

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

CT INFOLINE	2-1-1
FAIRFIELD HUMAN SERVICES	203-256-3169
FAIRFIELD SENIOR CENTER	203-256-3166
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	855-626-6632
CONSUMER PROTECTION	800-842-2649
OFFICE OF THE HEALTHCARE ADVOCATE	866-466-4446
MEDICARE	800-633-4227
CENTER FOR MEDICARE ADVOCACY	800-262-4414
CT FAIR HOUSING CENTER	888-247-4401
STATEWIDE LEGAL SERVICES OF CT	800-453-3320

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

CRISTIN MCCARTHY VAHEY

REPRESENTING FAIRFIELD | 133RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol: 1-800-842-8267
www.housedems.ct.gov/McCarthyVahey

Dear Friends,

As a new legislator, it is a privilege to serve as your representative in Hartford and to work hard to address the challenges you face in your day to day lives. Each day I learn more about the many important services we as a state provide our seniors, as well as our veterans and disabled residents. This newsletter provides you with some basic information on how state government can help, including contact information for various agencies. I have also included information about local programs, as the state and town work as partners to provide the services you need.

If you have specific concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Take care,

Cristin McCarthy Vahey



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
**Cristin
McCarthy
Vahey**

FREE CONSUMER LEGAL SERVICES FOR ELDERS

The Consumer Law Project for Elders (a project of Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.) provides free legal assistance to Connecticut residents age 60 or over who have questions about consumer rights, debt or collection problems, receipt of bills for items never purchased, identity theft, bankruptcy, and unfair and undisclosed loan terms. For more information call (800) 296-1467.



IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION

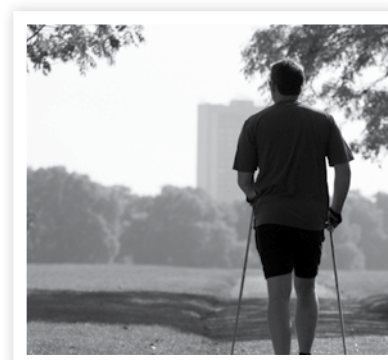
Using strong passwords for credit cards and bank accounts as well as strong computer protection software can help protect against identity theft. When shopping online, use one credit card specifically for online purchases and look for the lock image to ensure you are on a secure site. Never give out personal information like a SSN or bank account number unless it is with a company you know. Review a copy of your credit report at least once each year to watch for signs of identity theft. You can get one free Credit Report every year from each of the three credit bureaus, for a total of 3 reports per year by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com or calling (877) 322-8228.

CT HOME CARE PROGRAM FOR ELDERS (CHCPE)

Many seniors are blessed with family members who can provide needed care at home, rather than having to go to a nursing home. But that can be burdensome and costly. There is help available from the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. For information, brochures, and applications, call the Alternative Care unit at the CT Department of Social Services at (800) 445-5394.

CHOICES PROGRAM

Need help with understanding Medicare and other health insurance options? CHOICES (Connecticut Health insurance assistance, Outreach, Information and referral, Counseling, and Eligibility Screening) is an information source for services available to people age 60 and over, and those with disabilities. CHOICES can also provide referrals to state agencies for particular service needs. You can contact a counselor at (800) 994-9422 for information about your Medicare and health insurance coverage. Information is also available via our own Senior Center (203) 256-3166.



READY TO WORK PROGRAM

Although the economy and employment numbers are improving, there is still more work to do to help people find a job -- including job skill training for people 55 and older. To qualify, you must be unemployed and have an annual family income that is not more than \$14,588/single, \$19,663/family of two, and \$24,738/family of three. Participants are placed in temporary training assignments to gain on-the-job work experience and will work 20 hours a week for minimum wage. For additional information about Ready to Work, please call Associates for Training and Development at (800) 439-3307. Fairfield Public Library offers many outstanding programs for job seekers. Information can be found at <http://fairfieldpubliclibrary.org/classes-and-events/job-and-career-resources/> or by calling (203) 256-3155 or (203) 255-7307.

ASSISTANCE FOR GUARDIANS & GRANDPARENTS

Under current law, the Kinship Fund and the Grandparents & Relatives Respite Fund are available to people appointed guardians by the Probate Court, not just by the Superior Court as under prior law. If you or someone you know is a relative who is an appointed guardian of a child and does not receive foster care payments or subsidized guardianship benefits from the Department of Children and Families, you may apply for grants. Applications are available at the Probate Court in Fairfield (203) 256-3041.