

Housing and Other Basic Needs

Berlin Elementary Helping Hands

Helping Hands is committed to supporting the families and students of Berlin Elementary School. We support the BES Food Pantry, BES Holiday Bears, winter gear giveaway and recycling program. We are here to lend a helping hand to families in need. We also accept helping hands through donations of various items. For more information call Deanna Baker at BES or email her:

dhansen@berlincentral.org

Berlin Middle/High School Helping Hands

Helping hands can provide school supplies, winter coats and other winter clothing, and holiday gifts for families in need. Referrals come from students, parent/guardians, and staff. Contact Jennifer Poli jpoli@berlincentral.org

Commission on Economic Opportunity Weatherization Assistance Program Offers FREE insulation and weather-sealing services to eligible residents in Rensselaer County.

(518) 272-6012, ext. 410

To apply visit their website:

<http://www.ceoempowers.org/services/healthy-homes/weatherization/>

CoNSERNS – U

Services include a food pantry, information and referral service, back-to-school supplies, emergency assistance, and holiday gift and food distributions. Services are provided to individuals and families throughout rural Rensselaer County and City of Rensselaer.

Phone:518-463-8571

201 Academy St., Rensselaer, NY 12144

<https://www.ccrda.org/agencies-and-programs/catholic-charities-tri-county-services/>

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The HEAP Program usually opens in November of each year and continues through the heating season.

(518) 266-7960

<http://www.rensco.com/departments/department-of-aging/home-energy-assistance-program-heap/>

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

Provides rental assistance and home ownership options to extremely low, very low and low income households; also provides assistance to senior citizens and disabled persons on fixed incomes, displaced families, and homeless individuals with disabilities.

<https://rensselaerhousing.org/section-8/>

Temporary Assistance

To find out if you are eligible to receive Temporary Assistance, including help with an emergency, you need to file an application with your county department of social services. You should identify any emergency needs you may have at this time. If you have an emergency, you will be interviewed and told in writing about the decision on your emergency the same day you apply.

Temporary Assistance Hotline at 1-800-342-3009

(518) 266-7800

<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/apply/#ta>

United Way 2-1-1

Offers information on: food, housing, childcare, employment, health care, senior care, substance abuse, mental health, financial problems, crisis counseling, legal issues, volunteer opportunities or other matters.

Dial 211

<https://www.211neny.org/>

Unity House Street Ministry

Unity House is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people living in poverty, adults with mental illness, victims of domestic violence, children with developmental delays and their families, people living with HIV/AIDS, and others whose needs can effectively be met by Unity House services and philosophy. Unity House provides direct service and works toward social justice. We help individuals identify their strengths and needs, draw upon their abilities, and access community resources. We educate, collaborate with others and advocate to influence public policy and to create awareness of the people we serve and the issues they face.

(518) 274-2607

2431 Sixth Avenue, Troy, New York 12180

www.unityhousesny.org

New York State

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

Do you need help paying for overdue water and wastewater bills?

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) can help.

LIHWAP is a drinking water and wastewater emergency assistance program funded through new federal resources. Benefits are based on the amount of unpaid water and wastewater bills owed by applicants. This assistance is targeted at low income households and income guidelines will mirror that of the Home Energy Assistance Program.

LIHWAP benefits are based on the actual amount of drinking water and/or wastewater arrears, up to a maximum of \$2,500 per drinking water or wastewater provider, or \$5,000 if drinking water and wastewater services are combined, per household. Benefits are paid directly to the household's drinking water and/or wastewater vendor(s).

Eligibility and benefits are based on:

- income,
- household size,
- household includes a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or qualified alien, and
- amount owed to drinking water and/or wastewater provider(s).

Primary applicants must provide:

- Proof of identity
- Proof of residence
- Documentation of earned and unearned income
- A drinking water, wastewater, or combined drinking water and wastewater bill listing their permanent and primary residence
- A valid Social Security Number (SSN)
 - SSNs of additional household members will be requested

For more information, visit <https://otda.ny.gov/LIHWAP>



Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

Overview

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help eligible New Yorkers heat and cool their homes.

