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CABHN FEVER



Renters' Rebate Program

What is the Renters' Rebate Program? It is a program for Connecticut renters (tenants) who are elderly or totally disabled and whose incomes do not go over certain limits. If you qualify, the Renters' Rebate Program may give you a rebate check. The amount of the rebate check is based on your income, the amount of your rent and the utility bills that you paid in 2006, (excluding telephone). Rebate amounts can range from \$50 to \$900

You may be eligible if...

....you are over 65 years of age; **or**
 ...are the surviving spouse of someone who was eligible at the time of his/her death and over 50 years of age; **or**

... if you are permanently and totally disabled and 18 years of age or older;

In addition, you must...

...have lived in Connecticut for one year or more; **and**

...have rented an apartment, a room, a mobile home, or be living in cooperative housing; **and**

...have an income below \$28,800/year if you are single **or** have a combined income below \$35,300/year if you are married.

Where to apply...

Apply at your town's Assessor's Office or the town's Social Services Department.

Applications will be accepted from May 17th 2007 until September 15th, 2007.



Who's Required to Prove Citizenship & Identity for Medicaid ?

Go to www.ctkidslink.org for a quick reference guide and full report about who is and is not affected by the new Medicaid citizenship documentation rule, which became effective on July 1, 2006. The documentation requirements vary by the type of applicant. (Revised, March 2007). *Information taken from CT Voices for Children web site www.kidslink.org.*



Connecticut Birth to Three Program

Do you have concerns about your child's ability to see, talk, hear, move, eat, play?

To talk to someone about your concerns, call the Child Development INFOLINE. TDD accessible at 1-800-505-7000.

The mission of the Birth to Three System is to strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. This is a State of Connecticut program. To contact the Birth to Three Service and Support Office, call toll-free 866-888-4188 or email: thomas.coakley@po.state.ct.us

There is NO application fee or asset limits.

For more information, please call: Infoline at 2-1-1 or your Town Hall (the number can be found in the Blue Pages of your local telephone book).

Still have questions? Please call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320. ✦

Contact Your Legislator about EITC

The campaign to pass a State Earned Income Tax Credit is at a critical point. The Human Services Committee has voted S.B. 146 out of committee and it is anticipated it will go to the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee. A State EITC must be part of the revenue and tax package. The Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee is expected to come out with its package in April.

Please call your legislator and ask them to:

- 1) Support a 20 percent State EITC this legislative session.
- 2) Urge the chairs of the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee to include a State EITC in the revenue package.

When you call your legislator, you can also use these talking points:

- ✓ The EITC rewards hard work, strengthens families, and builds communities.
- ✓ Low-income working families are struggling to make ends meet.
- ✓ At least 165,000 households would benefit from a state EITC.
- ✓ The funds low-wage workers receive from a Connecticut EITC will be spent locally to purchase goods and services. The money spent in Connecticut will stimulate the local economy.
- ✓ Twenty states, including nearly all of the Northeastern states except Connecticut, have passed a State EITC.

House Dems 1-800-842-1902
House Reps 1-800-842-1423
Senate Dems 1-800-842-1420
Senate Reps 1-800-842-1421

New Poll: CT Voters Favor Coverage for More Uninsured Children

A survey which included 400 registered voters in Connecticut, examined opinions about the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), also called HUSKY B in Connecticut. SCHIP is a focus for the 100th U.S. Congress and state legislatures this year. The original ten-year authorization for the SCHIP program expires in 2007, and continued funding is a key issue.

The poll was sponsored by the New England Alliance for Children's Health and funded in part by the Connecticut Health Foundation and National Association of Children's Hospitals. It was administered in all six New England states for a total of 2,401 interviews. The survey showed a clear response from Connecticut voters: they want HUSKY expanded to cover more uninsured children in their state.

Some key findings:

- ☞ Voters support HUSKY because they believe that all children should have the health care they need to grow and learn.
- ☞ Connecticut voters reject the argument that there are other more important funding priorities, and they disagree that cutting taxes should take precedence over children's health coverage.
- ☞ Voters in Connecticut want to increase funding for HUSKY - at both federal and state levels.

Information taken from Connecticut Voices for children web site. Key findings, a chart pack, and survey methodology can be found by going to www.ctkidslink.org/media/other/ctpollsummary.pdf

Patient Safety Tips

As an educated and informed consumer, even if you trust your health care professional, it's important to know that doctors and health care professionals can make mistakes. Not all mistakes can be prevented, but many of them don't have to happen. The Institute of Medicine estimates that preventable medical errors cost the U.S. between \$17 billion and \$29 billion each year.

