



Quick Takes

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

Manhattan

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646/350-2681 VP

Queens

80-02 Kew Gardens Rd, #100
Kew Gardens, NY 11415
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CIDNY September 2020 Newsletter

Hello from CIDNY

Hello! Thanks for taking the time to read our September 2020 newsletter. We hope you're doing well and staying safe.

If you know someone who would like to also receive our newsletter, please feel free to forward this or have them sign up here: <https://www.cidny.org/join-us/>.

As a reminder, due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) our offices are closed to in-person meetings until further notice. However, our programs remain available remotely (though phone and email). If you have a benefits counselor you can reach out to them directly or contact us through email at info@cidny.org or phone (Manhattan: 212-674-2300 or Video Phone: 646-350-2681 | Queens: 646-442-1520 or Video Phone: 347-905-5088). We'll be sure to let you know when anything changes.

If you haven't already, please take a moment to Like/Follow CIDNY on social media.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CIDNYInc/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/CID_NY

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/cid_ny/

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI0eMkvGCPLf3hzvYXZCVg>

Election and Voting Rights Update

Governor Cuomo signed three pieces of legislation this week that will make it easier for New Yorkers to vote by mail and cast a ballot that counts in November. These bills guarantee that New Yorkers can access vote-by-mail, make their ballot requests early to help Boards of Election better manage the volume of ballots, and ensure that ballots mailed back on time will count. CIDNY supported these bills, see below:

- [S.8015-D/A.10833](#) Authorizes voters to request an absentee ballot due to risk of illness, including COVID.
- [S.8783A/A.10807](#) Authorizes voters to request absentee ballots as of August 20, instead of waiting until 30 days before an election.
- [S.8799A/A.10808-A](#) Allows absentee ballots to be counted if postmarked on or before Election Day, November 3, and received by the Board 7 days after the election; OR with no postmark and received by the Board the day after Election Day The BOE's General Election **online portal** for Absentee Ballot Applications is now live at nycabsentee.com, so we encourage you to apply online if you can. The online request for an Absentee Ballot makes it easier and quicker for BOE to process than paper forms.

Again, you can request your absentee ballot online at nycabsentee.com.

If you have any questions about Absentee Ballots or other voting issues, please contact Delva Somers, dsomers@cidny.org

Join the conversation: online at www.cidny.org; on Facebook (www.facebook.com/CIDNYInc), on Twitter (@CID_NY) and IG (@cid_ny)

Important Dates

Last Day to Register to Vote: Friday, October 9

- Voter registration applications must be received by Wednesday, October 14. You can print a [voter registration form here](#) and mail it to the Board of Elections. You can also check to [confirm](#) that you are already registered to vote.

Early Voting: Saturday, October 24 - Sunday, November 1

- Your early voting site will be confirmed over the coming weeks. Locations and hours for your early voting site will be [available here](#). We'll let you know when this link is available with full information.

The deadline to send in a completed application for an absentee ballot is Tuesday, October 27, 2020.

COVID-19 Testing & Tracing Education Grant Awarded to CIDNY

CIDNY is one of the community-based organizations that has been awarded a grant from New York City's Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) to do outreach and education for our community on COVID-19 Testing & Tracing. We are pleased that we can help people with disabilities understand where and how to get tested for the virus, best practices for keeping safe and helping family and friends stay safe.

We will be sending information out regularly to you through this newsletter, social media, on our website, and through Zoom education events. We will do our best to get you the most updated information available.

We do know that while the City is maintaining our lowest rates of COVID-19 since March, it's important to keep up our safety practices. This virus can easily come back quickly if we don't follow safety practices.

Since most of us with disabilities are at high risk no matter our age, it's important to follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Health Department advice. Most of us know the drill but here's a refresher:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 30 seconds, especially if you have been outside or people you live with have been outside. Wash your hands after you have gone to the store or picked up food, or after you pick up your mail or packages. You can use hand sanitizer when you're out, but soap and water is the best when you get home.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. These are the areas where the virus can get into your system.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing – it's best if you use a tissue.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay at home if you are sick.
- Social distancing means staying at least 6 feet away from others when you are out.
- Wear a mask whenever you leave your apartment or home. Wear a mask around anyone in your household who is sick.

Watch for news about the latest information on Testing & Tracing here and through our website (www.cidny.org), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CIDNYInc/>), and Twitter (https://twitter.com/CID_NY). For general information go to <https://www.nyhealthandhospitals.org/test-and-trace/testing/>.

If you have questions or don't have internet access call 212-674-2300 and ask to speak to someone about COVID-19. If you have email, please contact us at info@cidny.org.

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Together we can help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Benefits Updates

We have a few important updates to share with you.

