

Quinnehtukqut Legal News



Volume 1 Issue 1

A Newsletter For Native Americans In Connecticut

Summer 1997

1997 Connecticut Legislative Update: Welfare Reform

At the end of June of this year, the Connecticut Legislature made a number of changes to Public Assistance. This article highlights some of the most important changes. It is possible that the Governor will veto the bills that have passed, or that the agencies administering these programs will not agree with this interpretation of the changes. If you have specific questions about how these changes affect you, call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320.

Food Stamps. If you are between the ages of 18 and 50 and do not have dependent children, you may get food stamps for only three months in any 36 month period. Federal law allows the states to ask for a "waiver" of this harsh requirement. With a waiver, a state can extend the time period during which you can get food stamps. The waiver would apply to certain areas in a state.

To get the waiver, a state must show that there is a mismatch between the skill levels of workers in an area and the skills that employers in that area require their workers to have. Connecticut has 15 areas that could qualify for such a waiver. The Legislature has just required Governor Rowland to ask for this waiver. This should mean that Connecticut could get approximately \$8 million more from the Federal Government in 1998 to distribute through the food stamp program.

General Assistance. In 1996, Connecticut eliminated General Assistance cash aid to people who qualified as "employable" and "job ready." People in that category must apply for General Assistance and be referred to the Department of Labor. The department gives grants of \$100 a month for six months. Now the State has eliminated General Assistance for people who are classified as "employable but not job ready."

Previously, if you were "employable but not job ready," you could get up to \$300/month for sixteen months in a twenty-four month period. If you met the criteria listed in the statute, you could qualify for an extension. This benefit will be eliminated by August 31, 1997.

Under the new law, a new category of "transitional individuals" has been created. In order to get benefits, you must have a "documented" mental or physical impairment; you must be unable to work for two to six months; and you must show one of the following: You worked three of the last five

quarters and you made at least \$500 in those quarters; or You were eligible for unemployment compensation; or You can show "good reason" why you could not participate in the job market.

If you qualify in this new category, you will be eligible for up to \$200/month if you pay for shelter and \$150/month if you do not. The 16-month limitation on the amount of time for receiving benefits has been removed. If you had asked to be found to be "unemployable" and that request is still pending, you will be classified as "transitional" until a final decision is made on your status. Finally, sometime in 1998, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse will take over all services, including basic needs, for anyone with mental health and substance abuse problems. These changes will become effective by August 31, 1997.

(Continued on next page)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CANADIAN-BORN INDIANS

Some Canadian-born Native Americans are being notified that they will lose benefits such as SSI and Food Stamps. When the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 was passed last year, Congress took benefits away from non-citizens, including legal aliens. The Notices sent to Canadian-born Native Americans assume that this group should be treated as legal aliens.

Under United States law, however, Canadian-born Native Americans who have at least 50% Indian blood have rights to cross the border freely. They are not subject to U.S. immigration restrictions imposed on aliens. They should not lose their benefits under this new law.

The Congress is working on an amendment to make clear that this law was not intended to apply to Canadian-born Native Americans. It is not clear, however, when the amendment will be enacted.

If you get a Notice trying to end your benefits, you may want legal help. You can call Statewide Legal Services. The toll-free number is 1-800-453-3320. It is important to call immediately to protect your right to appeal a denial of benefits.

The articles in this paper are meant to provide 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.



About Pine Tree Legal Assistance

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is a non-profit organization which provides free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems.

Pine Tree operates a special Native American Unit in its Bangor office. The Unit is staffed by attorney Eric Nelson who has worked for many years at Pine Tree on behalf of migrant farmworkers and Native Americans. Eric can be reached at 1-800-879-7463.

Pine Tree attorneys are not licensed to practice law in Connecticut. However, its 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. The Telephone Number is 1-800-879-7463.

Temporary Family Assistance. Under Connecticut's Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) or "Jobs First" Program, families with dependent children are entitled to benefits for a 21-month period. Following that period, families may get extended benefits for six month periods. Now, the Department of Social Services (DSS) must hold "exit interviews" at 20 months. These interviews will decide whether you qualify for an extension, transitional housing, or a safety net.

