

Heads up

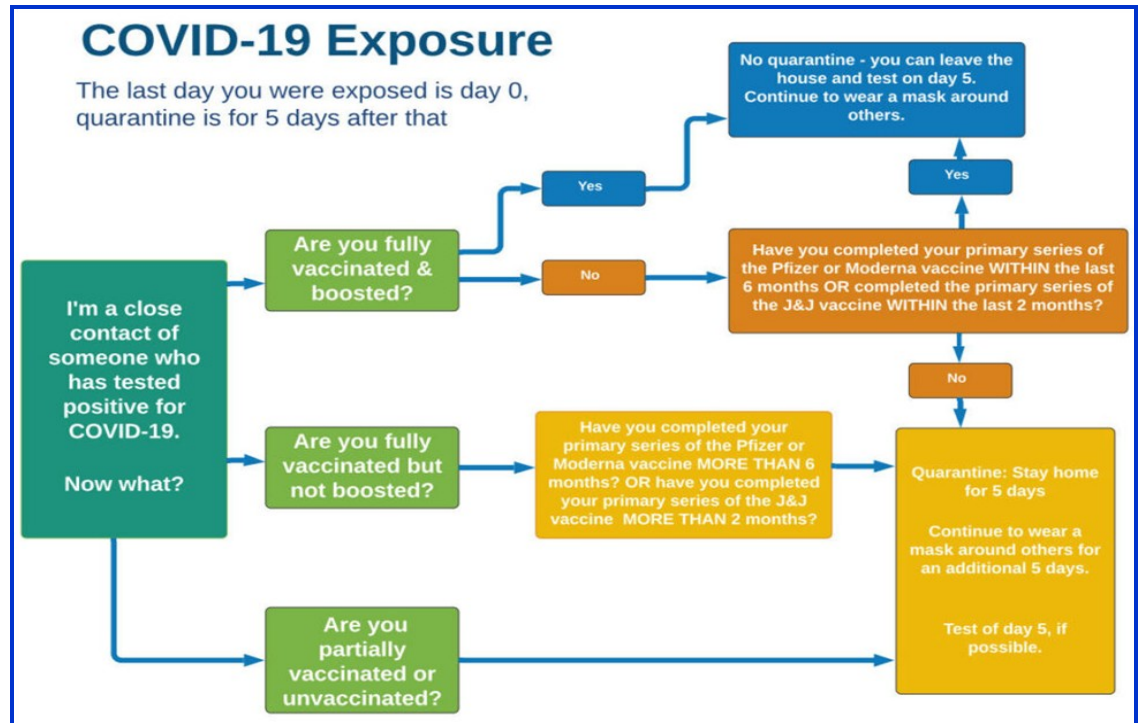
- Getting a vaccine: <https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov/>
- Questions about boosters and third doses? <https://tinyurl.com/u6tw34b8>
- Register for Senior Medication Safety: Drug Consumer Safety Rules for Seniors, 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 8 at <https://tinyurl.com/2p86ny28>

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February 2022

Actively Retired in Oregon

AFT-OREGON RETIREES



Source: The Children's Clinic <https://tinyurl.com/nbb74ern>

Seniors' safety

Step-by-step self triage

Widening availability of COVID-19 tests, including free home tests in the mail, is a sign to many that pandemic worries may be easing.

Even with declining numbers of infections, the waning of virus variants, and increasing vaccination rates, infection remains a possibility. Seniors, since the beginning of the outbreak, rank as one of the most vulnerable groups.

For anyone testing positive, or coming in contact with an infected person, wondering what to do

next, many health organizations have taken to flowcharts for easy understanding of Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) detailed explanations and guidance.

They are designed to ease confusion over what

next if positive or exposed.

Oregon Health and Science University also provides a complete guidebook (OHA 3894) with more detailed explanations and discussion is available from at

<https://tinyurl.com/y2smsr9r>

Candidates get in line for 2022 primary

The registration deadline for 2022 primary candidates is closing in for hopefuls for U.S. and Oregon offices. So far there are 10 candidates for the U.S. Senate seat now occupied by Ron Wyden; 36 competing for six U.S. House races; 32 for Oregon Governor; five for Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) Commissioner; 28 for the 16

Dear Retiree Members . . .



Louise Currin
President

“School districts are having a hard time retaining teachers and support employees. Sympathetic school board members are resigning under pressure.”

I am saddened to see the horrendous treatment of education employees and local school board members. School districts are having a hard time retaining teachers and support employees. Sympathetic school board members are resigning under pressure. Much of this is happening because many individuals on our school boards have no idea of how schools function prior to their election.

What you ask, can retirees (family members, friends and others that share these values), do to counteract this? Of course, you can volunteer in your local school building, but why not run for school board. Many of you have more knowledge than most school board candidates.

What we probably don't have is the knowledge and tools to run for office. Great help is there for the asking.

There are organizations in Oregon that

can help you. Three that I am familiar with are the Oregon Labor Candidate School (OLCS), the Womxn's Campaign School, and Emerge Oregon.

A quick overview of two of these, then more details about OLCS, which is there specifically for union members to access.

Oregon Womxn's Campaign School

Established originally to get and help women to run for office, its mission shifted over the years to “any candidate that is a champion for reproductive justice.”

Its founding objective remains the same: “to encourage, educate, and support” candidates. It continues itself as “an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization run by a board of volunteers and financed entirely through voluntary contributions.” Its candidate training program is a two-

Banding together

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Actively Retired in Oregon

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Since 1991 when it began, the interests of Oregon's public employment retirees has been under the watchful eye of the Oregon PERS Retirees, Inc. (OPRI), undertaking steps to safeguard their retirement security.

