



Finger Lakes **Independence** Center

*Opening Doors to Independence*

## **Our Mission**

**To empower all people with disabilities while creating an inclusive society through the elimination of social and architectural barriers.**

## **What's New at FLIC**

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### **Service Update**

FLIC is open for business Monday - Friday from 9:00 - 5:00. However, as many services as possible are still taking place remotely.

To maintain good health for our staff and visitors, all staff are working some days in the office and some days remotely. You can always reach someone at our building at 607-272-2433. You can email staff members as well.

To receive FLIC services, MASKS ARE REQUIRED IN THE FLIC BUILDING at all times. Please do not come to FLIC if you have symptoms of illness. Social distancing is also required.

If you are returning equipment you can place it in the small wooden shed to the left of the front door, then come inside to confirm your return and get your deposit back. Please consider donating your deposit because as a nonprofit, we appreciate extra support during this time.

Thank you for your patience during this difficult time.

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### **NYS Department of Health Announces Fiscal Intermediary Changes Related to Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA) Services**

Message from Jan Lynch, Executive Director at FLIC:

FLIC has been operating as a Fiscal Intermediary (FI) for consumer directed personal assistance programs since 1997. A little over a year ago the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) decided to put out applications for becoming an FI under NYSDOH. Their intent was to reduce the number of FIs in our state, and to provide consistency in operations. While these are good goals on the surface, this is often how services become less specific to the

community where they operate. Last week, the NYSDOH put the list of approved FIs on its website. Out of 390 applicants, only 69 were awarded contracts.

After weighing and discussing the implications of the application, FLIC did not apply to be an FI because we knew the state was looking for large agencies, so as to reduce the number of FIs. Instead FLIC signed on to be a Collaborating Partner with larger Independent Living Centers (ILCs) who applied through the FI application. Two of those larger ILCs were awarded an FI contract. Both have already been in touch with us to start sorting out the details.

The simplest way to put this is that FLIC will continue to be a part of local CDPA services, but we will operate under contract with one or more larger FIs. This will not take place immediately as the state FI contracts are expected to take months to be drawn up and processed.

FLIC has always been committed to the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, because it offers choices to help people with disabilities, whether present at birth, or acquired through injury, disease, or aging, to live in their homes and communities while selecting their personal caretakers. We continue to be committed to the program and we will keep you informed as we work in the background to figure out the details of how to comply with the changes to come, while maintaining the integrity of the service.

I will be getting a letter out to consumers and aides to explain this change, which should not impact them at this time. It is strongly suggested that consumers NOT switch FIs at this time because it could use up their one allotted chance to switch, which was part of what NYSDOH agreed to. FLIC will not be closing cases at this time.

At present, we will continue to operate as we have been, and consumers and aides of the program should do the same. We will let you know of any changes as we move forward. If you have questions, please feel free to email me at [jan@fliconline.org](mailto:jan@fliconline.org) or call 607-272-2433.

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### **SSA Disability Benefits and Work Incentives**

- Are you a Social Security disability beneficiary and want to know how working will affect your benefits?
- Are you afraid of losing benefits or medical coverage if you return to work?
- Learn about important topics that will help you return to work and explore a better financial future.

The American Dream Employment Network (ADEN) invites you to informational webinar

**“SSA Disability Benefits and Work Incentives”**

Thursday, 02/25/21 from 2pm-4pm

Registration is required and there is no cost to attend. To register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZltdOmopzorGdbyFiW1exHUBfRFs10LGOkj>

Once registered you will receive an email with the link to the webinar. ADEN is national administrative Social Security approved Ticket to Work provider and a division of National Disability Institute. Professional providers are located throughout the country to provide in person or virtual services to beneficiaries exploring employment goals. Contact ADEN today!

[www.AmericanDreamEN.org](http://www.AmericanDreamEN.org)

For more information about the Ticket to Work, contact Emily Papperman at FLIC, [emily@fliconline.org](mailto:emily@fliconline.org)

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### Join the FLIC Advocacy Team!

