



# Kansas Currents

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

## Central Kansas Extension District

[centralkansas.ksu.edu](http://centralkansas.ksu.edu)

**March - April 2026**

*District Extension Agent:*

**Lisa Newman**  
Family & Community  
Wellness

**Melissa Schrag**  
Adult Development  
and Aging



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Central Kansas Extension District.

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Research and Extension

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[ksre.k-state.edu](http://ksre.k-state.edu)

## DO YOU HAVE **concerns** about **falling?**



A MATTER OF  
**BALANCE**

MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

**Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. A MATTER OF BALANCE is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels.**

**This program emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls.**

### **YOU WILL LEARN TO:**

- view falls as controllable
- set goals for increasing activity
- make changes to reduce fall risks at home
- exercise to increase strength and balance

### **WHO SHOULD ATTEND?**

- anyone concerned about falls
- anyone interested in improving balance, flexibility and strength
- anyone who has fallen in the past
- anyone who has restricted activities because of falling concerns

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension  
Central Kansas District

Classes are held every Tuesday for 8 weeks, starting March 24th through May 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to Noon. Please plan to attend all classes in the series.

**Location: Extension Office**  
**315 W. 3rd, Minneapolis, KS**

No Cost to attend

**For more information, or to sign up, please call:**

**785-392-2147 Minneapolis**

**785-309-5850 Salina office**

K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting Melissa Schrag before February 24<sup>th</sup> at 785-309-5850. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.



# Medicare Advantage OPEN ENROLLMENT

January 1 – March 31, 2026

**Already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan?  
This is your chance to:**

- 🔄 Switch to another Medicare Advantage plan
- ➔ Return to Original Medicare (and Part D if needed)

## Why consider a change?

- ✔ New health needs
- ✔ Moving to a new area
- ✔ Coverage or cost changes
- ✔ Extra benefits like dental & vision
- ✔ Provider network updates

## How to switch:

- > Contact the new plan directly
- > Use Medicare Plan Finder

## Need help?

Saline Co: 785-309-5850  
Ottawa Co: 785-392-2147  
**1-800-MEDICARE**

# Babysitting Clinic

March 16 9AM-Noon  
Central Kansas District Extension Office  
315 W 3rd, Minneapolis

OR

March 18 9AM-Noon  
Salina Family Healthcare Center  
651 E Prescott Rd, Salina

Registration Fee: \$5



**SPACE IS LIMITED. REGISTER ONLINE:  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/BABYSITTING2026](https://tinyurl.com/babysitting2026)  
BY MARCH 9**

The Business of  
Babysitting

Health and Wellness  
Intro to First Aid/CPR

Development  
and Activities



**Are you interested in becoming a babysitter? Join K-State Extension along with community partners to learn about the responsibility of babysitting.**

**FOR AGES 11-15**

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## **Walk Kansas 2026 – Get Ready to Move!**

Did you know adults should aim for at least **150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week** to support overall health? Walk Kansas is an 8-week program designed to help you reach that goal in a fun, flexible, and motivating way. Whether you enjoy walking, biking, strength training, or any activity that gets you moving, it all counts!

### **Program Highlights:**

- **Team Formation:** Rally your friends or family as teams of up to six members, with one designated as the captain. Embrace flexibility, as each team member records their weekly activities, be it walking, yoga, or any chosen exercise.
- **Global Connection:** Through the magic of technology, teams can unite across borders, fostering bonds with family or friends residing in different parts of the world. Our Walk Kansas community extends its warm welcome to participants from around the globe!

### **Registration Details:**

- **Registration Opens:** March 1
- **Cost:** A nominal fee of \$10 per person opens the door to a wealth of health benefits.
- **Apparel:** Elevate your experience with exclusive Walk Kansas apparel, available for purchase directly from our website.

**Exciting news for 2026:** Walk Kansas will be hosted on a brand-new online platform, making it easier than ever to track your minutes, monitor progress, and stay motivated throughout the challenge.

For additional information and registration, visit [www.walkkansas.org](http://www.walkkansas.org) or reach out to Lisa Newman at [lmnewman@ksu.edu](mailto:lmnewman@ksu.edu). Feel free to call the Salina office at 785-309-5850 or the Minneapolis office at 785-392-2147.



