

Quinnehtukqut Legal News



Volume 2 Issue 1

A Newsletter For Native Americans In Connecticut

Summer 1998



1998 Connecticut Legislative Update:

Prescription Co-payments

The Legislature has eliminated the co-payment requirement for prescriptions for certain people who receive Medicaid or General Assistance Medical benefits. Before this, they could be charged \$1.00 for each prescription they needed to have filled. This co-payment was collected by the pharmacist. While, in theory, people who couldn't pay the \$1.00 were still supposed to be given their prescriptions, in practice, many ended up not getting their medication.

Under the new legislation, the Department of Social Services is authorized to set up other co-payment plans. At this time, however, no other co-pays are under serious discussion.

TFA Diversion Program

The Legislature has approved a TFA Diversion Program. This will provide cash and other short-term assistance to families to help keep them off welfare. You can be eligible for these benefits if you and DSS agree that receiving the benefits would keep you from needing TFA.

Under this program, you can get up to three months of benefits equal to the amount you would have gotten under TFA for that period. If you get **any** amount of benefits, however, it will be counted as if you received three full months of TFA benefits. If you get Diversion assistance, you will be ineligible for TFA for three months unless your family has experienced "undue hardship." Only DSS can decide whether your circumstances qualify for this exemption.

Other provisions of the program are:

- You must receive your assistance within 15 days of signing your application.
- You will not have to assign your child support payments.
- DSS must tell you about the benefits and services you can get under Diversion.
- You have three days to change your mind once you have asked for the Diversion Program.
- Getting Diversion assistance should not keep you from getting other types of non-TFA DSS assistance.

Food Stamp Benefits for Legal Aliens

The Legislature included nearly \$6 million in its budget to create a food assistance program for legal immigrants who are no longer eligible for the federal Food Stamp Program. Legal immigrants who entered the United States before April 1, 1998 will be eligible for benefits immediately. If you fall into that category and apply quickly, you may be eligible for benefits retroactive to April 1. If you entered the country after April 1, you must live in Connecticut for six months before you can be eligible.

DSS Assistance Limited for Anyone Charged With or Convicted of a Felony

If there is any warrant for a state or federal felony charge outstanding against you, DSS may decide that you are ineligible for benefits under any DSS program. If you fall into this category, DSS must give you notice and a hearing.

If you are a new applicant for TFA or food stamps, or if you are asking for redetermination, you must fill out a new form. This form asks you to state whether there have been any felony convictions in your household after August 22, 1996, whether anyone has had a felony drug conviction, whether anyone in the household is running to avoid prosecution or incarceration, or whether anyone is violating a condition of parole or probation.

Durable Medical Equipment

Under new legislation, you can get preauthorization from DSS to buy durable medical equipment without having to show that you can't get Medicare preauthorization. You must, however, submit your bill to Medicare and wait for Medicare to take action before DSS will actually pay the bill.

Nursing Home Personal Fund Allowance

The nursing home personal fund allowance has been increased from \$35 per month to \$50.

Electric Deregulation

Legislation was passed requiring deregulation for electric utilities. Basic consumer protections, such as the winter moratorium, will remain in place, however, even under deregulation. There is a possibility that low-income customers may be able to get discounts on their rates through a state-operated purchasing arrangement. ■



About Pine Tree Legal Assistance

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is a non-profit organization which provides free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems.

Pine Tree operates a special Native American Unit in its Bangor office. The unit is staffed by attorney Eric Nelson who has worked for many years at Pine Tree on behalf of migrant farmworkers and Native Americans. Eric can be reached at 1-800-879-7463.

Pine Tree attorneys are not licensed to practice law in Connecticut. However, its Native American Unit may be able to give information and help to low-income Native Americans in Connecticut with federal legal problems, such as questions about the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Jay Treaty. The Telephone Number is 1-800-879-7463.

