



# Assemblyman Kenneth P. Zebrowski



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## 2017 SENIOR UPDATE

*Dear Neighbor:*

*Every few years or so, I like to send an updated list of helpful services and programs that are available to you. As your state representative, I continue to fight to preserve programs that assist New York's senior citizens as well as support legislation that will improve your life. Working closely with the State and County's Office for the Aging, my goal is to always ensure that Rockland's seniors are being taken care of.*

*This brochure is a reminder of some of those state and local programs that you might find of interest. Please feel free to call my district office at 845-634-9791 for any questions or additional information.*

*Sincerely,*

Ken Zebrowski

## PROGRAMS FOR ASSISTANCE

Many seniors are able to take advantage and find some relief in the form of both state and local assistance programs. While many of these programs have explicit income-eligibility requirements, it is worth checking to see whether you qualify and could take advantage of any of the following:

- **EPIC** (The Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage) is a New York State program for seniors administered by the Department of Health. It helps more than 270,000 income-eligible seniors aged 65 and older to supplement their out-of-pocket Medicare Part D drug plan costs. Seniors can apply for EPIC at any time of the year and must be enrolled, or eligible to be enrolled, in a Medicare Part D drug plan to receive EPIC benefits and maintain coverage. The Fee Plan is for members with income up to \$20,000 if single or \$26,000 if married. The Deductible Plan is for members with incomes ranging from \$20,001 to \$75,000 if single or \$26,001 to \$100,000 if married. It is easy to join the program. For more information contact the EPIC Helpline at 1-800-332-3742 or visit [https://www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/epic/](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/epic/).
- **EISEP\*** (Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly Program) provides non-medical in-home everyday services such as personal care, shopping cooking, etc. to seniors age 60 and over. Fees are based on a sliding scale. Those already receiving assistance from Medicaid or any other entitlement program are not eligible for this program. For more information call 845-364-2120 or visit [https://www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/medicaid/program/longterm/expand.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/longterm/expand.htm).
- **HIICAP\*** (Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program) provides information and counseling assistance to seniors regarding Medicare, health insurance issues, and related benefits, including EPIC. For more information call 845-364-2118 or visit <https://aging.ny.gov/healthbenefits/>.
- **HEAP\*** (Home Energy Assistance Program) is a grant program that subsidizes heating bills from November through May. It is available for residents 60 or older, who meet income guidelines or who are already collecting SSI benefits. Monthly income limits are \$2,318 for individuals and \$3,031 (combined income) for married couples. For more information call 845-364-3480 or visit <http://www.ny.gov/services/apply-heap>.
- **WRAP\*** (Weatherization Referral and Packaging) is a home weatherization service for HEAP-qualified seniors. For more information call 845-364-2101 or visit <https://aging.ny.gov/NYSOFA/programs/econsecurity/WRAP.cfm>.
- **CAREGIVER RESPITE\*** provides caregivers (someone who cares for an individual 60 and over) with various types of relief. There are no income qualifications for the week-long respite program and it is subject to availability and funding. For more information call 845-364-3444.

# PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

The following is information about the STAR, Senior Enhanced STAR, and Low Income Senior tax exemptions. Please note that all exemption applications must be filed with the Assessor in your town no later than March 1st.

## BASIC STAR:

Homeowners may be eligible for different STAR exemptions based upon income, age, ownership and primary residency. Residents do not have to re-register with New York State if you've been a longtime homeowner that has received the existing exemption. If you own your home, it is your primary residence and your income is \$500,000 or below, you are eligible for Basic STAR. The law recently changed so that homeowners who bought their home after August 1, 2015 now receive a STAR credit in the form of a check instead of a direct exemption. Those who purchased their homes before that date will continue to receive the exemption.

## SENIOR ENHANCED STAR:

Enhanced Star has an additional eligibility requirement based upon income; therefore, this exemption must be renewed each year. It provides an increased benefit for the primary residences of senior citizens (age 65 and older) with qualifying incomes (\$86,000 or less for the 2018-2019 school year) based on the first \$66,800 of the full value of a home (for the 2018-2019 school year). To avoid renewing with your assessor every year, you can sign

up for the automatic income verification program. This allows the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance to automatically verify and renew your income eligibility without having to visit your town assessor. The forms can be found at the State's website: [https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current\\_forms/orpts/rp425ivp\\_fill\\_in.pdf](https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/orpts/rp425ivp_fill_in.pdf).

All applications must be in by March 1st of the year when the exemption will begin. For jointly owned property, only one spouse or sibling must be at least 65 by December 31st of the year when the exemption will begin. The income limit applies to all owners, and any owner's spouse who resides at the property.

## LOW INCOME SENIOR:

Local governments and school districts have the option in New York State to offer a reduction on property taxes to qualifying, low income, senior citizens. The amount of the reduction and income/age eligibility requirements vary from municipality to municipality. Generally, applicants must be over 65 years of age and must prove their past year's gross income through various sources: social security, pensions, interest, etc. Since each municipality is different, please contact your local assessor regarding the specific exemptions in your town that you may qualify for.

- Clarkstown . . . . . 845-639-2031
- Haverstraw . . . . . 845-942-3717
- Ramapo . . . . 845-357-5100 ext. 255

or go to the website of the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance <http://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/>.

## PROGRAMS FOR ASSISTANCE...continued

■ **CHORE\*** is a program sponsored by BRiDGES that provides in-home light handy work to adults 60 and over. Volunteers are sent to help conduct minor home maintenance when needed. For more information call 845-215-1010 or visit <http://www.bridgesrc.org/programs-services/chore-program/>.

