



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 will continue to be closed until it is deemed safe and reasonable to re-open. As many services as possible are taking place remotely.

THE CONSUMER DIRECTED PERSONAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE AS IT PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO PEOPLE WHO NEED HOMECARE.

If you have questions or other needs, you can call FLIC at 607-272-2433 and leave a message. You can email staff members as well.

FLIC is taking this action out of an abundance of caution and strong sense of responsibility towards our staff, consumers, and the community. The importance of staying put and limiting your contact with other people, to protect your health and the health of others, including people with disabilities, caregivers, and older adults can't be overstated. It is also important to reduce the burden on our medical community, allowing them to work effectively.

Thank you for your patience during this difficult time.

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### **"Gadabout's wheels are still rolling! I'd like to share some updates on our service." -from Kristen Wells, Executive Director**

Our drivers all have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes on the buses. Every evening high contact areas on our buses are disinfected with a professional-grade electrostatic sprayer.

From March 20th to April 10th Gadabout will not be collecting fares for trips. This will eliminate the driver's need to handle money while assisting our riders that may be struggling financially during this time. Donations are still welcome and can be mailed to our office.

We are offering our services to pick-up groceries that have been ordered and pre-paid. From our understanding the Dollar Generals are dedicating the 1st

hour after they open as a time for older adults to shop. Gadabout will provide rides to the Dollar Generals so seniors can shop. Call our office at 273-1878 for more information.

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## 2020 Census: Get Counted!

### What Is the 2020 Census?

The 2020 Census counts every person living in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories.

### Why We Conduct This Count

The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

The results of the census also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives, and they are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts.

### Important Dates

In mid-March, homes across the country will begin receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail.

For more information, visit <https://2020census.gov/en/what-is-2020-census.html>

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## **SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD is Available for Uninsured New Yorkers Reminder: There is NO COST SHARING for COVID-19 testing across Medicaid, Child Health Plus, Essential Plan, and Qualified Health Plans**

New York State's official health plan Marketplace announced that eligible (uninsured) individuals will be able to enroll in insurance coverage either through the Marketplace or directly through insurers between March 16 and April 15, 2020. The open enrollment period for coverage in 2020 had previously ended on February 7, 2020.

Individuals who are eligible for other New York State programs - Medicaid, Essential Plan, and Child Health Plus - can enroll year round.

To apply for coverage, you may:

Apply online [here](#)

Call the NY State of Health Marketplace at 1-855-355-5777

Call a local enrollment assister.

Assistors include certified navigators, certified application counselors, and facilitated enrollers.

Human Services Coalition - call 607-273-8686, press 1; or schedule an appointment [here](#).

Southern Tier Independence Center - call 1-855-478-4262.

Fidelis Care - Plan representative at 607-222-5739.

In Tompkins and Cortland, you can call the 211 helpline (2-1-1 or 1-877-211-

8667), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for information resources.

The original press release can be found [here](#).

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## **Effective March 17, 2020, Social Security Offices Will Only Offer Phone Service**

### **\*\* Online Services Remain Available \*\***

**All local Social Security offices will be closed to the public for in-person service starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020. This decision protects the population we serve—older Americans and people with underlying medical conditions—and our employees during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. However, we are still able to provide critical services.**

Our secure and convenient online services remain available at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). Local offices will also continue to provide critical services over the phone. We are working closely with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), state and local governments, and other experts to monitor COVID-19 and will let you know as soon as we can resume in-person service.

### **If you need help from Social Security:**

- First, please use our secure and convenient online services available at [www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices). You can apply for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits online, check the status of an application or appeal, request a replacement Social Security card (in most areas), print a benefit verification letter, and much more – from anywhere and from any of your devices. We also have a wealth of information to answer most of your Social Security questions online, without having to speak with a Social Security representative in person or by phone. Please visit our online Frequently Asked Questions at [www.socialsecurity.gov/ask](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ask).
  - If you cannot conduct your Social Security business online, please check our online [field office locator](#) for specific information about how to directly contact your local office. Your local office still will be able to provide critical services to help you apply for benefits, answer your questions, and provide other services over the phone.
  - If you already have an in-office appointment scheduled, we will call you to handle your appointment over the phone instead. If you have a hearing scheduled, we will call you to discuss alternatives for continuing with your hearing, including offering a telephonic hearing. Our call may come from a PRIVATE number and not from a U.S. Government phone. Please remember that our employees will not threaten you or ask for any form of payment.
  - If you cannot complete your Social Security business online, please call our National 800 Number at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). Our National 800 Number has many automated service options you can use without waiting to speak with a telephone representative. A list of automated telephone services is available online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/contact/phone.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/contact/phone.html).
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## **Health Advisory Update: Importance of Community Social Distancing**

(Ithaca, NY – March 20, 2020) – The Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD) is reinforcing the importance of social distancing for the community. Social distancing is crucial to slowing the spread of COVID-19. Community social distancing means:



People should not gather in groups outside of their homes, with the exception of essential workers.

Keep 6 feet distance between yourself and others.

- Minimize in-person contact.
- Limit all outdoor recreational activities to non-contact and avoid activities that put you in close contact with people.
- Social Distancing does not mean emotional isolation, check on friends, coworkers, neighbors through phone and text.
- Wash hands well and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Those at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, including older adults, those who are immune-compromised, or have a chronic medical condition, especially heart or lung disease, and diabetes, should avoid in-person contact with others.

“As the number of positive cases increase, social distancing must continue to be a community effort – one in which everyone plays a part,” said Public Health Director, Frank Kruppa.

If you develop symptoms of illness including fever, cough, or trouble breathing, call your healthcare provider before seeking in-person medical care.

As this situation evolves, check the TCHD website for updates. Frequently Asked Questions are available

here: <https://tompkinscountynyny.gov/health/factsheets/coronavirusfaq>

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### **Tompkins County Mutual Aid Response Team**

For a list of community resources that this group has put together, check out this [link](#). Topics include:

- Food
- Mental Health
- Opioid Substance Use
- Parenting
- Cornell Resources

There are also a number of miscellaneous documents including one on Creating Accessible Documents. It is worth taking a look.

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### **Finally, Just for Fun**

All the virtual concerts, plays, museums and other culture you can enjoy from home.

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/what-to-do-at-home-streaming-art-museums-concerts-coronavirus-trnd/index.html>

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[Donate](#)

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