You will be eligible for an extension if you have made a good faith effort to find work and you are not making more than your grant amount plus a \$90 work expense. If you qualify, your benefit will be the **difference** between the grant amount and what you earn. With an extension, therefore, your income will be less than what you received under TFA if you earned income while receiving your grant

If you are not eligible for an extension because you make too much, you may qualify for transitional rental assistance. You can qualify if you are not already getting housing assistance and if your housing costs are more than 30% of your income. You can get \$250/month for rent for the first six months and \$150/month for an additional six-month period.

If you do not qualify for an extension, DSS must provide a "safety net." It is not clear what this will mean. Services provided may include, at DSS discretion, food, clothing, employment services,

eviction prevention, intensive case management, and continuous monitoring for child abuse and neglect.

If you are at risk of not qualifying for an extension, you may have to sign an "individual performance contract." This contract can require you to get job training, search for a job, do volunteer work, or get parent training or counseling. If you complete the terms of the contract within the 21-month limit, you will qualify for a six-month extension, as long as you have not been sanctioned.

Under the changed law, if you lose cash assistance because you earn too much, you will still be eligible for Medicaid for up to two years.

A very important part of the new law states that if you do not cooperate with child support enforcement, you can lose **all** your cash benefits. If you are scared to cooperate because of domestic violence, make that very clear to your social worker. There is an exception for domestic violence. However, your social worker now has the right to demand that you show evidence of domestic violence and can force you to get a restraining order or attend counseling.

Child Care. DSS will be allowed to stop giving child care subsidies to families with incomes greater than 50% of the median income in Connecticut. Under prior law, subsidies were required for families with incomes up to 75% of the median. The bill also allows a sliding fee scale, even for TFA recipients. It is not clear what DSS will do with this.

Legislation Affecting Connecticut Indians

A bill was enacted during the last session restricting regulatory officials and certain state employees from working for Federally Recognized Indian Tribes running gaming operations. The restrictions apply to present or former Gaming Policy Board members, Division of Special Revenue Public Officials, and state employees designated by the State Ethics Commission. The restriction forbids present officials and employees from looking for a job with a Tribe while working for the state. It also prevents former personnel from working for a Tribe within two years after leaving state employment.

We Want To Hear From You!

If you have comments, articles or ideas on how this newsletter can be helpful to you, please let us know.

Please send articles or letters to:

*Quinnehtukqut Legal News
Pine Tree Legal Assistance
Coe Building, 61 Main Street
Room 41
Bangor, ME 04401.*



NOTE: FOR TFA RECIPIENTS

On the October 1, 1997, the 21 months will end for the first round of families receiving TFA benefits. In order to continue getting benefits, you must qualify for an extension. If you have been sanctioned during your 21 months, you can lose your eligibility for an extension.

If you have been threatened with a sanction, it is **Extremely Important** to follow the Conciliation Procedure. If, during conciliation, you have been asked to do something you don't agree with, do it anyway. You can appeal it later in a fair hearing. A **refusal to comply with conciliation can cost you your extension.**



Tribal Courts In Connecticut When Do I Use Them?

What Is A Tribal Court?

A Tribal Court is a court set up to serve some legal needs of members of Indian Tribes. Of the approximately 500 Federally recognized Tribes in the country, more than 200 have set up their own courts.

In Connecticut, there are two Tribal Courts. One serves the Mashantucket Pequots. The other serves the Mohegans.

Do All Tribal Courts Work The Same Way?

No. Tribal Courts can be as varied as the tribes themselves. They can range from tradition-based systems with little or no written rules to systems as formal as a State or Federal Court. Each Tribe decides how to set up its system and what rules and procedures it will use.

In Connecticut, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court is set up differently from the Mohegan's Gaming Dispute Court.

What Is The Gaming Dispute Court?

It is the Tribal Court For the Mohegan Tribe. This Court was set up by the Mohegans in 1995 to deal with certain types of gaming disputes. It is the only

Court that can hear Tribal gaming disputes arising out of or in connection with Gaming, the actions of the Tribal Gaming Authority, or contracts entered into by the Mohegan Tribe or the Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority in connection with Gaming.

