



## FAIRFIELD SOCIAL SERVICES SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022

203 256-3170  
[socialservices@fairfieldct.org](mailto:socialservices@fairfieldct.org)

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

#### **Summer Camp Scholarships**

Fairfield families who meet eligibility criteria may now apply for “camperships”. This program provides financial assistance while funds last; it does not fast-track or guarantee placement in any given camp. Applicants are asked to research camps, and to apply for any scholarship opportunities through those camps first, before applying for campership funding.

Please note: if your child participates in the free and reduced lunch program, they are eligible for a free session of the Playground Camp through Fairfield’s Parks and Rec Dept.

For more information, please call the Town of Fairfield Department of Social Services at 203-256-3170.

#### **COVID Recovery Fund**

The Town of Fairfield Social Services Department is now screening applications for this emergency fund. It is intended to help residents who continue to experience financial hardship related to the pandemic. For more information, including criteria for assistance, required documentation, and a printable copy of the application, go to

[www.fairfieldct.org/covidrecoveryfund](http://www.fairfieldct.org/covidrecoveryfund) or call the town's social services department directly at 203-256-3170.

### **Operation Hope – Rental & Mortgage Assistance**

Contact Brenda Lobdell, Community Case Manager at 203-292-5588 ext. 225.

### **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)**

ACP provides a discount of up to \$30/month towards internet service. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, a desk top computer, or a tablet from participating providers.

Enrollment is now open for eligible households (for example, residents who receive SNAP, SSI, Medicaid, or those who participate in the free and reduced-price school lunch program or breakfast program). For more information, see [ACPinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:ACPinfo@fcc.gov) and for specific application questions, email [ACPSupport@usac.org](mailto:ACPSupport@usac.org) or call 877-384-2575. You may also contact your internet provider.

### **UniteCT**

This program was suspended as of February 15<sup>th</sup>. However, **applications submitted before this date are still being considered; tenants and landlords have until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 to complete the application process.** Any cases that remain incomplete as of March 31<sup>st</sup> will be withdrawn from the case review process. For help completing the application process, you may call The Workplace at 203-610-8500, or BNT (Building Neighborhoods Together) at 203-290-4255.

## **TAX HELP & INFORMATION**

### **Advance Child Tax Credit Payments**

If you have minor children living with you, and have received monthly advance tax credit payments from the IRS between July – December 2021, you may claim the remaining child tax credit when you file your 2021 federal tax return. You should receive a letter from the IRS officially known as Letter 6475. Hold onto this as it will provide information that will be helpful in preparing your 2021 taxes and claiming this credit.

**Plus-Up Payments from the IRS** – you may be eligible for additional payments if you received a 3<sup>rd</sup> Economic Impact Payment from the IRS based on a 2019 tax return or information from the IRS, the VA, or RRB. You may also be eligible for a larger amount based on your 2020 tax return.

**To determine eligibility and the status of your Plus-Up Payment, check the “Get My Payment” tool on the IRS website:** [irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment](https://irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment)

### **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

Free tax preparation services are available to individuals and families who are income eligible, as well as persons with disabilities, seniors, and limited English speaking taxpayers. IRS-trained volunteers are certified to prepare simple tax returns and screen for special tax credits such as the Advance Child Tax Credit or the Earned Income Tax Credit. VITA volunteers are available at The Fairfield Public Library on Tuesdays only until April 12th (1080 Old Post Rd, no appointments required).

### **Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Program**

The filing period for eligible Fairfield residents begins February 1 and ends May 13, 2022. For income guidelines and information about how to apply, please contact the Assessor's Office at 203-256-3110, or check online at [www.fairfieldct.org/taxrelief](http://www.fairfieldct.org/taxrelief)

### **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

The EITC is designed to help low to moderate income households. If you qualify, you may use the credit to reduce the taxes you owe or increase the refund you receive. To check if you qualify, go to the IRS website at: [www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc](http://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc)

## **ADDITIONAL HOUSING RESOURCES**

### **BNT (Building Neighborhoods Together)**

BNT is a HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency that offers comprehensive financial and housing counseling services, including ongoing education and training through its Empowerment Resource Academy. Some of the educational opportunities this month address systemic issues like fair housing and discrimination, and foreclosure prevention strategies. To learn more about BNT's services and programs, see [www.BNTWEB.ORG](http://www.BNTWEB.ORG) ; any questions, call 203-290-4348. You may also email [beverly@bntweb.org](mailto:beverly@bntweb.org)

### **MyHomeCT – Coming Soon!**

Administered through CHFA (The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority), MyHomeCT seeks to help prevent mortgage delinquencies, defaults, and foreclosures. It is targeted to assist eligible homeowners who are struggling because of the pandemic. To sign up for updates and notifications about when MyHomeCT will begin accepting applications, go to <https://www.chfa.org/myhomect/>

