



NEWS

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Montgomery County Expands Community Connections Program with Four New Locations

Norristown, PA (March 26, 2015) – Montgomery County’s Community Connections program revolutionized the way human services are delivered in the county with an innovative approach to provide services to people who need them most, where they need them most—in their community. Community Connections offices are one-stop service centers in an initial four locations around Montgomery County—Willow Grove, Pottstown, Lansdale, and Norristown. So far the program has made approximately 8,414 referrals to agencies and served approximately 3,429 unique clients.

In an effort to provide more accessibility to county residents, four new regional offices are now opened. The expansion sites will be staffed by existing county personnel who will work out of the new sites on designated days. Please see below for the locations and hours of operation for the expansion sites:

Pennsburg/East Greenville:

The Open Link
425 Penn Street
Pennsburg, PA 18073
Tuesdays 8am-4pm

The Center at the Open Link
517 Jefferson Street
East Greenville, PA 18041
Thursdays 8am-4pm

Souderton:

Keystone Opportunity Center
104 Main Street
Souderton, PA 18963
Wednesdays 9am-2pm

Ambler:

Mattie N. Dixon Community Cupboard
150 North Main Street
Ambler, PA 19002
Wednesdays 9am-12pm

Lower Merion:

Narberth Community Food Bank
201 Sabine Avenue
Narberth, PA 19072
Tuesdays 9am-2pm

The initial phase of the Community Connections program featured county personnel in each regional office known as Navicates. The word navicate was created from the words navigator and advocate. These skilled human services professionals serve as navigators for residents of the county's large human services network, and then advocate on their behalf to receive the services they need for themselves or their family. The added value of the navicates is that they are located in the regional offices, eliminating the need for most residents in need of human services to travel exclusively to Norristown.

In the past, a resident might have a human service need, but not know who to call for help. Sometimes, a resident would not know what human services Montgomery County offered, or what services were available to residents. Now, a Montgomery County Community Connections Navicate provides a "front door" to County human services. Any resident who has a human service question can ask a Community Connections Navicate for help. A Community Connections Navicate can point the resident in the right direction, and even refer a resident to a variety of resources based on their need.

"Until now, someone needing services had to travel to Norristown to access those services," said Josh Shapiro, chairman of the county board of commissioners and a champion for the Community Connections program. "Many times those needing services the most either do not have a car or live in areas not served well by public transportation. Now they will have to travel much shorter distances to our regional offices, and once there will have someone working directly for them," Shapiro said.

For more information on the Community Connections program, please contact Turea Hutson at 484-674-6562 or visit Community Connections online at www.montcopa.org/communityconnections.