Quinnehtukqut Legal News

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Volume 8 Issue 2

www.ptla.org/quinnehtukqut/qlegal.htm

A Newsletter for Native Americans in Connecticut

Winter 2005



On-Line Resources Now Available



Unemployment Comp Filing Can Be Done on Internet

If you are filing a continuing unemployment insurance claim, you can now visit www.ct.gov/dol and click on the icon titled "File Your Weekly Claim/Inquiry on the Internet" listed under "Unemployment" on the left side of your screen. You can only use this on-line process after a claim has been established by calling the agency's "Dial to File" TeleBenefits automated phone system. The numbers for this vary depending on your area and can be found on the same website by clicking on "Claims Filing by Phone."

Both filing by phone and using the on-line method follow the same filing days and hours – Monday through Friday, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 12 a.m. to 11 p.m. The site also provides additional features, including secured access that allows you to review and print out benefit filing history. This information can be obtained Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 12 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eventually, the new Internet system will allow you to file your initial unemployment compensation claims online.

Food @Your Fingertips

Food@Your Fingertips is an interactive website that allows you to check for eligibility for food stamps. Just go to this web site: www.foodstampsct.org. You can also call End Hunger Connecticut! (EHC!) at 860-560-2100 if you need to talk to someone about food stamps.

Section 8 Waiting List Web Site Now On-Line

A web site listing all open Section 8 waiting lists has come online. Creation of the web site was mandated by a state law adopted in 2004. The web site address is www.das.state.ct.us/Business_Svs/HCVP/HCVP_Home.asp.
Registration is available to any person, including tenants looking for housing. You can also go to the website to

looking for housing. You can also go to the website to find a list of currently open Section 8 waiting lists.



If you worked in 2003, you may be eligible for the Earned Income Credit. If so, you'll owe less in taxes, and you could get cash back. Even if you don't owe income tax, you can get the EIC.

* If you raised one child in your home in 2004 and





Pine Tree's Native American Unit is Restructured

The Native American Unit of Pine Tree Legal Assistance has been restructured. Although we will no longer have a full-time attorney in the NAU working out of Bangor, there are many advantages to this new structure. Perhaps most importantly, we will have several experienced attorneys around the state working in or close to the Native communities. They will be able to maintain a strong visible presence in those communities, respond quickly to issues that develop, and be ready to meet and consult with you in person when necessary.

Judy Plano, who had been the full-time NAU attorney based in Bangor since June of 2002, has transferred to Pine Tree's Augusta office. She very much enjoyed working full-time on Native legal issues, but the transfer to Augusta means she is close to home and saves her the long commute every day. She will continue to devote some of her time to Native issues.

Paul Thibeault has returned to Pine Tree and is located in our Machias office. He has many years of experience practicing law in Indian country. He will devote much of his time to providing legal services to the Passamaquoddy communities at Indian Township and Pleasant Point.

Jeff Ashby and Courtney Lockwood are attorneys in our Presque Isle office. Over the past few years they have helped many members of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs and Houlton Band of Maliseets in a variety of legal issues. They will continue to do so.

Mike Guare and Eric Nelson are attorneys and Danny Mills is the paralegal in our Bangor office. They have worked part-time in the NAU for several years. Eric serves as the directing attorney of the unit.

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 about the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Jay Treaty. Pine Tree can also refer cases to lawyers in Connecticut. Our telephone number is 1-800-879-7463.

your family earned less than \$30,338 (or \$31,338 for married workers), you can get up to \$2,604.

* If you raised more than one child in your home in 2003 and your family earned less than \$34,458 (or \$35,458 for married workers), you can get up to \$4,300.

