request forms must be completed prior to the beginning of the meeting, the reading of the individual agenda items and/or the beginning of Public Comments. When addressing the Board, it is requested that you state your name for the record. Address the Board as a whole through the Chair. Comments to individual Members or staff are not permitted. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes.

Materials/handouts can be requested up to 72 hours in advance of the meeting by visiting <http://www.occommunityservices.org/>.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gene Hernandez
2. INSPIRATION: Amelia Castro
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Crystal Miles
4. ROLL CALL: Secretary Dave Tetzlaff (Interim)
5. SECRETARY COMMENTS: Secretary Dave Tetzlaff (Interim)
  - A. Monthly Senior Service Hours
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

*At this time, members of the public may address the Council regarding any items within the subject jurisdiction, provided that no action is taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law. (Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes, unless the Chair pre-identifies a different time at the start of meeting for all public speakers).*
7. INTRODUCTIONS: Chair Gene Hernandez
8. PRESENTATIONS:

**The Unwinding of the Public Health Emergency  
Impact on Medi-Cal for Older Adults**

Kenya Avila

Community Engagement Specialist

County of Orange Social Services Agency

9. ACTION ITEMS:
  - A. Adopt Council Goals and Objectives for 2023  
*Recommendation*: Council to review, discuss and adopt goals and objectives for 2023. Goals and Objectives for 2022 attached for reference.
  - B. Approve Selection of SCAC Members to Attend C4A Annual Conference  
*Recommendation*: Council to approve the selection of John Pointer, Meredith Chillemi and up to two more SCAC members to attend C4A Conference, May 9-11, 2023, in Glendale, CA.
10. CHAIR ITEMS: Chair Gene Hernandez
  - A. New Business
  - B. Old Business
  - C. Chair Comments

- 11. OFFICE ON AGING UPDATES: Claudia Harris, Director, Aging and Veterans Services, OCCS
  
- 12. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS: Vice Chair Meredith Chillemi  
(Report highlights – two (2) minutes per speaker)
  - A. Senior Citizens Engagement Committee – John Pointer
  - B. Wellbeing Reimagined – Rachel Owens
  - C. Housing and Transportation – Crystal Miles
  
- 13. SENIOR CENTER LIAISONS: Evelyn Velez
  
- 14. PRESENTATION SCHEDULE: Vice Chair Meredith Chillemi
  
- 15. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY SCAC MEMBERS
  
- 16. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

**Next SCAC Meeting (In-Person)**

May 12 – 9:30 a.m.

**Upcoming Standing Committee Meetings (In-Person)**

April 17 - 9:30 a.m.

**Senior Citizens Engagement Committee**

April 19 – 1:00 p.m.

**Wellbeing Reimagined**

May 11 - 9:30 a.m.

**Housing and Transportation**

DISCLAIMER: No member of SCAC shall sign a letter or make a statement purported to represent the position of SCAC as a body. Letters or verbal statements of support or opposition on any issue shall only be made or signed by the Chair of SCAC and shall be submitted to the Board for approval. The policy of the Board of Supervisors does not allow SCAC or its Chair to sign a letter of position on any matters pertaining to legislation. SCAC members may write personal letters or speak as individuals stating personal positions but may not do so as representing the position or opinion of SCAC.

**Senior Citizens Advisory Council**

1300 South Grand Avenue, Building B  
 Santa Ana, CA 92705  
 (714) 480-6450 ♦ (714) 567-5021 FAX  
 www.officeonaging.ocgov.com



May 10, 2022

Dear Chairman Chaffee and Members of the Board,

As the advisory body to the Orange County Board of Supervisors on matters relating to our county's older adults, the Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council (SCAC) presents the "Top 5 Priorities for Orange County Senior Citizens." In an effort to align State and local initiatives, these priorities have been developed around California's Master Plan for Aging goals; and were approved at our April 8, 2022 meeting.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on older adults, coupled with California's Master Plan for Aging, and the realization that Orange County's aging population represents nearly 700,000 residents and is expected to grow 30% over the next 10 years, creates a sense of urgency and unique opportunity to help improve the quality of life for all Orange County senior citizens.

The 5 bold goals outlined in the Master Plan for Aging are: Housing for all Ages and Stages; Health Reimagined; Inclusion of all Seniors; Caregiving that Works; and Affording Aging. During our annual workshop meeting, SCAC developed key priorities to support these goals. Our priorities address senior housing, transportation, adult day care, elder abuse prevention, and caregiver support.

