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Division of Aging Services to use $1.7 million grant to increase access to services and reduce social isolation

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ATLANTA – The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) will work to reduce social isolation for older adults and people with disabilities amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of a federal CARES Act grant. The Department will distribute $1.7 million throughout the state by mid-June to provide older Georgians with enhanced connectivity during a time when many feel lonely.

Georgians will see a range of new service solutions that incorporate assistive technology, telehealth and virtual social opportunities. The resulting service delivery innovations and infrastructure changes are expected to have a long-lasting, positive impact on the way in which Georgia supports older adults and people with disabilities.

“This grant gives us the opportunity to help older and disabled Georgians stay connected virtually by providing training for services like Zoom and Skype, and access to tablets, internet and data plans,” said Abby Cox, director of the Division of Aging Services. “We want to ensure people have the tools -- and the knowledge – to maintain vital relationships with family or friends in a way that also keeps them safe.”

The CARES Act made special COVID-19 funding available to each state’s lead agency for the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC). The ADRC provides information and assistance to older adults and people with disabilities through a statewide network of trained specialists. The size of each award is based on a state’s population and demographics. Georgia’s grant will be administered by the DHS Division of Aging Services, which manages the ADRC in collaboration

with 12 Area Agencies on Aging, nine Centers for Independent Living and the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

About the Georgia Division of Aging Services

The Division of Aging Services is the division within the Department of Human Services charged with assisting and protecting Georgia's older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives. DHS works in partnership with local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to deliver services. AAAs are part of a nationwide network of state and local programs designed to help older people plan and care for their lifelong needs. To find resources, visit georgiaADRC.com or call 866-552-4464, toll-free, to be connected to the Area Agency on Aging in your region. To learn more information about services available to assist vulnerable Georgians, visit aging.ga.gov.