(Continued on next page)



("EIC" continued from front page)

- * If you weren't raising a child, were between the ages 0f 25 and 64 on December 31,2004, and earned less than \$11,490 in 2004, you can get up to \$390.
- ** If you were raising a "qualifying child" in 2004, you must file federal tax return Forms 1040 or 1040A and must fill out and attach Schedule EIC. You cannot get the EIC if you fill out Form 1040EZ or do not attach Schedule EIC. Married workers must file a joint return.
- ** If you weren't raising children in 2004, file the return you would normally file (including the 1040EZ). Be sure to write "EIC" or the dollar amount of your credit on the Earned Income Credit line of your tax form. Do **not** file Schedule EIC.
- You don't have to calculate your own EIC. If you choose, the IRS will do it for you.
- * A correct name and social security number must be provided for every person listed on the tax return and Schedule EIC. If this information is incorrect or missing, the IRS will delay your refund.



Increase Your Take-Home Pay With the EIC Advance Payment Option

Most workers get their EIC in one large check from the IRS after they file a tax return. You have another choice. Your employer can add part of your EIC to every paycheck. You get the rest of your credit after you file your return.

For many workers, getting part of their EIC in each paycheck can make a difference in paying the rent, buying groceries, and meeting other day-to-day needs. If you earn between \$490 and \$1,300 a month, for example, you can get about \$50 to \$60 extra in each bi-weekly paycheck. Advance EIC payments are not counted as additional income in determining eligibility for public benefits such as cash assistance, housing assistance, food stamps and Medicaid.

In 2005, you can qualify for an Advance EIC payment if you have at least one qualifying child and you expect your 2004 income to be less than \$31,030 (\$33,030 if you are married).

Get FREE Help Filing your Taxes!

Assistance with Returns: Free tax preparation is available through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs in most



communities. Volunteers help prepare basic tax returns for taxpayers with low or limited incomes. To find a VITA site near you call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. Taxpayers may also call AARP – the largest TCE participant – at 1-877-227-7844 to see if they are near a local Tax Aide site.

Remember: paying for tax preparation takes money away from YOUR refund.



www.ptla.org

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 attorneys Paul Thi beault, Judith Plano, Mike Guare, Jay Ashby and Courtney Lockwood, by Paralegal Danny Mills, and is headed by attorney Eric Nelson. Judith, Mike and Danny have worked with the Unit for several years. Paul has specialized in Indian Law since 1983. Jay and Courtney have worked on Naïve American issues out of our Presque Isle Office 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.

You can find a list of Indian Legal Services Programs in your state on the web at www.judicare.org/nails.html.

Federal Recognition Update

The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs found in December of 2004 that it made a mistake in evaluating the Schaghticoke Indian tribe's recognition application. The agency, which reversed a preliminary ruling and granted the tribe federal recognition last January, miscounted the number of Schaghticokes who married other Schaghticokes during the 19th century. The BIA said the error does not automatically mean the tribe's recognition should be rejected.

In March of 2005, Interior Secretary Gale Norton upheld the Bureau of Indian Affairs' ruling last June that the Golden Hill Paugussett had failed to satisfy the criteria for federal recognition.





Statewide Legal Services slsct.org/

Call Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. (SLS) if you are low income and you need free legal help in the following areas:

Medicare

Medicaid

- Housing
- * Family Matters
- * Welfare
- Telephone Numbers To Call:

In the Middletown calling area: From other places in Connecticut: 1-860-344-0380

Other Government Benefits

From other places in Connecticut: 1-800-453-3320
Statewide Legal Services has changed hours to concentrate more staff during the busiest calling hours.

Monday 9AM-3PM Tuesday 9AM-4PM Wednesday 9AM-3PM Thursday 9AM-6PM Friday 9AM-4PM

You'll get through faster by using the "redial" button rather than hanging up and redialing manually if the line's busy..

888-774-2900

860-364-1900

860-658-7227

203-357-8162

860-482-7133

203-575-0036

860-456-9476

Quinnehtukqut Legal News



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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:

Ouinnehtukqut Legal News, Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Coe Building, 61 Main Street, Room 41.

