

Quinnehtukqut Legal News



Volume 4 Issue 1

A Newsletter for Native Americans in Connecticut

Summer 2000

Notice to Our Readers:

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is evaluating the usefulness of this publication to Native Americans in Connecticut. If you have suggestions or comments on how this Newsletter can be helpful to you, please let us know. If we do not hear from you, this may be our last issue.

You may contact us at Quinnehtukqut Legal News, Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Coe Building, 61 Main St., Room 41, Bangor, ME 04401. Or you can send e-mail to: csamp@ptla.org or call 1-800-879-7463 and ask to speak to Craig Sanborn or Eric Nelson



Legislative Update

Native American Issues:

Office of State-Tribal Relations: This bill would have created a new Office of State-Tribal Relations within the governor's office. The bill was approved by the Senate but died when it was not voted upon by the House of Representatives.

Private Land Deer Permits: This bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection to issue, with no fee, private land deer permits to Indians to hunt on their Tribe's reservation lands. The reservation must be at least 250 acres for members to be eligible. The permit allows them to hunt deer from November 1 through December 31 using a rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader, or bow and arrow. Currently, Indians may hunt on their reservation lands without a license under the same regulations and during the same hunting season as licensed hunters generally. This bill passed and has been signed into law.

Welfare Issues:


Public Act 00-2 was passed during the Special Session of the Legislature this June. The bill was designed to set the budget for the Department of Social Services. However, the bill also included some major changes in welfare policy. These include:

Security Deposit Guarantee Program:

Before the change, people getting cash benefits (such as temporary family assistance or general assistance) and living in emergency housing were entitled to get a cash security deposit to help them move into permanent housing. This law has been changed. People in this situation are now eligible only for a *guarantee* that DSS will pay a security deposit to the landlord instead of having DSS make a cash payment directly to the landlord. Cash payments can still be paid in very limited cases, but only if there is money available in the state's safety net account. *If* you: (a) get cash benefits; (b) are living in emergency housing; (c) cannot live in

permanent housing for a number of listed reasons; and (d) are faced with emergency circumstances which threaten the health, safety or welfare of a child living with you, you may be eligible for a cash payment to your landlord for one month's rent.

Prior Authorization for Prescriptions:

DSS has been given the authority to issue regulations that will require prior authorization for certain drugs covered by Medicaid, state-administered general assistance, general assistance, or the ConnPACE program. This means that you will be unable to get these prescriptions unless you or your doctor has gotten prior approval from an independent pharmacy consultant authorized by DSS. The drugs that are affected by the program are any first prescription for a drug costing over \$500 for a thirty day supply and any early refill of any drug covered by these programs. This bill is expected to make it harder for doctors to prescribe brand-name drugs instead of generic drugs. 




Bureau of Indian Affairs


Issues Proposed

Findings Supporting

Federal Recognition for Eastern Pequots and Paucatuck Eastern Pequots

 On March 31, 2000, the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs published Proposed Findings in the *Federal Register*. These Findings recommended granting the Petitions for Federal Recognition filed by both the Eastern Pequots and the Paucatuck Eastern Pequots.

In both Proposed Findings, which are identical in many areas, the Assistant Secretary stated that there was not enough evidence in the record at the time the Findings were issued to decide whether the two Tribes were in fact a single Tribe after 1973 or whether they were two separate communities. The Assistant Secretary did find that, whether there was one Tribe or two, there was enough evidence to give federal recognition. In reaching this conclusion, the Secretary placed great weight on the fact that the Eastern Pequots at the Lantern Hill Reservation had been recognized by the State of Connecticut since colonial times. The Tribes and other interested parties were invited to provide more evidence during the comment period on the question of whether there were in fact two separate Tribes.

Under Bureau of Indian Affairs regulations, there is a comment period that runs for 180 days after the date on which the Proposed Findings are published in the *Federal Register*. No final decision will be issued until the comment period has ended. The towns of Ledyard, Preston and North Stonington are contesting the proposed findings. 



