



Quick Takes

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
www.CIDNY.org

Manhattan

841 Broadway, #301
New York, NY 10003
212/674-2300 Tel
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Queens

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September 2019

It's Time for the Governor to Sign *Access to Complex Rehab Technology* into Law: You Can Help Make This Happen.

CIDNY advocates have urged the legislature to improve access to quality complex rehabilitation technology (CRT) for a long time. For patients with specific diagnoses and physical conditions who need equipment and technology that matches their individual situations, CRT is the answer. CRT can also help people to stay independent and avoid institutionalization.

Legislation to improve CRT access passed both houses and was vetoed by the Governor twice. A7492/S5741, a new bill, has now passed the legislature. It clearly prohibits a financial relationship between the prescriber and the equipment supplier—a concern the Governor raised. There is no reason for the Governor to continue vetoing this legislation.



[Image description: Customized wheelchair.]

Past recommendations to veto also came from the Division of the Budget, which speculated that while "difficult to quantify, this bill would likely increase Medicaid costs by limiting the State's ability to achieve the 'best price' from durable medical equipment suppliers." But their speculation does not include the extra costs to people and to Medicaid when health deteriorates because the right equipment and technology are not able to be accessed.

In deciding to veto in the past, the Governor completely disregarded the experiences of those affected by the lack of CRT. At least one CIDNY consumer advocate traveled to Albany twice. She told her story to legislators recounting the consequences of no CRT: her condition requires a wheelchair with a tilt feature that she must use every hour to avoid skin breakdown. While her chair was being repaired, her condition deteriorated so much that her doctor prescribed a wound care nurse who had to go to her home, at an extra cost. At the same time, she experienced more pain and suffering.

To get this bill signed, people on the Governor's staff are asking to hear from you. They want examples of why it

is important for Medicaid patients to have access to qualified rehabilitation technology professionals who can provide service and repairs. It is also necessary for them to understand the need for retail locations in the State. If you have a story to share, contact Heidi, CIDNY's Health Policy Director, at 66-442-4147 or hsiegfried@cidny.org, if you can help.

And you can always call the Governor at 518-473-8390.

Important Information about Public Charge

The federal government recently changed the rules they use to decide if someone is a "public charge" when applying for visas and for green cards. The new rules start on October 15, 2019. **Despite this change, public charge still doesn't apply to many people, and most federal government programs aren't included in the rules.**

Public charge is the test the federal government performs to see if someone is likely to become dependent on specific government programs when applying for a visa or for a green card. A person who uses some kinds of benefits from the federal government might be considered a "public charge," however, just using federal government programs does not make you a public charge.

What hasn't changed about Public Charge?

The public charge test is **not done for anyone who has a green card who wants to apply for citizenship**. It currently only comes into play for those applying for a visa or applying for a green card.

Additionally, **if you have the following visa statuses, the public charge test is not done as an exception in applying for a green card**: Refugee and asylees, victims of trafficking (T visa), victims of domestic violence or other serious crimes (U visas), VAWA self-petitioners, special immigrant juveniles (SIJS), and some other immigrants. If you are an immigrant with one of these statuses, you can apply for a green card and won't be considered for "public charge" no matter what.

What has changed with Public Charge?

Right now, the only federal government programs that might put you at risk for "public charge" are cash



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assistance like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Social Security Income (SSI).

When the new rules go into effect on October 15, 2019, the added programs that could put you at risk are:

- SNAP (food stamps)
- Non-emergency Medicaid (**this does not count healthcare services, the Essential Plan, Emergency Medicaid, or Medicaid for pregnant women and children under the age of 21**)
- Section 8 and public housing

If you are an immigrant, you might not qualify for these benefits anyway. Additionally, any benefits received by your U.S. citizen children **does not count against you for "public charge."**

What should I do now?

You don't need to cancel your benefits if you're not at risk of being considered a "public charge." Even if you are, it is important to think about what programs you and your family need as well as immigration concerns.

Before making any decisions about disenrolling from benefits due to public charge, please call your benefits counselor.

They can provide more information related to this issue. **Also, please call them if you need resources like free legal advice for your immigration issues or if you have questions.**

All information will be kept confidential.

Save CDPA Case Update: Groups Sue NY over Cuts to Long Term Care

At the end of July, as people with disabilities celebrated the 29th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a group of associations and providers filed papers, suing the New York State Department of Health (DOH) over a recently announced funding policy. They say the new method will bankrupt Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA), a popular Medicaid program that lets 90,000 people live independently in the community. CDPA allows seniors and individuals with disabilities to

take charge of their own services and has become increasingly popular over the past several years.