■ **MOVING FORWARD NEWSPAPER\*** is the official newspaper of the Rockland County Office for the Aging. Published every other month, it includes helpful, relevant information for seniors in the County. Residents can get the free paper by requesting it at 845-364-2117, or send your email address to [Sadowskj@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:Sadowskj@co.rockland.ny.us).

■ **NY CONNECTS\*** is a service that provides preliminary evaluations and information about long-term services, or long-term care. These services provide both medical and non-medical assistance to help people remain independent in their

everyday lives. Staff is available to help find services at 845-364-3444 or visit <https://www.nyconnects.ny.gov/>.

■ **MEALS ON WHEELS** is a home delivery service available to Rockland County residents who are confined to their home and unable to shop or cook independently. This service has no age requirement; meals may be provided to either seniors or individuals with illness or physical handicap. Kosher meals may also be provided. For more information call 845-624-6325 or visit [www.mowrockland.com](http://www.mowrockland.com).

*\*These programs are provided through the Rockland County Office for the Aging, which is funded by the Rockland County Legislature, the New York State Office for the Aging, and the Older Americans Act.*

To contact the Rockland County Office for the Aging call 845-364-2110.

## PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

**NEW YORK STATE** ■ *The Golden Park Program:* This program allows New York State residents, age 62 or over and who show a valid NYS Driver License or NYS Non-Driver ID Card, free vehicle access to state parks on non-holiday weekdays. For more information contact the NYS Parks Regional Office at Bear Mountain by calling 845-786-2701 or online at <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/admission/>.

**FEDERAL** ■ *The National Park Service:* The Park Service offers a “Senior Pass” for \$80, which is a lifetime pass to free access to the hundreds of national recreation sites throughout the country. Seniors may also take advantage of the discounted annual Senior Pass for \$20. Four annual Senior Passes purchased in prior years can also be traded in for a lifetime

pass. This must be purchased in person; two sites nearest to Rockland County are Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt in Hyde Park (845-229-9115 Ex. 2010) and Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace in New York City (212-260-1616). Additional information is available online at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

**ROCKLAND COUNTY** ■ *Rockland County Park System:* The County offers 28 parks comprising 3,100 acres that seniors can take advantage for free. For a parks brochure or other information, call 845-364-2670 or visit <http://rocklandgov.com/departments/environmental-resources/county-parks-and-dog-runs/>.

**TOWN SENIOR CLUBS** ■ All of the towns in the 96th Assembly District have much to offer in terms of senior clubs. If you don't already belong to a club, visit the County website for the contact information for your particular town: [http://rocklandgov.com/files/9914/1098/0151/2014\\_SENIOR\\_CLUBS.pdf](http://rocklandgov.com/files/9914/1098/0151/2014_SENIOR_CLUBS.pdf)

**Assemblyman Zebrowski Meets with the Rockland County AARP Chapter to Discuss their Legislative Priorities.**



## EDUCATION

*Rockland Community College offers various educational opportunities for seniors as well as a robust Senior Citizen's Club:*

### **SENIOR AUDIT:**

RCC allows any senior over the age of 60 to enroll in any of their regular academic courses free of charge. This is on a space available basis and seniors can register either by mail, fax, or in person. To learn more, visit <http://www.sunyrockland.edu/community-and-business/seniors>.

### **RCC SENIOR CITIZEN'S CLUB:**

Members of this club are encouraged to take advantage of everything that the college has to offer. Members often engage in social and intellectual experiences and are able to attend lectures, presentations and take trips. Call 845-574-4246 for more information.

### **RETIRED SENIORS AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP):**

RSVP is a non-profit made up of over 500 Rockland Seniors. It is funded by the Corporation for National Community Service, the New York State Office for the Aging and the Rockland County Legislature. Volunteers serve the community by tutoring children, providing independent living services, assisting victims of natural disasters, etc. To learn more call 845-356-6818 or visit <http://www.sunyrockland.edu/community-and-business/seniors/rsvp>.



**Assemblyman Zebrowski meets with Senior Citizen Advocate Joe Tarangelo.**



The Jewish War Veterans of the Rockland/Orange District Council with Assemblyman Zebrowski at their Annual Legislative Breakfast.

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### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

**ALL EMERGENCIES** . . . . . **911**

**ASSEMBLYMAN KEN ZEBROWSKI** . . . . . **845-634-9791**

#### SENIOR SERVICES

- Rockland County Office for the Aging. . . . . 845-364-2110  
*www.rocklandgov.com/departments/aging*
- New York State Office for the Aging. . . . . 800-342-9871  
*www.aging.ny.gov*

#### SOCIAL SERVICES

- Information Rockland . . . . . 845-364-2020  
*www.informationrockland.com*

#### TOURISM

- Dept. of Tourism (*Rockland County*). . . . . 845-708-7300  
*(Information on events and places in Rockland)*  
*www.rocktourism.com*

#### TRANSPORTATION

- Dept. of Transportation (*Rockland County*). . . 845-364-3333  
*www.rocklandgov.com/departments/aging/transportation*

#### VETERANS:

- Veterans Service Agency (*Rockland County*). . 845-638-5244  
*www.rockvets.com*
- Division of Veterans' Affairs (*NY State*) . . . 888-838-7697  
*www.veterans.ny.gov*
- Dept. of Veterans' Affairs (*United States*) . . 800-827-1000  
*www.va.gov*