

Enjoy the latest news from your friends at



Finger Lakes Independence Center
Opening doors to independence

FEBRUARY 2025

FLIC will be closed
on Monday, February 17,
for President's Day

Short Notes:

- ALT Text has been added to all images in this newsletter.
- You can contact FLIC by calling 607-272-2433 or by emailing the general mailbox at info@fliconline.org.

Important Article from Our Executive Director

-- Jan Lynch MSW

CDPAP and FLIC: News Update

Finger Lakes Independent Living Center, better known as FLIC, will serve as a community-based partner in the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP), which is undergoing changes as required by Governor Kathy Hochul along with the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH). FLIC remains committed to the CDPAP program and the individuals who use this important service.

CDPAP, as the statewide home care program is transitioning to a new model with a single fiscal intermediary, their name is Public Partnerships LLC (PPL). The transition is expected to be completed by April 1. **It is important to note that FLIC will continue to be a Fiscal Intermediary (FI) until the April 1 full startup of PPL.** FLIC has been a CDPAP provider since 1996. In the new model, FLIC and 10 other Independent Living Centers will serve as CDPAP Facilitators in partnership with PPL.

Over the coming months, we'll help CDPAP consumers or their designated representatives register with PPL so their home care services will continue without

interruption. We'll also help the personal assistants (aka Aides) transition to employment with PPL. Consumers and personal assistants will be contacted soon with information about the transition. Those with questions can contact FLIC at 607-272-2433 and ask for Mary-Ann, or email us at cdpahelp@fliconline.org

Once the transition is complete on April 1, FLIC will provide ongoing program support and help to CDPAP consumers and their PAs/Aides by continuing as a facilitator for PPL.


CDPAP is a program for Medicaid recipients that provides the opportunity for them to manage their own care and live independently at home with the help of personal assistants/aides. The program allows people with disabilities to choose, hire, train, schedule, supervise and dismiss their personal assistants/aides. FLIC has always supported this service because it gives people who use it the dignity of choice and keeps them out of institutions so they can live in their home communities.

It's Time to Nominate

The NYS Independent Living Council (NYSILC) is accepting nominations for the 2025 Hall of Fame class!

This is your chance to nominate someone who has made significant contributions to New York's disability community.

One change from previous years: the Hall of Fame celebration will be taking place during our NYAIL statewide conference on September 16. Visit the [Hall of Fame Page](#) for more information and the the nomination form!



NYSILC's Sixth NYS
**Disability Rights
Hall of Fame**

Nomination Form
Now Open Until
December 31st

FLIC Response to Trump Comments Following Fatal Crash

The Finger Lakes Independence Center is outraged by comments made by President Trump during his Jan. 30 press briefing following the fatal collision of a passenger plane and military helicopter. Rather than focusing on the 68 lives lost and ways to avoid such tragedies in the future, Trump used the opportunity to disparage the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)'s efforts to hire qualified workers with disabilities and blamed the collision on these workers. These claims are completely unsubstantiated, unacceptable, and ableist.

We will not sit quietly by and watch hard-won Disability, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility efforts get eradicated by this administration.

We at FLIC fight for the rights of our community to participate in every aspect of society – including employment. In 2023, the U.S. Dept of Labor reported that just 22.5% of people with disabilities were employed, compared to 68.5% of non-disabled people. Though this disparity has been steadily decreasing each year, comments such as those made by President Trump undermine this progress.

All oppression is connected, and we must unite as advocates to fight against this harmful

rhetoric. If you are interested in joining us in our fight, please reach out to our Statewide Systems Advocate, Andrea Champlin, by emailing her at andrea@fliconline.org. Nothing about us, without us!

SOME OF FLIC'S *favorite* PEOPLE!



FLIC

It's Our Board of Directors!

The wonderful FLIC board members recently hosted an End-of-the-Year luncheon at our offices, and most were able to attend in person. The board hosted the lunch to thank the FLIC staff for the excellent work they do year-round.

The board members pictured are: (Top row) Thena Lindhorst, Michael Bradley and Ellice Switzer (Bottom row) Bob Meek, Jozef Phillips and Richard Holborow. Missing are Tim Schmidle and Larry Roberts.