Statewide Legal Services

Call Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. (SLS) if you are low income and believe you have a legal problem. It is a toll-free telephone hotline that can give you free help in the following areas:

- Housing
- Family Matters
- Welfare
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Other Government Benefits

If you meet income eligibility standards, SLS can help you as follows:

☛ Problems that can be settled quickly. SLS staff can handle some of these problems themselves. For example, SLS staff can call your local General Assistance office to explain a mistake.

☛ More complicated problems. SLS can refer you to one of the four legal service agencies in Connecticut, a law school clinic, a specialized legal services agency, or a pro bono (free) lawyer. SLS makes referrals based on its priorities and resource limitations.

☛ Problems you can handle yourself. SLS can give you telephone instruction, send you written materials, or tell you about classes to help you represent yourself.

☛ Non-priority problems. If you have a problem which cannot be accepted by SLS or a referral agency, SLS can give you general advice.

Telephone Numbers To Call:

In the Middletown calling area: 1-860-344-0380

From other places in Connecticut: 1-800-453-3320

9 a.m.- 3 p.m., Monday through Friday



Issues in Native American Education

By Bonnie S. Bostrom

Bonnie is the Chief of Education for the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. She is a member of the Alabama Band of Cherokee. Bonnie has her Master's Degrees in Special Education and Educational Administration. She is currently a Doctoral Candidate in Leadership and Educational Administration from the University of New Mexico. She has worked in many pueblos and reservations.

There are many important issues in education facing Native Americans today. This article will cover some of those issues. The issues are: special education services, parental involvement, economic issues, staff development, and political coalitions. This article does not cover all of these issues in depth. It will, however help readers understand them.

Special Education And Due Process

Parents must understand their rights when it comes to Special Education referral, testing, and placement. The percentage of Native American students who are getting Special Education services is, in some places, much higher than the national average. You, as a Native American parent, should be aware that special education is not always the most helpful placement for your child.

There are steps that a school must take before placing your child in Special Education. If your child is referred to a school committee because of lack of achievement, the committee is required to gather information about your child and to offer intervention strategies **before** making a referral for diagnostic testing.

Children who are identified as needing help are often fast-tracked into Special Education without being given a chance to get other kinds of support. If you have been asked to sign for diagnostic tests, be sure to ask if alternative strategies have been put in place for your child. For example, if your child is identified as having problems in math or reading, ask if tutoring services have been tried. If you use a different language at home, ask whether a bilingual program or an English as a Second Language program might be better for your child.

If you decide to allow your child to be tested, you need to know that giving permission for testing does **not** mean that you are automatically giving permission for a Special Education placement. After any testing, you have the right to meet with the

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committee again. At the meeting, the results of the testing should be explained to you so that you understand them. If you do not agree with the results of the testing, you can ask for another assessment at the school's expense.

Even after the tests have been explained to you, you do not have to agree to have your child placed in special education. You may decide that there are other options which are better for your child. In fact, it is often a good idea to have an advocate with you who is not hired by the school. This can help you understand what is really happening with your child. There is a lot of jargon used in special education testing. This can be very confusing and intimidating and can make you highly concerned when, in actuality, your child may be having difficulty in school but may not be "disabled."

The term "Learning Disabled" can be very misleading. In most states, if there is a significant difference in scores between your child's achievement test and his or her intelligence test, your child can be labeled as Learning Disabled. For students through third grade, that difference must be 19 points; for all other grades, the difference is 23 points. There can be many reasons for this difference in scoring. Not all of them mean that there is a real disability. For example, low attendance, changing schools, language differences and cultural differences, to name a few, can also cause the difference in scoring.

In one school district in a nearby state, the number of Native American students who were placed in Special Education was three times greater than the national average of 12%. This is a severe problem. We must be vigilant that it does not happen in Connecticut.

For more information on this subject you can write to the Special Education Resource Center, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown CT 06457. This group can also send you parent guidelines.

The Economic Factor

There are many children across the United States in Special Education classes who do not belong there. However, many school leaders are finding that, while they have money to fund Special Education, they do not have adequate dollars to provide a regular curriculum that covers the real needs of these students. This economic reality may, in fact, be a driving factor behind placing a child in Special Education.

