

## Needed: Letters for long-term care residents

Written by Gallupsun Staff  
Thursday, 24 December 2020 10:42

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### **Aging & Long-Term Services asks letter writers to help spread cheer**

As COVID cases across the nation surge, New Mexico's Aging and Long-Term Services Department is asking the community to help rekindle the holiday spirit within the state's 300+ Long Term Care facilities. LTCs are comprised of Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes.

There are approximately 11,000 people living in Long-Term Care facilities right now. Many have been unable to see or be with family, to leave their facility, participate in activities, or share a meal over the past nine months. While we know COVID-safe practices are a critical way we can protect this vulnerable population, we also know the isolation our LTC residents experience is devastating.

We have a simple ask—can you take a few minutes to write a letter? From the artwork of a toddler to the experiences of a fellow senior, these letters mean so much to their recipients. It's a simple way to bring joy, hope, friendship, and a smile. All of these things can be accomplished with one letter ALTSD Cabinet Secretary Katrina Hotrum-Lopez said.

Since the start of the pandemic in New Mexico ALTSD has been collecting and distributing letters to LTC residents, homebound seniors, and adults with disabilities as part of their Create & Connect Campaign

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(#CreateAndConnect). Through the emergency food distribution project and bulk boxes filled with letters, they've distributed approximately 5,000 letters to seniors and disabled adults since April.

Address letters to:

ALTSD

Create and Connect Campaign

8500 Menaul Blvd. NE, Suite B-350

Albuquerque, NM 87112

***Writers are encouraged to share their letters by tagging @NewMexicoAging (on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram) and using the handle #CreateAndConnect. Letters for seniors are collected year-round by the department. Volunteer organizations, schools, private businesses, and faith-based organizations are encouraged to participate in the campaign or reach out to facilities in their region to adopt the facility and provide letters.***