**JOIN THE WALKING CHALLENGE**

**WALK KANSAS**

**March 22 - May 16, 2026**  
Walk with us toward a *healthier* tomorrow.

 Kansas State University  
**Extension**



# LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LIEAP can help pay your home heating bills!

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time annual benefit.

The 2026 LIEAP application period begins January 20, 2026, at 8 a.m. and ends March 31, 2026, at 5 p.m. Applications will not be accepted, and payments will not be issued until the season officially opens.

Applying for LIEAP is easy. You can complete your LIEAP application online through the DCF Self-Service Portal at [dcfapp.kees.ks.gov](https://dcfapp.kees.ks.gov) during the LIEAP application period.

Paper applications can be requested by calling toll-free 1-888-369-4777

## Simply Produce

Simply Produce is a produce bundle program between Central Kansas District and Gene's Heartland Foods in Minneapolis.

Community members can purchase produce bundles containing fresh fruits and vegetables for \$15+ tax at any register located at Gene's in Minneapolis. Contents in the monthly bundles do vary from month to month.



March purchase dates: March 12-17. Pick-up date and time: Friday, March 20, 12-12:30 p.m.

April purchase dates: April 9 - 14. Pick-up date and time: Friday, April 17, 12-12:30 p.m.

Purchasing location: Gene's Heartland Foods located at 218 W 3rd, Minneapolis.

Pick up location: Community Bible Church located at 929 N. Rothsay, Minneapolis.

## Optimizing Sleep

You spend about one-third of your life sleeping – or trying to. While it may seem like downtime, sleep is one of your body’s most active processes, affecting nearly every system that keeps you healthy and alert. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine calls sleep a biological necessity – vital for brain function, mood, immune health, metabolism, and your heart.

When sleep falls short, so does your health. Sleep loss raises your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and depression. It also affects focus, emotional balance, and ability to manage stress. Adults need about seven to eight hours of quality sleep each night.

The good news: you can often improve sleep with practical changes.

**-Create a calm environment.** Keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool. White noise, a fan, or blackout curtains can help.

**-Set a regular schedule.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day – including weekends - to regulate your body’s internal clock.

**-Limit screens and stimulants.** Avoid caffeine within six hours of bedtime and turn off electronics 30 minutes before bed. Blue light from screens suppresses melatonin, the hormone that helps you sleep.

**-Use your bed only for sleep and intimacy.** Watching TV or working in bed trains your brain to stay alert.

**-Watch what and when you drink.** Stay hydrated, but limit fluids close to bedtime to reduce nighttime trips to the bathroom.

Health & Nutrition Letter, Tufts University, February 2026, Vol. 43, No. 12

## Cold Weather Rule

**November 1 – March 31**

The Cold Weather Rule is designed to keep your utilities connected during the winter months, even when you’re unable to pay your bill in full.

Contact your utility company to see if you qualify to make payment arrangements under the Cold Weather Rule.



**For more information:**  
Call your utility company or the  
Kansas Corporation Commission  
at (800) 662-0027.



## Wondering about TrumpRx?

TrumpRx.gov is a federal website that offers discounted prices on select brand name prescription medications. The site currently lists 43 medications, with the possibility of more being added.

To use TrumpRx, you visit the website, search for your medication, and either download a coupon to take to a pharmacy or purchase directly from the manufacturer. A valid prescription is required.

TrumpRx is most useful for people without insurance or those whose insurance does not cover certain medications, such as weight loss or fertility drugs. People with Medicare or Medicaid are not eligible. Most people with private insurance will usually get better prices through their insurance, unless their plan excludes a drug or they have a high deductible they will not meet.

TrumpRx may save money for people paying out of pocket. For example, Wegovy pills can drop from \$1,349 to \$149 per month, and Gonal-F can drop from \$966 to \$168 per pen. However, some prices match existing discount programs like GoodRx, and in some cases generics or over-the-counter alternatives are far cheaper.

Experts recommend comparing prices across TrumpRx, insurance, pharmacy cash prices, and other discount programs. Pharmacists can help determine the best option. TrumpRx may help a small subset of people, but it is not broadly beneficial for most insured patients.

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

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**Central Kansas Extension District**

K-State Salina  
2218 K-State Road North  
Salina, KS 67401

Address Service Requested

The enclosed material is for your information. If we can be of further assistance, feel free to call or drop by the Extension Office.

**Salina Office**

K-State Salina  
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**Minneapolis Office**

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