### **Eviction Help**

For those facing the possibility of eviction, legal services are available at 1-800-453-3320 (toll free). Also, if you do not know your rights, The Connecticut Fair Housing Center can help. Call 860-247-4400 or 888-247-4401, or explore their website at [www.ctfairhousing.org](http://www.ctfairhousing.org)

### **Home Repairs**

The Town of Fairfield's Office of Community & Economic Development offers home repair loans up to 60% of the total project cost, not to exceed \$15,000 per qualified applicant, annually. These no interest loans must be repaid when the homeowner sells, refinances, or transfers the property. Covered home improvements include exterior painting, siding or roofing projects; installation of new or replacement storm windows and doors; lead-based paint or asbestos abatement projects; installation of replacement boilers or hot water heaters; heating, plumbing or electrical improvements to address code deficiencies and modifications to accommodate persons with disabilities. Applicants must be income eligible and current Fairfield homeowners; certain restrictions apply. For additional information, please contact Sonia Hine at the Office of Community & Economic Development via email at [shine@fairfieldct.org](mailto:shine@fairfieldct.org) or at (203) 256-3120.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

### **Positive Directions – Center for Prevention and Counseling**

Positive Directions provides individual counseling, supports groups, and referral services. For more information: [www.positivedirections.org](http://www.positivedirections.org) or call 203-227-7644.

### **Turningpointct.org - Peer Created Content and Resources**

Turningpointct.org is an online community created by and for teens and young adults to support mental health and recovery. Peer developed content includes blogs, podcasts, videos, and online discussions covering a wide range of topics. The website provides mental health resources and information as well: [www.turningpointct.org](http://www.turningpointct.org)

### **The Hub**

The Hub is the state-designated Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (RBHAO) serving Southwestern CT. On its website, you may find resource guides, lists of free peer supports, online screenings, timely information about prevention, intervention, and other useful tools. Visit [www.thehub.org](http://www.thehub.org) to learn more.

**Child and Family Guidance Center** provides children and families with culturally-informed mental health care and complementary supports. From its website – ‘When a child struggles emotionally, the reasons why can be complex. Our team of mental health experts help children and teens address a range of emotional and behavioral issues. Whether it is anxiety, trauma, depression, stress, ADHD or something else effecting your child’s emotional well-being, we offer answers and support. We provide individual and family therapy (both in our office, or your home), psychiatric evaluations and medication management. Call 203-394-6529 for more information or to make an appointment.

**Fairfield Counseling** is located in the white house behind Town Hall and is part of Lifebridge Community Services. It offers a continuum of comprehensive, high quality mental health and substance abuse services to adults, youth, and families in Fairfield County. From its website – ‘Fairfield Counseling Services staff are trained as Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and Clinical Mental Health Counselors (LPC), as well as a Licensed Addictions Specialist (LADC). We are a licensed substance abuse facility and offer individual and family therapy as well as recovery, relapse prevention and sober living groups. Call 203-255-5777 for more information or to make an appointment.

## **MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES & INFORMATION**

### **Grief Support Group**

This group is intended for those who are processing the death of a loved one within the past year. It will be a “closed” group that meets for 6 weeks, meaning that group size will be limited and participants are expected to attend all 6 sessions. Time and dates will be determined once we have at least 3 people signed on to participate.

If interested, please contact Malinda Johnson or Kristin Hosp at 203-256-3170.

### **Dental Care**

Senior Smiles is a program offered by the Fones Dental Hygiene Health Center Clinic providing basic dental care for seniors age 65 and older. Some restrictions apply. For more information

about services, call 203-576-4137 or email [seniorsmilesub@bridgeport.edu](mailto:seniorsmilesub@bridgeport.edu).  
For children 18 years old and younger, the FDHHC Clinic is also offering full preventive dental hygiene services FREE of CHARGE on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00am to 3:00pm. For an appointment, please call 203-576-4137.

### **Job Opportunity**

The WorkPlace is looking for young adults interested in a PAID OPPORTUNITY with the CareerHub. Put your tech skills to work! You can be a tech mentor to a senior citizen. For more information call The WorkPlace at 203-416-8487.

### **Safe Return Network**

If a family member is prone to “wandering” or getting lost, consider registering for a new program developed to assist emergency personnel in locating them. To register go to [fpdct.com/safereturn](http://fpdct.com/safereturn); for more information, contact Officer Anthony Krushinsky at [akrushinsky@fairfieldct.org](mailto:akrushinsky@fairfieldct.org) or call 203-254-4800.

### **Energy Assistance Focus Groups – Participants Needed**

In an effort to better understand how energy cost and energy reliability play a role in the lives of Connecticut residents, Operation Fuel is working with Vermont Law School on a series of upcoming focus group interviews. If interested, please take the brief survey which may be accessed via the following link:

**<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf1uEyw4zzyNaM2B2fKplbVTfbPm7A61BkQh56l7g0NrWoqiQ/viewform?ts=62157b1a>**

***Please call Social Services (203) 256-3170 with any questions  
or to schedule an appointment.***