



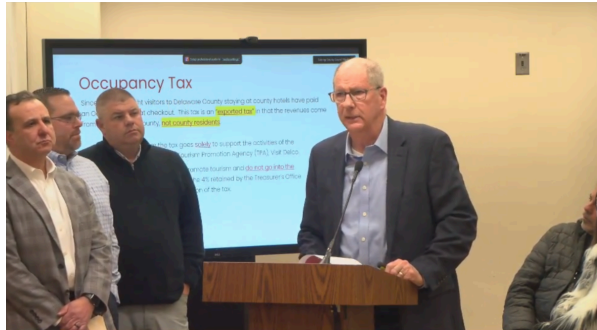
The Delaware County Digest

Your source for the latest news from Delaware County | January 23, 2026



Delaware County Council Unanimously Passes Ordinance Amending Hotel Tax

At Wednesday evening's meeting, Delaware County Council unanimously passed an ordinance enhancing the County's Hotel Tax after a presentation from Visit Delco about the impacts of the tax. This comes ahead of a year where Delaware County is expected to see an increase in visitors thanks to a variety of local sporting events and United States 250th birthday celebrations.



The tax, which will be paid by visitors rather than Delaware County residents, will increase from 3% to 5% effective April 1. This will nearly double the revenue generated from the tax, providing an additional \$3 million to Visit Delco annually and putting Delaware County on par with neighboring counties.

Since 1985, overnight visitors to Delaware County lodging at hotels have paid a Hotel Tax. By state law, counties are able to tax up to 5%, and revenue from the tax goes solely to support the activities of Visit Delco as the County's designated Tourism Promotion Agency.

"This is a tool in the toolbox that we need to use," said Council member Joanne Phillips. "This will bring economic help to the county. It will create jobs, it will create business, and it's economically smart."

Representatives from Visit Delco outlined the economic impact of visitors to Delaware County in their presentation before the vote. In 2024, 4.5 million people visited Delco, spending \$840 million and creating 13,000 jobs, leading to an economic impact of \$1.2 billion and \$68 million dollars of local taxes collected which were reinvested into the community to improve the lives of

Delco residents. In 2025, the County saw growth across the board in hotel occupancy, revenue, and rooms sold, with Delco seeing the largest growth in rooms sold across all Philadelphia area counties.

In 2026, these numbers are expected to grow considerably with the PGA Championship coming to Newtown Square, FIFA World Cup matches being played in South Philadelphia, a high-profile international soccer team using the Philadelphia Union facilities in Chester as their World Cup base camp, the MLB All-Star Game, America250 celebrations, and more.

“This has been a long time coming,” Council member Elaine Paul Schaefer said. “We’ve spent the last few years talking about the need to raise this to 5%. With increased investment, we will get more for our hoteliers and we will have more economic activity coming in.”

Visit Delco also explained the challenges they’ve faced after the pandemic with the decrease in business travelers and how they’ve gotten creative in attracting people to the county. Among other things, they have been advertising digitally in countries that will be playing in Philadelphia during the World Cup encouraging fans to stay in Delco, partnering with groups hosting events in the area like the Donegal Festival in Springfield in March, and providing Main Street Grants to municipalities holding events that attract visitors.

Read the ordinance amending the Hotel Tax [here](#). For more information about Visit Delco, go to visitdelco.com.

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Sign up for Delco Alert and Ensure you are Prepared for the Winter Storm Fern



With forecasts calling for the potential of more than a foot of snow and significant ice accumulations, Delaware County encourages residents to take steps now to prepare for a significant winter storm, including signing up for Delco Alert.

Delco Alert is Delaware County’s free emergency notification system that keeps our communities informed, prepared, and safe. Delco Alert delivers essential messages straight to residents’ phones, emails, or landlines. These include Code Blue alerts that trigger the County’s Cold Plan, storm and flood warnings, road closures, health advisories, and municipal service changes.

It is one of the most effective ways for County and local officials to communicate during emergencies and disruptions.

