

November 10, 2021



Empowering  
Independence

CENTER FOR LIVING & WORKING, INC.

WHAT'S UP?



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

## COVID-19 Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions

I'M VACCINATED FOR COVID-19, CAN I STILL GET COVID-19?

**YES** — if you're fully vaccinated, you can still get COVID-19!

- Vaccines help prevent COVID-19, but **not 100%**.
- When a fully vaccinated person gets COVID-19, it is called a "breakthrough infection".
- Most people who get COVID-19 are NOT vaccinated.

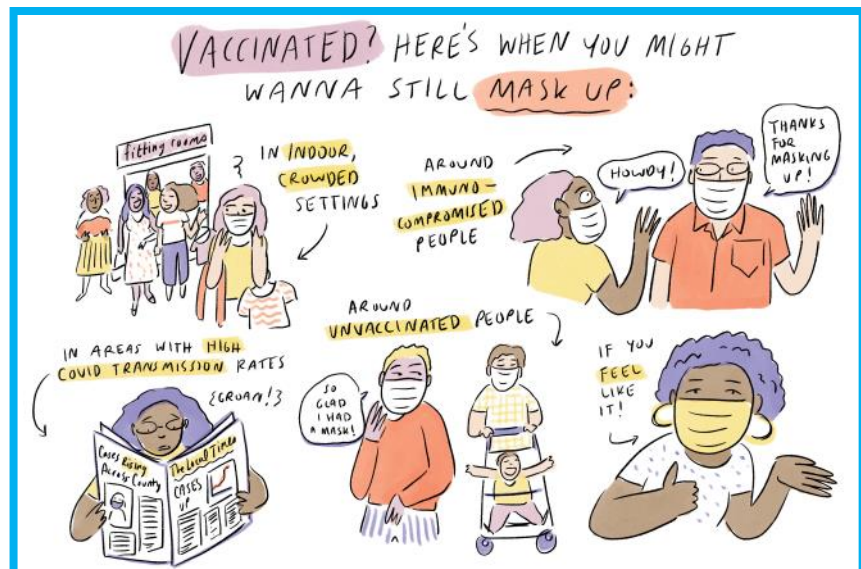


I'M FULLY VACCINATED FOR COVID-19, DO I NEED TO WEAR A MASK?

**EVERYONE** (fully vaccinated or not) should wear a mask when:

- In a high risk city/town (look up a city/town [here](#))
- In public indoor places
- You can't keep 6 feet apart (from people you don't live with)

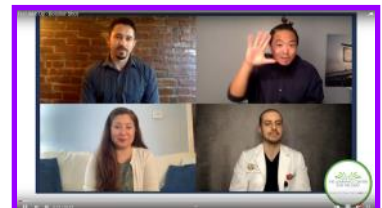
The best protection for **everyone** is to get a COVID-19 vaccine.



### COVID-19 Booster Shot

New VLOG from TLC VAX Up!

Watch [here](#).



## Introducing our New Deaf Skills Trainer

Hi, my name is Rosemary Moreira and I am a full-time DHILS Deaf Skills Trainer at CLW.

I moved to the U.S. from Brazil 21 years ago. I am hard of hearing. My family is Deaf and lives in Brazil, other than my older Deaf sister, who lives in Spain.

I know 6 spoken languages and 3 sign languages: LIBRAS (Brazilian Sign Language), ASL and LSE (sign language of Spain). I also write and read Portuguese, English and Spanish.

I have worked with children and adults with disabilities to empower them to live and work independently.

*I look forward to working with the DHILS team!*



## Overcoming the Stigma of Hearing Loss: Technology and You



Learn about the importance of health care for hearing — and how people with hearing loss can be positively impacted by technology.



Read about it here:

<https://captioncall.com/hearing-health/overcoming-the-stigma-of-hearing-loss-technology-and-you#msdyntrid=S52RFHEuOW588sUYvhx-xwNTSDTaoZRLX32KOxY-Gyw>

*NOTE: This is Part 3 in a series. Click Part 1 and Part 2 to see the first parts.*

## Pathways to Successful Employment

Watch the video here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbVDS\\_AsrHQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbVDS_AsrHQ)

Read more here:

<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/news/disability-employment>



### MISSED A *WHAT'S UP* NEWSLETTER?

***Past issues of newsletters are on our website!***

VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CENTERLW.ORG/SERVICES/DEAF-HARD-OF-HEARING/](https://www.centerlw.org/services/deaf-hard-of-hearing/)

## Over-the-Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids

The FDA suggested new rules for over-the-counter hearing aids. The idea is that people with a **mild-to-moderate loss** will be able to buy a low-cost hearing aid that safely amplifies sound with simple programming. If approved, the rule would allow some hearing aids to be sold directly to consumers in stores or online *without a medical exam or a fitting by an audiologist*.