If you would like to become a part of FLIC's Advocacy team, please feel free to email Valerie at: [valerie@fliconline.org](mailto:valerie@fliconline.org). Being part of the team, you will receive relevant Action Alerts on issues you are passionate about, such as housing, education or health care to name a few. The Action Alerts will ask you to email, call or write a letter to your representative and we encourage you to express how you feel about the subject. It is extremely important for your representatives to know what the community and constituents feel about certain topics. You may volunteer to assist at certain events or participate in a few workshops. At this moment, COVID-19 is changing the traditional way of connecting in person and hosting events to using technology such a Zoom, social media, conference calls and emails.

#### Snapshot of February Policy

- The governor finally released the figures of nursing home vaccination rates. The results revealed that less than half of the workers in New York City facilities received a vaccine. However, so far this month, the administration was criticized for not sharing data from nursing homes from the pandemic. <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/the-cuomo-administration-is-withholding/>
- Amtrak has a 2.25 million compensation and has started accepting claims for monetary compensation for people with mobility disabilities who traveled or wanted to travel to or from one of the 78 stations and experienced accessibility issues. Amtrak will fix inaccessible stations- prioritizing stations with the most barriers to access and pay millions to victims hurt by inaccessibility. Amtrak has pledged to design more accessible stations, train staff on ADA requirements and start a process for accepting and handling ADA complaints. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/225-million-fund-available-justice-department-settlement-amtrak>
- Annually, Albany hosts budget advocacy week (Feb 8-12) but this year, it was virtually held. New York Association of Independent Living released a budget and policy priority agenda. It is linked here: <https://ilny.us/advocacy/advocacy-priorities>
- #FairPay4HomeCare campaign started Feb 9<sup>th</sup>. Advocates and Independent Living Centers have started campaigning for better home health care. A bill is being proposed with increasing home care workers' wages to 150% of the highest regional minimum wage. The coronavirus has exposed issues within the home health care and nursing home system.

A meeting will be scheduled with Assemblymember Kelles and Senator O'Mara. If you are interested in participating to discuss budget topics and what is important for the disability community. You can also be a part of the advocacy team as a volunteer. If interested, please email Valerie, the Advocacy Specialist at [Valerie@fliconline.org](mailto:Valerie@fliconline.org)

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### **Attention Tompkins County Residents**

***Do you or someone you know need a modular ramp to safely enter and exit your home?***

FLIC currently has modular ramping available.  
Call 272-2433 for an assessment.

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### **Looking Ahead - March is Brain Injury Awareness Month**

As part of our [Go Blue! for Brain Injury](#) campaign, we invite you to host your own event.

Your event can be awareness only or you can also raise a little money if you'd like. (We use the donations from [Go Blue!](#) to fund scholarships for survivors and caregivers to attend our conference.)

For more information on local Brain Injury support groups and events, contact Jessica Morley, [jmorley@bianys.org](mailto:jmorley@bianys.org)

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### **Are You Interested in Being Part of a Support Group via Zoom?**

In these physically distanced times, it is easy to feel isolated and disconnected. FLIC is here to help and we want to hear from you!

Please email Megan at [Megan@fliconline.org](mailto:Megan@fliconline.org) if you would like to join a support group via zoom to talk about coping with covid, anxiety and depression, living with invisible disabilities, or other areas that impact your life. We want to know about the issues you are facing and how FLIC can best assist you going forward. Email Megan today!

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### **Emergency Preparedness Tip of the Month - February** **The Core Advisory Group of Tompkins County reminds you:**

"Emergencies Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today."

#### **Water**

**Task One: Purchase and store a 72-hour supply of commercially bottled water (or more - up to two weeks).**

A three-day supply for one person is 3 gallons (12 liters) of water – one gallon (4 liters) per person per day. Also include an extra one gallon (4 liters) for a medium size pet. That one gallon should last three days, but plan for more or less if your pet is very large or very small.