Many municipalities now use the platform to issue their own community alerts, and that number continues to rise. The system is available at no cost to all 49 municipalities in the County, and it’s already being used to share everything from weather warnings and vaccine events to street paving notices and trash delays.

You can choose what types of alerts you’d like to receive, how you’d like to receive them (text, call, or email), and you can register multiple locations, such as your home, your workplace, or a family member’s address.

To sign up, visit delcopa.gov/delcoalert.

Before the storm starts this weekend, ensure that you have enough food, drinking water, medications, and other essentials to last several days in case travel becomes difficult. Stock up on batteries, flashlights, and a portable phone charger in the event of a power outage. To check outage information, please visit PECO's outage map.

Avoid unnecessary travel during the storm, especially during peak snowfall (projected to be Sunday). If you must drive, keep an emergency kit in your vehicle that includes a blanket, extra clothing, snacks, water, a flashlight, and a shovel. Drive slowly, increase following distance, and be alert for snowplows and emergency vehicles.

If it's safe to do so, check in on neighbors to make sure they have heat, food, and any assistance they may need. Severe weather can be challenging for older adults, people with disabilities, and those living alone.

Please check the official County website delcopa.gov and social media channels for countywide updates. Visit local municipality websites and social media channels for specific updates.

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Delaware County Honors Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King with 4th Annual Day of Service in Chester



On Monday, members of Delaware County Council and the Delaware County community came together to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. at the 4th Annual MLK Day of Service in Chester.

The event built upon the 2026 theme “Reclaiming the Dream – Truth, Justice, and Community” to honor Dr. King’s enduring principles of equality and compassion. The Day of Service featured a variety of events designed to inspire and engage the community, emphasizing well-being, volunteerism, and unity. These activities were designed to fulfill Dr. King’s legacy by addressing current social issues, fostering inclusivity, and promoting a culture of peace and understanding.

“Days like Monday are the ones that Dr. King called for and fought for,” said Delaware County Council Chair Richard Womack. “With a shared purpose grounded in love, justice, and the belief a better future for all, Dr. King envisioned communities that

break down barriers, build bridges of understanding, and stand united in the face of challenges.”

The day began with an opening ceremony at Chester City Hall, which was followed by a Peace March from City Hall to Widener University. At Widener, participants worked on community beautification and community building activities that appealed to all ages. After lunch and remarks from local officials, the Cultural Arts and Technology Center and America250PADElco organized community building and art activities. These included a film and activity about the impacts of segregation, the creation of an “I Belong, We Belong” banner, a station with MLK historical pins, and much more.

Finally, participants headed over to the Schwartz Athletic Center on the Widener campus for the Hoops for Hunger basketball game between Widener students and Chester community members, which collected donations to benefit local food pantries. In a tightly contested game, Chester came out on top.

Throughout the day, attendees also reflected on the time Dr. King spent in Delaware County as a young man. Dr. King studied at Crozer Theological Seminary in Upland, graduating in 1951. At Crozer he was elected President of the student body while spending time preaching at Calvary Baptist Church in Chester. Although he only spent a few years in Delaware County, it served as an important stop on his journey to becoming the civil rights icon he's known as today.

Activities like the ones on Monday fostered unity, addressed social issues, and inspired us all to continue the work of building a more inclusive and compassionate Delaware County. It served as a reminder of the importance of continuing to carry out Dr. King's vision of service as a tool for change and illustrates the relevancy of his legacy.

Delaware County thanks the partners who made the MLK Day of Service such a success for the fourth year in a row, including Widener University, the Philadelphia Union, the City of Chester, America250PA Delco, the Cultural Arts and Technology Center, Making a Change, the Delaware County Heritage Commission, and the MLK Commemorative Committee of Chester and Vicinity.

For more information about community events celebrating US and Delco history, visit america250padelco.org.

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Delaware County Emergency Services Reflects on Building Readiness Together

Emergency management is often associated with response, but much of the work that keeps communities safe happens well before an incident occurs. In 2025, Delaware County's Emergency Management (EM) team focused on planning, training, and coordination, working closely with municipalities, agencies, and community partners to strengthen countywide readiness and recovery.