There are not enough sources of additional dollars to give services to students who need help but are not really learning disabled. These students need

services similar to those provided for special education. For example, the lower pupil/teacher ratio in special education classrooms is also important for the student who needs more support than can be given in a regular classroom. We need to ask questions about our schools' regular curriculum. How can the student get the extra attention and support without the stigma of being in Special Education? Where can we get funds to use for the development and implementation of programs specific to student needs?

As it stands, the Federal Government gives additional dollars to public schools for children who are identified, tested, and placed in Special Education. This allows a school district to hire special personnel to provide services. Sometimes this is indeed the best setting for your child to get help in the form of special experts to work with them.

You should know, however, that you can take your child out of Special Education **at any time**. If you do not believe that your child is making sufficient progress or if you have any other reason for being dissatisfied, your child can be removed from the Special Education program. Special Education should not be a final placement. There should be an exit plan developed at the same time as your child's Individualized Education Program is developed. This exit plan can be used to decide whether your child is making sufficient progress.

Parents should also know that there are sometimes disadvantages to getting Special Education services. If your district gives a Certificate of Completion instead of a high school Diploma to its Special Education students, you should understand what this can mean to your child in the future. A Certificate of Completion cannot be substituted for a Diploma for jobs with federal, state, or local governments, the Armed Forces, or for any commercial venture that requires a Diploma. This can cause severe problems for a young person looking for a job. Many parents do not know about this possible problem.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement with a child's education is also a major issue of concern to Native American parents. There is some confusion about the term "parental involvement." Recent research about parental involvement in education has been interpreted to mean that parents should be involved with their children's schools. That's not what the research says. In fact, research says that **parental interest and support of the child** is the primary factor behind a child's success in school. The research also shows that a family's socio-economic

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status is not the primary reason for success.

Many school personnel are trying to improve student achievement by trying to get parents to come into the school. This can be helpful, but it may not make a significant difference. Parents must be interested in their children's education. This means talking to your children about school work, listening to them read, letting them know that school work is important, and helping with homework.

You are your child's first and best teacher. When children know that their parents care and are interested in them, their self-esteem and confidence levels rise. Your child wants to do well so that you will be proud of him or her.

Staff Development

Yet another issue of concern in Native American education is that teachers and administrators need a far greater understanding of cultural differences, learning styles, and diversity. Native American children bring characteristics and values to the learning environment that should be acknowledged and affirmed, not eradicated. If teachers don't understand cultural differences, they can misinterpret children's behavior. This can cause simple interactions to turn into conflict and hurt feelings.

We cannot expect school personnel to do all the work in understanding our various Native cultures. We must build relationships between our tribal communities and the schools that serve those communities. This can help turn our schools into caring environments where our children can flourish. The schools cannot do it without our help.

We have the chance now to sit on planning committees at our schools. If your school district gets Federal funds designated for Native American children, the district is required to include parents in part of the planning for how to use those dollars. Call your local school and volunteer to be on the parent committee. One of the issues that can be explored on the committee could be whether this money can be used for programs which would provide better alternatives than placing children in Special Education classes.

Higher Education

Native Americans must also be concerned about increasing the numbers of Native American students who graduate from high school and college. According to the 1995 edition of the American Indian Digest, only 52% of Native Americans graduate from high school; 17% attend college; 4% graduate from

Vita Sites Needed For 1998 Tax Year

VITA stands for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. It is a free, IRS-sponsored program to help low-income workers, including anyone eligible for the Earned Income Credit, fill out their tax returns. Using a VITA site allows low-income workers to get help filling out their tax returns without having to pay for tax preparation.

The IRS is always looking for additional VITA sites. If your Tribe or organization would be interested in setting up a VITA site to help your members, call your Regional Taxpayer Education Coordinator. The number to call in Connecticut is 860-240-4149.

It is best to call in September to set up a VITA site for the 1998 tax year. The IRS will provide training to set up the site.

college; and 2% attend graduate school.

