



Finger Lakes **Independence** Center

Opening Doors to Independence

January 2022



Celebration of Life Month

January is Celebration of Life Month!

January is International Celebration of Life Month. We are encouraged to start this new year centered on how precious life is, and to develop practices which celebrate life each and every day. Traditionally, the new year begins with resolutions, such as to eat healthier or exercise more, which puts pressure on us to succeed and often sets us up for failure. Celebration of Life Month asks us to focus on simply being alive. It is a great reminder to start off the new year celebrating life each and every day!

Instead of a New Year resolution, perhaps we could mark the start of this new year with a new practice of expressing gratitude for all the life around us; family, friends, co-workers, caregivers, strangers, and the living world around us. Let us celebrate life in 2022.

holidaysmart.com



DISABLED NEW YORKERS TO GOVERNOR HOCHUL: A CHIEF DISABILITY OFFICER WITHOUT A STAFF IS TOKENIZING; SIGN A3130/S1836 AND REINSTATE THE OFFICE OF THE ADVOCATE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

On December 14th, the Executive Chamber posted a job description for a Chief Disability Officer (CDO). The Center for Disability Rights and others in the Disability Community are gravely concerned that this signals Governor Hochul intends to veto critical legislation reinstating the Office of the Advocate for People with Disabilities.

Similar legislation reinstating the Office of the Advocate for People with Disabilities passed in 2019 but was vetoed by Governor Cuomo who used an announcement about creating this position to blunt criticism he would face for vetoing the bill. Disability rights advocates have also noted that the job description for the Chief Disability Officer posted by the Hochul administration does not include any mention of supervising staff and are concerned what that means.

“Look at that job description. One person can’t possibly address all disability-related issues in a state government with a budget of more than \$200 billion,” said Zach Garafalo, Manager of Government Affairs at the Center for Disability Rights. “Without a staff, the job is undoable which demonstrates that it is intended to be nothing more than token representation. It is a slap in the face to the Disability community.”

“One Disabled person cannot represent all of the communities who identify as people with disabilities. Although we deal with a common oppression – ableism – our experience of that oppression is very different based on the individual’s personal experience,” said Bruce Darling, President/CEO of the Center for Disability Rights. “No single person has the expertise or bandwidth needed for all of this work and frankly, if the Hochul administration hires one Disabled person for the CDO position without reestablishing the Office of the Advocate, every disability group that does not feel adequately represented by that single person will be angry.

“That would be as offensive as Governor Hochul hiring one person of color in her administration and announcing that her administration is representative of all people who experience racism. She should know better,” added Rebecca Payton, Senior Director of Independent Living at the Center for Disability Rights.

The Center is concerned that because Governor Hochul’s team lacks any representation of people with disabilities, they don’t understand the issues faced by the Disability Community and why this Office is needed. “The concern about Governor Hochul vetoing this bill illustrates the need for an Office of the Advocate. Without Disabled people in her administration, she has non-disabled people making decisions about us without us. That’s universally understood by the Disability Community as wrong,” said Garafalo. “Even if she isn’t initially inclined to sign the bill reinstating the Office of the Advocate, I challenge Governor Hochul to meet personally with representatives of our community before making that decision. After hearing our concerns directly, instead of being filtered through her non-disabled staff, I truly believe she will sign

our bill and address this."

Zach Garafalo, Manager of Government Affairs,
Center for Disability Rights, 518-362-7916 or zgarafalo@cdrnys.org



January 17th is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

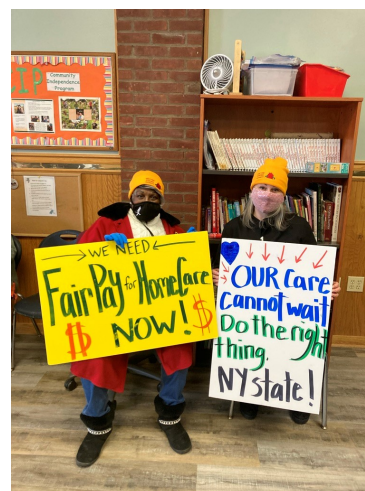
The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is a defining moment each year when Americans across the country step up to make our communities more equitable and take action to build the Beloved Community of Dr. King's dream. While Dr. King believed the Beloved Community was possible, he acknowledged and fought for systemic change. His example is our call to action.

