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## **Michigan's older adults can connect virtually with family and friends this holiday season**

### ***MDHHS partners with GetSetUp to help residents cope with COVID-19 separation***

LANSING, Mich. – Older adults experiencing social isolation this Thanksgiving due to the COVID-19 pandemic have a new opportunity to celebrate the holiday virtually.

Through its partnership with the national education technology company GetSetUp, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Aging & Adult Services Agency is offering a series of Thanksgiving-themed social hours this week. The special classes will help older adults connect with family and friends this holiday season. This includes a special Thanksgiving social hour on Thursday, Nov. 26 at 3 p.m.

“Older adults are at greater risk for complications related to coronavirus and have had to follow public health guidelines closely, including social distancing. We believe this platform will help reduce social isolation by empowering older adults when it comes to using technology while providing a safe place to learn, grow and make friends,” said Dr. Alexis Travis, senior deputy director at of the Aging and Adult Services Agency. “This Thanksgiving week, we hope older Michiganders will join some of these social hours as a safe way to engage with others and celebrate the holiday.

In October, the Aging & Adult Services Agency announced its partnership with GetSetUp, a mission-driven company dedicated to creating economic and learning opportunities for older adults. The partnership creates a new free resource for Michiganders age 60 and over as the state continues to face the pandemic. Nearly 5,000 Michiganders have taken advantage of the free classes on the GetSetUp platform, funded in part from a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund.

Thanksgiving theme social hours and courses include:

- The Power of Gratitude: Tuesday, Nov. 24, 3 p.m.
- Social Hour – Thanksgiving Then and Now: Wednesday, Nov. 25, 11:30 a.m.
- Social Hour – Thanksgiving Fun: Thursday, Nov. 26, 3 p.m.
- Social Hour – Thanksgiving Leftovers Recipe Swap: Friday, Nov. 27, noon.

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These Thanksgiving social hours will allow people to connect with other older adults. The sessions also can help participants learn how to use technology to better connect with family and friends.

Registration is required. Classes and social hours are offered online and via telephone. To register, visit the [www.getsetup.io/michigan](http://www.getsetup.io/michigan) or call 1-888-559-1614.

In addition to social hours, older Michiganders can access more than 150 free online group classes designed for and led by older adults. Popular classes include how to use a smartphone or tablet, how to use services like video conferencing, Gmail, Facebook, YouTube, as well as virtual social hours.

Information around the COVID-19 outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](http://Michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](http://CDC.gov/Coronavirus).

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