

## **CIDNY December 2025 Newsletter**

### **Hello from CIDNY**

Thank you for taking the time to read CIDNY's December 2025 newsletter

If you know someone who would like to receive our email newsletter, please forward this or have them sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/r/5FCJP8Auiv>.

Please note that the information in this newsletter is subject to change. If you have any questions, please call or email us. You can view this newsletter on our website at <https://www.cidny.org/cidny-quick-takes/> where you can access accessibility options such as changing font size, changing background color, and more through the Recite Me app (icon in the bottom-right corner of the CIDNY webpage).

Please Like/Follow CIDNY on social media if you have not already.

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

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LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cidnyinc/>

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/cidnyinc.bsky.social>

If you would like to support CIDNY with a donation, you can do so here: <https://www.cidny.org/donation/>.

[Click here to view CIDNY's Rights and Responsibilities and Grievance Policy.](#)

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## **CIDNY's Consumer Action Network (CAN) Meeting**

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

We'll be discussing accessibility for students with disabilities and advocacy efforts regarding afterschool busing.

Please RSVP in advance at <https://www.tinyurl.com/CIDNY4All> or by emailing Mbacke Thiam at [mthiam@cidny.org](mailto:mthiam@cidny.org).

If you need accommodation like large print, American Sign Language (ASL), or materials in other languages, please let us know as soon as possible and at least two weeks in advance. For more information, please call 212-674-2300. Thank you!

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## Upcoming CIDNY and Public Information Events

Below are some upcoming CIDNY events and public events where you can speak with staff from CIDNY. Stop by and say hello to learn more about some of our programs. For all events, please visit <https://www.cidny.org/calendar>.

### Career Workshops

Thursday, December 4, 2025, 3 p.m.

Thursday, December 11, 2025, 3 p.m.

Thursday, December 21, 2025, 3 p.m.

CIDNY is offering no-cost workshops catered to people with disabilities to find employment and overcome barriers. Weekly interactive workshops will include: current job market, vocational skills, resume writing, interview preparation, mock interviews, job coaching, technology in the workplace, advocacy and reasonable accommodations/legal rights, and more.

RSVP: <https://forms.office.com/r/LXiN9bmbsq>

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## Lobby Day 2026

Join us for Lobby Day in Albany on Tuesday, February 3, 2026!

Lobby Day with CIDNY is an opportunity for advocates to discuss bills and legislation that impact people with disabilities, directly with the policy makers.

We'll be taking a bus to Albany, departing from CIDNY's Manhattan office: 66w 38th Street New York, NY 10018. In order to join us for Lobby Day, you must attend one of our prep meetings on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 1 p.m. or Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 6 p.m. to learn more about our legislative agenda.

For more info, email Mbacke Thiam at [mthiam@cidny.org](mailto:mthiam@cidny.org) or call 212-674-2300.

Please RSVP in advance at:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/c0rSR1Pyem>

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## CDPAP Survey Alert!

We are sharing the following message from New York Caring Majority, Caring Majority Rising, and Consumer Directed Action of New York:

Governor Hochul exempted PPL's \$11 billion contract from comptroller oversight. This means the oversight is up to us! We want to know - how is it going for you? And how does PPL compare to your prior fiscal intermediary (FI)?

Complete our brief survey of consumers, personal assistants and designated representatives!

Past survey reports have brought media attention to your stories and laid bare the devastating impact of PPL's scam health insurance, health assessment process and payment issues.

Your voices are making a difference. As we prepare to launch our Care Not Corruption campaign, we need to continue to arm ourselves with the truth in the face of the lies and deception of PPL, the governor and the Department of Health.

We need your participation to continue to monitor PPL, because Governor Hochul won't - complete this quick survey now at the link below!

Take the survey here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdo410uNKaWJpHcGsFI8MV21-VNYWLHRmnkiBRfg40xmQHvEA/viewform>

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## **Accessible Food Pantries and Resources in New York City**

The folks at the New York State Independent Living Council (<https://nysilc.org>) are working on a project to build a comprehensive list aimed at helping people identify which food pantries, kitchens, and other resources in their region are accessible. We are sharing a list of NYC area resources below.

Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens: Our comprehensive network includes strategically located food distribution centers and accessible food pantries throughout the boroughs, including home-delivered meals. Link: <https://www.ccbq.org/service-type/emergency-and-food-assistance/>

Community Health Action of Staten Island (CHASI) Food Pantry: Located at 2134 Richmond Terrace in Port Richmond (S40 bus to Sharpe Ave.) They have a wheelchair accessible entrance and parking lot, and they also operate a mobile food pantry that visits various neighborhoods.

Link: <https://chasiny.org/services/food-pantry-mobile-food-pantry/>

Church of the Good Shepherd Food Pantry: Disabled individuals or those who have extenuating health-related circumstances that preclude their ability to physically pick up food on Saturdays can have food delivered to them if they live within zip codes 10033, 10034 or 10040.

Link: <https://goodshepherdnyc.org/food-pantry>

God's Love We Deliver: 166 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013

Prepares and home-delivers nutritious, medically tailored meals for people living with a chronic or life-altering illness or other serious condition. Registered dietitian nutritionists work with you to design your individualized meal plan.

They also support healthcare providers getting meals for their partners.

Link: <https://www.glwd.org/>

Link: <https://www.glwd.org/get-meals/for-your-members/>

Helping Hands for the Disabled of NYC: Offers a food pantry delivery service once a month to all 5 boroughs.