Observed each year on the third Monday in January, MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities. Making time to volunteer for MLK Day of Service is a great way to engage with your community while honoring the legacy of Dr. King. Whether you plan on cleaning up a public space, mentoring a young person, or assisting those who are food insecure, what you do makes a world of difference. (americorps.gov)

**Learn about MLK,
Jr.**

Fair Pay for Home Care Act in New York

Strides are being made encouraging support of the Better Jobs, Better Care Act reported in our newsletter last month. In our state, much support is being given to the Fair Pay for Home Care Act. In December, #FairPay4HomeCare was the #1 trending hashtag on Twitter in the state of New York, bringing much attention to this important issue. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and SEIU1199 United Healthcare Workers East both publicly support the Act. At the close of 2021, 80 Assembly Persons and 35 Senators were co-sponsors on the Fair Pay for Home Care Act for New York State, with bi-partisan support in both chambers.



It is never too late to call, tweet and write letters to the Governor about Fair Pay! Click the link below to access a tool kit to help make your voice heard.

Tool Kit



Top 10 Tips for Personal Safety for People with Disabilities

1. **Personal safety begins with awareness.** How often do you talk on your cell phone, oblivious to your surroundings? Trust me, we all have fallen into that distraction trap. But if we put the phone down, and watch where we are walking and who is around us, we are much more apt to detect a situation that is malevolent. For as cliché as it may sound, the simple act of avoiding a confrontation can minimize the likelihood of being attacked by nearly 75 percent.
2. **Shift your posture.** When we are younger, our parents may nag, "Sit up straight." Amazingly, there is something to it. Whether you are standing up straight or sitting up straight, holding your head up with an open posture allows you to be more aware of what is going on around you. Good posture increases your peripheral vision and heightens your sense of hearing. Knowing what is around you either by sight, noise or even scent can alert you to potential danger. When we carry ourselves with confidence, no matter whether we are sitting, standing or lying down, that confidence lets others know that you are not a push-over or weakened by your circumstances. Often, projecting this confidence goes far beyond the physical posture. For example, I don't sit perfectly straight all of the time. And yet, it is clear when I own my space and surroundings, and when I am not. This may be as simple as looking up rather than at the ground, scanning our surroundings rather than keeping our eyes locked in one position, or it may also mean relaxing ourselves internally so that we are not bound by fear. Equally as important, when you are walking or driving your chair somewhere, know where you are going, own it, and head there with a purpose. This does not mean that you have to rush everywhere. Yet, neither does it mean that we dawdle or look unsure of where we are going.
3. **Where is your safe space?** Whether you are in your own home or out in the community, we all need to define a safe space, a place where we can go in an emergency. For people with disabilities, it may also mean having alternative modes of communication such as having *In Case of Emergency* notes in our phones. Along with knowing where to go, just as important is how to get there. Where are the exits in a building? What is on the other side of them, and are they accessible? What is between you and your escape route? Are other people with you? All of the questions are things to think about in crowds, traveling or out and about in the community.
4. **Reactions in time of stress.** When I feel stressed, I don't always communicate well because I have a lot to say, and it feels like the words just won't come out. And, I may not be able to drive my wheelchair as well because muscle spasms become more uncontrollable. We all have different reactions to stress. Knowing how we respond, and what to do to calm down can help keep our heads clear. Techniques such as breathing or finding a quiet place may help keep our emotions calm. Just as we react to stress in different ways, so may our families, direct support staff or care givers. Many times, we

must work together as a team in difficult situations, and building the relationship with your team can give you the confidence you need in unfamiliar situations.