**Hearing Loss Association of America website:** [https://www.hearingloss.org/fda-releases-proposed-rules-otc-hearing-aids/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=getresponse&utm\\_content=It+was+a+banner+news+week+for+people+with+hearing+loss%21&utm\\_campaign=Hearing+Loss+Association+of+America](https://www.hearingloss.org/fda-releases-proposed-rules-otc-hearing-aids/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=getresponse&utm_content=It+was+a+banner+news+week+for+people+with+hearing+loss%21&utm_campaign=Hearing+Loss+Association+of+America)

**FDA website:** <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-issues-landmark-proposal-improve-access-hearing-aid-technology-millions-americans>



## New Captioned Phone App: *Olelo*

Easy-to-use app to help people with hearing loss use the phone.

Learn more here: <https://www.olelophone.com/>



## DMH Job Opening: *Language Access Coordinator*

This position will be responsible for coordination of interpreter and translation services statewide. Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services will be the focus, but the hope is that spoken language interpreter needs will be covered also.

*Please note that one of the MINIMUM ENTRY position requirements is the ability to sign.*

<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=2100099D>

## DeafHope - *Deanne Bray's Rude Awakening*

**LAVENDER REVOLUTION:** social media movement to end violence against women. Watch video here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2\\_UclJCbDao&t=79s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_UclJCbDao&t=79s)

Are you or someone you know in a DV situation and in need of help?

- Contact ODSC: <https://www.odscunity.org>
- More info at: <http://www.deaf-hope.org>



# Heat/Fuel Assistance Resources



Due to the pandemic and high natural gas prices worldwide, electricity and gas supply prices are set to be very high this winter. New and expanded assistance programs are available to help customers pay bills or manage the increase.



## YOUR UTILITY COMPANY CAN HELP

If you are behind on your utility bills, you should call your utility company immediately and ask about their payment plans. Utilities are offering several customer assistance programs, including flexible payment plans (regardless of income) and balance forgiveness plans for those eligible. You will be protected from shutoff if you make payments as scheduled under the plan.

**BERKSHIRE GAS**  
(800) 292-5012

**EVERSOURCE**  
(866) 861-6225 (East)  
(877) 963-2632 (West)

**LIBERTY**  
(800) 544-4944

**NATIONAL GRID**  
(800) 322-3223

**UNITIL**  
(888) 301-7700

## INCOME-ELIGIBLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Don't wait to apply for income-eligible assistance programs. First, contact your utility to apply for an income-eligible rate which provides a discount on your whole bill. Second, you may qualify for the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP eligibility is evaluated based on your gross household income for the past 4 weeks. Use the contact info below to find your local community action agency where you can apply for LIHEAP.

→ [masscap.org/heatinghelpma](https://masscap.org/heatinghelpma) • Cold Relief Heatline: (800) 632-8175 • [mass.gov/hed/fuel](https://mass.gov/hed/fuel)

## HELP FOR RENTERS

Renters struggling to afford rent and utility costs may qualify for Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). Renters experiencing financial hardship because of COVID-19 should ask if they are eligible through one of six regional housing agencies.

→ [mass.gov/CovidHousingHelp](https://mass.gov/CovidHousingHelp)

## OTHER ASSISTANCE

If you don't qualify for income-based assistance, there may also be funds available to assist you. If your household income is between 60 to 80 percent of the state median income, you may be able to receive help from the Good Neighbor Energy Fund.

→ [magoodneighbor.org/assistance](https://magoodneighbor.org/assistance)

## COMPETITIVE ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS

A study by the AG's Office found that most electric supplier customers lose money in the long run. Beware of deceptive marketing promising savings as compared to the utility's high winter electric prices. If you have a supplier, check if your rate is still competitive with your utility's. Contact the AG's Office with questions.

## SHUTOFF MORATORIUM

From November 15 to March 15, there is a moratorium in place that prevents shutting off your gas or electric if you use that to heat your home. But know that you will still owe payment for your bills. To avoid falling into debt, take advantage of fuel assistance programs or enroll in a budget-installment plan.

## Learn more about LIHEAP

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap>

## Don't Qualify for Income-Based Assistance?

You might be able to get help from the *Good Neighbor Energy Fund*.