- **NYC Get Cool program:** CIDNY helped people enroll in NYC's Get Cool program. The program supplied a free air conditioner (AC) to NYC residents in low-income households having a household member who is at least 60 years old. The last day for this program was August 31st. If you received an AC through the Get Cool program and are experiencing issues with installation or have yet to receive your AC even if you completed an intake with CIDNY, please reach out to your counselor for help.
- **NYSOH Marketplace:** New York State of Health Marketplace is extending open enrollment through September 15, 2020. This extension is new. If you need help with enrolling in the NYSOH Marketplace, please contact your counselor.
- **Medicaid Extensions:** There has been a 12-month extension on Medicaid cases that expire in September. This means that cases due to expire in the months of March – September are automatically extended for 12 months. If you have questions or concerns about this, please contact your CIDNY counselor.
- **NYCHA Application Renewals:** NYCHA applications must be renewed every two years. If you miss the renewal deadline, you must file a new application and will lose your original application date and place on line. NYCHA was terminating applications of applicants who missed their renewal deadlines after March, even though the Customer Contact Center offices were closed and many applicants do not have technology to renew online. NYCHA has now agreed to reinstate all applications terminated for nonrenewal since March and restore their original application dates. All applications that expire before October 31, 2020, will automatically renew without need for any action by you. It may take time for the applications to be restored, so check online in a couple of weeks. Please reach out to your counselor if you need assistance or have any questions.
- **Dentists and Providers Charging for PPE:** Dentists and other providers cannot charge a "facility fee" to patients for the use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) during their visit. The Department of Finance at New York State circulated a letter to all insurance plans and providers on August 5th about this. If your dentist or provider is trying to charge you a "facility fee" for your use of PPE, you can refuse to pay since it is unlawful. Please contact your counselor if you have any questions or concerns.
- **DOE Food Distribution:** Food distribution will continue at Department of Education (DOE) meal hubs until school starts on September 10th. After school starts, every family with a child enrolled in a DOE school can get meals during the school week, regardless of whether their child is enrolled in remote learning or attending school in person. Please note this is a change from the current policy. After September 10, only families who have children enrolled in a DOE school will be able to access meals from the DOE. If you need help with food resources, please contact your counselor for assistance.



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- **Federal Stimulus Payments: Economic Impact Payments:** The IRS has extended the deadline for individuals and families to register for the stimulus payment as a non-income-tax filer. New Yorkers who have an income of less than \$12,200 for an individual or \$24,400 for a family must complete a document with the IRS on the IRS "Non-filer" portal. Payments are automatic for people who filed a tax return in 2018 or 2019, receive survivor or disability benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Veterans Affairs beneficiaries who did not file a tax return in the last two years. In order to register for payments, individuals and families should use the "[Non-Filers: Enter Your Payment Info Here](https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here)" (<https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here>) application to provide information to receive payment. This application should be used for the following individuals and families:
 - US citizen or a non-citizen with a Social Security Number.
 - Have a qualifying child under the age of 17 to claim the \$500 payment per child.
 - Have not already entered information using the IRS Non-Filer Tool for themselves and at least one child.
 - Did not file a 2018 or 2019 federal income tax return because gross income was under \$12,200 (\$24,400 for married couples). This includes people who had no income.
 - Were not required to file a 2018 or 2019 federal income tax return for other reasons.

Some Economic Stimulus Payments are distributed by prepaid debit card. The card will arrive in a plain envelope from Money Network Cardholder Services. Cards will arrive with activation instructions.

If you have any questions about the information above or need any help, please reach out to your counselor.

2020 Census – Our Community Needs Your Voice

There are 5 weeks left to fill out your 2020 CENSUS form. If you care about

- affordable, accessible housing,
- education for students with disabilities,
- health care and coverage,
- food programs like SNAP, and
- accessible transportation

Join us and get counted. The Census count will help decide how federal and state monies are allocated for these things and more.

Census counts also decide our representation in Congress. New York is in danger of losing representation this year because of low Census responses. As people with disabilities who have been historically undercounted and under represented on issues that affect our stability and independence, we cannot afford to lose more voices in Congress.

If you have questions or need help with the Census form, contact Corinne Varela, CIDNY's Census Manager at cvarela@cidny.org. You can also go to our Census page <https://www.cidny.org/census/>, take the pledge and fill out your Census form.



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CIDNY Action Network (CAN)

Join us on September 16, 2020 at 1:00pm -3:00pm for our monthly CAN meeting.

Let us tell you about our Get Out the Disability Community Vote training series!

- Election Accessibility and Voter Rights
- Voter Registration
- REV UP! Making the Disability Vote Count

Get quick updates about CIDNY's advocacy efforts, our successes, and continuing challenges.

REMEMBER: Your experiences help our advocacy efforts.

Please RSVP by calling Shohana at 212 674-2300 or by sending an email to sjoati@cidny.org and we will send you a link to the Zoom meeting closer to the date.

If you need an accommodation, such as large print or interpretation services, please let us know by September 8, 2020.

Navigator Network

Our Navigator program helps people enroll in health insurance on the NY State of Health Marketplace. If you need help with NY State of Health insurance (the Marketplace), CIDNY has six Navigators in Manhattan and Queens who can help you. Please call us at 917-810-2566. CIDNY Navigators have been helping people get insurance since the Affordable Care Act began in 2014, so you have access to the best expertise available.

Transportation Update - Fair Fares

Fair Fares is a program for low-income individuals between the ages of 18-64. "Low-income" is set by Federal guidelines, which you can see here: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>. Access-A-Ride (AAR) users are also eligible for Fair Fares.

With Fair Fares you can:

- Use the Fair Fare card for AAR services
- Have both a Half-Fare Metro-Card for the bus/subway and use a Fair Fares card for AAR
- Continue to receive four free trips a day for subway/bus trips - but you must request the MetroCard for four free trips.
- Riders who receive [Feeder Service](#), a program where a rider is dropped off or picked up at a subway or bus stop, are also eligible.

You can find out more about Fair Fares here: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/fairfares/index.page>.

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CIDNY in the News

Take a look at our most recent news coverage below.

[How the MTA's doomsday cuts threaten riders with disabilities \(City & State\)](#)

[The Eater New York Guide on How to Help \(Eater\)](#)