5. **Personal Space.** Perimeter distance is the space you occupy, and for many of us, it's our personal space. If you extend your arm or leg and spin in a circle, this is your perimeter distance. Similarly, if you use a wheelchair or crutch, this distance may be the edge of a footrest, the space if you can hold with your crutch extended. Many of us don't like someone coming into our personal space without being invited. It could be as simple as standing next to someone in an elevator or leaning in to talk to someone in a wheelchair. We give non-verbal clues to others about approaching this personal space. For example, if I'm being misunderstood, I may speak in a way where someone needs to lean in closer to me to listen. If I want more space, my leg may jet out, giving a barrier for someone who is approaching.
6. **Don't be afraid to be rude.** If you find yourself approaching a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable such as an elevator with only one other person on it, do not feel obligated to put yourself in that position out of courtesy. Using a mobility device may make us feel more vulnerable, and it's okay to say no to something we do not feel comfortable with. Trust your gut. If something feels odd, find a way around it. And don't worry about hurting the other person's feelings. In fact, chances are if the other person is a good-hearted individual, they will recognize the situation and not take offense anyway.
7. **Personal Choice.** In life-threatening situations, we may feel afraid and not know what to do. No matter what anyone else may tell you, surviving the situation is success. This does not just apply to scenarios of bullying or assault. During our lifetime, we find ourselves in a many different situations: natural disaster, a car wreck, job change, or change in living situations, just to name a few. Many times, after we've lived through tough situations, we may question what we could or should have done. As much as you can, let it go, and be compassionate with yourself; you've lived to see another day.
8. **Being Aware of the Tools We Have.** We have heard and been touched by tragic situations that have involved tools of malice. School shootings, break-ins, thefts, we hear about them on the news every day. But we each have tools that we can use just as easily. Our voices, our confidence, our personality can all be considered tools, just as our hands, legs, mobility devices or what we are carrying with us. As a martial artist and self-defense instructor, I advocate that if you choose to use a tool for self-defense, such as mace, you have continual training to know how it works, and how it can be used against you.
9. **Expand Your Sense of Your Environment.** How often do we go through the day without knowing how we got there? Just as we need to become more aware of our environment, we also need to be aware of our senses. This may be visual, auditory or feeling textures. It may be that we are aware our wheelchairs will get stuck in gravel, that walkers are not that great for off-roading, or crowds may not be the best for someone with an intellectual disability. It may also be that we create relationships to build trust with other people in our community.
10. **Trust Your Gut.** No matter who we are or what our ability, we all have what many refer to as intuition, that feeling inside. This is the combination of all of your other senses and the data that they provide, and at the same time it is a separate sense equally as vital and informative as the other five. Particularly people with disabilities may not trust this feeling. After all, there are times when we may rely on others, and we feel silly. And yet, this internal feeling has, over the generations, been known for saving lives of people, no matter what their background or walk of life. Learn to understand and listen to what it's telling you.

The bottom line is: We are all more powerful than we give ourselves credit for.

When we find ourselves in an emergency situation, as long as you make a choice to survive, you increase your chances of sustaining yourself.

**Visit the
Website**



Tompkins County Public Library Offering One-to-One Technology Help Appointments

Tompkins County Public Library is pleased to offer One-on-One Tech Help appointments through February 2022, in the Digital Lab. Times and dates vary.

Patrons can book an in-person appointment with a librarian or volunteer technology tutor for help with downloading ebooks and audiobooks, as well as basic computer questions.

To register for an appointment, visit the TCPL online calendar to see available dates and times: <https://www.tcpl.org/events/upcoming?keywords=one-on-one%20tech>.

Questions? Please contact Tom Fredette at tfredette@tcpl.org or 607-272-4557 ext. 271.



Tips to Recognize, Prevent, or Reduce Cyberattacks and Cybercrimes

Scott Cory, Chief Information Officer, ACL
(Administration for Community Living)

As we move through the holiday season, new challenges that people and organizations face include the heightened risk and probability of “bad actors”—people with criminal intention, organized crime groups, and state-sponsored groups—seeking to compromise people and organizations’ mobile phones, tablets, and systems to gain access to data and information. The Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) published this **alert** on December 15, 2021. The risk has always been present—with our attention on holiday celebrations, our personal and professional guard and resources can be down. It’s easy to be distracted by the phishing email or the phone call asking you to click on a link, or to provide personal information that can allow a bad actor to gain access to data and systems. After that happens, there are fewer people and more challenges to identify, respond to, and repair any damage carried out by cyberattacks and cybercrimes.

You may think that community-based organizations aren’t targets. However, in 2021 three Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and associated service providers experienced cyberattacks, resulting in loss of data about the organizations and the people they serve. There may well be other community-based organizations that experienced cyberattacks about which we don’t know. As providers of services that CISA and others consider part of the **National Critical Functions**, AAAs, Centers for Independent Living, and state and local adult protective service agencies, among others in our aging and disability networks, all are potential critical infrastructure targets.

What can we do to prepare for and protect against cyberattacks and cybercrime? The first—and most important—way to prevent cybersecurity issues is to be aware. CISA offers this advice on **"How to Recognize and Prevent Cybercrime."**

Recognize the Risk of Cybercrime:

Identity theft is the illegal use of someone else's personal information in order to obtain money or credit. How do you know if you've been a victim of identity theft? You might get bills for products or services you did not purchase. Your bank account might have withdrawals you didn't expect or unauthorized charges.

Phishing attacks use email to collect personal and financial information or infect your machine with malware and viruses. Cybercriminals use legitimate-looking emails that encourage people to click on a link or open an attachment. The email they send can look like it is from an authentic financial institution, e-commerce site, government agency, or any other service or business.

