ENDEPENDENCE CENTER NEWSLETTER APRIL 2025

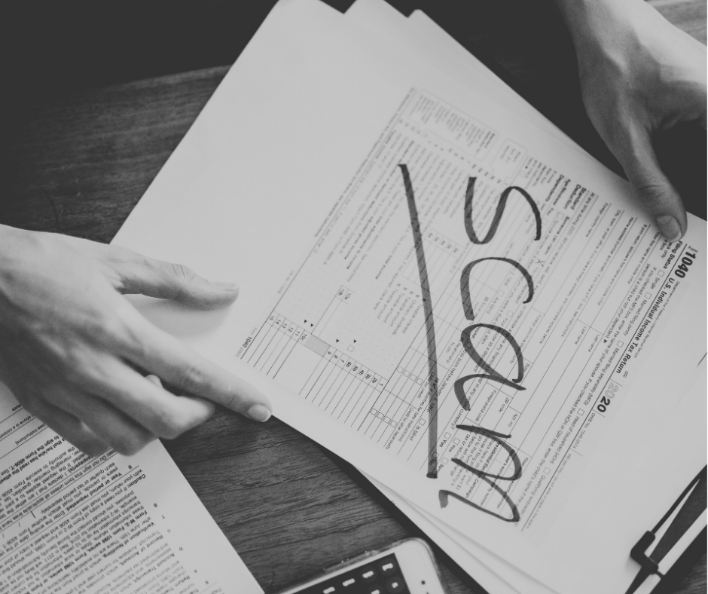
**Social Security Administration to Reinstate Overpayment Recovery Rate**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced that starting on March 27, 2025, it will increase the default overpayment withholding rate for Social Security beneficiaries to 100 percent of a person’s monthly benefit. This is a major change from the previous withholding rate for SSDI/CDB beneficiaries of 10% of the overpayment amount.

This will impact only those beneficiaries who have an overpayment of benefits after March 27th, it will not impact those with prior overpayments or those receiving SSI as those will remain at 10% withholding. For further information you can read the press release at [www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases](http://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases) or call Linda Johnson at 757-351-1577.

**Protect Yourself from Medicare Fraud and Scams**

*From Medicare.gov*: Follow these 3 tips to protect yourself from Medicare fraud and scams.

**1. If you get a call, text or email asking for your Medicare Number, don't respond.** Don't give your Medicare card or Medicare Number to anyone except your doctor or people you know should have it.

**2. Check your Medicare Summary Notices (MSNs) or claims statements carefully**. If you see a charge for a service you didn't get or a product you didn't order, it may be fraud. **If you suspect fraud, report it at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).**

**3. Guard your Medicare card** like it's a credit card.

**Waiting For a Home: The Journey for Accessible Housing**

******When Khalil Burgess entered a nursing facility nearly seven years ago, he never expected to stay long. Each year, the facility staff asked if he wanted to return to the community and speak with someone about transitioning. His answer was always yes, but no one ever followed up.

Determined to regain his independence, Khalil took matters into his own hands. After asking the facility’s social worker about housing, he was directed to the Endependence Center. With the help of an ECI Independent Living Coordinator, he immediately began submitting applications for subsidized housing, the only option within his budget.

Khalil uses a motorized wheelchair and needs an accessible home in Norfolk. He continues to work with ECI, taking the next steps on his journey to accessible housing: organizing personal documentation for housing applications; developing a budget to manage independent living expenses; and exploring support services.

Due to long waitlists for affordable housing, Khalil is also advocating for change. He wants to participate in local housing planning and share his story, hoping his experience will inspire policy improvements.

Khalil’s situation is not unique; many others have reported similar disconnects between nursing facilities and local contact agencies. Thanks to advocacy efforts by ECI and other Virginia Centers for Independent Living (CILs), the Department of Medical Assistance Services is now developing a new process to improve these connections.

Khalil’s perseverance is a testament to the power of self-advocacy and the impact of organizations like ECI in helping individuals regain their independence.

**Join ECI’s Consumer Advisory Committee!**

ECI is looking for participants to serve on our **Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC)**! This committee plays a vital role in ensuring that participants have a voice in the services we provide. It’s a chance to **share feedback, offer ideas, and help shape the direction of ECI.**

*Continued on next page.*

The new term will officially begin in **October 2025**, but we’re starting the search now. We need **at least six new members** since several of our current members have completed their terms. **Any active ECI participant is eligible to join**, and if you’ve served before, you’re welcome to serve again!

If you’re interested in serving on the CAC, please contact your coordinator! Once they confirm your interest, they will forward your name for consideration.