Statewide Legal Services



Call Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. (SLS) if you are low income and believe you have a legal problem. It is a toll-free telephone hotline that can give you free help in the following areas:

- ★ *Housing*
- ★ *Family Matters*
- ★ *Welfare*
- ★ *Medicare*
- ★ *Medicaid*
- ★ *Other Government Benefits*

If you meet income eligibility standards, SLS can help you as follows:

- ▶ ***Problems that can be settled quickly.*** SLS staff can handle some of these problems themselves. For example, SLS staff can call your local General Assistance office to explain a mistake.
- ▶ ***More complicated problems.*** SLS can refer you to one of the four legal service agencies in Connecticut, a law school clinic, a specialized legal services agency, or a *pro bono* (free) lawyer. SLS makes referrals based on its priorities and resource limitations.
- ▶ ***Problems you can handle yourself.*** SLS can give you telephone instruction, send you written materials, or tell you about classes to help you represent yourself.
- ▶ ***Non-priority problems.*** If you have a problem which cannot be accepted by SLS or a referral agency, SLS can give you general advice.

Telephone Numbers To Call:

In the Middletown calling area: **1-860-344-0380**
 From other places in Connecticut: **1-800-453-3320**
9 a.m.- 3 p.m., Monday through Friday

Now you can call for free advice and information on Thursday nights from 5:30pm-7:30pm, as well as Monday-Friday from 9am-3pm.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is a non-profit organization that gives free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems in Maine.

Pine Tree operates a special Native American Unit in its Bangor, Maine office. The unit is staffed by attorney Craig Sanborn and is headed by Eric Nelson. Craig is a member of the Penobscot Nation. He joined the Pine Tree Staff in September of 1998. Eric has worked at Pine Tree for many years on behalf of migrant farmworkers and Native Americans.

Pine Tree attorneys are not licensed to practice law in Connecticut. However, the Native American Unit may be able to give information and help to low-income Native Americans in Connecticut with federal legal problems, such as questions about the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Jay Treaty. Pine Tree can also refer cases to lawyers in Connecticut. The telephone number is **1-800-879-7463**.

Free Help For Tax Problems

If you are a low income tax payer facing an audit, an administrative appeal, or litigation about your state or federal taxes, you may be eligible for free legal help. Quinnipiac College School of Law Legal Clinic (203-287-3238) and UCONN School of Law Tax Clinic (860-570-5165) offer free clinics to help with tax problems. They can give you free advice about your rights and free income tax preparation. All consultations are free and all information is confidential. Income limits apply.



You May Qualify for Medicaid, Even if You Don't Get Cash Assistance

The following articles are based on information provided by *CABHN Fever*, a publication of the Connecticut Alliance For Basic Human Needs.

You no longer need to be eligible for cash assistance in order to be eligible for Medicaid. This separation between eligibility for cash benefits and Medicaid is called "delinking." It means that families who lose or never received cash assistance may be eligible for Medicaid.



States are now required to take steps to identify who may have been wrongly terminated and to reinstate those benefits. In Connecticut, the Department of Social Services is trying to identify families that have been wrongly terminated from Medicaid since October 1, 1996. Families that were incorrectly terminated or incorrectly denied Medicaid will be reimbursed by DSS for their out-of-pocket medical costs. DSS will also reimburse providers for a family's outstanding bills.

If you lost Medicaid since October 1, 1996 and either paid for medical care or still owe medical bills, call DSS to find out if you may have been wrongly dropped from the Medicaid program. You can also call Statewide Legal Services at **1-800-453-3320** or **860-344-0380**.



New Elder Law Web Site



Connecticut Legal Services has a new web site to answer legal questions that affect the elderly. The web site address is **www.CTElderLaw.Org**. It has information about:

- ☐ Government assistance programs
- ☐ Health care programs
- ☐ Social Security and SSI
- ☐ Medicare and Medicaid
- ☐ Prescription programs
- ☐ Food stamps and
- ☐ Elder law issues such as nursing homes, patients' rights, living wills, etc.



*The articles in this paper are meant to give information, **NOT** to give legal advice. No one should interpret any law without the help of an attorney who has been told all the facts.*



The Quinnehtukqut Legal News is published by Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Inc. The views expressed by individual authors in this Newsletter are not necessarily shared by Pine Tree Legal Assistance or its staff.

Executive Director of PTLA: Nan Heald, Esq.
Native American Unit:
Directing Attorney: Eric Nelson, Esq.
Staff Attorney: Craig Sanborn, Esq.

Editor: Cushing Pagon Samp

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INDEX of COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This is a list of some key resources, which will offer you service or direct you to the best local resource.



