



# FRIDAY ALERT



**Alliance for Retired Americans**

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Spanish version: [www.alianzadejubilados.org](http://www.alianzadejubilados.org)

**May 20, 2022**

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## **Alliance Stands with Those Targeted in Mass Shooting in Buffalo**

**Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance, expressed his condolences this week to the victims and families of the tragic mass shooting last Saturday in Buffalo, New York at a Tops Friendly Markets grocery store. Ten people were killed, and three others were injured; 11 of the victims were black. Police said the 13 victims, including the wounded, ranged in age from 20 to 86.

Authorities are calling the attack “[racially motivated](#).” The suspect allegedly wrote a 180-page document filled with hateful rants about race that invoked the false “great replacement” conspiracy theory.

“The members of the Alliance join with all Americans who were hurt by the terrible violence last weekend in Buffalo in calling for an end to the bloodshed. Our thoughts are with the deceased, the injured and all of their loved ones. We send our deepest wishes for healing to everyone affected by this senseless attack.”

President Roach said that the rhetoric that has become all too familiar on television and social media has contributed to the violence in America.

“Regardless of what they may think they are saying, when cable television pundits, politicians and everyday Americans use harsh, hateful and inappropriate language to communicate, it divides the nation and can have serious consequences.”

## **Health Insurance CEOs Raked in Record Compensation Last Year**

The CEOs of America’s seven largest publicly traded health insurance and services companies together [earned more than \\$283 million in 2021](#) — the most of any year in the past decade by far.

Soaring stock prices made up the bulk of the executives’ fortunes, according to a *Stat* analysis of disclosures from UnitedHealth Group, CVS Health, Anthem, Cigna, Humana, Centene, and Molina Healthcare from 2012-2021.

Higher profits drove the companies’ stocks. With the coronavirus pandemic leading people to delay some of the care they would have otherwise sought, insurers retained premiums that would have been paid out as medical claims. Years of large acquisitions have also paid off as health insurance companies became conglomerates encompassing lucrative drug benefits middlemen, physician groups, pharmacies, and other services.

Cigna CEO **David Cordani** took home more than \$91 million in 2021 and has received more than \$365 million since 2012, the most of the seven executives over the last ten years.

“The pandemic could have allowed insurers to do more to keep their prices in check,” said President **Roach**. “Instead, workers, taxpayers and employers have continued to watch health care premiums soar. Insurers have an incentive to let spending and premiums keep growing, because that increases their share of the profits.”

### **Join the Alliance Next Thursday for “Slam the Scam: How to Shut Down Social Security Scammers” Workshop**

In 2021, the Social Security Administration (SSA) received 568,000 reports of Social Security-related scams and victims’ losses totaled more than \$63.6 million.

You can learn how to fight back and avoid being a target at a special “Slam the Scam: How to Shut Down Social Security Scammers” virtual event **Thursday, May 26 at 4 PM Eastern time**. An SSA official will lead a workshop on how to shut down Social Security/government impostor scams effectively and learn how to spot the latest rip-offs.

**Please click [here](#) to RSVP for this free, one-hour online workshop.**



“Scammers frequently target older Americans,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “This training is an opportunity to learn how to identify and stop the criminals trying to steal your hard-earned money.”

An email with a link to join the session will be sent to those who sign up 24 hours before the session.

Questions? Email **Maureen Dunn**, Director of Field Mobilization for the Alliance, at [mdunn@retiredamericans.org](mailto:mdunn@retiredamericans.org).

### **CMS Unveils Updated, More User-Friendly Medicare Website**

On Wednesday the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) unveiled several updates to the [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) website, designed to make it easier to navigate and access information to compare health and drug coverage and find providers.

The updated website features timely messages on the homepage and highlights the information most often sought by Medicare beneficiaries, people nearing Medicare eligibility, and their families.

This week’s improvements also add more detailed pricing information about Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) Policies that give individuals the information they need to compare Medigap plans, which supplement traditional Medicare benefits.