The amazing Bob Meek recently retired from the board; Bob was on the board for several years, including time serving as President of the Board. With his departure, FLIC is looking for new board members. Please reach out to Executive Director Jan Lynch at jan@fliconline.org or 607-272-2433 if you are interested in being on the board. We would love to talk!

Trump's Efforts to Freeze Federal Funding Causes Confusion and Concern

The White House Office of Management and Budget issued a memorandum on

January 29, 2025, rescinding an order that was issued two days earlier to halt federal grant, loan and other financial assistance programs with limited exception.

The original order had caused widespread confusion; federal officials, state governments, nonprofits, disability advocates and others struggled to understand what the implications of the directive -- to pause trillions of dollars in government spending -- and how the directive would impact everything from Medicaid to special education, employment and housing assistance for people with disabilities.

Even the White House struggled to establish which programs were included. The original memo specifically exempted Medicare and Social Security, but did not comment on Medicaid. By midday Tuesday, even before the order was set to take effect, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said all of the online portals state governments use to access federal Medicaid payments were down.

The White House had presented the spending freeze as a pause to ensure that programs were in compliance with several executive orders Trump recently signed, including one requiring the government to recognize only two genders — male and female — and another eliminating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in federal government.

The American Association of People with Disabilities, or AAPD, said that even after the original memo was rescinded they “continued to hear from people with disabilities, disability programs, and others facing substantial, disruptive problems with accessing funds from government grants, loans, and programs.”

In addition to Medicaid, the Trump administration said that Individuals with Disabilities Education Act grants would not be affected by the funding freeze, but discretionary grants from the Department of Education could be.

AAPD said that the funding pause could also have affected protection and advocacy agencies, developmental disabilities councils, centers for independent living, parent training and information centers, university centers on developmental disabilities and numerous state and national disability organizations that rely on federal grants. AAPD further pointed out that Americans have “already paid for these services with our tax dollars,” and Congress has already allocated the funding for these programs and services.

Though the original order was rescinded, disability advocates, naturally, remain uneasy.



Historic Win!

NY Makes Dyslexia Testing Accessible To All

We're excited to share a major victory for disability rights in New York!

Governor Hochul has signed a groundbreaking bill requiring health insurance to cover neuropsychological exams for conditions like dyslexia, ADHD, and other learning differences. Previously, screenings could cost families up to \$10,000, making them inaccessible for many.

This achievement is a testament to the tireless advocacy efforts of the Center for

Independence of the Disabled NY across key areas like education, health, housing, transportation, and employment.

First-in-the-nation Affordable Broadband Act guarantees \$15 broadband access statewide

In a significant win for affordable internet access, the US Supreme Court declined to hear a case brought by a coalition of broadband companies opposing New York's Affordable Broadband Act.

The decision, issued in mid-December, effectively upholds the law which mandates that internet service providers offer discounted broadband rates to eligible residents.

Last May, funds ran out for the federal Affordable Connectivity Program, which provided a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households. Depending on the internet speed desired, to qualify for rates of \$15 or \$20, New York residents must participate in one of the following programs: free or reduced-price lunch through the National School Lunch Program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid, the Senior Citizen Rent Increase exemption, a Disability Rent Increase exemption, or an affordability benefit from a utility.

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

Try-It-Room **Spotlight**

We have so many cool items in our Try-It-Room. Do you have a need for clamp-on tub rails? These rails are much more secure than the temporary suction-based grab bars that go on shower walls.

Items in our Try-It-Room can be borrowed for one month with no deposit or cost. For more information on items available in the Try-It-Room, contact Lindsey at lindsey@fliconline.org or 607-272-2433.



FLIC'S Safety and Preparedness Corner

Do1Thing is a non-profit organization that promotes emergency preparedness for individuals and businesses, breaking preparedness down into small easy steps each month. Every month has three low or no-cost options to become better prepared. <https://www.do1thing.com/>

In **February:**

Focus on water. **Have 72 hours (3 days) worth of water stored for your household.**

Whether you get water from a municipal water system, or your home has a private well, your water supply depends on having power to operate the system.

During a power outage you may find yourself without drinkable water. Here's how you can prepare:

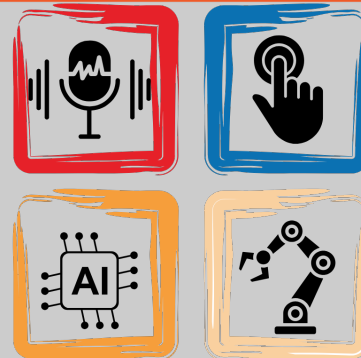
1. Purchase and store a three-day supply of bottled water.
2. Bottle and store your own three-day supply of water.
3. Learn how to provide a safe supply of drinking water for your household in a disaster.

For more information visit: <https://www.do1thing.com/individuals/water/>

HURRY!

On February 6, our NY Connects Specialist Ben Bassett, will be meeting with Cornell Inclusive Innovation, an assistive design tech group at Cornell. The group is looking to design and build an innovative product or tool that would help people with disabilities. Ben is looking for great ideas to bring to the meeting. Do YOU have any awesome ideas? If so, message your idea to ben@fliconline.org.

What's your big idea?



Takeaways from Governor Hochul's 2025 State of the State Address

On January 14th, many of our staff tuned in to view Governor Hochul's 2025 State of the State address. You can watch the recorded event by following **this link**. This important event provided the public with what the Governor has planned for the upcoming budget. This can help prepare advocates for developing their advocacy strategies. Throughout the address, Governor Hochul's focus was on making New York more affordable for its residents. Many advocates will likely focus their budget advocacy on ensuring that funding is not cut for the vital services people with disabilities need to live in their communities to pay for the new affordability measures.

In addition to the event, the Governor has also provided a more detailed 2025 State of the State Book. This book can be viewed by following **this link**. Our Statewide Systems Advocate, Andrea Champlin, broke down some of the items included in the book that will impact the disability community. While we know that most, if not all, policies will impact the disability community, this summary is just covering the section on Supporting New Yorkers with Disabilities. Feel free to reach out to Andrea if you're interested in discussing other sections – she loves nerding out about policy!

- Strengthen the Workers with Disabilities Employment Tax Credit: The tax credit, currently limited at \$2,100, helps businesses and organizations to provide reasonable accommodations to workers with disabilities. Governor Hochul states she will increase the maximum tax credit to \$5,000.
- Support Mobility for People with Physical Disabilities: Governor Hochul has stated

that she will increase Medicaid rates and coverage so that people can get evaluations for new power chairs more easily, and complete preventative and routine maintenance for their current wheelchairs.

- **Create Regional Disability Clinics:** The Governor will give funds to create Regional Disability Clinics across the state that will provide healthcare to people with developmental disabilities. Funds are currently planned to be limited to one-time costs that would make clinics more accessible and provide quality care.
- **Modernize the Institute for Basic Research:** Governor Hochul plans to Invest \$75 million to the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities' Institute for Basic Research, including "customized identification of genetic defects underlying people's disabilities." The Governor also committed funds to changing and updating the former Willowbrook State School into a "Center for Learning."
- **Facilitate Innovative Therapies for Spinal Cord Injury:** Governor Hochul plans to create legislation that will enable the Spinal Cord Injury Research Board to add "Quality of Life" issues to their research endeavors.
- **Create the NYS Interpreter Fellowship Program:** The Governor will develop a six-month New York State Pilot Interpreter Fellowship Program to increase the number of qualified ASL interpreters available.

Are you interested in learning more about the State legislative and budget processes? Want to make your voice heard in Albany? Consider joining the FLIC Volunteer Systems Advocacy Team! Contact Andrea Champlin at andrea@fliconline.org or at (607)272-2433.

The Registry Referral Program

FLIC is pleased to offer the Registry Referral Program, a free referral service linking caregivers to people who need care in their homes. Opportunities include: elder companion, housekeeper, errand runner, cook, personal care aide, home care aide, LPN, RN and more.

If you need assistance or if you would be interested in listing your name as a caregiver, please contact Cheryl Baker at cheryl@fliconline.org or 607-272-2433. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.



Need a Notary Public?

Our services are free.

Contact Cheryl Baker at cheryl@fliconline.org or 607-272-2433 to make an appointment.



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