CRISIS SERVICES (available 24 hours a day)



INFOLINE.....211

INFOLINE is a Statewide Information, Referral, and Crisis Intervention Service. Callers can get help 24 hours a day. The professional caseworkers answering the phone can give up-to-date information about agencies and programs, can make referrals, and can intervene in crises, including suicide prevention.



Child Abuse and Neglect:

Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline.....1-800-842-2288
TD 1-800-624-5518



Domestic Violence:

- Ansonia:**
The Umbrella Project.....203-736-9944
- Avon:**
Interval House.....860-409-2583
- Bridgeport:**
Center for Women and Families
of Eastern Fairfield County, Inc.....203-334-6154
- Danbury:**
Women's Center of Greater Danbury.....203-731-5206
- Danielson:**
Domestic Violence Program/United Services, Inc.....860-774-8648
- Enfield:**
Network Against Domestic Abuse.....860-763-4542
- Falls Village:**
Women's Support Services.....860-824-1080
- Greenwich:**
Domestic Abuse Service Greenwich YWCA.....203-622-0003
- Hartford:**
Interval House.....860-527-0550
- Manchester:**
Interval House.....860-645-4033
- Meriden:**
Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis.....203-238-1501
- Middletown:**
New Horizons.....860-301-0030
- New Britain:**
Prudence Crandall Center for Women.....860-225-6357

New Haven:

Domestic Violence Services of
Greater New Haven.....203-789-8104

New London:

Domestic Violence Services of New London County.....860-301-0030

Norwalk:

Domestic Violence Crisis Center.....203-852-1980

Stamford:

Domestic Violence Crisis Center.....203-357-8162

Torrington:

Susan B. Anthony Project.....860-482-7133

Waterbury:

Women's Emergency Shelter.....203-575-0036

Willimantic:

Domestic Violence Program/United Services.....860-456-9476



Elder Abuse and Neglect:

INFOLINE (for after hours emergencies).....211

Statewide (Toll free).....1-888-385-4225

Eastern Region:

Greater Norwich/New London Area.....860-886-0521
Windham Area.....860-465-3550

North Central Region:

Hartford Area.....860-723-1003
Manchester/New Britain/Bristol Areas.....860-647-5930

North West Region:

Torrington Area.....860-496-6950
Waterbury/Danbury Area.....203-596-4242

South Central Region:

Middletown/Meriden/Wallingford Areas.....860-704-3040
New Haven.....203-974-8029

South West Region:

Bridgeport Area.....203-551-2701
Norwalk Area.....203-855-2759
Stamford Area.....203-251-9392



Mental Health:

Ansonia:

Valley Mental Health Center.....203-736-2601

Bridgeport:

Greater Bridgeport Community
Mental Health Center.....203-551-7400
Hotline.....1-800-586-9903

Danbury:

Danbury Hospital.....203-797-7899

East Hartford:

Emergency Services.....860-895-3100

Enfield:

North Central Counseling Services.....860-253-5020

Hartford:

Capitol Region Mental Health Center.....860-297-0999

Manchester:

Genesis Center.....860-643-3680

Meriden:

Mid-State Medical Center.....1-800-567-0902

Middletown:

River Valley Services.....860-262-5200

Milford:

Bridges Community Support System.....203-878-6365

New Haven:

Connecticut Mental Health Center.....203-974-7300

Norwich:

Southeastern Mental Health Authority.....860-886-9302

Plainville:

Wheeler Clinic.....860-747-8719


Stamford:

F.S. DuBois Center.....203-358-8500



- ✕ **Torrington:**
Northwest Mental Health Authority.....860-482-1560
- ✕ **Waterbury:**
Waterbury Hospital.....203-573-6500
- ✕ **Willimantic:**
United Services.....860-456-2261


 **Poison Control:**
Connecticut Poison Control Center.....1-800-343-2722
TD 860-679-4346

-  **Sexual Assault Crisis Programs:**
(Hotline Numbers)
- ❖ Center for Women and Families of Eastern Fairfield Co., Inc
Rape Crisis Service.....203-333-2233
 - ❖ Women's Center of Greater Danbury
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....203-731-5204
 - ❖ Hartford Region YWCA
Sexual Assault Crisis Services.....860-522-6666
 - ❖ Central Connecticut YWCA
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....860-635-4424
 - ❖ Rape Crisis Center of Milford.....203-878-1212
 - ❖ New Britain YWCA
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....860-223-1787
 - ❖ Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis.....203-624-2273
 - ❖ Northeastern Connecticut
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....860-456-2789
 - ❖ Susan B. Anthony Project for Women
(Serving Northwestern Connecticut).....860-482-7133
 - ❖ Women's Emergency Shelter Sexual Assault
Crisis Service(serving greater Waterbury.....203-753-3613
 - ❖ Sexual Assault Crisis Center
(Lower Fairfield County).....203-329-2929