During an emergency, you should drink at least two quarts (one half gallon/two liters) of water a day. Drink 3-4 quarts (3-4 liters) a day if you are in a hot climate, pregnant, sick, or a child. Some of the water in your emergency water supply will be used for cooking or washing.

If you buy commercially bottled water, it should be replaced once a year. Store

your water in a cool, dark place to keep it tasting fresher longer.

### **Task Two: Bottle a 72-hour supply of water at home.**

If you get your water from a private well, disinfect your tap water before bottling. Place six drops of bleach for each gallon of water, shake well, then let sit for 30 minutes. If you get your water from a municipal water system, there is no need to disinfect tap water before bottling.

Replace your water supply every six months if you bottle your own water. Always sanitize bottles before refilling them. Store your water in a cool, dark place.

Sanitize bottles before filling:

- (1) Wash containers with dishwashing soap and rinse with water
- (2) Sanitize by washing a solution of 1 teaspoon of liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water on all interior surfaces of the container.
- (3) Let air dry for at least one minute

Use clear plastic bottles with tight sealing caps. Milk jugs don't make good water storage containers, they don't seal well, and water stored in them can sometimes develop a plastic taste. Only use bottles that originally had beverages in them (large plastic soft drink bottles work well).

### **Task Three: Learn how to provide a safe supply of drinking water for your household in a disaster.**

Water Heater - DO NOT use if the tank or fixtures have been submerged in floodwater!

- (1) Turn off the gas or electricity to water heater (turn off electricity at the fuse or breaker box, turn off gas by locating the valve supplying the hot water heater and turning the valve handle so that it crosses – is not lined up with – the gas line)
- (2) Turn off the water intake valve (should be located near the water heater)
- (3) Open the drain at the bottom of the tank
- (4) Turn on a hot water faucet (water will drain from the tank, not the faucet)

Discard the first few gallons if they contain rust or sediment. Do not turn the gas or electricity back on until the tank is refilled.

Pipes

- (1) Turn off main water valve where the water comes into the house (usually near the water meter if you have city water).
- (2) Let air into the pipes by turning on the highest faucet in your house.
- (3) Get water from the lowest faucet in your house (never get water from faucets that have been submerged in floodwater).

Ice - If you have freezer space, consider freezing part of your water supply. This has the added advantage of keeping food in the freezer cold longer during a power outage.

Source: [www.do1thing.com/topics/water](http://www.do1thing.com/topics/water)

**The Core Advisory Group (CAG) of Tompkins County advocates for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all emergency preparedness activities. We welcome any interested people from the Tompkins County Community. For more information contact Jan Lynch 607-2722433; [jan@fliconline.org](mailto:jan@fliconline.org)**

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## The Registry In-Home Assistance

The Registry is a program that matches people in Tompkins County that need in-home workers with individuals able to work in people's homes.

The Registry maintains a listing of in-home Caregivers who have been screened through a face to face interview and whose references have been checked. The Registry is a "pay out of pocket" program.

If you need someone to help with housekeeping or personal care, we have Caregivers that are available to assist.

The Registry is made possible by funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging and New York State Office for the Aging.

For more information, contact Teri at the Finger Lakes Independence Center at 607-272-2433 or email [Teri@FLIOnline.org](mailto:Teri@FLIOnline.org)

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### 25 Simple Tips to Make Your Diet Healthier

A healthy diet has been scientifically proven to provide numerous health benefits, such as reducing your risk of several chronic diseases and keeping your body healthy.

However, making major changes to your diet can sometimes seem very overwhelming.

Instead of making big changes, it may be better to start with a few smaller ones.

#### **1. Slow Down**

The pace at which you eat influences how much you eat, as well as how likely you are to gain weight.

#### **2. Choose Whole-Grain Bread — Not Refined**

You can easily make your diet a bit healthier by choosing whole grain bread in place of traditional refined-grain bread.

#### **3. Add Greek Yogurt to Your Diet**

It has been strained to remove its excess whey, which is the watery part of milk. The end result is a yogurt that is higher in fat and protein than regular yogurt.