Or you can send e-mail to csamp@ptla.org



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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

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



JNDEX 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

www.infoline.org

INFOLINE is an integrated system of help via the telephone – a single source for information about community services, referrals to human services, and crisis intervention. It is toll-free and operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Multilingual caseworkers and TDD access is available.



Child Abuse and Neglect:

Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline www.state.ct.us/dcf/HOTLINE.htm

1-800-842-2288

TDD 1-800-624-5518



Statewide Hotline: This toll-free number will connect you to the nearest domestic violence agency. 888-774-2900 Ansonia: The Umbrella 203-736-9944

www.bghealth.org/umbrella_domestic_violence_services.htm Bridgeport:

Center for Women and Families of Eastern Fairfield County, Inc. www.cwfefc.org/home.html 203-384-9559

Columbia/Danielson/Dayville:

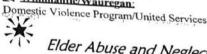
Domestic Violence Program/United Services 860-774-8648 Danbury:

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

www.danbury.org/womenctr

Network Against Domestic Abuse Greenwich: 860-763-4542 Domestic Abuse Service Greenwich YWCA www.ywcagreenwich.org/domesticabuse.htm 203-622-0003 Hartford: Interval House www.intervalhousect.org Manchester: 860-527-0550 Interval House East www.intervalhousect.org Meriden: 860-645-4033 Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis Middletown: 203-238-1501 New Horizons New Britain: 860-347-3044 Prudence Crandall Center for Women www.prudencecrandall.org/ 860-225-6357 New Haven: Domestic Violence Services of Greater New Haven www,dvsgnh.org 203-789-8104 New London/Norwich: Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut Norwalk: 860-701-6000 Domestic Violence Crisis Center

www.dvccct.org



Sharon:

Simsbury

Stamford:

Torrington:

Waterbury:

Women's Support Services

Domestic Violence Crisis Center

Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury Willimantic/Wauregan:

Interval House West www.intervalhousect.org

Susan B. Anthony Project www.sbaproject.org/

Elder Abuse and Neglect:

Connecticut Decartment of Social Services. (Statewide toll-free number):......1-888-385-4225 www.dss.state.ct.us/svcs/socialwork/pg3.htm



Poison Control:

Connecticut Poison Control Center 800-222-1222 poisoncontrol.uchc.edu/ TDD 866-218-5372



Sexual Assault Crisis Programs: (Hotline Numbers)

Call 888-999-5545 to get the name of the sexual assault crisis

service nearest you or go to their website at www.com Center for Women and Families of Eastern	ult crisis nsacs.org/.
 Women's Center of Greater Danhum 	203-333-2233
Hartford Region YWCA Sexual Assault Crisis	203-731-5204
Services www.ywcahartford.org	860-522-6666
Toll Free Spanish:	888 568-8332
Toll Free English:	888 999-5545
Sexual Assault Crisis Service Of Central CT	860-635-4424
Rape Crisis Center of Milford New Britain YWCA	203-878-1212
Sexual Assault Crisis Service	860-223-1787
 Greater New Haven Sexual Assault Crisis Service 	203-624-2273
Women's Center of Northeastern Connecticut bronzefrogs.com/center/index.html	860-456-2789
Susan B. Anthony Project for Women (Serving	
Northwestern Connecticut) www.sbaproject.org	860-482-7133
Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury Crisis	
Services	203-575-0036

J. Sale

Sexual Assault Crisis Services

203-329-2929



Contact the nearest Youth Service Bureau through your town hall



LEGAL RESOURCES



☐ Lawyer Referral Service: www.ctbar.org/article/articleview/291
This service can recommend a private lawyer who, for a small fee, will assess a case and give an estimate of charges.

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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 Leg		gal Services	1-800-453-3320	
	in Middletown	860-344-038	80	

Statewide Legal Services (slsct.org/) 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. Please call Statewide Legal Services first, unless you have an emergency that needs to be settled that day or you are over age 60.