Imposter scams happen when you receive an email or call seemingly from a government official, family member, friend, or other trusted source requesting that you wire them money to pay taxes or fees, or to help someone you care about. Cybercriminals use legitimate looking emails that encourage people to send them money or personal information.

Prevent or Reduce the Impact of Cybercrime:

Keep a clean machine. Update the security software and operating system on your computer and mobile devices. Keeping the software on your devices up to date will prevent attackers from taking advantage of known vulnerabilities.

When in doubt, throw it out. Stop and think before you open attachments or click links in emails. Links in email, instant message, and online posts are often the way cybercriminals compromise your computer. If it looks suspicious, it's best to delete it.

Use stronger authentication. Always opt to enable stronger authentication when available, especially for accounts with sensitive information, including your email or bank accounts. A stronger authentication helps verify a user has authorized access to an online account.

Visit www.lockdownyourlogin.com for more information on stronger authentication.

Preparation for cybercrimes and cyberattacks is the second step. As the Chief Information Officer for ACL, I'm often told by my colleagues that they don't know or understand cybersecurity. My answer always is: as a manager or executive, your organization **should** have plans for minimizing and managing the risks of cyberattacks and cybersecurity that:

- Increase organizational vigilance by ensuring there are no gaps in Information Technology (IT)/Operational Technology (OT) security personnel coverage and that staff provides continual monitoring for all types of irregular behavior. Security coverage is particularly important during the winter holiday season when organizations typically have lower staffing.
- Prepare your organization for rapid response by adopting a state of heightened awareness. Create, update, or review your cyber incident response procedures and ensure your personnel are familiar with the key steps they need to take during and following an incident. Have staff check reporting processes and exercise continuity of operations plans to test your ability to operate key functions in an IT-constrained or otherwise degraded environment. Consider your organization's cross-sector dependencies and the impact that a potential incident at your organization may have on other sectors, as well as how an incident could affect your organization.
- Ensure your network defenders implement cybersecurity best practices. Enforce multi-factor authentication and strong passwords, install software updates (prioritizing known exploited vulnerabilities), and secure accounts and credentials.
- Stay informed about current cybersecurity threats and malicious techniques. Encourage your IT/OT security staff to subscribe to CISA's mailing list and feeds to receive notifications when CISA releases information about a security topic or threat.
- Lower the threshold for threat and information sharing. Immediately report cybersecurity incidents and irregular activity to CISA and/or the FBI. Sharing your data and experience may help other people and organizations prepare for, respond to, and reduce the impact of cyberattacks and cybercrimes. (Adapted from CISA's "[Preparing for and Mitigating Potential Cyber Threats](#).")

Our partners at DHS and CISA, and at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) have good, effective **guidance** and **technical assistance** for building resilience to cyberattacks and cybercrimes. It may seem overwhelming at first, but having even a simple plan about how to respond to a data breach or a cyberattack compromising a system supporting your organization will let you act more quickly, and with greater confidence, than if you had none.

Preparing for and preventing cyberattacks and cybercrimes should become part of our personal

and professional lives. Changing our behavior means staying aware of emerging cybersecurity issues. We can do this by:

- Taking note of articles about new and existing cyberthreats in the popular and professional media.
- Paying attention to software and device updates for our personal devices and our organizations' mobile phones, laptops, and servers.
- Including assessing and managing the risk of cyberattacks and cybercrime as a regular and ongoing part of our management and governance practice.

Make planning for and managing cyber risk part of your personal and professional practices to ensure your personal security, and the security and privacy of the people we serve.

[Visit the Blog](#)

Staff Changes at FLIC!



Welcome Brenda Richardson!

Brenda joined the staff at FLIC on November 17, the new Student Transition Specialist. She help students build the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully transition from high school to work, college, and independent living. Visit FLIC's webpage to learn more:

[Visit our Website](#)



Welcome Trish Cocola!

Trish started on December 8 as the new Administrative Assistant here at FLIC. If you call or stop in, she is likely the first person at FLIC who will greet you.

Trish lives in Watkins Glen with Nick, her spouse of 30 years. They have three children, ages 31, 29, and 24. Trish is also a BIG Buffalo Bills fan.



Top 5 Health Tips for People with Disabilities

1. **Regular Checkups:** Making and keeping regular health checkups and preventative care appointments can ensure your health is in great conditions and potential complications

are kept at bay. From general checkups to specialized visits, here are a few of the providers you may want to consider scheduling an appointment or consultation with in order to maintain a positive state of overall health and wellbeing.