The types of gaming disputes the Court may hear include: tort claims arising on the Gaming Enterprise site; appeals from the issuance and revocation of gaming licenses; and discriminatory employment practices Claims and Appeals.

What Is The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court?

It is the Tribal Court serving the Mashantucket Pequots. This court has operated for over five years and covers more kinds of cases than the Gaming Dispute Court. It also decides certain criminal cases.

What Civil (Non-Criminal) Cases Can Be Heard By The Mashantucket Pequot Court?

- Civil causes of action, including actions against the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe.
- Contract cases.
- Tort Claims arising on the Gaming Enterprise Site.
- Appeals of Employees suspended or terminated from their jobs with the Gaming Enterprise.
- Probate of Estates.
- Child welfare issues: abuse and neglect; guardianship; and termination of parental rights.
- Collection of debts owed to the Gaming Enterprise.
- Actions to enforce an agreement to arbitrate and to enforce arbitration awards.
- Domestic cases: marriages; restraining orders; annulments; dissolution of marriages; paternity; child support; and emancipation of minor children.
- Regulation of vehicle use on Reservation.
- Keeping pets and livestock on Reservation.

Does The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court Handle Any Criminal Cases?

Yes. Crimes by Indians against Indians, crimes by Indians against non-Indians, and crimes by Indians without victims, which are not committed on the gaming floor, can be handled in either Tribal or State Court.

Do I Need A Lawyer To Go To Tribal Court?

Not necessarily. Both courts allow you to proceed "pro se" (on your own). If you want a lawyer for the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court, call the Office of the Tribal Court Clerk to ask for the list of lawyers allowed to practice in that Court. The Gaming Disputes Court Clerk's Office also has a list of lawyers allowed to practice in that Court.

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What Does A Tribal Court Clerk Do?

The Court Clerk's Office can help you get any forms you might need for a case and will give you copies of Tribal laws or rules of procedure. The Office will also handle scheduling. The Clerk's Office, however, **cannot** give legal advice.

Telephone Numbers and Addresses:

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court
8 Annie George Drive Ext.
P.O. Box 3126
Mashantucket CT 06339-3126
Tel.: 860-572-6156
FAX: 860-572-6320
Hours: Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mohegan Gaming Disputes Court
67 Sandy Desert Road
P.O. Box 549
Uncasville CT 06382-0549
Tel.: 860-848-6155
FAX: 860-848-6159
Hours: Monday-Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Indian Child Welfare Act Update

Below are just a few answers to questions you might have.

What Is The Indian Child Welfare Act?

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is a Federal law governing placement proceedings of Indian children. If your child is a member of a Tribe, or is eligible for membership in a Tribe, your family can be protected by the ICWA. These protections can be used in any case involving **child protection, adoption, guardianships, termination of parental rights, runaways, truancy, or voluntary placement of your children.**

Why Was This Law Passed?

The ICWA was passed in 1978 to re-establish tribal authority over the adoption of Native American children. The goal was to strengthen and preserve Native American families and culture. Before the Act was passed, a very high percentage of Indian Families were broken up because non-tribal agencies removed children from their homes. One reason for this was because state officials did not understand or accept Indian culture.

What Does The Law Do?

Under The ICWA, placement cases involving Indian children must be heard in Tribal Courts, if possible, and must allow a child's Tribe to be involved in State Courts. The law also requires

testimony from expert witnesses familiar with Indian culture before your child can be removed from your home.

If your child is removed, either for foster care or adoption, your child should be placed with extended family members, other Tribal members, or other Indian families. The ICWA sets minimum standards for removing Indian children from their homes.

Who Does The Law Apply To?

The law applies to unmarried Native American children under eighteen. The child must be a member of, or eligible for membership in, a federally recognized Tribe.

What If My Child Is Not A Member Of A Federally Recognized Tribe?