A major milestone was the development of Health System Support Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and community recovery coordination. This effort established a structured framework built around nine dedicated workgroups: Public Information, Administration, Workforce Re-Employment, Healthcare Facility Support, Healthcare Sustainability, Emergency Communications, Emergency Operations, Emergency Medical Services, and Health and Human Services. Together, these workgroups provide a coordinated approach to healthcare system stabilization and recovery, with continued collaboration across public, private, and nonprofit partners.

Training and exercises remained a core focus throughout the year. The EM team facilitated countywide planning sessions and exercises addressing real-world risks and community priorities, including safe schools, senior living facilities, hazardous materials preparedness, water rescue coordination, and Emergency Operations Center functions. These activities emphasized decision-making, coordination, and communication, ensuring partners are prepared before emergencies occur.

Municipal Emergency Management Coordinators (EMCs) played a central role in this work. The County's EM program is intentionally built around municipal needs, recognizing that local governments are on the front lines of emergency response and recovery. Through increased municipal participation in EOC operations, planning efforts, and training opportunities, the County works to ensure EMCs are supported, informed, and positioned for success in the communities they serve.



Technology and public communication capabilities also advanced in 2025. Enhancements to WebEOC improved information-sharing among agencies, while expanded participation in Delco Alert strengthened the County's ability to deliver timely public notifications. Residents are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts at delcopa.gov/delcoalert to stay informed about weather, safety messages, and community impacts.

Looking ahead, 2025 set the foundation for coordinated planning around major 2026 events. Municipalities are working with DES on upcoming events to support early resource coordination and preparedness. This includes planning for events that will bring national attention to Delaware County, such as the PGA Championship, America250 celebrations, and FIFA World Cup–related activities.

Through collaboration, planning, and shared responsibility, Delaware County's Emergency Management team continues working to build a more resilient county—for those who live, work, and play here.

Take Part, Spread the Word, Stay Connected



COSA Program to Help Sedentary Older Adults Get Moving Begins Monday, January 26

The Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) is offering **FREE** Active Living Every Day classes on Zoom on **Mondays at 10 AM** beginning January 26 running through April 13. This is a behavior change program focused on helping sedentary adults over age 60 fit physical activity into their lives in realistic ways. **For more information, email williamse@co.delaware.pa.us or call 610-499-1937 and provide your name, address, phone number, and email address.**



COSA to Offer Weekly Diabetes Self-Management Program in Sharon Hill Starting Wednesday, January 28

The Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) is offering the nationally recognized *Diabetes Self-Management Program* for residents over 60 who have diabetes, prediabetes, or care for someone with diabetes. The program will include six classes, primarily **Wednesdays from 10:30 AM-2 PM** at the Good Neighbor Senior Center in Sharon Hill starting January 28 and ending March 24. The program is **FREE** however class size is limited so registration is mandatory. **For more information, email williamse@co.delaware.pa.us or call 610-499-1937 and provide your name, address, phone number, and email address.**



COSA to Offer Weekly Chronic Pain Self-Management Program via Zoom Starting February 12

The Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) is offering the acclaimed *Power Over Pain* program to provide residents over 60 with self-care tools and life skills that support them in reaching their personal goals to manage their chronic pain. The program, which will be done over Zoom, will happen on Thursdays from 9:30 AM-12 PM, beginning on February 12 and going through March 19. The program is **FREE** however class size is limited so registration is required.



DCHD Continues Birth and Beyond Class Series

Birth and Beyond is a DCHD program in collaboration with the Foundation for Delaware County's Family Village designed to improve maternal and infant health outcomes by increasing access to education, supportive services, and community resources during pregnancy, postpartum, and beyond. DCHD plans to host monthly pop-up events throughout the county in 2026 to share resources and promote birthing classes. Each month will have a different theme, which will focus the sessions on different topics and resources.

February's events are **February 13 and 20 from noon-1:30 PM** at DCHD's Wellness Center in Yeadon. The events are for birthing or expecting parents only. **Registration is required through DCHD's Wellness Line at 484-276-2100.**



Delaware County Weekly Archive