It is imperative that we do better. We need successful Native Americans to be models to give hope and encouragement to our youth. We must have new skills and knowledge to carry our Nations forward in economic growth and prosperity. We also deserve the opportunity to realize our dreams and potential as individuals.

It will take new ways of working and collaborating to improve our rate of college completion. Some positive actions we can take are:

- ★ Find mentors for our young people in high school and college.
- ★ Support the creation of Native American student groups.
- ★ Create a coalition among local Tribes to serve as advocates and political lobbyists.
- ★ Celebrate small steps made towards completion by having Tribal graduation ceremonies.
- ★ Pool local resources to create scholarships for deserving students.
- ★ Form local groups to discuss ways to support our youth.

There is much work to be done. No one can do it for us. Perhaps we can join together and share information on strategies to improve education for all Native American people in our State.

If you would like to speak to someone in more detail about any of these issues, please contact Bonnie Bostrom, Chief of Education, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, 2 Matt's Path, P.O. Box 3060, Mashantucket CT 06339. You also can call 860-572-6252: ■



Two Tribes Put on "Active" Status For Federal Acknowledgment

Two tribes in Connecticut may have their petitions requesting federal acknowledgement acted upon during 1998. On January 1, 1998 the Eastern Pequots were put on the "active consideration" list as part of the process for being considered to be a federally acknowledged tribe. On April 2, 1998, the Paucatuck Eastern Pequots were put on the active list. In addition, the petitions for each tribe will be reviewed simultaneously. They will not be treated as the same tribe, however.

Being put on active consideration means that, within one year of the date of being put on the list, the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs must make proposed findings about whether those tribes should be acknowledged. Even this time line is not exact, however. If more time is needed, the Assistant Secretary may take up to an extra 180 days to issue its proposed findings.

The federal acknowledgement procedure is a lengthy and time consuming process. The purpose of this article is to explain briefly how the process works.

Over the last twenty years, a number of American Indian tribes in Connecticut have formally asked for federal acknowledgment of their existence. The purpose of the acknowledgement procedure, as stated in the federal regulations, is to recognize that a government-to-government relationship exists between the United States and tribes which have existed since the days of first contact with non-Indians. Acknowledged tribes are eligible for certain protections and benefits from the Federal Government. Once a Connecticut Tribe is federally acknowledged, it would be allowed to operate casinos.

To date, two Connecticut tribes have received federal acknowledgment--the Western Mashantucket Pequots in 1983 and the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of the State of Connecticut in 1994. The Golden Hill Paugussetts were refused acknowledgment in the fall of 1996. They petitioned for reconsideration on December 26, 1996. Other tribes are still in the process of trying to get acknowledgment. The Eastern Pequots, the Paucatuck Eastern Pequots, the Schaghticoke Indian Tribe, the Mohegan Tribe and

Nation, and the Nehantic Tribe and Nation have all filed Letters of Intent to Petition. Of that group, only the Eastern Pequots and the Paucatucks have been put on Active Status to date.

There are several ways for tribes to get federal acknowledgement. By far the most common is to apply to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and go through the lengthy Federal Acknowledgement Process. This process was started in response to the increase in requests for acknowledgement that occurred in the 1970's. Regulations governing the process became effective in 1978.

Congress also has the power to recognize tribes through legislation. This was the method used by the Mashantucket Pequots. In addition, the President can acknowledge tribes by Executive Order. Since the development of the Federal Acknowledgement Process, however, this method has not been used. Finally, tribes may be acknowledged through litigation in federal court. Since the development of the Federal Acknowledgement Process, however, courts have required parties to try the Federal Process before asking for a remedy from the courts.

The Federal Acknowledgement Process begins when a group of Indian descendants decides to petition for acknowledgement. This is done by writing a "letter of intent." Typically, the letter will be written by the governing body of the group. It does not need to be formal or elaborate.

