

November 10, 2022



*Empowering
Independence*

CENTER FOR LIVING & WORKING, INC. **WHAT'S UP?**



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

CLW Is Moving Soon!

CLW is still packing and preparing to move soon to our new office at **18 Chestnut Street**. We hope to be settled in our new office by the end of the year.

We're still here for you!

During the move, we will still meet with you in your home, at libraries, and via VP and Zoom meetings. Contact your staff directly or call 508-762-1164 (VP).

November & December *What's Up?* Newsletter

This newsletter is for November and December. Our next regular newsletter will be sent in January 2023.

Like us on *Facebook* to see the latest news
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/469192334303776/>)!



Contact Information

When we move, only our mailing address will change. Our email addresses and VP/phone numbers will *stay the same*.



www.centerlw.org

WE ARE MOVING!

18 Chestnut St,
5th Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

VOICE: 508-798-0350
TTY: 508-755-1003
VIDEOPHONE: 508-762-1164

 Center for Living & Working

**SAME NUMBER
SAME WEBSITE
NEW ADDRESS!**



DHILS Staff in front of the Denholm Building



CLW's new office:
18 Chestnut St., 5th Floor
Photo credit: Worcester Telegram

MCDHH Updates



Terry Malcom Retires

Looking Back on a Meaningful Career

A video excerpt from the Governor's Citation presentation to MCDHH staff Terry Malcolm at her retirement after 22 years of service.

Facebook link: <https://fb.watch/grQ-3ShV8b/>

Link to transcript: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1c7EofMzW78pbKewGLletQk1A8iodxVT67WfDTyRUZN8/edit?usp=sharing>



Diana L'Heureux Batch's Retirement



Diana has been a long term employee of MCDHH and has worked within the court and legal profession tirelessly for decades. She has contributed to legal trainings and mentorship and has been a valued member of our staff and in state service for 28 years.

Diana said, "As a person raised by Deaf parents, working for MCDHH felt like a natural process for me. Interpreting 28 years as a staff of MCDHH has given me the tools to be successful in providing professional quality interpreting services for the community in which we serve. Communicating and being around Deaf and Hard of hearing people was like home to me."

MCDHH Job Announcement — *Executive Assistant to the Commissioner*

MCDHH is now accepting applications for **#22000C6J- Executive Assistant to the Commissioner**, the complete job posting is now live on *MassCareers* [here](#). This job posting will remain active for 30 days; and first consideration will be given to those applicants that apply within the first 14 days.

The *Executive Assistant to the Commissioner* will support the Office of the Commissioner by coordinating and overseeing the day-to-day activities. The Executive Assistant position is an opportunity to work with dynamic, knowledgeable, and mission-driven staff. This position will provide high-quality, professional customer service, and maintain efficient office operations. The selected candidate will ensure the office systems, agency procedures, and practices are well organized and administered effectively.

The incumbent will provide functional supervision to the secretarial pool and interact on behalf of the Commissioner with legislative leaders, agency heads, disability leaders, and others such as consumers, advocates, IL centers, other disability organizations, etc.

Want to Apply?

Interested applicants should attach a cover letter and resume when applying. Apply and see the complete job posting here: <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=22000C6J>

For new applicants/new to *MassCareers*, you first need to create an applicant profile. The Commonwealth offers this guide to assist you, *MassCareers* Create a Profile guide: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/masscareers-apply-for-a-job-guide>



COVID-19 Updates

United States at a Glance

Cases Total 97,329,787 Deaths Total 1,066,351 Current Hosp. Admission Trends 11,873 7.3% of People 5+ with Updated Booster Dose

What You Need to Know

- Updated (bivalent) boosters are **now available**.
- The CDC recommends everyone stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines **for their age group**.
 - ⇒ Dosage is based on a person's age on the day of vaccination [not size or weight].
 - ⇒ Children and teens ages 6 months – 17 years (*More information [here](#).*)
 - ⇒ Adults ages 18 years and older (*More information [here](#).*)
- Getting a COVID-19 vaccine *after* you recover from COVID-19 provides **more protection** against COVID-19.
- If you recently had COVID-19, you can wait to get your next vaccine dose (1st dose or booster) 3 months after your symptoms started **OR** if you had no symptoms, when you first tested positive. (*More information [here](#).*)
- People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised have **different recommendations** for COVID-19 vaccines. (*More information [here](#).*)
- **NOTE:** COVID-19 vaccine and booster recommendations may change as the CDC continues to watch the latest COVID-19 data.