◆ Bridgeport	Connecticut Legal Services www.connlegalservices.org/Contact CLS.htm	203-336-3851
New Britain	Connecticut Legal Services	860-225-8678
New Connecticut Legal Services		860 447-0323
London	=	
Stamford	Connecticut Legal Services	203-348-9216
♥ Waterbury	Connecticut Legal Service	203-756-8074
♥ Willimantic	Connecticut Legal Services	860-456-1761
New Haven	New Haven Legal Assistance www.nhlegal.org/index.htm	203-946-4811
Hartford	Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Inc (serving Greater Hartford) www.ghla.org/index.htm	860-541-5000

Law School Legal Clinics: Law school legal clinics provide legal assistance to low-income clients.

Quinnipiac University School	
of Law Legal Clinics	203-582-3238
law.quinnipiac.edu/x317.xml	
University of Connecticut Law	
School	860-570-5165
www.law.uconn.edu/clinics/	
Yale Community Legal	
Services Clinic	203-787-0191

Center for Medicare Advocacy www.medicareadvocacy.org/
This organization gives legal advice, written materials and representation to elderly and disabled people denied Medicare coverage for home health care, skilled nursing facility care, rehabilitation and other health services. Services are free to residents of Connecticut.

Telephone: 860-456-7790

Connecticut Legal Rights Project www.mindlink.org/clrp.html
This organization helps low-income adults who have or are
perceived to have psychiatric disabilities. Its staff may also help
clients to protect their civil rights in conservatorship and
commitment proceedings or in discrimination in housing.

Telephone toll-free: 877-402-2299

Connecticut Lawyer's Legal Aid to The Elderly
This organization offers legal help to low-income elderly in the Hartford area.

Telephone: 860-273-4303

☐ Children's Law Center www.clcct.org/

This organization gives legal representation to children in northeastern Connecticut using a lawyer/mental health team approach. The Center also provides legal information about situations involving children through the Children's Lawline (1-888-LAW-DOOR)

Telephone: 860-232-9993

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.

Telephone: 800-479-2949

CTElderlaw.org/ www.ctelderlaw.org/

CTElderLaw.org was created to provide comprehensive, current information on elder law, government programs and legal assistance for residents of Connecticut age 60 and older. It is a service of Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.

Telephone: 800-413-7796

□ Disabilities:

Connecticut Office Of Protection and Advocacy For Persons With Disabilities www.ct.gov/opapd/site/default.asp

60B Weston Street Hartford CT 06120-1551

Toll Free Telephone: 1-800-842-7303

Hartford area: 860-297-4300 TDD: 860-297-4380

E-Mail: OPA-Information@po.state.ct.us.



Discrimination:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

www.state.ct.us/chro/index.html

 Capitol Region:
 Southwest Region:

 1229 Albany Avenue
 1057 Broad Street

 Hartford, CT 06112-2193
 Bridgeport CT 06604

 Tel.: 860-566-7710
 Tel.: 203-579-6246

 TDD: 203 579-6246
 TDD: 203 579-6246

West Central Region: Rowland State Government Center 55 West Main St. Suite 210

Suite 210 Waterbury CT 06702-2004

Tel.: 203-805-6530 TDD: 203-805-6579 Eastern Region: 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

l.: 860-541-3400 800-477-5737

TDD: 860-541-3459



Social Security: www.ssa.gov/
Statewide s3abaca.ssa.gov/pro/fol/fol-home.html1-800-772-1213

Some Helpful Native American Web Sites

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☐ Pine Tree Legal Assistance: www.ptla.org

■ Index of Native American Resources on the Internet:

www.hanksville.org/NAresources

■ Native Links: www.johnco.com/nativel/

Aboriginal Links:

www.bloorstreet.com/300block/aborcan.htm

Legal Assistance Resource Center of Connecticut

☐ Statewide Legal Services: www.larcc.org slsct.org/