#### **4. Don't Shop Without a List**

There are two important strategies to employ when you go grocery shopping: make your shopping list ahead of time and don't go to the store hungry.

Not knowing exactly what you need makes room for impulse buying, while hunger can further exacerbate your impulses.

#### **5. Eat Eggs, Preferably for Breakfast**

Eggs are incredibly healthy, especially if you eat them in the morning.

They are rich in high-quality protein and many essential nutrients that people often don't get enough of, such as choline.

#### **6. Increase Your Protein Intake**

Protein is often referred to as the king of nutrients, and it does seem to have some superpowers.

#### **7. Drink Enough Water**

Drinking enough water is important for your health.

Many studies have shown that drinking water may benefit weight loss, weight maintenance and even slightly increase the number of calories you burn daily.

## **8. Bake or Roast Instead of Grilling or Frying**

The way you prepare your food can drastically change its effects on your health.

Grilling, broiling, frying and deep-frying are all popular methods of preparing meat and fish.

Healthier cooking methods include baking, broiling, simmering, slow-cooking, poaching, pressure cooking, stewing and sous-vide.

## **9. Take Omega-3 and Vitamin D Supplements**

A surprising number of people around the world are deficient in vitamin D, including 42% of the US population.

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is very important for bone health and the proper function of your immune system. In fact, every cell in your body has a receptor for vitamin D, indicating its importance.

Vitamin D is found in very few foods, but fatty seafood generally contains the highest amounts.

If you don't eat fatty seafood regularly, you should consider taking a supplement. Omega-3s and vitamin D can often be found together in a supplement.

## **10. Replace Your Favorite "Fast Food" Restaurant**

Eating out does not have to involve unhealthy foods.

Consider "upgrading" your favorite fast food restaurant to one with healthier options.

There are many healthy fast food restaurants and fusion kitchens offering delicious and healthy meals.

They may just be a great replacement for your favorite burger or pizza joint. What's more, you can generally get these meals at a very decent price.

## **11. Try at Least One New Healthy Recipe Per Week**

Deciding what to have for dinner can be a constant cause of frustration, which is why many people tend to use the same recipes again and again.

Chances are you've been cooking the same recipes on autopilot for years. Whether these are healthy or unhealthy recipes, it's always healthy to try something new.

Aim to try making a new healthy recipe at least once per week. This can change up your food and nutrient intakes and hopefully add new and healthy recipes to your routine.

## **12. Choose Baked Potatoes Over French Fries**

Potatoes are very filling and a common side to many dishes.

That said, the method in which they're prepared largely determines their health effects.

## **13. Eat Your Greens First**

A good way to ensure that you eat your greens is to eat them as a starter.

By doing so, you will most likely finish all of your greens while you are the hungriest and be apt to eat less of other, perhaps less healthy, components of the meal.

This may lead you to eat fewer and healthier calories overall, which may result in weight loss.

Furthermore, eating vegetables before a carb-rich meal has been shown to have beneficial effects on blood sugar levels.

## **14. Eat Your Fruits Instead of Drinking Them**

Fruits are very healthy. They are loaded with water, fiber, vitamins and antioxidants.

Studies have repeatedly linked eating fruit to a reduced risk of several diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

Because fruits contain fiber and various plant compounds, their sugars are

generally digested very slowly and do not cause major spikes in blood sugar levels.

However, the same does not apply for fruit juices.

### **15. Cook at Home More Often**

Try to make a habit of cooking at home most nights, rather than eating out. For one, it's easier on your budget.

Second, by cooking your food yourself, you'll know exactly what is in it. You won't have to wonder about any hidden unhealthy or high-calorie ingredients.

### **16. Become More Active**

Good nutrition and exercise often go hand in hand.

Exercise has been shown to improve your mood, as well as decrease feelings of depression, anxiety and stress.

### **17. Replace Your Sugary Beverages With Sugar-Free or Sparkling Water**

Sugary beverages might possibly be the unhealthiest thing you can drink.