That means continuous pursuit of its goal “to provide information on the activities of the legislature and the courts that impact retirees and their benefits.” It's three original directors, a state forester, a state highway construction engineer, and an Assistant Attorney General, all retirees, has expanded to seven,

including three retired from employment by the state; two from school districts; and one each from local government and the Department of Higher Education. The Board includes Retiree Chapter VP Legislative Activities Greg Monahan; and Deanna Woods, Retiree Chapter Secretary, is a past Board member. A membership organization any PERS retiree can join, it now boasts of thousands of members.

A recent membership poll found that a plurality (48% Yes to 37% No) of those polled believed

PERS has become a financial crisis for Oregon, and a plurality (43% Yes to 29% No) favored requiring “future PERS retirees to make greater contributions to their own personal retirement accounts” to reduce the PERS' unfunded liability.

Members also favored (55% to 30%) capping salary at \$100,000 for calculating future retirees' benefits; favored (58% to 28%) a proposal giving a choice to current public employees of staying in PERS “or switching to a 401(k)-style

day course (its January program was virtual).

Emerge Oregon

With its focus on getting Democratic Women to run for public office at any and all levels of government, Emerge Oregon works to identify, train, and inspire them to run. It delivers a seven-month training program for each cohort of accepted candidates and is “the first state-based training program exclusively focused on Democratic women.” The effort is to build “the bench” from the ground up.

Emerge graduates include current Secretary of State Shema Fagan and Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle, and several members of the Legislature, local boards and commissions.

Oregon Labor Candidate School

Aimed exclusively at union

Find them:

Oregon Womxn's Campaign School
tinyurl.com/2p8wv9dc

Emerge Oregon
tinyurl.com/2p946xab

Oregon Labor Candidate's School
tinyurl.com/ypza2svv

members and staff, the OLCS, like Emerge Oregon, operates a program of monthly sessions. Sessions convene at locations in the Portland area and in the Willamette Valley to accommodate rural members.

OLCS representative have been guest speakers at Local meetings, including at the AFT-Oregon State Convention, and at our Retiree Chapter meetings where we urged donations to support the program. Its alumni also are among the ranks of current state legislators, boards and commissions.

Application for the next group begins later this summer, with those selected beginning training in October.

In Solidarity,

Louise

No news on Medicare premium rise

No announcement, yet, on review of the \$30 increase in Medicare Part B premium, after HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said in January he would seek review of the jump from Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Social Security Trustees last August recommended a modest \$10 monthly increase 2022. The 2021 deductible from monthly Social Security benefits of \$148.50, was an increase of only \$3.90 over 2020. Depending on modified adjusted gross income, the deductible now can range as high as \$504.90. The premium is automatically deducted from monthly social security payments. Recipients saw a 5.9 percent increase for 2022 in their monthly Social Security benefit.

OPRI *continued from Page 2*

defined contribution plan.”

Members were more evenly split (42% to 39%) for a proposal increasing business and corporate taxes dedicated to reduce PERS' unfunded liability; and (28% to 29%) for a proposal requiring current public employees to put part of their salary designated for their IAP into pension to reduce the PERS unfunded liability.

Find OPRI information and membership opportunity at <https://opri.org/>

Candidates *continued from Page 1*

four-year term State Senate seats; and 99 for the 60 two-year term State House seats. Counting a Supreme Court position, Circuit and County Court Judge and District Attorney races, 296 candidates have registered to-date. Registrations close March 8. The list of candidates is at <https://tinyurl.com/ycksj3a5>

Initiative outlook

With four months left for signature gathering, only 10 of the 43 initiatives and referenda still standing are approved for signature gathering for the 2022 election. The season has drawn 53 initiatives three referenda and two referrals. The complete list including titles, filer(s), and status is at:

[http://
egov.sos.state.or.us/
elec/
web_irr_search.searc
h_form](http://egov.sos.state.or.us/elec/web_irr_search.search_form)

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Upcoming Events:

Programs and Meetings 2022

- March 8, Part 2 of Medications: Keeping Seniors Safe Zoom presentation, 10 a.m.
- May 3 Founders' Charter Celebration Brunch and Annual Meeting
(Location to be announced)

Executive Board Meetings 2022

(Unless announced otherwise, all meeting begin at 10 a.m. at AFT-Oregon office)

- March 9
- April 13
- May 11
- June 8

Today's Drug Technology and Seniors

Part 2: Drug Consumer Safety Rules for Seniors coming March 8

Prescription drug types most used by Seniors

- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatories
- Heart Medications (Digoxin)
- Anti-Anxiety (Minor Tranqs)
- Anti-Depressants
- Anti-Psychotic (Major Tranqs)
- High blood pressure drugs
- Sedative-Hypnotics
- Sleeping Pills
- Opiates – Synthetic Opiates

Though seniors make up only about 17 percent of the U.S. population, they consume some 34 percent of the drugs used, according to Mark Miller of the Comprehensive Drug Education Center.

He urged seniors to follow these safety guidelines and discuss with their health care provider (and pharmacist):

- What is the chemical?
- Where is it working in the body?
- What is the correct dosage?
- What drug Interactions are there?
- What is the abuse and addiction potential?



Source: Mark Miller, Center for Drug Education <https://tinyurl.com/2p87xdzi>

With age, he told participants during *Part 1* of a Retirees Chapter Zoom presentation February 24, the longer it takes drugs to get

into the body's system, the more time it takes to be effective, and the longer it takes to breakdown and be removed from the system.