It is clear that the law applies to members of federally recognized Tribes. In Connecticut, however, the State has recognized five Tribes: the Schaghticoke, the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot and the Golden Hill Paugusett, as well as the federally recognized Mashantucket Pequot and the Mohegans. There may be a legal argument that, at least in the State of Connecticut, the ICWA must be applied to anyone recognized as an Indian under State law. Ask your lawyer to look into this possibility.

In addition, your lawyer can also ask a State Court judge to apply some of the protections given by the ICWA to your case.

What If My Child Does Not Live On A Reservation?

If a State takes a child into custody, it **must** tell the child's Tribe, no matter where the child may be in the United States.

Does The Act Apply To Divorce Cases?

No.

If I Have Allowed Someone To Become A Guardian For My Child, Can I Change My Mind?

Yes. You, as an Indian parent, always have the right to change your mind.

Which Tribes Does The Law Apply To?

The law applies to all federally recognized Tribes. In Connecticut, this means the Mashantucket Pequots and the Mohegans. Remember, however, that if you are not a member of one of these federally

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recognized tribes, you may be able to get a judge to apply the law to you anyway.

The ICWA defines an Indian tribe as any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians recognized as eligible for the services given to Indians by the Secretary of the Interior because of their status as Indians.

Who Decides If I Am A Member Of A Tribe?

Each Tribe is allowed to decide that on its own.

What Courts Will Hear Cases Involving Native American Children?

In Connecticut, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court hears cases involving children from that Tribe. That Court will also hear preliminary matters involving children of the Mohegan or Narragansett Tribes, especially if there is an emergency. The Court will then refer the case back to the Tribe.

The Connecticut Superior Court and the Juvenile Court can also hear these kinds of cases.

Is This Law Being Changed?

The United States Congress is considering changes to the ICWA. The proposed changes are based on recommendations approved at a June 1996 National Conference of American Indians. It is possible that at least one other bill will be proposed.

What Are The Proposed Changes?

If the proposed changes are enacted by Congress, the ICWA would:

- Require State Courts to give notice to Tribes in voluntary adoption cases. Courts must already give notice in involuntary cases.
- Establish time limits for Tribes to intervene in voluntary ICWA cases in State Courts.
- Place criminal penalties on lawyers and adoption agencies who knowingly violate the Act.
- Set time limits on when you can withdraw your consent to an adoption.
- Allow State Courts to provide for open adoption where state law does not now allow it.
- Make clear that a Tribe keeps exclusive jurisdiction over children who become wards of the Tribal Court after jurisdiction has been changed from State Court to Tribal Court.

- Require lawyers and adoption agencies to tell Indian parents about their rights under the ICWA.

- Require that, if a Tribe wants to intervene in a State Court, it must give the Court a Tribal certification that the child is a member of, or is eligible for membership in, the Tribe.



LOW INCOME? NEED LEGAL HELP? CALL STATEWIDE LEGAL SERVICES

What Is Statewide Legal Services?

Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. (SLS) is the first place to call if you are low income and believe you have a legal problem. It is a toll-free telephone hotline.

SLS is a non-profit organization. It was started in February, 1996 to help meet the non-criminal legal needs of the poor in Connecticut. It is a free service.

What Kinds Of Legal Problems Can SLS Help Me With?

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

How Will SLS Help Me?

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 negotiate with your landlord to allow you to stay in your apartment if you agree to pay your back rent. Or, the 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 or clinics to help you represent yourself.

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- **Non-priority problems.** If you have a problem which cannot be accepted by SLS or a referral agency because of resource limitations or because your problem is a non-priority matter, SLS can give you general advice.

This Is A Different Way Of Giving Legal Services. Does It Work?

Yes. The benefits of this system are: faster response to clients' questions; better efficiency in handling routine matters and referrals; a broader network of legal and non-legal referrals; and more time for the staff of other legal service providers to help clients needing full legal representation.

Telephone Numbers To Call

In the Middletown calling area call:

1-860-344-0380

From other places in Connecticut call:

1-800-453-3320

**Times To Call:
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Monday through Friday

CREDITS

This Newsletter is published by Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Inc., a non-profit organization which provides free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems in the State of Maine.

