



SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES™

Addressing underlying conditions of wellbeing and justice, for all to reach their full potential

Community Connections

A Newsletter of the Shelby County Government's Division of Community Services

Happy Birthday to Me (mphis & Shelby County)

As a person who believes in the power of birthday celebrations, as evidenced by our division's birthday parties, May is a pretty special month for me. May 20 if you want to get specific. It is not about the strawberry cake or fellowship of family and friends, although I do love both. The more trips around the sun I go, the more I recognize how powerful birthdays are as a **tool of reflection, renewal, and regeneration** for each of us. Birthdays mark our beginnings, but also represent an opportunity for us to **take a critical look at where we have been and where we want to go**. Although our personal journeys are not always perfect or even close, we still celebrate the marking of our birthdays as it signifies the possibilities ahead.

Memphis in May 2019 has been an even more festive month for me, as I shared the marking of a big birthday with Memphis and Shelby County. This year marks the Bicentennial (200th) Anniversary of the founding of both the City of Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee. All month long, we have celebrated with good music, BBQ, and community fellowship to mark the importance of the beginnings of this place that we live, grow and love. We have also continued to have **important conversations around poverty, racism and barriers to education and healthcare that have plagued our story**.

I believe that the best way to honor the gift of what birthdays are is the ability to celebrate, critique and change towards the best version of ourselves. The same is true as we recognize the birthday of Memphis and Shelby County. Our community isn't perfect. We know that. We rank among the highest (or lowest) among many national rankings that are not favorable. We struggle with the stain of racism and inequities that continue to impact families and children every day. At the same time, we have a community filled with **people of resilience, creativity and connectedness** hard to find anywhere else in the world.

As public servants within a very visible division of government, it is important that **each of us individually and collectively commit ourselves to celebration and regeneration of our community**. It is through both that we will position ourselves for the sustainable, positive change that we strive for.

Happy Birthday Memphis and Shelby County. Here is to two centuries, with a hope for an even better century ahead!

Sincerely,
Dorcas Young Griffin
Director, Division of Community Services



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Vision Statement

The Shelby County Division of Community Services strives to be a highly organized team and partner, dedicated to promoting a strong community where all people are able to reach their full potential.

Mission Statement

The Division of Community Services promotes ongoing economic security and independence for the people of Shelby County. We do this by promoting, coordinating and delivering services that address the underlying conditions for wellbeing and justice.

Published by the Office of Community Engagement and Outreach for the Shelby County Division of Community Services
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Memphis Child Advocacy Center Grows



On Monday, June 10, from 4pm to 6pm, the public is invited to join the Memphis Child Advocacy Center (CAC) as they celebrate their enhanced and expanded campus. There will be a ribbon cutting, self-guided tours, and kid-themed refreshments. One highlight is the **new forensic medical clinic**—geared especially for children. The clinic will be operated by the **Shelby County Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center**.



The Memphis CAC is all about helping **kids find hope and healing** after sexual or physical abuse. The Shelby County Child Protection Investigation Team (CPIT) is headquartered at the Memphis CAC. Made up of 15 agencies, CPIT is responsible for the investigation and response to reported child abuse. The CAC provides advocacy, therapy, forensic interviewing, and team coordination.



In addition to CAC staff, the campus is also home to the Memphis Police

Child Abuse Squad and several units of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services. In addition to the new Shelby County Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center clinic, additional units from Tennessee DCS are also moving onsite. That’s a lot of caring professionals looking out for our community’s most vulnerable kids.

Visit MemphisCAC.org for more information.

*Want a representative from Community Services to come to your event?
Complete this [form](#) to make your request.*





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Community Services Gives Back Again



In honor of National Child Abuse Prevention Month this April, Community Services participated in a “Wish List Drive” in support of our partner agency Memphis Child Advocacy Center. Because of our efforts, 13 large reusable grocery bags of snacks, 14 bags and boxes of cleaning supplies, 17 cases of water, 4 bags of juice boxes, and 2 bags of journals were given. Over 300 items will be put to good use for the children who receive services from the Memphis Child Advocacy Center. Huge kudos to **Tori Cooper of Pretrial Services** who spearheaded this amazing effort, the Employee Ambassadors who assisted with the planning and execution of the “Wish List Drive,” and each employee who donated to support our youth.

