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"We've faced trying times over the last two years. I'm fighting to ensure all residents have the resources to help make ends meet and pursue meaningful lives in the communities they call home."

**– Assemblyman
William Conrad**

**LOOK
INSIDE**

for tips from
Assemblyman
William Conrad on
how you can stay
healthy and safe

Helpful Resources for Western New York Residents from

Assemblyman William Conrad



Assemblyman William Conrad is keeping you informed...

HEAP and Emergency HEAP

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps low-income residents cover the costs of heating their homes, while Emergency HEAP assistance is available for heat-related crises. Eligibility and benefits are based on income, household size, primary heating source and who resides in the house. Visit otda.ny.gov/programs/heap for information about HEAP and emergency heating aid or call the Erie County HEAP Office at **716-858-7644**.

Prescription Drug Assistance

The Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) Program provides copayment assistance for Medicare Part D-covered prescription drugs after any Part D deductible is met. This program also covers many drugs excluded from Medicare Part D. EPIC is available to anyone age 65 or older who is not receiving full Medicaid benefits and whose income is no higher than \$75,000, or \$100,000 if married. For more information, visit www.health.ny.gov/health_care/epic or call **800-332-3742**.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Our communities have faced unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, but resources and support are available for those impacted. Insurance will cover the cost of eight at-home COVID-19 tests per person each month. For details, visit cms.gov/how-to-get-your-at-home-OTC-COVID-19-test-for-free. You can also order four free at-home tests at covidtests.gov.

Following public health recommendations helps protect everyone, especially older adults and other high-risk populations. For the latest local information about the pandemic, visit www2.erie.gov/health/coronavirus. To find a vaccination site, call **800-232-0233**.

Consumer Scam Protection

Consumer scams have cost people millions of dollars through false promises, inaccurate claims and deceptive practices. Sadly, seniors are often targeted and are less likely to file claims.

Some of the most common scams are: scammers purporting to be from Medicare in order to gain your personal information; scammers who claim you need to hand over information to access an inheritance; telemarketers who ask for a "good faith payment" with the promise of providing a prize; fake charities; investment and reverse mortgage schemes; retail scams in which a caller (often an automated voice) indicates you need to provide financial information to avoid a charge on your credit card; scams in which a thief demands remote access to your device through the guise of a malware attack; and grandparent scams, in which a caller pretends to be a loved one in need or their representative.

Some tips: resist the pressure to act quickly – scammers intentionally try to create a sense of urgency. Be cautious of unsolicited phone calls, mailings and door-to-door offers. Do not download email attachments from unknown senders. Do not provide your personal information in response to unexpected text messages; government agencies and legitimate businesses do not ask for information this way. Verify numbers and addresses as well any requests for money or assistance that are supposedly coming from people you know.

For information and tips, visit ny.gov/agencies/division-consumer-protection, or contact the State Division of Consumer Protection helpline at **800-697-1220**.

Property Tax Relief

The STAR and Enhanced STAR programs provide eligible seniors with exemptions on the taxable value of their homes, resulting in significant school tax savings. Income and other eligibility criteria may change from year to year. For more information regarding eligibility and application procedures, visit tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star/default.htm or call **518-457-2036**.



Important Phone Numbers

courtesy of **Assemblyman William Conrad**

Erie County van services for seniors:
716-858-7433 or www2.erie.gov/seniorservices/transportation

Center for Elder Law and Justice:
716-853-3087 or www.elderjusticenyc.org

Meals on Wheels WNY:
716-822-2002 or www.feedmorewny.org

Erie County
Public Health 716-858-7690
County Clerk 716-858-8785
Senior Services 716-858-8526

Emergencies
Erie County Sheriff 716-858-7618
Fire, Police, EMS 911
NYSEG Natural Gas Emergency Line 800-572-1121
NYSEG Electrical Emergency Line 800-572-1131
Town of Tonawanda Police Department 716-876-5300
City of Tonawanda Police Department 716-692-2121
Village of Kenmore Police Department 716-875-1234

State Assistance
Attorney General's Consumer Helpline 800-771-7755
Office of Victim Services 800-247-8035
Department of Taxation & Finance 518-457-5181
Department of Financial Services 800-342-3736
NYS Dept. of Health COVID-19 Hotline 888-364-3065
NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline 844-863-9314
Unemployment Insurance 888-209-8124

Federal Assistance
Federal Trade Commission
Identity Theft Hotline 877-438-4338
Consumer Response Center 877-382-4357
Postal Service 800-275-8777
Senator Charles E. Schumer 716-846-4111
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand 716-854-9725
Social Security 800-772-1213

Services & Hotlines
EPIC Helpline 800-332-3742
Medicare Helpline 800-633-4227
Office for the Aging Hotline 800-342-9871
Utility Bill Problems 800-342-3377
"Do Not Call" Telemarketing Registry 888-382-1222