Wear a Mask to Protect Yourself and Others

- Masking is a critical public health tool and it is important to remember that any mask is better than no mask.
- Wear the most protective mask you can that fits well and that you will wear consistently.
- Wearing a high-quality mask along with vaccination, self-testing, and physical distancing, helps protect you and others by reducing the chance of spreading COVID-19.



Free Mask Locator

Find free masks (N95 respirators) at a participating location near you.

[Find a Mask Near You](#)

Or call **1-800-232-0233** (TTY 1-888-720-7489)

IRS Videos

No one likes paying taxes! But did you know that you can file your income taxes online, and most people can file them for **FREE**?

Income taxes for 2022 will be due on April 15, 2023. But you can file early, starting in January 2023.



SSI Recipients are Eligible for Discounted Internet Service



Internet access is now needed for work, school, healthcare, and more. But many households can't afford it. The *Federal Communications Commission* (FCC) wants everyone to access reasonably priced internet services. The **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** can help lower the cost of internet services.

The ACP provides a discount of up to:

- \$30 per month toward internet service *for eligible households*.
- \$75 per month for households on *qualifying Tribal lands*.

Eligible households can also get a **1-time** discount of *up to* \$100 toward buying a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from specific vendors/stores.

- To qualify (for the 1-time discount): households must pay \$11 — \$49 of the device's purchase price.

Does someone in your household get Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

Yes — then you can get discounted internet service through the ACP.

Social Security **doesn't** count ACP assistance as income or a resource for SSI purposes. ACP assistance will not affect a person's SSI payment.

Learn more and apply here: <https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>

1

Check if You Qualify

See if *your household* fits into any *eligible categories*

2

Apply for the ACP

You can apply online, by mail, or by contacting your current internet company.

[Apply Now](#)

Apply by Mail or by Contacting an Internet Company

Are you already enrolled in Lifeline? You don't need to apply again – [click here to learn more](#).

3

Find a Company Near You

Use our [search tool](#) to find a company that offers ACP discounts

ACP

Affordable Connectivity Program

ACP is a new federal program that helps low income families afford the cost of having internet service at home.

Learn how your household can save up \$30 on your monthly internet bill.

www.affordableconnectivity.gov

WAYS TO SAVE ON YOUR HEATING BILL

Home Heating Assistance Is Here

Learn about **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**

Also called **Fuel Assistance**, this program helps eligible households pay a part of their winter heating bills.

See if you qualify and where/how to apply: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap>

Other things you can do to save money on keeping your home warm:



- Income eligible households may qualify for a **Discounted Rate** (from your utility company, ex: National Grid gas/electric, oil or gas company).
- Contact your heating company to **Enroll in a Payment Plan**.
- Get an **Energy Audit** (homeowners AND renters/tenants) to identify possible **no-cost upgrades** like insulation, heating system repair and/or inefficient appliance replacement — including refrigerators, freezers, washers and more!
- Use a **programmable thermostat** to allow moderate heat settings, and adjustments based on when heat is needed most based on household activity.



FY23 LIHEAP Income Eligibility

Number in Household	Annual Income	Income Past 4 Weeks
1	\$42,411	\$3,262
2	\$55,461	\$4,266
3	\$68,511	\$5,270
4	\$81,561	\$6,273
5	\$94,610	\$7,277

UPDATED
2022-2023

INFLUENZA VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Look for specific updates, including:



3 vaccines preferentially recommended for people 65 and older



Vaccine composition updated to better protect against flu viruses expected to circulate this season

CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine



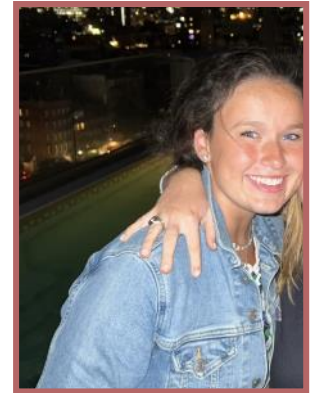
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AUGUST 26, 2022

MMWR

Introducing Our DHILS Volunteer, and Community Based Learning (CBL) Students

Hi! My name is **Kathryn McConnell** and I am a junior at *College of the Holy Cross* with a major in Psychology, and minors in Education and Deaf Studies. I'm also involved in other fun activities at school such as the sales club, intramural soccer, and during my freshman year I volunteered as a tutor at the Nativity School in Worcester. I am from New York, right by the city, and have always been involved in after school activities because getting involved with the community is my favorite thing to do. In the future, I hope to go on to working with children, whether it be at school or not, with anything they need from ASL tutoring to playing fun outdoor games. I am excited to join the community at the Center for Living & Working and to meet everyone!



