



CID-NY

Manhattan
841 Broadway
Suite 301
New York, NY 10003
212/674-2300 Tel
212/254-5953 Fax
646/350-2681 VP

Queens
80-02 Kew Gardens Rd
Suite 107
Kew Gardens, NY 11415
646/442-1520 Tel
718/886-0428 Fax
866/948-1064 VP

www.CIDNY.org

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

February 2016



WORKSHOPS

If You Like to Write or Would Like to Try Your Hand at It, Join CIDNY's Writers' Group

Every Thursday, a friendly group gathers in the conference room at CIDNY-Manhattan for a free writing workshop.

Although each of us has a disability, that is not necessarily what we write about, for we have so much more to express. Most of the people in the group never thought of themselves as writers before they joined—but they found that in the uncritical, supportive atmosphere of the workshop they become writers. We never criticize anyone's work; we only praise what we enjoy.

There's no need to prepare anything beforehand, because the leader, a published author, always gives a suggestion for what to write about. You can write prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction. And there's no obligation to do any work outside of the workshop.

CIDNY's Writers Group is part of the NY Writers Coalition network. The Coalition offers workshops throughout the city. Being part of our group allows you to take other free workshops, and attend, and take part in, readings at no cost. We would love to have you as a new member and hear the unique, interesting, and beautiful things you have to say. We hope you will join us.

CIDNY's Writers Group meets every Thursday from 3:30 – 5:30 pm at our Manhattan office. Spaces are limited, so please contact CIDNY at 212-674-2300 if you would like to be on the list. If you need an accommodation, such as an ASL interpreter, please also let us know in your phone call.

Proposed Executive Budget Impacts People with Disabilities

The Governor presented his budget with his state of the state address on January 13.

One of the Governor's proposals was an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. This proposal would benefit 2.3 million workers in New York State. Since people with disabilities are concentrated in low wage jobs and the poverty rate for people with disabilities is over 30 percent in much of the state, we know that this proposal will improve their lives. To give businesses the time to plan, the increase will be phased in incrementally, reaching \$15 on December 31, 2018 in New York City, and on July 1, 2021 in the rest of the state. Budget watchers have noted that New York State will have to increase funding to non-profits and Medicaid providers with which it contracts to cover these increased wages.

Other budget positions that CIDNY has adopted include the following:

Support the Community Health Advocates (CHA) program with \$4 million.

Since 2010, CHA has helped 240,000 New Yorkers, including many people with disabilities all over New York State navigate their health insurance plans to get what they need. It has saved New Yorkers \$15 million. The Governor proposes a budget for the program of \$2.5 million. *We urge the Legislature to add \$1.5 million, for a total of \$4 million, to maintain current capacity.*



Preserve "prescriber prevails": "Prescriber prevails" allows doctors with clinical expertise and knowledge of an individual patient to override a preferred drug when necessary to protect the patient's best interest. The State Budget proposes to *eliminate* these protections for consumers, which applies to anti-depressants, anti-retrovirals, anti-rejection, seizure, endocrine, hematologic and immunologic therapeutic classes. *We urge the Legislature to preserve prescriber prevails for all current classes of drugs.*

Eliminate the 20-visit limit on Medicaid Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy: Arbitrary visit limits do not make sense, and discriminate against people with disabilities. *The Legislature should repeal the therapy caps.*

Increase funding for the Long-term Care Ombuds Program: The Governor proposes to provide \$3 million for the Long-term Care Ombuds Program, which protects New York's nursing home residents.

Quick Takes

CIDNY CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK MEETING—Wednesday, February 17 — 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
CIDNY-Queens, 80-02 Kew Gardens Road, Suite 107, Kew Gardens, Queens

By Subway: Take the E or the F train to Union Turnpike/Kew Gardens – this station has an elevator.

Bus: Take the Q10, Q37, Q46, Q60, Q74, x63, x68 and exit at Union Turnpike – Kew Gardens Station.

Come join us to hear about: our trip to Albany; the legislators we met; and the issues we presented to them. Let us discuss our next steps and how to prepare for our next legislative day.

Ven y Únete a nosotros escuchar acerca de: nuestro viaje a Albany; los legisladores que conocimos; y los problemas que se les presentan. Vamos a discutir los próximos pasos y cómo prepararnos para nuestro próximo día legislativo.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 10 to Eva Burgess at 212-674-2300 and let her know if you need an accommodation like large print, Braille, or an interpreter, including ASL. Please be considerate to people dealing with chemical sensitivity disorders and refrain from wearing cologne or perfume at our meetings and events.

The program deals with downsizing and closures, discharge of residents to homeless shelters, psychotropic drugging, and other serious problems with only minimal resources. *The legislature should increase funding of the Program to at least \$3.5 million.*

Shelter people with disabilities who are homeless:

The Governor proposes to spend \$10 billion to address the inadequacies of the shelter system by adding 27,000 new beds and services. He proposes “checks and balances” – an audit including inspection of shelters to address health and safety violations. In New York City, nearly half of the homeless have disabilities. Inaccessibility of the shelters, combined with poor health conditions and lack of safety, forces many to live on the streets. *We urge the Legislature to support this proposal and to ensure that audits include whether emergency homeless shelters meet the physical, communications, and program requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and are accessible to people with all disabilities.*

Remove barriers to career and technical education for students with disabilities:

Governor Cuomo proposes to invest \$1 million in reforms that will ensure that Career and Technical Education is fully available to people with disabilities. *We urge the Legislature to support this provision of the Executive Budget.*

Improve food access and nutrition for people with disabilities:

Governor Cuomo proposes to increase gross income eligibility for SNAP to 150 percent of poverty for all households with earned income. This will have a particularly important impact for low-income workers with disabilities. *We urge the Legislature to support this change. It will improve health and bring new resources into low-income communities without increasing costs by the State or county.*

Are You Eligible for DRIE?

The Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE, also known as the NYC Rent Freeze Program) is an exemption against future rent increases for eligible people with a disability living in rent-controlled, rent-stabilized, Mitchell-Lama, and other eligible apartments. Applicants must meet certain eligibility requirements for DRIE benefits.

Landlords of DRIE tenants will receive tax credits to make up the difference between the frozen rent and what the DRIE tenants would be paying without the benefit.

CIDNY benefits counselors can help you with your DRIE application. Come in during our walk-in days to get help at either our Queens or Manhattan location. Please check our calendar or www.cidny.org for walk-in hours.

Mark Your Calendars! NYAIL Legislative Day 2016 is Monday, February 8th

Let us prepare to go to Albany to meet with our legislators to discuss our issues and share our stories.

One of the trainings was held on January 27, 2016, at the Queens office. If you missed this one, there is another training on Thursday, February 4, 2016, from 1:00-3:00 PM at the Manhattan Office.



Picture: New York State Capitol in Albany

You MUST attend one training to go to Albany. In this training, we discuss our policy agenda, how we're going to present topics, and scheduling for appointments. Please contact Monica Bartley at 646-442-4152 if you have any questions.

CIDNY Quick Take