“We applaud all efforts to make it easier for people to understand their Medicare benefits and then make choices based on what they’ve learned,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

## **Kaiser Health News: Why Won’t More Older Americans Get Their Covid Booster?** **By Liz Szabo**

Even as top U.S. health officials say it’s time America [learns to live](#) with the coronavirus, a chorus of leading researchers say faulty messaging on booster shots has left millions of older people at serious risk.

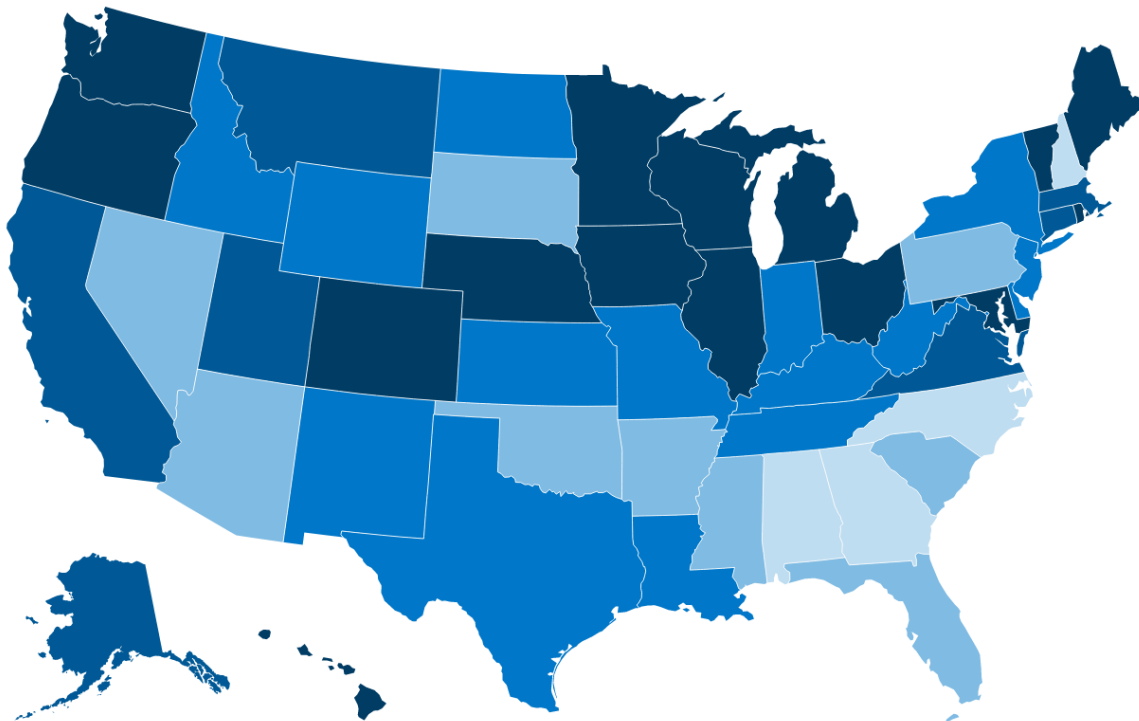
Approximately 1 in 3 Americans 65 and older who completed their initial vaccination round still have not received a first booster shot, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The numbers have dismayed researchers, who note this age group continues to be at the highest risk for serious illness and death from covid-19.

### **Southeastern US Lags in Covid Boosters for Adults 65+**

The share of people 65 and older who completed their initial vaccination course but have yet to receive their first booster shot ranges widely by state.

#### **Share of Vaccinated Adults 65+ With at Least One Booster Dose as of May 8, 2022**

39.5%-59.9%   60%-64.9%   65%-69.9%   70%-74.9%   75%+



Note: North Carolina officials say the state’s booster rates are higher than Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data indicates because of data-sharing problems.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Credit: Phillip Reese for KHN

**KHN**

People 65 and older account for about 75% of U.S. covid deaths. And some risk persists, even for seniors who have completed an initial two-dose series of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or gotten

one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Among older people who died of covid in January, 31% had completed a first vaccination round but had not been boosted, according to a [KFF analysis](#) of CDC data.

The failure to boost more of this group has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives, said **Dr. Eric Topol**, founder and director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute.

Read more [here](#).

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The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well-being of over 4.4 million retirees and their families.