New Leadership in Community Services

RAUSHANAH MORGAN has recently been appointed as Deputy Division Director. She is excited about the opportunity to serve the needs of Shelby County’s most vulnerable residents, while bringing a unique perspective to the agency. Ms. Morgan is a proud Memphian who spent most of her career in Financial Services, living across the globe in places like Boston, New York, and Hong Kong. However, never one to settle for the status quo, she was passionate about effecting positive social change while away and is thrilled to be back at home to serve Shelby County. In her new role, she hopes to encourage more relationship building, strategic planning and data analysis within the Division to accomplish Director Griffin’s vision for a more engaged team, more resources, and an increased awareness of and connection within the much-needed services throughout the Division and its community partners.



ZACH FERGUSON has joined Community Services as the Administrator for Performance and Quality Management. Mr. Ferguson will be working across the division to track and improve performance and outcomes, improve efficiencies, and build tools that will help us gauge the impact of our work and tell our story. Originally from Virginia, Zach moved to Memphis 8 years ago as a United Methodist Missionary that came to work on issues of worker rights, economic justice, and wage theft cases. Falling in love with the city, he stayed and served as Executive Director of the Memphis Area Prevention Coalition, then Deputy Director for Workforce Investment Network. He is most excited about working with the amazing group of people that make up the Community Services family.





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Older Americans Act and the Aging Commission

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
AGING COMMISSION

Governor Bill Lee proclaimed May as Older Tennesseans Month in correlation with Older Americans Month. Many of the services and supports provided by the Aging Commission of the Mid-South are funded by the Older Americans Act.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) originally enacted in 1965, supports programs that are designed to help seniors stay as independent as possible in their homes and communities. These services help seniors avoid hospitalization and nursing home care to promote the dignity of older adults and help them remain engaged in their community as they age.

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Programs and services provided by the Older Americans Act are for persons over 60. These services include: case management, senior center services, in-home services, transportation, information and referral, home delivered meals, meals at congregate sites, and family caregiver support.



In 1981, the City of Memphis Government, Fayette County Government, Lauderdale County Government, Shelby County Government, and Tipton County Government joined together to establish the Delta Commission on Aging to provide supports and services sponsored by OAA. Now known as the Aging Commission of the Mid-South, this vital organization serves as a single point of entry for needed resources for older adults by providing counseling, information, intake, screenings and referrals for services to assure access to the services sponsored by the Older Americans Act.

If you know seniors who need assistance, please have them call (901) 222-4111.





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Community Services in your area



The best way for residents to learn about Community Services and access programs is to be in touch with someone from our incredible team. Join us for an upcoming event all around Shelby County.

SCS PreK Screening and K Readiness
at SCS Early Childhood Offices
June 1, 10am—2pm

Fight the FOMO. Follow us at:
www.shelbycountyttn.gov/Community-Services



LIKE THE NEWSLETTER?

We will be moving to an eNewsletter soon. If you like our current newsletter format, please email Janet.Lo@shelbycountyttn.gov and let us know what you enjoy.

Goodwill Excel Mid-South Social Services Luncheon
June 5, 11am

Wilder Youth Family Day
June 8, 9am—1pm

Evento Familiar para la Comunidad
June 9, noon—5pm

HUD Strong Families Day
at the Emmanuel Center
June 15, 8am—2pm

WKNO Ready To Learn
At Southgate CashSaver
June 22, 10am—2pm



\$\$\$ Money \$\$\$
for Utility Assistance is still available. Please spread the word so we can help **KEEP THE LIGHTS ON.**

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT &
OUTREACH