**Virginia Sun Wheelers Headed to 2025 National Tournament**

A group of men in wheelchairs posing for a photo

AI-generated content may be incorrect.The Virginia Sun Wheelers (local wheelchair basketball team) has been invited to compete in the 2025 Wheelchair Basketball National Tournament. Held over the first two weekends in April, the Championships will be at the Henrico Sports & Event Center in Henrico, Virginia. More information about the tournament will be posted on the ECI website and Facebook.

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*Pictured above: Team photo of the Sun Wheelers Wheelchair Basketball Team. The photo is of eight players and one coach, all wearing basketball jerseys and using wheelchairs.*

Endependence Center, Inc. Events

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

**2nd Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) 2:00pm - 3:30pm**

**WED** This month's agenda is a discussion of ILS Trainings for the last six months, and to develop three new ILS trainings for 2025.

**8th Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?"**

**TUE 3:00pm - 4:30pm *(note, there is no virtual option for this ILS)***

Please listen to the recordings done in March, and help us plan the layout for the podcast.

**16th Independent Living Skills Training 2:00pm - 3:30pm**

**WED** This month, there will be a presentation on federal and state Fair Housing laws, to celebrate Fair Housing Month. We will cover the groups who are protected from housing discrimination, the additional protections for people with disabilities, and how to file a complaint.  Please bring your questions. To register to attend this ILS via Zoom, visit <https://endependence.org/zoom>.

**22nd Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?"**

**TUE 3:00pm - 4:30pm *(note, there is no virtual option for this ILS)***

Come meet in the media room to edit and put the podcast together.

**26th Youth Independent Living Skills Training 1:30pm – 3:00pm**

**SAT** *"I want to earn and save money - how do I do that?"* Let's find out some ways you can earn and save money for the things you want.

**29th Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?"**

**TUE 3:00pm - 4:30pm *(note, there is no virtual option for this ILS)***

Come and help us finalize the podcast in the media room where we edit and compile the recordings. It is a hands-on experience for editing the recordings.

**30th Group Peer Mentoring 2:00pm - 3:30pm**

**WED** The monthly Group Peer Mentoring Discussion is an opportunity for participants to share experiences, provide information, and support one another to accomplish their goals.

Community Events & News

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

**4th  Silent Dinner 5:30pm – 8:00pm**

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

All are welcome! Come meet the Deaf Community, ASL-English interpreters, ASL students, CODA (Child of Deaf Adult), signers, and others interested in ASL.

**7th  PEATC Community Office Hours 10:00am – 1:00pm**

**MON Endependence Center (6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk)**

This is an opportunity for families to visit Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC) staff in-person. For questions, call or text PEATC's Region 2 Family Support Specialist at (757) 271-6613 or visit <https://peatc.org>.

**26th TOUCH Group 11:00am – 1:00pm**

**SAT Endependence Center (6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk)**

Come and join us for a discussion on how resources can help assist us with navigating life. It is important to know who and what your resources are in the community, so come share your thoughts and ideas. For questions, contact Montrell Rodgers at 757-238-1293 or [VATOUCH.22@gmail.com](mailto:VATOUCH.22@gmail.com).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SUNDAY** | **MONDAY** | **TUESDAY** | **WEDNESDAY** | **THURSDAY** | **FRIDAY** | ***The words "Fair Housing" below roof outlines*SATURDAY** |
|  |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
|  |  |  | **Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC)**  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm - 3:30pm** |  | **Silent Dinner\***  **@ Lynnhaven Mall**  **5:30pm – 8:00pm** |  |
| **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** |
|  | **PEATC Community Office Hours\***  **@ ECI**  **10:00am – 1:00pm** | **ILS Training on Podcasts**  **@ ECI**  **3:00pm – 4:30pm** |  |  |  | **ASL Hangout\***  **@ Voodoo Brewing Co.**  **6:00pm – 9:00pm** |
| **13** | **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** |
|  |  | ***A grey alarm clock with "TAX DAY" written on the clock face.*** | **ILS Training\*\***  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm - 3:30pm** |  |  |  |
| **20** | **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | **26** |
|  |  | **ILS Training on Podcasts**  **@ ECI**  **3:00pm – 4:30pm** |  |  |  | **TOUCH Group\***  **@ ECI**  **11:00am – 1:00pm**  **Youth ILS Training**  **@ ECI**  **1:30pm – 3:00pm** |
| **27** | **28** | **29** | **30** |  |  |  |
|  |  | **ILS Training on Podcasts**  **@ ECI**  **3:00pm – 4:30pm** | **Group Peer Mentoring**  **@ ECI**  **2:00pm - 3:30pm** | ***\*This event is not organized by ECI and bus and paratransit tickets will not be provided.***  ***\*\*This event has a virtual option for attendance. Visit*** [***endependence.org/zoom***](https://endependence.org/zoom/) ***to register*** |  |  |

APRIL 2025

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)

**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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