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The Honorable Jill Shibles, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court
Janet Van Tassel, Esq., Legal Assistance Resource Center of Connecticut*



SOCIAL SECURITY Your Protection For The Future

Some employers do not make FICA--Social Security--deductions. Below are some answers to questions you might have about Social Security. If you have other questions, call your local Social Security Administration office.

What is it? The FICA tax is a deduction of 7.65% of your wages. This amount is paid to the Social Security Administration by your employer, for your benefit. Your employer must also pay an equal amount (7.65%) of its own money to Social Security. Both these amounts go into your account to establish your eligibility for Social Security benefits and to determine the amount of benefits you may receive. You can get your benefits when you retire or become disabled. When you die, your family may get your benefits.

How does it work? FICA must be deducted if you earn more than \$150 from an employer. To qualify for benefits later on, you will have to show that you earned a certain number of credits. The number of credits you must have depends on your age when you ask for your benefits. You can earn up to four credits a year. However, the amount of wages you must earn to gain one credit changes from time to time.

Why is it important? It is important to build your credits so that you can receive benefits later on. Also, your credits will determine the amount of benefits you can get.

How can I be sure deductions are being made? You need to fill out a Form W-4 with your employer before you start work. You have to do this to get your credits. You can also look at your pay check stubs or your itemized statement. The deductions will also be reported on your Form W-2 at the end of the year for your tax records.

What if I am being treated as an independent contractor? If your employer tries to avoid making your FICA payments by saying you are an independent contractor, he may be wrong. Migrant farmworkers, for example, should rarely be considered independent contractors. If you work for an independent contractor, your employer must deduct FICA and you should receive a list of deductions.

How can I be sure that my FICA deductions are going into my account? Use Form SSA-7050-F3 to ask for the

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information you want. You can get the form from your local Social Security office or by calling 1-800-772-1213.

Can I correct my record? Yes. If you find out that your employer has not reported your wages properly, you may have your record corrected. If your employer is not making or paying deductions, it is important to report him so that you and other workers will get proper credit and benefits for the future.



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.....1-800-203-1234

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 Protection Careline.....1-800-842-2288
TDD 1-800-624-5518

Domestic Violence:

Ansonia:
The Umbrella Project.....203-736-2601
203-736-9944

Bridgeport:
YWCA of Eastern Fairfield County.....203-334-6154

Danbury:
Women's Center of Greater Danbury.....203-731-5206

Dayville:
Domestic Violence Program/United Services, Inc...860-774-8648

Enfield:
Network Against Domestic Abuse.....860-763-4542

Greenwich:
Domestic Abuse Service Greenwich YWCA.....203-622-0003

Hartford:
Hartford Interval House.....860-527-0550

Meriden:
Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis.....203-238-1501

Middletown:
New Horizons.....860-347-6971

New Britain:
Prudence Crandall Center for Women.....860-225-6357

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

New London:

Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut.....860-447-0366

Norwalk:

Women's Crisis Center, Inc.....203-852-1980

Falls Village:

Women's Emergency Services.....860-824-1080

Stamford:

Domestic Violence Services, Inc.....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, Inc...860-456-9476

Elder Abuse and Neglect:

INFOLINE (for after hours emergencies).....1-800-203-1234

North Central Region:

Hartford Area.....860-566-7329

Manchester Area.....860-566-5342

New Britain/Bristol Area.....860-566-1744

Eastern Region:

Greater Norwich/New London Area203-886-0521

South West Region:

Bridgeport Area.....203-579-6824

Norwalk Area.....203-838-4303

Stamford Area.....203-348-8176

North West Region:

Waterbury/Danbury Area.....203-596-4242

Torrington Area.....860-482-5531

South Central Region:

New Haven/Meriden/Wallingford Area.....203-789-6913

Middletown Area.....860-344-2104

Mental Health:

Bridgeport:

Greater Bridgeport Community.....203-579-6651
Mental Health Center

Danbury:

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

East Hartford:

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

Hartford:

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

Manchester:

Manchester Memorial Hospital.....860-647-4766

Meriden:

Crisis Stabilization Program.....203-238-8382

Middletown:

River Valley Service Mobile Crisis Team.....860-344-2040

New Haven:

Connecticut Mental Health Center.....203-789-7713

Norwich:

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

New Britain:

Community Mental Health Affiliates.....860-224-2647

Plainville:

Community Response Team of Wheeler Clinic.....860-747-8719

Stamford:

F.S. DuBois Center

Community Crisis Intervention.....203-358-8500

Torrington:

Northwest Mental Health Authority.....860-482-1560

Waterbury:

Waterbury Hospital Crisis Intervention Center.....203-573-6500

Willimantic:

United Services.....860-456-2261

**Poison Control:**

Connecticut Poison Control Center.....1-800-343-2722
TDD 860-679-4346

Sexual Assault Crisis Programs:*(Hotline Numbers)*

YWCA of Eastern Fairfield County, Inc
Rape Crisis Service.....203-333-2233
Women's Center of Greater Danbury
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....203-731-5204
Hartford Sexual Assault Crisis Service
of Hartford Region YWCA.....860-522-6666
Central Connecticut Sexual Assault
Crisis Service.....Meriden.....203-235-4444
Middletown.....860-635-4424
Rape Crisis Center of Milford.....203-878-1212
New Britain YWCA Sexual Assault Crisis Service..860-223-1787
Greater New Haven Sexual Assault Crisis Service..203-624-2273
Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut
Rape Crisis Service (New London).....860-442-4357
Northeastern Connecticut Sexual
Assault Crisis Service (Willimantic).....860-456-2789
Susan B. Anthony Project for Women
(Serving Northwestern Connecticut).....860-482-7133
Waterbury YWCA Sexual Assault Crisis Service....203-753-3613
Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Center
(Lower Fairfield County).....203-329-2929

Youth Crisis:

INFOLINE.....1-800-203-1234
CARE-LINE.....1-800-842-2288

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.....1-800-972-9628
Bridgeport.....203-335-4116
Hartford.....860-525-6052
New Haven.....203-562-5750
New London/Norwich.....860-889-9384
Waterbury.....203-753-1938

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.....203-336-3852
Danbury.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-541-8909
Derby.....New Haven Legal Assistance.....203-946-4811
Enfield.....Legal Aid Society of Hartford.....860-745-0606
Hartford.....Neighborhood Legal Services.....860-297-0760
Legal Aid Society of Hartford.....860-541-5000
Meriden.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619
Middletown.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619

New Britain.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619
New Haven.....New Haven Legal Assistance.....203-777-4811
New London.....Connecticut Legal Services.....860-447-0324
Norwalk.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-541-8909
Rockville.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7796
Stamford.....Connecticut Legal Services.....203-348-9216
Torrington.....Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7796
Waterbury.....Connecticut Legal Service.....203-756-8075
Willimantic.....Connecticut Legal Services.....860-456-1761
Legal Assistance to Medicare Patients...860-423-2556

Connecticut Legal Rights Project.....860-344-2576

This organization helps mental health clients, residents of mental health facilities, and out-patient clients of community residential facilities.

Disabilities:**Connecticut Office Of Protection and Advocacy For Persons With Disabilities**

60B Weston Street
Hartford CT 06120
Tel.: 860-297-4300
Hartford Area TTY: 860-566-2102
Toll Free and TTY: 1-800-842-7303

**Discrimination:****Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**

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

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

West Central Region:
50 Linden Street
Waterbury CT 06702
Tel.: 203-596-4237
TDD: 203-596-4240

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

Central Office

21 Grand Street
Hartford CT 06106
Tel.: 860-541-3400
860-541-3495
1-800-477-5737
FAX: 860-246-5068

**Social Security:**

Ansonia.....203-735-6201
Bridgeport.....203-365-8452
Bristol.....860-584-2716
Danbury.....203-748-3569
East Hartford.....860-290-5420
Hartford.....860-493-1857
Meriden.....203-238-0346
Middletown.....860-347-8562
New Britain.....860-229-4844
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