They are loaded with liquid sugar, which has been linked to numerous diseases, including heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Also, your brain doesn't register liquid calories the same way it registers solid calories. This means you don't compensate for the calories you drink by eating any less .

One 17-ounce (500-ml) sugary soda may contain about 210 calories.

### **18. Stay Away From "Diet" Foods**

So-called "diet foods" can be very deceiving.

They've usually had their fat content reduced dramatically and are often labeled "fat-free," "low-fat," "fat-reduced" or "low-calorie."

However, to compensate for the lost flavor and texture that the fat provided, sugar and other ingredients are often added.

### **19. Get a Good Night's Sleep**

The importance of good sleep cannot be overstated.

Sleep deprivation disrupts appetite regulation, often leading to increased appetite, which results in increased calorie intake and weight gain

### **20. Eat Fresh Berries Instead of Dried Ones**

Berries are very healthy and packed with nutrients, fiber and antioxidants.

Most varieties can be purchased fresh, frozen or dried.

Although all types are relatively healthy, the dried varieties are a much more concentrated source of calories and sugar, since all the water has been removed.

### **21. Eat Popcorn Instead of Chips**

It may be surprising that popcorn is a whole grain that's loaded with nutrients and fiber.

A 3.5-ounce (100-gram) serving of air-popped popcorn contains 387 calories and 15 grams of fiber, while the same amount of chips contains 547 calories and only 4 grams of fiber.

Diets rich in whole grains have been linked to health benefits, such as a reduced risk of inflammation and heart disease.

For healthy popcorn, try making your own popcorn at home (not microwave popcorn varieties) or purchase air-popped popcorn.

### **22. Choose Healthy Oils**

Unfortunately, highly processed seed and vegetable oils have become a household staple over the past few decades.

Examples include soybean, cottonseed, sunflower and canola oils.

These oils are highly processed and high in omega-6 fatty acids, but deficient in omega-3s.

A high omega-6 to omega-3 ratio can lead to inflammation and has been linked to chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and

autoimmune diseases.

### **23. Eat From Smaller Plates**

It has been proven that the size of your dinnerware can affect how much you eat.

Eating from a large plate can make your portion look smaller, while eating from a small plate can make it look bigger.

Studies have supported this and shown that people tend to eat as much as 30% more when their food is served in a large bowl or on a large plate.

By eating from smaller dinnerware, you can trick your brain into thinking that you're eating more, making yourself less likely to overeat.

### **24. Get the Salad Dressing on the Side**

Simply getting to the point of being able to order a salad at a restaurant is a great achievement for some people.

However, your efforts should not end there. Some salads are smothered in high-calorie dressings, which may make the salads even higher in calories than other items on the menu.

Asking for the dressing on the side makes it a lot easier to control the portion size and therefore the calories that you consume.

### **25. Drink Your Coffee Black**

Coffee, which is one of the most popular beverages in the world, is very healthy.

In fact, it is a major source of antioxidants and has been linked to many health benefits, such as a lower risk of diabetes, mental decline and liver disease.

However, many commercial varieties of coffee contain lots of additional ingredients, such as sugar, syrup, heavy cream, sweeteners and milk. Many of these drinks are practically desserts in a cup.

### **The Bottom Line**

Completely overhauling your diet all at once can be a recipe for disaster. Instead, try to incorporate some of the small changes in this article to make your diet healthier.

Some of these tips will help you keep your portion sizes reasonable, while others will help you add nutrients or adapt to something new.

Together, they'll have a big impact on making your overall diet healthier and more sustainable, without a huge change in your habits.

Source: [25 Simple Tips to Make Your Diet Healthier \(healthline.com\)](https://www.healthline.com/health/25-simple-tips-to-make-your-diet-healthier)

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### **Need a Public Notary?**

Contact Cheryl Baker at FLIC at 272-2433 to make an appointment.  
Services are FREE.

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[Donate](#)

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