Here are just a few helpful ways to protect yourself as a patient:

- Put your questions in writing before your appointment.
- Listen carefully to all information and instruction your doctor gives you and make notes for future reference.
- If you don't understand something your doctor says, say so and ask your doctor to explain it again. Tape record important conversations. Repeat back any instruction your doctor gives you
- Know why your doctor prescribed medication, a test, or treatment and how it will help you and what the possible side effects are.
- Make sure you can read your doctor's prescription slip. When you pick up your medicine, read the prescription label and make sure it matches what your doctor prescribed.

Statistics tell us that medical errors are the 8th leading cause of death in the US. So it is worth it to take a few moments to learn how to help avoid them.

For more information and interactive features, go to the Aetna Intellihealth web site featuring Harvard Medical School consumer health information at www.intelihealth.com.

Families' Food Stamp Benefits Purchase Less Food Each Year

Food stamp benefits will average only about one dollar per person per meal in 2007. In addition, as a result of benefit cuts enacted as part of the 1996 welfare law, the purchasing power of most households' food stamp benefits is eroding in value each year.

In 2008, food stamp benefits for a typical working parent with two children will be about \$37 a month lower than they would have been without the across-the-board benefit cuts included in the 1996 law. By 2017, the average benefit reduction from those provisions will reach almost \$45 a month in 2008 dollars. In fact, by 2017 a typical working parent of two will, over the course of a year, miss out on more than one and a half months-worth of food stamps, compared to the amount of benefits she or he would have received under the law in place prior to 1996. Under current rules, this lost ground will never be recovered. (*Info from Center on Budget and Policy Priorities web site www.cbpp.org*)



Dial-A-Ride

Dial-A-Ride provides transportation in specially-equipped vans for elderly persons (60 years of age or older) and persons with disabilities who are not able to access public transportation. The purpose is to provide rides to individuals who have difficulty using public transportation. The *DIAL-A-RIDE* contractor is DATTCO.

Call your town for info about your local dial-a-ride program and to inquire about an application. The vast majority of Connecticut towns operate dial-a-ride programs. Calls can be made to DATTCO at 860-404-0712 Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Best time to call is in the afternoon hours.



April Congressional Recess - Time to Talk to Your Representative About the Federal Budget

From April 2 through April 13, the United States House of Representatives will be in recess. Most US Representatives will be spending some time in their districts. Congress has decided to use a continuing resolution to set funding levels for the 2007-08 federal fiscal year and is now working on the federal budget for the federal fiscal year starting in October of 2008.

The President has proposed cuts to vital low income support programs on all fronts from health care to food stamps. A summary of the President's proposals is in the February edition of CABHN Fever, or you can go to the Coalition for Human Needs website, www.chn.org, for more details. As a general standard, national advocates propose returning to 2005 funding levels for human service programs.

Now is a good time to talk to your Representative about what's important to you in the federal budget. US

Representatives will be holding events in their districts during the April recess. Town hall meetings and other events where constituents can meet US Representatives will be listed on the Connecticut Citizen Action Group website (www.ccag.net) as they are made public. Or you can call their offices to set up a meeting or get information about in-district events. Local numbers for US Representatives' offices are:

- 1st District** -Rep. John Larson
860-278-8888
- 2nd District** - Rep. Joseph Courtney
860-886-0139
- 3rd District** - Rep. Rosa DeLauro
203-562-3718
- 4th District** - Rep. Christopher Shays
203-579-5870
- 5th District** -Rep. Christopher Murphy
860-223-8412

March 22

Planning & Development
Human Services

March 23

Environment
Public Health

March 26

Government Administration
& Elections

March 30

Education
Judiciary

April 13

Appropriations

April 19

Finance

April 20

Revenue and Bonding

Below is a list of the bill numbers for some proposals of interest:

SB1, SB3, SB1425, HB7322, HB6652, HB1371 are among the various bills raised this session that contain proposals to expand health care eligibility and accessibility.

HB 1361 contains proposals that give additional supports for TFA recipients.

RB 7240 also makes important changes to the TFA program, following the recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee.

HB 1350 increases the amounts of cash assistance for SAGA recipients.

RB 146 establishes a state Earned Income Tax Credit (see article on page 1).



Bills of Interest at the Legislature

By the time you receive this, action will have been taken by key committees on many bills of importance to CABHN Fever readers. Bills must be voted out of the committee where they originate by the Committee's JF (joint favorable vote) deadline. You can find updates on these bills by going to the CT General Assembly website at www.cga.ct.gov, and typing in the bill number in the "Quick Search Number" box. Committee JF deadlines are as follows:

March 6

Aging
Children
Housing
Veterans Affairs

March 8

Banks
Public Safety & Security

March 12

Program Review &
Investigations

March 13

Energy & Technology
General Law
Higher Education &
Employment Advancement

March 14

Legislative Management

March 15

Labor and Public Employees
Insurance and Real Estate

March 19

Transportation
Commerce

If you or your organization would like to receive our newsletter by email or would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact dbrown@larcc.org or call 860-278-5688 x10.

