

Senior Peer Counselling

Senior Peer Counsellors of BC are trained volunteer counsellors who provide active listening, emotional support and guidance, empathy with life-style changes, decision-making and problem solving. The following agencies offer this service, free of charge.

Beacon Community Services

Seniors Hotline &

Volunteer Centre **250-656-5537**

SHOAL Centre
10030 Resthaven Drive
Sidney, BC V8L 3G4
www.beaconcs.ca

Salt Spring Seniors **250-537-4635**
Services Society **or** **250-537-4604**

379 Lower Ganges Road
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V4

Seniors Serving Seniors **250-382-4331**

109-1022 Pandora Avenue
Victoria, BC V8V 3P5
www.seniorsservingseniors.bc.ca



Financial Assistance

Information on pensions, supplements, benefits, allowances, and taxes.

Automobile Insurance Discounts

Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC) **1-800-663-3051**

or contact your local insurance agent.

If you are 65 or older, and use your motor vehicle for pleasure only, you may be eligible for a discount of 25 percent off your basic AUTOPLAN insurance premium. Disabled seniors may qualify for both Seniors' rate and the Disability Discount.

www.icbc.com

Provincial Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax Consumer Taxation

Branch **250-387-1500**

PO Box 9442, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9V4

Offers rebate to Handicapped Persons.

www.rev.gov.bc.ca/ctb

Compassionate Care Benefits

Benefits are available to Employment Insurance eligible workers who must be absent from work to provide support to a family member who is gravely ill with a serious risk of death. Six weeks of benefits are available to those who are eligible and provide the required medical certificate. The benefit can be used by one individual or shared

with eligible family members to care for a child, parent, spouse or common-law partner. More information is available at Service Canada at **1-800-206-7218.**

www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Health Benefits & Subsidies

Medical Services Plan (MSP) **1-800-663-7100**
Out of province claims **250-952-1334**

The Medical Services Plan provides basic health services for BC residents. For information regarding eligibility and services contact the BC Seniors' Line or refer to "BC Seniors' Guide" available at **1-800-465-4911**

www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/msp

Pharmacare **1-800-663-7100**

Mailing Address
Ministry of Health
PO Box 9655, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9P2

Pharmacare is the program that provides assistance for prescription drug costs. Call the above number for information and eligibility. Representatives are available to take your call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.

www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme

Housing Benefits and Subsidies

BC Home Owner's Grant **250-356-8904**

If you are a permanent resident in BC, a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, and own and occupy your residence, you may be eligible for the Provincial Home Owner Grant. The grant reduces the amount of property taxes you have

to pay. To apply for the Home Owner Grant, complete the application form on the back of the property tax notice, which is sent to you in May of each year.

www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individual

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation **250-363-8040**

150 - 1675 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2G5

Provides market forecast reports, technical publications, and videos on adapting your home so you can live independently. CMHC insured financing for seniors projects, including affordable partnerships. Information on Home Owners' grants, including Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program & Home Adaptation for Seniors Independence. Information on home security, home inspection checklists, avoiding renovations problems.

www.cmhc.ca

Deferment of Property Taxes
Ministry of Finance **250-387-0555**

Real Property Taxation Branch
Tax Deferment Section
Ministry of Finance & Corporate Relations
PO Box 9446, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9V6

Homeowners aged 55 years and over may defer the payment of annual property taxes on their principal residence. The program is also available to homeowners of any age who are widowed spouses, or who meet the definition of a person with disabilities, in the Disability Benefits Program Act.

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters Program

(SAFER)

1-800-257-7756

BC Housing

101 - 4555 Kingsway

Burnaby, BC V5H 4V8

Provides direct cash assistance to eligible residents of British Columbia who are age 60 or over and who pay rent for their homes. Seniors may be eligible if they: pay more than 30% of their total income toward rent for their homes or pad rental; are age 65 or over, and are entitled to Old Age Security from the Government of Canada; are age 60-64 and a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant; have resided in BC for the full 12 months immediately preceding application; applicant or spouse must have lived in Canada for 10 continuous years as an adult.

www.bchousing.org

Pensions and Supplements

Federal Programs

Service Canada **1-800-277-9914**

PO Box 1177

Victoria, BC V8W 2V2

Service Canada is responsible for administering the federal benefits listed below including: Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Allowance for the Survivor. Canadian Pension Plan benefits are based on contributions to the plan while Old Age Security is designed to ensure a minimum income to eligible Canadians. Call the number above to book an appointment. If you have a hearing or speech impairment and you use a TDD/TTY device, call **1-800-255-4786**.

www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Canada Pension Plan (CPP) provides retirement pension and other benefits for those people who have contributed to the Plan through paid employment in Canada. The amount of CPP benefit is determined by the contribution you made during the time you were employed. Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits may begin as early as age 60. Applications for Canada Pension Plan benefits are available from any federal Service Canada office.

Old Age Security Pension (OAS) is a federally-funded basic monthly pension that is paid to you if you have reached the age of 65, if you are a Canadian citizen or a legal resident of Canada and if you meet the residence requirements. To receive OAS, you should apply at least six months before your 65th birthday or the date of your eligibility.

Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) may be available to you depending on your income and your marital status. To receive GIS, you must apply by providing an application, which can be obtained from Service Canada. GIS is based on your annual income, or the combined income of you and your spouse.

Allowance for the Survivor may be available for the spouse of someone receiving OAS and GIS. You must be between 60 and 65 years of age and meet residence requirements. You may receive an Allowance for the Survivor until you reach age 65 depending on your income.

Provincial Programs

Seniors Not Receiving Old Age Security

If you are 65 or over and are not eligible for the Old Age Security Pension and its supplement - Guaranteed Income Supplement. - you may be eligible for assistance from the Ministry of Human Resources. Eligibility is based on your income, assets, and shelter costs. For more information contact your local Ministry of Human Resources office listed under "Governments - British Columbia" in the blue pages of the TELUS Phone Directory or phone

Service BC 250-387-6121

Tax Credits - Federal

Canada Revenue Agency

Taxation Office 1-800-959-8281

Low-income seniors may obtain assistance completing their tax forms through various seniors' organizations. Refer to volunteers who assist people to live independently on page ??.

If you have a hearing or speech impairment and you use a TDD/TTY device, call **1-800-665-0354** for more information on taxes.

www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca

Tax Credits - Provincial

BC Sales Tax Credit 250-387-3332

The BC Sales Tax Credit application for low-income families and individuals can be found on the British Columbia Credits form included with your income tax return package from the Federal Government.

www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/itb



Health Services

A listing of public and private providing health care.

Aboriginal Health Services

Aboriginal Health Regional Manager

250-370-8965

Please call with any concerns regarding health services delivered by the Vancouver Island Health Authority, or for advocacy and support in accessing health services for you, your family or community.

Aboriginal Diabetes Team

and Health Nutritionist 250-370-8258

If you or a family member has diabetes the team will come to your home to help you. Nutritional counselling will be provided in your home or in your community.

Aboriginal Liaison Nurse 250-370-8847

Serves Aboriginal patients and their families who have been admitted to the hospitals on Southern Vancouver Island.

Aboriginal Women Wellness Program

250-519-1831

Supports Aboriginal women to attain their wellness goals.