



# Resourceful Thinking

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## SOCIAL SECURITY COLA OVERTIME RULE OVERTURNED UPDATED NURSING HOME REGULATIONS

### SOCIAL SECURITY ANNOUNCES BENEFIT INCREASE FOR 2017

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 65 million Americans will increase 0.3 percent in 2017, the Social Security Administration has announced.

The 0.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 60 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2017. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2016.

The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject

to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$127,200 from \$118,500. Of the estimated 173 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2017, about 12 million will pay more because of the increase in the taxable maximum.

Information about Medicare changes for 2017, will be available at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). For some beneficiaries, their Social Security increase may be partially or completely offset by increases in Medicare premiums.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

[Source: SSA Press Office, <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/##/post/10-2016-1>]

### OVERTIME RULE OVERTURNED

A federal judge has blocked an Obama administration rule to extend mandatory overtime

pay to more than 4 million salaried workers from taking effect, imperiling one of the outgoing president's signature achievements for boosting wages.

U.S. District Judge Amos Mazzant, in Sherman, Texas, agreed with 21 states and a coalition of business groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, that the rule is unlawful and granted their motion for a nationwide injunction.

The rule, issued by the Labor Department, was to take effect Dec. 1 and would have doubled to \$47,500 the maximum salary a worker can earn and still be eligible for mandatory overtime pay. The new threshold would have been the first significant change in four decades.

It was expected to touch nearly every sector of the U.S. economy and have the greatest impact on nonprofit groups, retail companies, hotels and restaurants, which have many management workers whose salaries are below the new threshold.

[Source: Reuters, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-employment-overtime-idUSKBN13H2JY>]

### UPDATED NURSING HOME REGULATIONS

On September 28, 2016, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued updated federal nursing home regulations (Requirements of Participation for Long-Term Care Facilities). This is the first comprehensive revision to the regulations since they were issued in 1991. The updated rule (also referred to as the "final rule") is being implemented in three phases: Phase 1-November 28, 2016; Phase 2 - November 28, 2017; and Phase 3-November 28, 2019. The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care has released a fact sheet explaining the changes to the Federal Nursing Home Regulations. The 15 page fact sheet " provides a brief overview of key changes in the sections on Resident Rights; Freedom from Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation; and Admission, Transfer and Discharge that will go into effect in Phase 1. The purpose of the summary is to highlight what is different between the prior rule and the final rule." Go to the following link to read the summary:

<http://theconsumervoicet.org/uploads/files/issues/summary-of-key-changes-effective-phase-1-final.pdf> or call us for a hard copy.

[Source: "Elder Law Prof Blog, November 28, 2016]

### TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR

Many of us remember the days when our primary care doctor (or general practitioner) handled most of our medical care. The doctor took the lead, we followed. Today, things have changed. We need to look at our relationships as care partnerships. We not only have our primary care doctor, we have nurses, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, therapists, and specialists as part of our care team.

This means that we need to be attentive to our medical care and be our own health care advocates. We need to ask questions. We need to bring up problems even if the doctor doesn't ask. We need to let the doctor know if we have concerns about treatments, medications, or procedures. What's going on in our daily health life? Let the doctor know.

Good communication is honest and open communication. Our doctors can suggest the best treatments only if they know what is really going on with our health.

Go to your appointment prepared. Make a list of questions you need answered. We know that our time with our doctors is limited so prioritize your questions.

Stick to the point. Make notes on your symptoms, when they started, how often, what makes them better or worse.

Although our medical care is important at any age, we need to be more attentive as we age. We

may have more health concerns, and there are more treatment options available to us. Our health has a big impact on all parts of our lives, and we need to be able to discuss our concerns with our physicians and our care team! For more tips on talking to your doctor, check out the blog on our web page!

[Source: Talking With Your Doctor, NIH, NIA, 2014]

### CHILDREN'S BOOK ON ALZHEIMER'S PUBLISHED

Peggy Baller Everly was employed as a geriatric specialist and Adult Day Services Director with Family Service – Upper Ohio Valley for twenty-five years, and was strongly involved with the Alzheimer's Association, being recognized with the Rockefeller Award. Peggy is now an author with the publication of her children's book "*I'm Looking for Grandma's Memory*".

Billy is very excited to visit with his Grandma, and during the visit Grandma tells Billy that she's lost her memory and he needs to help her find it.

Contact us for information on how to get your copy!

### CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

The Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group has changed meeting days and location. Meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00pm – 7:00pm at

First Christian Church, 1343 National Road, Wheeling. For more information on the group, call Chris Gillis (group facilitator) at 304 780-6504. The group is open to all who are caring for a loved one with dementia. Parking and refreshments are available.

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT FAIR**

The 18<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT FAIR will be held at the Ohio Valley Mall in St Clairsville Ohio on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 from 10am – 3pm. Exhibitors will provide information, giveaways and health screens for Fair attendees. Entertainment is offered and a Fashion Show is held in the afternoon.

There is NO fee to exhibit although most exhibitors need to provide a certificate of liability insurance. Registration packets will be distributed in early February, 2017.

Exhibitors will have the opportunity to meet consumers, and a continental breakfast for Fair exhibitors offers an opportunity to network before the Fair opens.

The event is free and open to the public, and attendees can learn about services that are available to them whether they live in Ohio or West Virginia!

Want to participate? Have questions? Contact me at 304 243-0996 or [akoegler@frontier.com](mailto:akoegler@frontier.com) for general information or to make sure you're on our contact list!

**WV SOCIAL WORK BOARD CHANGES ADDRESS**

The WV Board of Social Work has moved its offices. The new location is 1124 Smith St (one block past Capitol Market) in Suite B 200. The mailing address remains the same - PO Box 5459, Charleston, WV 25361. Phone and fax numbers remain unchanged. Business hours also remain the same: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Should you need to come to the Board office, you should park in the back of the building and enter from the back. Walk in visitors are accepted between the hours of 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**2017 PROGRAMS**

We are working on our spring program schedule for the community (Personal Enrichment programs) and for professionals (workshops with continuing education credit). Call Altnheim Resource & Referral Services at 304 243-0996 for more information on our 2017 schedule.

**CAN WE HELP YOU?**

People may need help as caregivers or care receivers, and often don't know where to turn to get information. Altnheim Resource & Referral Services has been helping seniors, caregivers and professionals locate services and learn about aging issues for over 21 years. Many things have changed during that time. Agencies have come and

gone as have services. Technology has advanced. We have seen on-line information expand although like so many things – a wider presence doesn't necessarily mean better service. Internet searches may add to the frustration with web sites that are difficult to navigate or contain outdated information. Can you reach a live person? Is there someone with whom you can discuss your situation?

Let us help. We serve anyone in need of assistance regardless of location, age or income. Consultation, information, and referrals are provided without charge and remain confidential. Do you need someone to speak to your group about aging and caregiving? Feel free to call us at 304 243-0996, email Ann at [akoegler@frontier.com](mailto:akoegler@frontier.com) or contact us through our web site at [www.altnheimcommunity.com](http://www.altnheimcommunity.com). We'd be happy to help you!

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Let us be  
Your Gateway to Senior  
Care!

Our Hours:  
Monday – Friday  
8am – 4pm



[www.facebook.com/altnheimresourceandreferral](http://www.facebook.com/altnheimresourceandreferral)