[www.magoodneighbor.org/assistance](https://www.magoodneighbor.org/assistance)





✔ [findyourfunds.org](https://findyourfunds.org)     **Sign Up By November 15!**

## You could get thousands of dollars in federal money!

Get **\$250-\$300 per child per month** under the 2021 Child Tax Credit *and* any missed stimulus payments for you and your children/dependents - **\$600-\$3200 per person!**



**You can have low OR no income to get this money.**

This money does not count for SNAP, TAFDC, MassHealth, SSI, public housing or most other benefits.



**You should sign up if you:**

- Did not get monthly money from the 2021 Advance Child Tax Credit for any of your children or any stimulus payments for you and/or your dependents,
- Have no income or low income, AND
- Have not filed a 2020 tax return or used the IRS online Non-Filer or GetCTC.org tools this year.

## How do I sign up?

Sign up by November 15.  
After November 15, you need to wait until the IRS reopens for applications in early 2022.

Learn more at [findyourfunds.org](https://findyourfunds.org)

## Child Tax Credit:

***Sign Up by November 15, 2021***

Get up to **\$1800 per child** with the **2021 Child Tax Credit** *and* any missed stimulus payments for you and your children/dependents.

Apply and see *Frequently Asked Questions* here: [www.findyourfunds.org](https://www.findyourfunds.org)

Check eligibility here: <https://youtu.be/KMe3q9N5UHY>


See more information at:

<https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/advance-child-tax-credit-payments-in-2021>

Download a guide [here](#).

**How to Use:**

**The IRS's  
Child Tax Credit  
Non-filer Sign-up  
Tool**



# COVID-19 Resources/Data

*We will add more sites as needed.*

Vaccine Information	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine">https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine</a>
Vaccine Appointments	<a href="https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/">https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/</a>
COVID-19 Testing	<a href="http://www.mass.gov/covid-19-testing">www.mass.gov/covid-19-testing</a>
US COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by State	<a href="https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days">https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days</a>
MA Travel Order	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order">https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order</a>
MA Response Reporting	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting">https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting</a>
Governor's Press Office	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/orgs/governors-press-office">https://www.mass.gov/orgs/governors-press-office</a>

**NOTE:** Contact your Skills Trainer with questions. See *SE Resources* page for more information.

## Questions about this Newsletter?

Need a website address from your printed newsletter? Contact your Skills Trainer!

Joan Philip	DHILS Director	508-762-1165 (VP)
Denise Paro	Administrative Assistant	508-556-1600 (VP)
Ellen Perkins	DHILS Asst. Manager/Hard of Hearing Skills Trainer	508-502-7576 (Voice); 508-762-1354 (VP)
Catherine Brown	Deaf Skills Trainer (Part-time)	508-762-1021 (VP)
Rosemary Moreira	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	508-762-1166 (VP)
Kim White	Staff Interpreter	508-755-1042 (Voice); 508-283-1036 (VP)
VACANT	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	

## Contact Us!

Center for Living & Working, Inc.

*Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services Department*

Videophone: 508-762-1164

Voice/TTY: 508-755-1003

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



*Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services*



CLW: <https://www.facebook.com/CenterForLivingAndWorking>

DHILS Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/469192334303776>



CLW DHILS  
*Invites you to join us for*

## 2021 DHILS Consumer ZOOM Chats

# 1:00 - 2:00 PM

~~Monday, October 18, 2021~~

~~RSVP BY: October 14~~

**Monday, November 15, 2021**

**RSVP BY: November 11**

**Monday, December 20, 2021**

**RSVP BY: December 16**



**ZOOM CHAT ASL VLOG:**

<https://youtu.be/OBdXcnYlhBo>

**RSVP to get the Zoom link!**

**Zoom links emailed  
Monday mornings.**



**RSVP HERE:** <https://forms.gle/zAcBqdArKfxiJVvr9>

*Questions?* Contact Denise Paro  
508-762-1164 (VP) Email: [dparo@centerlw.org](mailto:dparo@centerlw.org)

**Want a Zoom Guide for a Computer/  
Cell Phone/iPad?**

**Learn how to:**

- ♦ Download Zoom
- ♦ Join/Leave a meeting
- ♦ Gallery View vs. Speaker View
- ♦ Pin a screen



Contact Denise Paro  
508-762-1164 (VP)  
Email: [dparo@centerlw.org](mailto:dparo@centerlw.org)