

COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

GENERAL RESOURCES

211 WNY

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 211 WNY operators connect people to resources in the community. Operators can connect callers to resources having to do with food access, tax preparation, substance abuse, housing, legal services, etc. 211 WNY is a great resource for people who have a variety of needs or concerns and do not know where to start.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

- Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF): Call 716.858.8000 for an application. No in-person interview required; Interviews are done over the phone
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Call 716.858.7239 or visit their website: www.mybenefits.ny.gov
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP): Call 716.858.7644 or visit their website: www.mybenefits.ny.gov
- Foster Care, Youth Services, Child Protective Services, etc.: Visit their website for more information: www.mybenefits.ny.gov
- Erie County Department of Social Services (Main Number): Call 716.858.8000

CHILD CARE RESOURCE NETWORK

The resource network is matching essential front line workers in need of child care with child care programs that have temporary vacancies.

FOOD ACCESS

FEED MORE WNY

You can still get food from pantries. Some pantries that offer client choice will be pre-bagging during this time. Clients normally show ID & proof of residency but are currently allowed to self-attest for the time along with income verification. People temporarily out of work due to this situation would qualify.

The website with area pantries and soup kitchens will be updated if hours on any program changes: www.foodbankwny.org/pantry-locator. Some of the soup kitchens have started offering clients to-go containers and are limiting the number of people eating at one time.

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE PROJECT (MAP)

For individuals experiencing food challenges, please email MAP: dpnoc@mass-ave.org

BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School meal pick up dates, times locations and district updates

LITTLE FREE PANTRY COALITION

Community organization utilizing outdoor pantries to provide food in the Greater Buffalo Area

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HEALTH INSURANCE RESOURCES

[NYS OF HEALTH](#)

Effective immediately, the Department will allow those assisting with application completion to conduct telephone enrollments and renewals through the NY State of Health Marketplace. This authority is for all programs (Medicaid, Essential Plan, Child Health Plus and Qualified Health Plans) served on NY State of Health until further notice.

- NYSOH call center continues to keep the phone lines open for uninsured consumers who are applying for coverage and for those with significant income changes to report.
- Although some Medicaid enrollees may have already received notices from NY State of Health that their coverage will end on March 31, 2020, the coverage will not end, it will be continued. Any cases terminated after March 18, 2020 during the period of the COVID-19 emergency will be reinstated with no gap in coverage. Additionally, all Medicaid, Child Health Plus and Essential Plan cases that are due for recertification during the COVID-19 emergency period will be automatically renewed for a four-month period.
- Neighborhood Health Center has on-site staff prepared to assist with enrollment. Call 716.875.2904: Tara Moist (ext. 2275) and Terry Scheffer (ext. 5355)

UTILITIES

[NYS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE](#)

- The helpline 1.800.342.3377 is available from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM Monday-Friday for complaints/inquiries about utility services or billing.
- The hotline 1.800.342.3555 is available from 7:30am – 7:30pm Monday - Friday for electric or natural gas shut off concerns or situations.

The State's major electric and gas utilities, Con Edison, National Grid, Central Hudson, Orange and Rockland, NYSEG, RG&E, PSEG Long Island, and National Fuel Gas have all committed to suspending shut-offs for customers, and assist customers impacted by COVID-19 who may be experiencing financial hardship that makes it difficult for them to pay their utility bills during the outbreak. Individuals who are struggling with their utility bills should contact and work with their utility company, as needed. Call the helpline and hotline numbers above for additional assistance, if necessary.

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LEGAL

New York State's court system has postponed all "nonessential" services and suspending all eviction proceedings and pending eviction orders statewide. Questions about how this might impact an open case should be addressed by an attorney.

CENTER FOR ELDER LAW AND JUSTICE

Individuals can call the intake line at 716.853.3087 with questions or to set up a phone or video appointment.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES

Individuals can call the offices at 716.847.0650 for Erie and Niagara County residents or 585.343.5450 for Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming County residents. Reception staff will connect you with an NLS advocate.

MENTAL HEALTH

The Erie County Department of Mental Health has noted that most in-person meetings for Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous have been suspended or cancelled. There are online resources for web-based meetings for each of these:

- Alcoholics Anonymous: <http://aa-intergroup.org/directory.php>
 - Narcotics Anonymous: <https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/>
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The New York State Domestic Violence Hotline is 1.800.942.6906.

HAVEN HOUSE

Provides shelter, support and services for victims and survivors of domestic violence. Call 716.884.6000; people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can call 7-1-1. Haven House's advocates are working remotely and are available with support and services for victims and survivors.

THE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

The Family Justice Center is closed to in-person visits, but they are still operating by phone, email and online chat. Call 716.558.SAFE (7233)