If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per program year and could also be eligible for emergency HEAP benefits if you are in danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off.

Questions regarding the HEAP program should be directed to your [HEAP Local District Contact](#).

HEAP may be able to help you if you heat your home with:

- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Oil
- Coal
- Propane
- Wood/Wood Pellets
- Kerosene
- Corn

How to Apply for HEAP

You can [apply for Home Energy Assistance Program](#) benefits online, in person, or in writing.

Types of Benefits: Regular Benefit, Regular Arrears Supplement Benefit, Emergency Benefit, Heating Equipment Repair or Replacement Benefit, Clean and Tune Benefit, Cooling Assistance

For more information visit: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>

Legal Assistance

LawHelpNY

LawHelpNY is an online tool for helping low-income New Yorkers solve their legal problems. Our mission is to: "Provide and promote access to, high-quality online information about free legal services throughout New York, about legal rights in a broad range of substantive areas, about the court system, and about related advocacy, government and social service organizations. We are committed to providing information that is user-friendly, in English, Spanish, and other languages, in order to help low-income and other vulnerable New Yorkers achieve equal access to justice." LawHelpNY is the only comprehensive source of legal referral information in the state and includes:

- More than 600 free legal service projects & organizations with their contact & intake information.
- Over 4,000 Know Your Rights and self-help resources covering 16 areas of law.
- Extensive links to social service, advocacy and government organizations, information about the Court system.

<http://www.lawhelpny.org/>

Legal Aid Society North Eastern NY

The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York provides free legal services to low income upstate New Yorkers.

518-462-6765 or 1-800-462-2922

95 Central Avenue, Albany, New York 12206

<http://www.lasny.org/contact/>

NYS Bar Association Referral Service

Lawyer referral and information service. The service does not list Pro Bono (free) attorneys. If you are referred to an attorney through the lawyer referral service the attorney will provide you with a half-hour consultation for \$35. (Free consultations are given for personal injury, social security, medical malpractice, veteran's and military law, unemployment or workers' compensation.) If the attorney agrees to represent you, the attorney will charge you at his or her regular rates.

1-800-342-3661

<http://www.nysba.org/lawyerreferral/>



295 Hamilton Street, Albany, NY 12210

<https://utalnbany.org>

(518) 436-8997

info@unitedtenantsalbany.org

Who We Are

United Tenants of Albany (UTA) is a community based nonprofit organization that works to improve housing conditions, both in terms of physical conditions and in terms of tenants' rights for security and equity. UTA responds to calls throughout the Capital District and concentrates its activities in low and moderate income neighborhoods in Albany.

Mission

The mission of UTA is to protect tenants' rights for safe, decent and affordable housing, with special emphases on those who have the greatest need or who experience the most severe problems and to promote the development and preservation of more affordable housing.

Background

Over the past 4 decades UTA has worked to improve code enforcement, campaign for rent regulations, advocating for responsible investment policies and support the development and preservation of affordable housing. We have linked up with public housing tenants, mobile home park tenants, concerned home owners and responsible landlords on issues of housing justice.

UTA carries on this tradition with a combination of direct services and community organization. The direct service activities range from crisis intervention to counseling and advocacy. The community organization work includes bringing small groups of people together and joint efforts with other organizations on broader housing issues.

United Tenants funding sources vary from year to year but generally include The NYS Homes and Community Renewal, the Albany County Department of Social Services, the Emergency Solutions Grant through the City of Albany, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Catholic Charities of the Albany Diocese, corporate donors, and numerous individual donors (many through the State Employee Federate Appeal and Community Works).

TenantHelp

About

The New York Covid-19 Tenant Help Project provides clear and easy guidance to tenants facing eviction as well as information on how to present defenses in court. This website will also provide resources to pro bono attorneys assisting tenants with their eviction cases.

This website is a collaboration of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Nassau Suffolk Law Services, Legal Aid of Western New York, Legal Aid Society of Mid New York, Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Legal Services of Hudson Valley, and Pro Bono Net. Funding is provided by the New York Office of Attorney General.

<https://tenanthelpny.org/>