Once a letter is received, the Branch of Acknowledgement and Research (BAR) in the Bureau of Indian Affairs is called in. BAR will publish a notice in both a local newspaper and the Federal Register that a letter of intent was filed. BAR will also notify the state Governor and Attorney General. Finally, BAR will open a file and send the group a "petition packet" with information about what the group needs to do to complete its formal petition.

After the letter has been filed, the tribe must prepare and submit a formal petition. There is no deadline for filing this petition. The petition should include the evidence and arguments to prove that the tribe meets the requirements for acknowledgement.

Once the formal petition has been received, it will be evaluated by BAR. That evaluation involves an analysis of the petition and a short research trip to the tribe's home area. Sometimes BAR will conduct its own limited research to answer questions which it has about the petition. Finally, BAR will make a technical report which discusses the evidence and will make a recommended decision on whether the tribe has met the criteria for acknowledgement.

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There are seven mandatory criteria for acknowledgement set out in the federal regulations. Each tribe asking for acknowledgement must prove that those criteria have been met. The criteria are:

1. The tribe has been identified as an American Indian entity on a continuous basis since 1900. The type of evidence which can be used to meet this requirement includes showing that the tribe has been identified by the federal government as an Indian entity; showing that a state government has treated the tribe as an Indian tribe; or identification of the tribe by anthropologists, historians or other scholars.
2. Most of a petitioning tribe is a community that has existed from historical times until the present. The type of evidence that meets this requirement includes showing significant social relationships between members; a significant degree of shared labor among the members; or shared rituals.
3. The tribe has had political influence or authority over its members since historical times. This requires showing that the tribe can mobilize its members or its resources for group purposes; showing that most members consider that actions taken by the group leaders are important; or showing that there is widespread knowledge, communication and involvement in political processes.
4. The tribe must provide a statement describing its membership criteria and governing procedures.
5. The tribe's membership must be made up of descendants from a historical Indian tribe.
6. The tribe's membership does not include a significant number of individuals who are members of an already acknowledged tribe.
7. There has never been any congressional legislation which terminates or forbids a Federal relationship with the tribe or its members.

Basically, a petitioning tribe should try to show that it is a group of people of American Indian descent who have moved along together through time and, where applicable, along migration routes. The tribe should first look at itself today and describe itself. It should define who its members are and describe where the members live and what they do together as a tribe. Then the tribe must move backwards in time to show how the group developed and what its origins are. It is important to avoid leaving gaps in time when trying to trace the tribe's development.

When BAR issues its technical report and recommendations they are then reviewed by the

Office of the Solicitor, Division of Indian Affairs, the Office of Tribal Services, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs; and the Office of the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs. Copies of the Report must be given to the petitioning tribe and any interested parties. Once the recommendations have been reviewed and approved by the Assistant Secretary, they are published as proposed findings in the Federal Register.

After publication, the tribe or interested parties have 180 days in which to file comments challenging or supporting the proposed findings. If asked, the Assistant Secretary must hold a formal meeting to ask about the reasoning, analysis and factual bases for the proposed findings.

After considering the proposed findings and any comments, the Assistant Secretary will make a final determination. Once that determination has been made and published in the Federal Register, the tribe or any interested party may ask for reconsideration. In fact, the Golden Hill Paugussetts requested reconsideration of the decision declining to give them federal acknowledgement.

You may get information on the status of tribes requesting acknowledgement from the internet at http://www.doi.gov/bia/ack_res.html.

The articles in this paper are meant to provide information, **NOT to give legal advice.**

No one should interpret any law without the help of an attorney who has been fully informed of all the facts involved.

CREDITS

This Newsletter is published by Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Inc., a non-profit organization which provides free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems in the State of Maine. The views expressed by individual authors in this Newsletter are not necessarily shared by Pine Tree Legal Assistance or its staff.

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You may view this Newsletter on the Internet at:
<http://www.pila.org/quinnehtukqut/qlegal.htm>

We Want To Hear From You!

If you have comments, articles or ideas on how this newsletter can be helpful to you, please let us know.

Please send articles or letters to:
Quinnehtukqut Legal News, Pine Tree Legal Assistance,
Coe Building, 61 Main Street, Room 41, Bangor,
ME 04401. Or you can send e-mail to csamp@ptla.org.