Some of the priorities presented in the attached report are within your area of governance and await your direction. For those priorities that are not within your direct area of responsibility, we respectfully request that you be the voice to highlight the current needs of Orange County's older adults.

We continue our work to fulfill the responsibility of SCAC and will collaborate with the Office on Aging and community partners to advocate for the needs of older adults. We welcome your input and communication with us as we work together to serve the older adults of Orange County.

Sincerely,

Elaine Gennawey, Chair  
 Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council  
 egennawey@cityoflagunaniguel.org

**Executive Board**

*Elaine Gennawey, Chair ♦ Gene Hernandez, Vice-Chair  
 Elizabeth Busick, Secretary ♦ John Pointer, Past Chair ♦ Meredith Chillemi, Member-at-Large  
 Cynthia Thacker, Member-at-Large ♦ Dave Tetzlaff, Member-at-Large*

**Senior Citizens Advisory Council**

1300 South Grand Avenue, Building B  
 Santa Ana, CA 92705  
 (714) 480-6450 ♦ (714) 567-5021 FAX  
[www.officeonaging.ocgov.com](http://www.officeonaging.ocgov.com)



May 10, 2022

*The Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council is charged with the responsibility of advising the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Office on Aging on matters affecting Senior Citizens in Orange County. The 40-member council is comprised of volunteer citizens, local elected officials, representatives of health care and supportive service provider organizations, persons with leadership experience, and the general public.*

Orange County Senior Citizens age 60 years and older represent nearly 700,000 residents and that number is expected to grow by almost 30% over the next ten years.

To serve the needs of current Senior Citizens, and to prepare for the seismic growth of this demographic, the Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council has identified the following five top priorities. These priorities are aligned with the 5 bold goals under California's Master Plan for Aging (MPA).

1) **Senior Housing and Transportation**

Affordable housing and transportation continue to be a top priority among seniors in Orange County. The high cost of living is especially difficult for older adults on a fixed income, resulting in demand for supportive services such as nutrition and subsidized transportation to offset housing costs. Those caring for older adults are also impacted. Often, caregivers are adult children also trying to maintain their own household, caring for school-aged children, and working full-time. Supportive services such as home-delivered meals that can be easily reheated in the microwave, or transportation services for medical appointments, and access to adult day care as well as reliable internet to promote connection and reduced isolation are critical to caregiver success.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board in order to promote independent living for seniors is: to work with cities and developers of senior housing to ensure that all housing projects include microwaves and access to broadband internet; advocate for increased State funding for social model Adult Day Care services; and increased outreach and promotion of transportation options for seniors in Orange County.

*These priorities are aligned with MPA Goal #1 "Housing for All Ages and Stages."*

2) **Caregiver Support**

Related to the first priority, is the need to support those who care for older adults, particularly family caregivers. Many seniors are able to remain independent and avoid the high cost of skilled nursing or assisted living because they have a caregiver who is committed to meeting their needs of daily living. Unfortunately, caregivers who focus on the care of others often neglect their own health and well-being. It is not uncommon for caregivers to pass away before the patient they are caring for. Caregiver burnout is alleviated by programs offered through the Caregiver Resources Centers, such as respite, support groups, and scholarships for adult day care.

**Executive Board**

*Elaine Gennawey, Chair ♦ Gene Hernandez, Vice-Chair  
 Elizabeth Busick, Secretary ♦ John Pointer, Past Chair ♦ Meredith Chillemi, Member-at-Large  
 Cynthia Thacker, Member-at-Large ♦ Dave Tetzlaff, Member-at-Large*

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is in support of legislative action that would increase State funding for caregiver support to expand scholarship programs for adult day care, as well as respite grants so more caregivers can benefit from these supportive services.

*This priority is aligned with MPA Goal #2 "Health Re-Imagined"*

### 3) **Elder Abuse Prevention**

Internet fraud and scams against elders is an epidemic. In 2021, California was ranked first in the nation with nearly 13,000 reported elderly victims of internet scams with over \$152 million in losses. Seniors are especially vulnerable because they tend to be trusting and polite, own a home, and have financial savings. As the senior population grows, so too does the risk for elder scams and abuse.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is to form a task force dedicated to raising awareness and combating incidents of elder abuse and internet scams. The task force should consist of members of law enforcement, financial institutions, the District Attorney's office, and others who work to protect seniors.