Link: <https://www.1degree.org/opp/get-groceries-delivered-for-individuals-helping-hands-for-the-disabled-new-york-new-york>

Joan & Alan Bernikow JCC Food Pantry: 1466 Manor Rd,  
Staten Island, NY 10314

Our accessible pantry is unique in that families can pick  
the items they want from our extensive, healthy selection.  
Users can “shop” online for their food, similar to grocery  
pickup services like Instacart. All food in our pantry is  
Kosher and Halal.

Link: <https://www.sijcc.org/foodpantry>

Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA) Food  
Pantry: At the Cultural Center at 546 Main Street, NY, NY,  
10044. Wheelchairs and strollers can gain entry via  
elevator.

Link: <https://www.ridainc.org/>

Staten Island Hunger Task Force: This website offers a list  
of community refrigerators, pop-up pantries, food drives,  
and mobile pantries throughout Staten Island. Call ahead  
for accessibility information.

Link: <https://www.hungryonstatenisland.com/pantries.htm>

Other New York City resources

include: [https://www.nyc.gov/site/foodpolicy/programs/e  
mergency-food.page](https://www.nyc.gov/site/foodpolicy/programs/emergency-food.page)

[https://www.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/food\\_pantry.page](https://www.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/food_pantry.page)



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## **Clinical Trial Participants Needed**

We are sharing the opportunity below from the Mount Sinai Health System.

The Department of Dermatology at Mount Sinai Health System is currently seeking individuals with Alopecia Areata and/or Atopic Dermatitis, to participate in a study looking at the effectiveness and safety of the study drug Abrocitinib, in individuals that also have Down Syndrome.

Patients eligible to participate must be:

- At least 12 years old with Down Syndrome
- Have been diagnosed with Alopecia Areata, which affects at least 25% of the scalp AND/OR been diagnosed with Atopic Dermatitis, which affects at least 7% of the body
- No history of tuberculosis, hepatitis or HIV
- No diagnosis of other inflammatory skin condition (e.g., psoriasis, seborrheic dermatitis, lupus)
- Not currently receiving another treatment for Alopecia Areata or Atopic Dermatitis

If interested or for more information, please contact Giselle Singer at 212-241-3288 or [giselle.singer@mssm.edu](mailto:giselle.singer@mssm.edu).

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## Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

It's getting cold out there! Did you know there's a program that can help with home energy costs like heating? The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that helps low-income homeowners and renters heat and cool their homes. If you need help with this or other public benefits and services, please reach out to us. While some services may currently be delayed, you can still contact CIDNY for assistance and more information.

For more information about this program, please visit <https://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/energy-assistance.page>.

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## Join CIDNY's Next Empowerment Group For People With Disabilities

Join us for an inspiring and transformative experience! Reach out now to reserve your spot in our next group.

This group meets online via Zoom weekly for a total of eight sessions. This is your chance to connect with a supportive community where you can learn, grow, and share experiences. Our sessions focus on identity,

self-acceptance, and the importance of building vital support networks in a welcoming environment.

What You Can Expect:

- Engaging discussions and activities
- Valuable resources and support
- A small group setting (6-8 participants) for meaningful interactions

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to be part of a transformative journey.

For more information, contact Eric Blazsek, LMHC-D, MPA at [eblazsek@cidny.org](mailto:eblazsek@cidny.org) to find out about upcoming open groups.

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## **Accredited Continuing Education Courses For NYS Licensed Mental Health Professionals**

Registration is available for upcoming continuing education courses! CIDNY is currently offering accredited Continuing Education (CE/CEU) courses for mental health professionals licensed in New York State (NYS). The courses, instructed by New York State licensed professionals at CIDNY, will count towards satisfying the 36-credit-hour continuing education credits that are required by the New York State Licensure Board for

triannual renewal of licensure. The program currently offers accredited courses to NYS licensed practitioners holding LMSW, LCSW, LMHC designations, as well as licensed psychologists.

If you or someone you know is a licensed mental health professional in New York State, please visit our website to find out more about our upcoming courses and support a non-profit organization while getting your required CE credits.

Upcoming courses include:

- Trauma and Disability: December 17 - [Register here](#)
- Trauma and Disability: January 14, 2026 - [Register here](#)
- Impact of Disability in the First Session: December 3 - [Register here](#)
- Impact of Disability in the First Session: January 7, 2026 - [Register here](#)

For more information and available courses, please visit:  
<https://www.cidny.org/ce/>

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## **Jobs at CIDNY – Come Work With Us!**

We have a few open jobs at CIDNY. Below is a list of our current open roles. Please visit <https://www.cidny.org/jobs/> for more information, full job descriptions, and our most recent job listings. Come join our team, help fellow New Yorkers, and get great benefits!

- Benefits Counselor - Queens
- Bilingual Licensed Mental Health Counselor (English/Spanish)
- Director of Human Resources
- LTCOP Ombudsman Advocate/Brooklyn Nursing Homes
- NY Connects Benefits Counselor - Brooklyn
- OHS Housing Specialist
- Transition Specialist

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## **CIDNY In The News**

Check out some of our recent media coverage, linked below. You can always see CIDNY in the news stories at <https://www.cidny.org/media-coverage>.

- NYC Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani announces transition committees (CBS News)

- NYC Voters Approve Proposal 5: A Milestone for Digital Mapping and Geospatial Modernization (Geo Week News)
- Rally at City Hall Calls for Reform of 45-Year-Old School Bus Contracts (Pavement Pieces)
- Geraldo Rivera Column: Passages (Long Island Press)
- Dialogues With Dan: Dr. Sharon McLennon Wier (Dialogues With Dan Podcast)
- Hunters Point Library Building Nears ADA Access Fixup (Queens Gazette)