The associations filing suit are the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of NYS (CDPAANYS), the New York State Association of Health Care Providers (HCP), and the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL), of which CIDNY is a member.

The Court denied the State's motion to dismiss and is accelerating the full resolution of the case. The Court set a new return date for Sept. 13th.

Save a Stamp and Switch to Email

If you enjoy our newsletter and have an email address, you can change your subscription preferences to email only by notifying us at info@cidny.org. The email version can easily be adjusted to a larger font size for readability on your screen and you can connect to useful links and more content.

Save October Dates for Budgeting and Debt Management

Join CIDNY and a Financial Planning Association Representative for workshops to help you work toward financial stability. RSVP by Sept 25.



Building a Better Budget

Wednesday, October 9, 2019, 2 pm – 3:30 pm

- Why you need a budget
- How to build a budget based on your values, goals and priorities
- How to plan for irregular expenses & what to do if your expenses aren't what you predicted
- Why you shouldn't feel controlled by your budget



Dealing with Debt

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

2 pm – 3:30 pm

- How to prioritize debt
- How the debt avalanche works
- What protections you have as a consumer & as a recipient of disability benefits
- Learn about consolidation loans, debt settlement, debt management and hardship plans

**CID-NY**

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NEED HELP?

Walk-in/drop-in to get the help you need. Staff will be available during these times for housing and benefits-related help.

**Walk-In Days—Manhattan**

Every Monday and Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Walk-In Day—Queens**

Every Monday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Important Dates

September 2 – Labor Day 2 – Office Closed

September 29 – Rosh Hashana Begins

**CIDNY's Writer's Group Starts Again Thursday,
September 5th!** 

Thursdays from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Please join us for writing and sharing work in a supportive and respectful environment. Writers of all genres and levels of experience are welcome. No prior writing experience is necessary. Participants should sign up in advance. Call 674-2300 and ask to be placed on the list. Please let the receptionist know if you need an accommodation like ASL interpretation; CIDNY has a hearing loop. Please bring pen/pencil and paper (CIDNY will supply if you don't have). Led by Avra Wing, writer and writing workshop leader certified to lead creative writing workshops by the NY Writers Coalition.

Housing Workshops

**Wednesday, September 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. –
Manhattan**

**Wednesday, September 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. –
Queens**

CIDNY's housing workshop covers housing options: NYCHA, HPD, HUD listings; NYC Housing Connect and other programs; what you qualify for; income and family size; and how to get and go over your credit report. CIDNY is a full-service center and other benefits will be

discussed; we don't offer housing, but can provide information and assist with applications.

CIDNY Action Network (CAN) Meeting

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

Come Join Us to Hear About:

New York State's 2019 Legislative Reforms! CIDNY was successful in getting the early voting law passed. It will allow voters the right to go to the polls to vote nine days before the actual date to vote. You can vote nine days earlier! You can start voting early in the November 2019 General Elections. Come and hear what is involved and what steps to take.

Únase con nosotros para aprender:

iReformas legislativas de votación del estado de Nueva York 2019! CIDNY fue triunfo en lograr la ley cual le da derecho para votar nueve días antes del el día designado para votar. Este derecho comienza en la próxima vez que votamos. Cual será noviembre de 2019 la elección general. Ven y escucha lo que implíquela y los pasos a seguir. Para confirme que vendrá llame a Laurette Hamilton al 212 / 674-2300 o mande un correo electrónico a lhampilton@cidny.org. Si necesita una adaptación, como letra grande o servicios de interpretación, infórmenos antes del miércoles 11 de septiembre de 2019. Se servirán refrescos.

All events are at CIDNY, 841 Broadway, Suite 301, New York, NY 10003, unless otherwise noted. To RSVP, contact Laurette at 212/674-2300 or lhampilton@cidny.org. For events in Queens or if you speak Spanish, RSVP to Jose at 646/442-1520 or jmera@cidny.org. If you need an accommodation, such as large print or interpretation services, let us know as soon as possible.

SEPTEMBER 2019 CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Office Closed  LABOR DAY	3  Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	4	5  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	6	7
8	9  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	10  Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	11  Housing Workshop – Manhattan 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	12  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	13	14
15	16  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	17  Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	18 CIDNY Action Network Meeting – Manhattan 1-4 p.m. 	19  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	20	21
22	23  Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	24  Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	25  Housing Workshop – Queens 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	26  Walk-in Day 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	27	28
29 Rosh Hashana begins	30  Walk-in Day – Manhattan and Queens 10 a.m.-2 p.m.					 CID-NY Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY