



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski

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September 2022

Dear Neighbor:

Periodically, I like to send out a list of available services and programs, along with helpful tips. I've worked hard to ensure that programming available for seniors in New York has not just been preserved; but expanded, especially over the last two years.

As costs of living continue to impact New Yorkers, I fought for: expanding access to the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP); implementing a gas tax suspension through December; and providing much needed property tax relief. I will continue to work closely with state and local governments on benefits like these for my constituents.

Please review this brochure to find out which programs you may be able to take advantage of, based on eligibility requirements. If you have any questions or need assistance with any of these programs, please call my office at 845.634.9791.

Sincerely,

Ken Zebrowski

Important Programs to Know About



Statewide and locally there are many programs that seniors may be able to take advantage of. Many have differing age and income-eligibility requirements, so be sure to find out if you may be eligible to receive these benefits:

EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage) is a prescription program for income-eligible seniors 65 and older that provides secondary coverage for Medicare Part D-covered drugs purchased after any Part D deductible is met. It also covers many Medicare Part D-excluded drugs, like prescribed vitamins and cold and cough medications. EPIC copayments range from \$3 to \$20 based on the cost of the drug. EPIC also provides premium assistance for Medicare Part D plans to income-eligible seniors. For single individuals, the income limit for the Deductible Plan is \$75,000. For married individuals, the income limit for the Deductible Plan is \$100,000. The current program helps over 270,000 income eligible seniors. For more information on enrolling in and using EPIC, visit health.ny.gov/health_care/epic or call the toll-free EPIC hotline at 800-332-3742 (TTY: 800-290-9138).

EISEP (Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly Program) provides non-medical in-home everyday services to help the elderly, ages 60 and up, who want to live at home but need help with everyday activities, such as dressing, bathing, shopping and cooking. The goal of this program is to improve access to, and increase the availability of, appropriate and non-medical support services for older adults who are not Medicaid eligible. NY Connects can help you find service providers in your community. Visit www.nyconnects.ny.gov for more information.

HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) is a grant program that subsidizes heating bills from November through May. Eligibility is determined by your annual income and household size. Visit www.otda.ny.gov/programs/heap or call your local office for the aging or the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance at 800-342-3009 for more information.

HiICAP (Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program) provides information and counseling assistance to seniors regarding Medicare, health insurance issues, and related benefits, including EPIC. For more information, call 845-364-2118 or visit <https://aging.ny.gov/health-insurance-information-counseling-and-assistance-program-hiicap>

CHORE is a service provided by BRIDGES that provides minor home repairs for those who are over 60 years old and/or disabled. For more information, call (845) 624-1366.

Meals on Wheels provides home delivery service to Rockland residents who are confined to their home and unable to shop or cook independently. Kosher meals may also be provided. For more information, call 845-624-6325 or visit www.mowrockland.com

Tax relief

To provide tax relief for residents age 65 and older, New York has taken action on several fronts. The following programs may help ease your tax burden:

Enhanced STAR. Provides an increased benefit for primary residences of senior citizens with a qualifying income of \$93,200 or less. If you already receive STAR, you will automatically receive the Enhanced STAR benefit when you turn 65. If you haven't signed up yet, all applications must be submitted by March 1st of the year the exemption will begin. For more information, visit <https://www.tax.ny.gov/star/>

Income tax exemption for retirement income. Tax law exempts qualified retirement pension and annuity income up to \$20,000 per person per year from state income taxes. You must be at least 59 1/2 years old to qualify. For more information, visit www.tax.ny.gov/pit/file/information_for_seniors.htm

Homeowner Tax Rebate Credit (HTRC) is a one-year tax rebate for homeowners sent directly by the state, there is no need to apply. To be eligible you must qualify for STAR, had income less than or equal to \$250,000 for the 2022 tax year, and a school tax liability for the 2022-2023 school year that is more than your 2022 STAR benefit. These rebates will continue to be sent out through October 2022.

Senior Citizen Low Income Exemption. Local governments have the option to give homeowners up to 50% off their assessments for incomes up to \$37,400. All towns in the 96th Assembly District currently offer this exemption.

Breaking news: A bill I co-sponsored this year will allow this income limit to increase up to \$50,000. Municipalities will have to pass a local resolution increasing the limit for this to go into effect. Look out for information from your assessor.

Beware of Scams



Scam calls continue to impact New Yorkers, and anyone can be a victim. These solicitations can include fraudulent charities, bogus vacation prizes, shady investment opportunities, and more. **Follow these tips to avoid being scammed:**

- Never send money or give out personal information like credit card or checking account numbers to anyone through text or email.
- Don't answer calls from unidentified phone numbers.
- Be aware that no government office will ever call you to ask for money.
- Don't be intimidated by the caller, and don't be afraid to hang up the telephone.
- Don't click on email and text links or open attachments if the source of the text or email is unknown.

You can report to the Federal Trade Commission by calling 877-382-4357 or visiting www.ftc.gov

If you aren't on the Do Not Call Registry, be sure to sign up by calling toll-free 888-382-1222 or visiting www.donotcall.gov

Programs for Veterans



New York is home to nearly 1 million veterans, and I'm proud to have been a strong ally to ensure they receive the resources and services they deserve. Below are just a few of the programs available to veteran New Yorkers and their spouses, and my office is always available to help with any additional questions.

Property Tax Exemptions: Municipalities have the option to grant a property tax exemption of 15 percent of assessed value for veterans who served during wartime and an additional 10 percent exemption for those who served in a combat zone. Veterans should contact their local assessor's office for information and an application.

Aid and Attendance and Housebound Benefit: Veterans and survivors who are eligible for a VA pension and require the aid and attendance of another person may be eligible for additional monetary payment. Visit www.va.gov/pension/aid-attendance-housebound for more information.

Driver's License Designation: Eligible New Yorkers may have their status as a veteran designated on their driver's license at no additional charge. This helps make it easier to access veterans programs, benefits, and discounts. You can apply by mail or in person at a motor vehicle office.

67 North Main Street, 2nd Floor, New City, NY 10956

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Assembly District 96 • September 2022

Important Contacts



All Emergencies:	911
Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski:	845-634-9791
Rockland County Office for the Aging:	www.rocklandgov.com/departments/aging • 845-364-2110
New York State Office for the Aging:	www.aging.ny.gov • 800-342-9871
Social Security:	www.ssa.gov • 800-772-1213
Medicare:	www.medicare.gov • 800-633-4227
New York Connects:	www.nyconnects.ny.gov • 800-342-9871

Veterans

Veterans Service Agency (Rockland County):	www.rockvets.com • 845-638-5244
Division of Veterans' Affairs (New York State):	www.veterans.ny.gov • 888-838-7697
Dept. of Veterans' Affairs (United States):	www.va.gov • 800-827-1000