2. **Stay Active:** Staying active is one of the most important ways to prevent health complications. If possible, aim for at least 30 minutes per day or at least 150 minutes per week of activity. Activities that raise the heart rate, such as power walking, jogging, basketball, volleyball, swimming, and cycling are even more beneficial for overall health and wellness.
3. **Eat Healthy:** Eating healthy is essential for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Avoiding processed foods and added sugar is just one of the ways you can improve your physical and mental wellbeing. Here are a few more tips for eating healthy.
4. **Don't Neglect Mental Health:** Mental health is just as important as physical health, and mental health problems can often manifest as physical illnesses, so being proactive about staying positive can go a long way in preventing other health problems and complications as well.
5. **Create a Support Team:** Creating a support team is very important for people with disabilities and their families. Many resources, offer programs and facilities that can assist you with a variety of needs. Building a support team through resources and the love and care of family and friends can help foster physical and mental wellbeing.

<https://www.baddour.org/blog/posts/our-top-5-health-tips-for-special-needs-adults>

Assistive Technology



Assistive Technology: Tools to Improve Your Everyday Life

Most Americans want to stay in their homes as they age. Not a bad plan, but what if your home doesn't fit you as well as it once did?

Often, aging can be accompanied by a change in your ability to manage and move around in your home. That's where assistive technology – better known as AT – comes in. No matter your age or what type of disability you may have, chances are there is an AT device out there that can help you with everyday tasks.

AT isn't a new concept. In fact, most people have probably used an assistive device without realizing it. Smartphones, voice command technology and certain types of software all fall under the AT umbrella. AT also includes plenty of low-tech devices, like adapted pencil grips for students with disabilities.

There's an ever-growing variety of AT tools available to help with household chores, work functions, getting around, seeing, hearing, learning and living independently in general. These devices and technologies are designed to help older adults and people with disabilities, but you may find that these tools can make life easier for anyone.

Examples of AT devices and tools include:

- Hearing aids
- Vehicle modifications, such as hand controls or wheelchair lifts
- Devices that help with bathing and eating
- Software modifications for those with hearing and visual challenges
- Equipment, such as grab bars in a shower, to help prevent falls
- Eye glasses and magnification devices to help individuals with low vision
- Communication devices for individuals with speech disabilities
- Wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility devices

The right AT for you

At first, trying to find the right AT tools and solutions can feel overwhelming. The network of State Assistive Technology Act Programs is a good place to start. Your state AT Act program can provide information and support to help you identify and acquire AT that meets your needs.

These programs offer:

- Device demonstration and short-term loan programs that allow you to try out equipment before purchasing
- Reuse programs that provide gently used devices at substantial savings
- Financing options, such as cash loan programs, that can help you get the AT devices you need

In New York State, the state AT Act program is the TRIAD Program: [Click here](#). We at FLIC, through our Loan Closet and Try-It Room, are a local resource for AT.

With more research and awareness around the importance of AT, the future possibilities for living independently in the place of your choosing are almost limitless.

Emergency Preparedness Goal for January:

Understand what puts you at risk from disaster and take steps to lower your risk.

Task One: Plan what to do if you have to Evacuate

Choose two places for your family to meet. One should be right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire. The other should be outside of your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.

Decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there. You may choose to go to a hotel, stay with friends or family in a safe location, or go to a shelter. Hold evacuation drills at home. Practice getting out of the house quickly, and drive your planned evacuation route. The more you practice, the more confident you will be if you really have to evacuate.

Plan ahead for your pets. Due to health concerns, pets are not allowed in Red Cross shelters. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation route in case a designated pet shelter is not available. Contact your local humane society or animal shelter to ask if pet emergency shelters will be opened in a disaster.

Task Two: Take steps now to prevent damage to your home in a disaster

Once you know what disasters could happen in your community, there are things you can do to lower your risk of injury or property damage. Here are some suggestions.

Tornado – Add a tornado safe room to your home, or add extra protection to an existing room to keep your family safe in a tornado. Look for FEMA publication 320 for more information.

Hurricane – Install hurricane shutters. Keep trees around your house trimmed to prevent damage from falling branches. Secure your soffits to make sure that they won't provide a way for wind and water to get into your home. Make sure entryway doors have three hinges and a deadbolt lock.

Wildfire – Use fire-resistant building materials like shingles and siding. Cut back branches and brush within 30 feet of your home. Keep firewood at least 30 feet away. Check into the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise program for more ideas.