Hi! My name is **Riley Bodenrader**, I am a current sophomore at the *College of the Holy Cross*! I am a Psychology major, with a minor in Deaf Studies/ASL. I am also involved with different volunteer groups and sports clubs on campus, and am extremely excited to add CLW to my list!

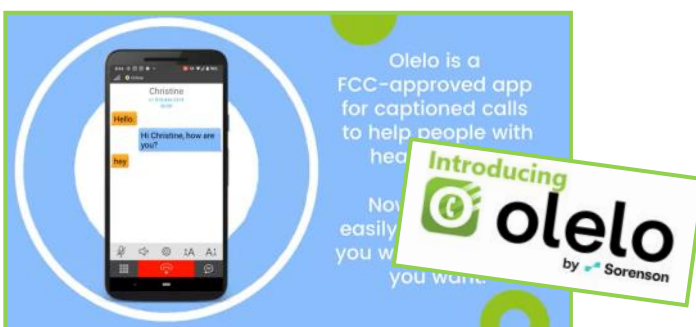
I am originally from North Andover, Massachusetts, and am the oldest of four children. In my free time I enjoy baking, reading, hiking, and spending time with my friends and family! In the future, I hope to continue to work with children and the Deaf community as a therapist. I am excited to immerse myself into the Center for Living & Working, Inc.'s community, to gain more knowledge about Deaf culture, create new meaningful relationships, and improve my ASL!



My name is **Freddi Koss**. I graduated from Hampshire College in 2019 and now I'm in the Interpreting Certificate Program at *Northern Essex Community College* in Haverhill, Massachusetts. I am currently building my ASL skills by volunteering with CLW's DHILS department. Some of my hobbies include costuming, creative writing, and dance.



New CaptionCall Product: *Olelo*



Watch video: <https://youtu.be/iDGsQAZBWbo>

Click [here](#) for more information!

Worcester WRTA

Zero Fare until the end of JUNE, 2023!!!

The *Worcester Regional Transit Authority* voted to continue the suspension of bus fares until 2023!



ZERO FARE WRTA



One Account per Household

- The Lifeline Assistance program is available for only one wireless or wireline account per household.
- Separate households that live at the same address are eligible, including residents of homeless shelters and nursing homes.
- Residents with temporary addresses are also eligible.

Assurance Wireless

Patient can apply for an assistance wireless phone online through the link provided. Patient will need mailing address for phone to be sent too. Phone plan includes unlimited talk, text and 10 GB of hot spot.
<https://www.assurancewireless.com/>

Safe Link Wireless

Patient can apply for an assistance wireless phone online through the link provided. Patient will need mailing address for phone to be sent too.
<https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/Web/www/default/index.html#!/newHome>

Standup Wireless

Patient can apply for an assistance wireless phone online through the link provided. Patient will need mailing address for phone to be sent to.
<https://standupwireless.com/>
 Phone: 1-800-544-4441
 E-mail: info@standupwireless.com

Free Cell Phone Programs in Massachusetts

Eligible participants can receive a smart phone with data, texting, and phone time for an upfront fee

Qualifications

- Eligible if you receive benefits from any of these programs in Massachusetts:
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
 - Veterans Pension and Survivor's Benefit.
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance (BIA)
 - Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF)
 - Tribal Head Start (only those households meeting its income qualifying standard)
 - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- You can also qualify based on household income
 - If you are unemployed, you can use your Unemployment Benefit Letter as proof of eligibility until 6/30/22

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/lifeline-services>

Worcester Parent Guide to Community Resources

[CLICK HERE FOR ENGLISH GUIDE](#)

Worcester Parent /
Caregiver Guide to
Community Services



A project originally supported by the Child Development
Program - Prevention Collaborative of the
Health Foundation of Central MA

Updated Therapists for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Directory

Click here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mRNQIKYYNjM4vYpRX7OECQkiW-PQlu62/view?usp=sharing>



MISSED A *WHAT'S UP* NEWSLETTER?

Past issues of newsletters are on our website!

VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CENTERLW.ORG/2022/07/WHATS-UP-NEWSLETTER/](https://www.centerlw.org/2022/07/whats-up-newsletter/)

NOTE: Contact your Skills Trainer with questions.

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)
Jonathan Vanderschrick	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	508-762-1350 (VP)
Kim White	Staff Interpreter	508-755-1042 (Voice); 508-283-1036 (VP)

Contact Us!



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

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



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

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