Youth Crisis:

Contact the nearest Youth Service Bureau through your town hall

LEGAL RESOURCES

 **Lawyer Referral Service:**
This service can recommend a private lawyer who, for a small fee, will assess a case and give an estimate of charges.

- Fairfield County.....203-335-4116
Hartford.....860-525-6052
New Haven Area/Waterbury/Middlesex County.....203-562-5750
New London/Norwich.....860-889-9384

 **Legal Assistance Programs:**
These organizations give free civil legal help to income eligible people. This help includes telephone advice, referrals, direct representation, and giving out self-help material, depending on the priorities and resources of the organization.

STATEWIDE.....Statewide Legal Services.....1-800-453-3320
in Middletown.....860-344-0380

Statewide Legal Services screens cases for all legal assistance programs in the state, giving brief service and advice, community education materials, and referrals to local legal services offices for non-criminal cases.

- ❖ **Bridgeport**.....Connecticut Legal Services.....203-336-3851
- ❖ **Hartford**.....Greater Hartford Legal Assistance (serving Greater Hartford).....860-541-5000
- ❖ **New Britain**.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619
- ❖ **New Haven**.....New Haven Legal Assistance.....203-946-4811
- ❖ **New London**.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7798
- ❖ **Stamford**.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-541-8909
- ❖ **Waterbury**.....Connecticut Legal Service.....1-800-413-7797
- ❖ **Willimantic**.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7796
- Legal Assistance to Medicare Patients.....1-800-413-7796

Connecticut Legal Rights Project

This organization helps mental health clients, residents of mental health facilities, and out-patient clients of community residential facilities. Telephone: 860-262-5030

Connecticut Lawyer's Legal Aid to The Elderly

This organization offers legal help to low-income elderly in the Hartford area. Telephone: 860-273-8164

Children's Law Center

This organization gives legal representation to children in northeastern Connecticut using a lawyer/mental health team approach. Telephone: 860-951-7392

Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund

This organization provides a free telephone counseling, information and legal referral line for help on discrimination, harassment and family matters. The group also offers community education and training, mainly in employment and family law. For information on workshops, call 860-247-6090. Telephone: 1-800-479-2949

Disabilities:

Connecticut Office Of Protection and Advocacy For Persons With Disabilities

60B Weston Street
Hartford CT 06120
Toll Free Telephone: 1-800-842-7303
Hartford area: 860-297-4300
TDD: 860-566-2102
Fax: 860-566-8714

Discrimination:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Capitol Region:
1229 Albany Avenue
Hartford, CT 06112
Tel.: 860-566-7710

Southwest Region:
1057 Broad Street
Bridgeport CT 06604
Tel.: 203-579-6246

West Central Region:
50 Linden Street
Waterbury CT 06702
Tel.: 203-596-4237

Eastern Region:
City Hall, Room 210
100 Broadway
Norwich CT 06360
Tel.: 860-886-5703
TD: 860-886-5707

Central Office
21 Grand Street
Hartford CT 06106
Tel.: 860-541-3400
1-800-477-5737



Some Helpful Native American Web Sites

- ❑ Nipmuc Indian Association of Connecticut:
<http://www.nativeweb.org/NativeTech/Nipmuc/>
- ❑ Pine Tree Legal Assistance:
<http://www.ptla.org>
- ❑ Index of Native American Resources on the Internet:
<http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/>
- ❑ Native Links: <http://www.johnco.com/native/>
- ❑ Native Sense: <http://www.nativesense.com/>
- ❑ Aboriginal Links:
<http://www.bloorstreet.com/300block/aborcan.htm>
- ❑ Native American Internet Resources:
<http://my.athenet.net/~ahuntley/nativeam.html>
- ❑ Dusters Native American:
<http://www.speccent.com/~duster/volc2.html>

