ENDEPENDENCE CENTER NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024

# Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams

Lately, fraud and scams are popping up more and more, and can be devastating. Scams are constantly changing and knowing the common types of frauds and scams can help protect you.

ECI was notified by the Administration of Community Living (ACL) of increases in scam calls from imposters claiming to be from Eldercare Locator, Social Security, and even Medicaid.

Remember:

* **The government will never contact you and ask for a Social Security number.**
* **The government will never ask for payment by gift card or wire transfer.**
* **Social Security numbers cannot be suspended.**

Here are some general tips that ACL provided that can help everyone protect themselves:

* If you are ever suspicious about a call, **hang up immediately**. Find the organization’s contact information on your own (don’t use caller ID), and call or email them directly to discuss the situation.
* Never give out your Social Security number, banking information, or Medicare number to anyone who contacts you through unsolicited calls, texts, or emails.
* Never pay someone you do not know well via gift card or wire transfer.
* Never click on an email link or attachment, unless you fully trust the sender.
* Sign up for the National Do Not Call Registry at <https://www.donotcall.gov>.

The goal of scams is to commit fraud and steal your money and potentially your identity. The common payment methods used by scammers are wire transfers, gift cards, and person-to-person payment services and mobile payment apps, such as Cash app, Venmo, or Paypal.

The Consumer Financial Protect Bureau has detailed information about understanding the most common types of scams and how to take action if you are a victim of a scam. Visit their website at <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/fraud/>.

# Housing Workshop to be Held at ECI

Are you receiving Medicaid Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver services or on a wait list for DD Waiver services and interested in housing opportunities? The Southside Housing & Supportive Services Team invites individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members to an information session to learn about independent housing resources. The session will include a housing panel of individuals that have moved from various settings into their own home in the community. Did you know over 2,100 people with developmental disabilities are living in their own home using natural supports and/or supports provided through the Medicaid DD Waiver? You can too! Please join us at the session to find out how to make this a reality for you or someone you know. It will be a hybrid session with in-person availability and virtual access via Microsoft Teams. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED TO ATTEND.** To register, email [mrodgers@endependence.org](mailto:mrodgers@endependence.org) by January 8.

**JANUARY 2024**

Endependence Center, Inc. Events

Held at ECI, 6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd, Norfolk

**4th Advocacy Group Meeting 2:00pm – 3:30pm**

**THU** The Advocacy Group is focused on access at Norfolk recreation centers. Surveys and site visits have been conducted at several recreation centers. The Advocacy Group will meet to discuss results of these surveys and to plan their next steps.

**10TH ECI Board of Directors Meeting 1:00pm – 3:00pm**

**WED** ECI Board meetings are open to the public.

**11TH Housing Information Session 3:00pm – 4:30pm**

**THU**  Focus is housing for people with developmental disabilities. See page 1 for more details.

**17TH Independent Living Skills Training: Respiratory Health 2:00pm – 3:30pm**

**WED** ECI will be bring awareness to “Respiratory Health” in our January ILS training. Come and learn more about COVID-19 and join in a hand washing demonstration.

**20TH Youth Independent Living Skills Training 1:30pm – 3:00pm**

**SAT** How to Handle Emotions in Stressful Situations

**24TH Independent Living Day at the General Assembly**

**WED** In January, advocates from the Endependence Center will join with other advocates from across Virginia to celebrate Independent Living Day. This is an opportunity to meet with Virginia General Assembly legislative staff to share information about issues important to people with disabilities. If you attended independent living skills training or the Advocacy Group meetings in 2023, talk with your Independent Living Coordinator about possibly attending Independent Living Day.

**31st Independent Living Skills Training: What's Bugging You? 2:00pm – 3:30pm**

**WED** This month, we'll learn what is needed to create a podcast, and the steps to create one.

Community Events & News

*Transportation tickets are NOT provided to attend community events.*

**5TH Silent Dinner 5:00pm – 8:00pm**

**FRI Lynnhaven Mall (701 Lynnhaven Parkway, Virginia Beach)**

Southside Silent Dinner is a silent, social, family-friendly event for the deaf community, CODA (Child of Deaf Adult), ASL beginners and students, and others interested in ASL.

**16th Participant-Led Event 12noon – 2:30pm**

**FRI Pinboys at The Beach (1577 Laskin Road, Suite 100, Virginia Beach)**

This event is organized by participants.

**20th TOUCH Group 11:00am – 1:00pm @ ECI**

**SAT** Come and join the TOUCH Group for networking and the opportunity to learn from our peers. Our disability is important to us, and we want to make sure everyone has enough support and understanding of living with their disability.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SUNDAY** | **MONDAY** | **TUESDAY** | **WEDNESDAY** | **THURSDAY** | **FRIDAY** | **SATURDAY** |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** |
|  | ***ECI CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF NEW YEAR'S DAY*** |  |  | **Advocacy Group Meeting**  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm – 3:30pm** | **Silent Dinner\***  **@ Lynnhaven Mall**  **5:00pm – 8:00pm** |  |
| **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **13** |
|  |  |  | **ECI Board Meeting**  **@ ECI**  **1:00m – 3:00pm** | **DD Housing Opportunities**  **@ ECI**  **3:00pm – 4:30pm** |  |  |
| **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** | **20** |
|  | ***ECI CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY*** | **Participant-Led Event\***  **@ Pinboys at the Beach, Virginia Beach**  **12noon – 2:30pm** | **ILS Training: Respiratory Health**  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm – 3:30pm** |  |  | **Youth ILS Training**  **How to Handle Emotions in Stressful Situations**  **@ ECI**  **1:30pm – 3:00pm**  **TOUCH Group**  **@ ECI**  **11:00am – 1:0pm** |
| **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | **26** | **27** |
|  |  |  | **IL Living Day**  **@ General Assembly** | ***ECI CLOSED***  ***12noon – 2:00PM***  ***FOR STAFF MEETING*** |  |  |
| **28** | **29** | **30** | **31** | ***\*These events are not organized by ECI. Bus and paratransit tickets will not be provided by ECI.*** |  |  |
|  |  |  | **ILS Series**  **"What's Bugging You?"**  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm – 3:30pm** |  |  |  |

January 2024

ECI LogoDisability Advocacy & Services

Endependence Center, Inc.

6300 East Virginia Beach Blvd  
Norfolk, VA 23502

***Phone:***

(757) 461-8007 Voice

(757) 461-7527 TDD

***E-Mail:***

[ecinorf@endependence.org](mailto:ecinorf@endependence.org)

***Website:***

[www.endependence.org](http://www.endependence.org)

***Newsletter alternate format:***

contact (757) 351-1598 or [ehoapili@endependence.org](mailto:ehoapili@endependence.org)

**Schedule Changes**

Check the ECI website: [www.endependence.org](http://www.endependence.org)

or call

(757) 461-8007, option 4

**ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Accommodations**

To request accommodations

for ECI activities:

(757) 351-1586 voice

(757) 461-7527 TDD

[tmanno@endependence.org](mailto:tmanno@endependence.org)

**Non-Profit Org.**

**U.S. Postage**

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**Norfolk, VA**

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