Flood – Elevate your home above the base flood level or take steps to floodproof. Elevate your

utilities above the base flood level. Make sure you have adequate flood venting. Use flood-resistant building materials when you build or remodel. Taking steps like these can lower your flood insurance rates.

Earthquake – Secure your furniture, appliances, and water heater to walls and floors. Install safety catches on cabinets and cupboard doors. Make sure your appliances are connected with flexible connections. Consider using a safety film on your windows or installing laminated glass to prevent injuries from broken glass.

Task Three: Learn what disasters can happen in your area and decide what you will do in a disaster

It is important to know what types of disasters can happen where you are. Is your home in a floodplain? Are you in an area that has earthquakes? When are tornadoes most likely to happen? Knowing what disasters could happen can help you know how to be prepared and what to do. Contact your local American Red Cross or emergency management office to learn more about the disasters in your area.

Meet with your family or household members. Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work, and play. Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team. If a family member is in the military, plan how you would respond if they were deployed.

Talking About Disasters

Talking about disasters can be scary, especially with children, or with someone who may have difficulty coping with daily life. Be open and positive. The unknown often causes more anxiety than knowing the facts. Listen to what the individual has to say, learn how they feel and what they may be afraid of. Older people and people with disabilities may worry that asking for help during a disaster will take away their independence. Talk about different options for assistance and make a plan with them.

**Visit the
Website**

Mental Health Mindfulness 101

The Finger Lakes Independence Center presents **Mental Health Mindfulness 101** -A peer self-help mutual support group which uses the basics of mindfulness to assist its members towards bettering their mental health.

Meeting Dates: Jan. 10 & 24,

Feb. 7 & 21,

Mar, 7 & 21.

Time: 3:00 to 4:00 pm

Place: Via Zoom

Guiding Principles

1. This is a self-help and mutual support group.
2. We believe that improving our lives and healing is possible using mindfulness, peer support, and learning coping skills.
3. We are not here to fix each other or give advice, but rather to “Be” with one another with a culture of respect and support.
4. We refrain from universalizing our experience and world view. We speak from the “I” prospective. Differences are expected and welcomed.

Come join us as we support each other as we learn, share, and experience ways to live a more peaceful, happier, and empowered life. We will learn how to incorporate mindfulness tools such as the power of our thoughts and words, self-love, meditation, positivity, and much more.

To register or for more information contact

Steven Karris 631-745-2850/stevenjames6560@gmail.com or

Jeff Boles 607-272-2433/ jeff@fliconline.org

The Registry Referral Program

The Finger Lakes Independence Center administers the Registry Referral Program. This is a free referral service linking individuals seeking independent employment to people who need care in their home. Opportunities include: elder companion, housekeeper, run errands, cook, personal care aide, home care aide, LPN, RN. People looking for help can call and receive names of people willing to provide those services. If you either need assistance or if you would be interested in listing your name as a caregiver, please call FLIC at 272-2433 or email: info@fliconline.org. If you have experience caring for a friend or loved one, please consider sharing your compassion with others. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Need a Public Notary?

Contact Cheryl Baker at FLIC at 607-272-2433 to make an appointment.

Services are FREE!



January Observances



The United Nations General Assembly designated January 27—the anniversary of the liberation of **Auschwitz-Birkenau**—as **International Holocaust Remembrance Day**.

On this annual day of commemoration, the UN urges every member state to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of Nazism and to develop educational programs to help prevent future genocides.

Click below for the link to view the ceremony and to learn more.

[Learn](#)



January is National Blood Donor Month, a time to celebrate the lifesaving impact of blood and platelet donors. It has been celebrated each January for nearly 50 years and coincides with one of the most difficult times to maintain a sufficient blood supply for patients and this year is no exception.

Winter months are typically slow for blood donations. Even during the holidays blood supply levels nationwide were dangerously low. Click the button below to find a location to donate near you.

[Find a Blood Drive Near You](#)



Celebrate soup all month long. Make your favorites. Explore new recipes. Warm up with a hot bowl of soup these chilly January days.



Birth Defects are structural changes that affect one or more parts of the body (e.g. heart, brain, foot). They develop most often during the first three months of pregnancy, when a baby's organs are forming and can cause problems in overall health, how the body develops and functions. About 1 in 33 babies in the U.S. is born with a birth defect each year, according to the CDC.

**Learn
More**

Finger Lakes Independence Center | 215 Fifth Street, Ithaca, NY 14850

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