Additionally, research shows that seniors who are active and engaged in their community through work or volunteer service are less likely to become victims of elder abuse and scams compared to those living alone and who are isolated. Active participation in the community ensures they are highly visible to others who look after their safety and well-being. Seniors who work or volunteer also have opportunities for continued learning and awareness of current scams and warning signs of elder abuse.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is support advocacy efforts to provide State funding for volunteer coordinator positions within the County, particularly to assist with volunteer recruitment of seniors, or for organizations who serve seniors and depend on volunteers.

Finally, Welfare and Institutions Code 5150.05 related to involuntary detention and hospitalization of people with psychiatric disabilities and in need of mental health care, medical treatment, and other services does not apply to older adults with dementia. Therefore, a 5150 hold is not possible for people with cognitive impairment who may pose a health and safety risk to themselves or others cannot be detained and hospitalized for treatment under a 5150. This limitation poses ongoing challenges for first responders and social workers who are called to assist with crisis situations and there is no legal authority to provide mental health or medical intervention.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is to include in the County's legislative platform support for revisions to the WIC codes that govern 5150s so they may include detention and intervention for people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia that impact cognitive functioning and pose a safety risk to self and others.

*This priority is aligned with MPA Goal #3 "Inclusion, Equity, Not Isolation"*

#### **Executive Board**

*Elaine Gennawey, Chair ♦ Gene Hernandez, Vice-Chair  
Elizabeth Busick, Secretary ♦ John Pointer, Past Chair ♦ Meredith Chillemi, Member-at-Large  
Cynthia Thacker, Member-at-Large ♦ Dave Tetzlaff, Member-at-Large*

#### 4) **Professional Careers in Aging**

Paid caregiving is essential to older adults and their ability to live independently. Over 5 million families in California are caring for an aging loved one, and nearly 2 million of those are caring for someone with Alzheimer's or another dementia. This represents billions of dollars in unpaid time spent caring for an aging person. In addition, professional caregivers provide direct care in settings such as skilled nursing, assisted living, adult day care, and in a person's own home. Professional caregivers earn less than half of the State's median income and one in four are living below the Federal poverty limit. Innovative solutions to promote change in the delivery of care, including virtual care and telehealth are needed to close the gap between care needs and the caregiver labor force. As the cost of paid caregiving for individuals increases, other models of care must be explored such as, receiving care in congregate or group settings.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is to support advocacy efforts and goals outlined by the California Commission on Aging which encourages increased workforce diversity and cultural competency by raising awareness of Gerontology and Geriatric related fields and normalize continuing education for adults throughout their lifespan in higher education and short-term training programs. To further support his effort, SCAC is recommending to the Board to consider supporting paid internships and/or stipends for students in educational programs that focus on Gerontology and Geriatrics career fields.

*This priority is aligned with MPA Goal #4 "Caregiving That Works"*

#### 5) **Affording Aging**

Advance planning is critical for ensuring economic security for seniors as they age. Knowing the cost of various care options helps seniors and their families be able to make informed decisions based on affordability. Without transparent pricing, the in-home care and assisted living industries establish their own pricing structure which often isn't disclosed until the service is requested. For example, the monthly rate for an assisted living facility doesn't reflect additional costs if medication needs to be given, or a weekend meal is requested, or to have help with laundry service. Upfront, transparent pricing will provide the tools and information families need to make the best care decisions based on health needs as well as financial resources. Rate sheet and pricing information should be a condition of inclusion into public referral databases.

SCAC's recommendation to the Board is to ensure that County resource and referral services require private companies such as in-home care and assisted living to provide pricing information in order to be included in a public database. Further, a template for price comparison such as an Orange County Uniform Rate Sheet should be developed and required of long-term care providers to aid families who are researching several options simultaneously.

*This priority is aligned with MPA Goal #5 "Affording Aging"*

###

#### **Executive Board**

*Elaine Gennawey, Chair ♦ Gene Hernandez, Vice-Chair  
Elizabeth Busick, Secretary ♦ John Pointer, Past Chair ♦ Meredith Chillemi, Member-at-Large  
Cynthia Thacker, Member-at-Large ♦ Dave Tetzlaff, Member-at-Large*