

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 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

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.



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.

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Endeppendence Center, Inc. Events Held at ECI, 6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd, Norfolk

- 2nd WED** **Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) 2:00pm - 3:30pm**
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 TUE** **Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?" 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 WED** **Independent Living Skills Training 2:00pm - 3:30pm**
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://endeppendence.org/zoom>.
- 22nd TUE** **Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?" 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 SAT** **Youth Independent Living Skills Training 1:30pm - 3:00pm**
"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 TUE** **Independent Living Skills Training on Podcasts: "What's Bugging You?" 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 WED** **Group Peer Mentoring 2:00pm - 3:30pm**
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 FRI** **Silent Dinner 5:30pm - 8:00pm**
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 MON** **PEATC Community Office Hours 10:00am - 1:00pm**
Endeppendence 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 SAT** **TOUCH Group 11:00am - 1:00pm**
Endeppendence 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.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) @ ECI 2:00pm - 3:30pm	3	4 Silent Dinner* @ Lynnhaven Mall 5:30pm - 8:00pm	5
6	7 PEATC Community Office Hours* @ ECI 10:00am - 1:00pm	8 ILS Training on Podcasts @ ECI 3:00pm - 4:30pm	9	10	11	12 ASL Hangout* @ Voodoo Brewing Co. 6:00pm - 9:00pm
13	14	15  TAX DAY	16 ILS Training** @ ECI 2:00pm - 3:30pm	17	18	19
20	21	22 ILS Training on Podcasts @ ECI 3:00pm - 4:30pm	23	24	25	26 TOUCH Group* @ ECI 11:00am - 1:00pm Youth ILS Training @ ECI 1:30pm - 3:00pm
	28	29 ILS Training on Podcasts @ ECI 3:00pm - 4:30pm	30 Group Peer Mentoring @ ECI 2:00pm - 3:30pm	<p><i>*This event is not organized by ECI and bus and paratransit tickets will not be provided.</i></p> <p><i>**This event has a virtual option for attendance. Visit endependence.org/zoom to register</i></p>		



Disability Advocacy & Services

Endeppendence Center, Inc.
6300 East Virginia Beach Blvd
Norfolk, VA 23502

Phone:

(757) 461-8007 Voice
(757) 461-7527 TDD

E-Mail:

ecinorf@endependence.org

Website:

www.endependence.org

Newsletter alternate format:

contact (757) 351-1598 or
ehoapili@endependence.org

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Schedule Changes

Check the ECI website:
www.endependence.org

Accommodations

To request accommodations
for ECI activities:
(757) 351-1586 voice
(757) 461-7527 TDD
tmano@endependence.org

Social Media

Facebook: Endeppendence
Center, Inc.-Norfolk, Virginia