**Save the dates!
May 6, 2007, 1PM
Foodshare Walk
Against Hunger**

Donate, recruit or walk, but please be sure to join the 24th Annual Foodshare Walk Against Hunger.

Why walk?

Over 100,000 people, including 40,000 children, are in need of emergency food assistance in greater Hartford each year.

Foodshare distributes more than 11 tons of donated food per day to 375 local programs that serve hungry individuals and families in Hartford and Tolland counties.

For every \$30 donated, Foodshare can provide enough food for one person for a month.

For more information on how to register, please go to www.foodshare.org or call (860) 286-9999.

**Speak Out for Quality
Affordable Health
Care**

When? Saturday, May 5, 2007 11 AM

Where? State Capitol, Hartford

Sponsored by healthcare4every1.org.

For more info, call 203-639-0550 or email campaign@universalhealtct.org

**CT Dept. of Labor
Upcoming Job Fairs**

☞ Thursday, April 12 at the Holiday Inn, North Haven 11am-3pm

☞ Tuesday, May 1 at the Holiday Inn, Norwich, 11am-3pm

Visit www.ctjobfairs.com for Career Fair schedule updates, list of employers who will be attending, locations and directions to each fair. Don't have access to a computer? Call the CT Department of Labor's Job Development Unit (860) 263-6280 for more information.

CABHN Meetings
held 1st Friday of the month

Upcoming Meetings

CABHN/FESN Meeting

Friday, April 20

9:30-11:30 am

(CRT)

**555 Windsor St.
Hartford**

The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of individuals, community groups and organizations which supports and promotes advocacy on low-income issues. For more information, please call (860) 278-5688.

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**Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT and
CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)**
80 Jefferson Street
Hartford, CT 06106

CABHN FEVER

**E-Mail
Supplement**

April 13th Symposium

The Connecticut Association for Community Action invites you to participate in a

Symposium on Child Poverty:

A Conversation on Poverty and Economic Security

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Friday, April 13, 2007

Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

In conjunction with leaders in education, healthcare, public policy and human services, we will determine goals, create benchmarks and frame strategies that we can use to eliminate poverty and its devastating effects on children, families and the community. Proposals generated during these state dialogues will be presented at the National Symposium in Bethesda, Maryland May 29-31, 2007. Other networks and organizations in the public and private sector, including faith-based organizations, academic institutions and non-profits, will prepare their plans of action and protocol for presentation at the National Summit in May 2009. More details available from the CAFCA website, www.cafca.org as they become available.

Celebrate Connecticut's Women Veterans and Active Duty Servicewomen

Friday March 30th - Hosted and Funded by the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs

Program runs from 9am to 3 pm, 8:30 am Registration and Coffee at the Veterans' Home Auditorium, 287 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT. Please Register by March 23rd. Call 866-928-8387 X 5826 or Email Catherine.Cook@po.state.ct.us

Tell Legislators What's Important in Health Care Reform

Sen. Donald Williams, President Pro Tem of the Connecticut Senate, is holding a series of forums around the state to discuss health care reform.

These forums provide important opportunities to tell Sen. Williams and legislators from the area what's most important for Legal Services clients.

It's even better if clients can come and tell their own stories.

Note: Speakers should either work or live in the region where the forum is being held.

Below is a list of the forums (some details still tentative). Let me know if you have clients who want to speak; we may be able to assist in making sure they don't have to wait all night for their turn.

Thursday, March 22 - New Britain - 7pm

New Britain Community Health Center, 1 Washington Square, New Britain

Wednesday, March 28 - Norwalk - 7pm

Grace Baptist Church (tentative)

Tuesday, April 10 - Bloomfield

details to be announced

Monday, April 16 - Hamden - 7pm

Miller Library (tentative)

End Hunger Connecticut! Forum

Monday, March 26th - CAHS and End Hunger Connecticut! Forum - Farm Bill 2007 Reauthorization and You: Help us Make Nutrition Program Improvements for Your Community

PCCM Forum

Join the legislative forum on Primary Care Case Management: An Option for CT Medicaid on Tuesday March 27, 9am to noon at the Legislative Office Building, Room 2C.

There is no cost to attend, but you must register for conference materials. To register on-line, go to <http://www.cthealthpolicy.org/pccm/forum.htm> >

Confirmed speakers to date:

Vern Smith, Principal, Health Management Systems

Dr. Charles Willson, East Carolina University

Commissioner Mike Starkowski, CT Dept. of Social Services

Dr. Rob Zavoski, President, American Academy of Pediatrics, CT Chapter

Primary Care Case Management is a way to run Medicaid programs, such as HUSKY, that does not involve HMOs. Policymakers are actively seeking alternatives to HMOs for HUSKY. Come to the forum to learn more. For more on PCCM, go to http://www.cthealthpolicy.org/briefs/issue_brief_29.pdf .