INDEX of COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This is a list of some key resources which will offer you service or direct you to the best local resource.



CRISIS SERVICES

(available 24 hours a day)



INFOLINE.....1-800-203-1234

INFOLINE is a Statewide Information, Referral, and Crisis Intervention Service. Callers can get help 24 hours a day. The professional caseworkers answering the phone can give up-to-date information about agencies and programs, can make referrals, and can intervene in crises, including suicide prevention.

Child Abuse and Neglect:

Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline.....1-800-842-2288
TD 1-800-624-5518

Domestic Violence:

Ansonia:
The Umbrella Project.....203-736-9944
Bridgeport:
YWCA of Eastern Fairfield County.....203-334-6154
Danbury:
Women's Center of Greater Danbury.....203-731-5206
Dayville:
Domestic Violence Program/United Services, Inc...860-774-8648
Enfield:
Network Against Domestic Abuse.....860-763-4542
Falls Village:
Women's Emergency Services.....860-824-1080
Greenwich:
Domestic Abuse Service Greenwich YWCA.....203-622-0003
Hartford:
Hartford Interval House.....860-527-0550
Meriden:
Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis.....203-238-1501
Middletown:
New Horizons.....860-347-6971
New Britain:
Prudence Crandall Center for Women.....860-225-6357
New Haven:
Domestic Violence Services of.....203-789-8104
Greater New Haven, Inc.

New London:

Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut.....860-447-0366

Norwalk:

Women's Crisis Center, Inc.....203-852-1980

Stamford:

Domestic Violence Services, Inc.....203-357-8162

Torrington:

Susan B. Anthony Project.....860-482-7133

Waterbury:

Women's Emergency Shelter.....203-575-0036

Willimantic:

Domestic Violence Program/United Services, Inc...860-456-9476

Elder Abuse and Neglect:

INFOLINE (for after hours emergencies).....1-800-203-1234

Eastern Region:

Greater Norwich/New London Area203-886-0521
Windham Area.....860-450-7187

North Central Region:

Hartford Area.....860-566-7329
Manchester/New Britain/Bristol Areas.....860-647-5896
Or 860-647-5820

North West Region:

Torrington Area.....860-496-6950
Waterbury/Danbury Area.....203-596-4242

South Central Region:

Middletown/Meriden/Wallingford Areas.....860-344-2104
New Haven.....203-789-6913

South West Region:

Bridgeport Area.....203-579-6824
Norwalk Area.....203-899-1369
Stamford Area.....203-708-8984

Mental Health:

Bridgeport:

Greater Bridgeport Community.....203-579-6651
Mental Health Center

Danbury:

Danbury Hospital.....203-797-7899

East Hartford:

Emergency Services.....860-895-3100

Hartford:

Capitol Region Mental Health Center.....860-297-0999

Manchester:

Genesis Center.....860-643-3680

Meriden:

Crisis Stabilization Program.....203-238-8382

Middletown:

River Valley Service Mobile Crisis Team.....860-344-2040

New Haven:

Connecticut Mental Health Center.....203-789-7713

Norwich:

Southeastern Mental Health Authority.....860-886-9302

Plainville:

Community Response Team of Wheeler Clinic.....860-747-8719

Stamford:

F.S. DuBois Center
Community Crisis Intervention.....203-358-8500

Waterbury:

Waterbury Hospital Crisis Intervention Center.....203-573-6500

Willimantic:

United Services.....860-774-2020

Poison Control:

Connecticut Poison Control Center.....1-800-343-2722
TD 860-679-4346

**Sexual Assault Crisis Programs:***(Hotline Numbers)*

YWCA of Eastern Fairfield County, Inc	
Rape Crisis Service.....	203-332-8283
Women's Center of Greater Danbury	
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....	203-731-5204
Hartford Sexual Assault Crisis Service	
of Hartford Region YWCA.....	860-522-6666
Central Connecticut Sexual Assault	
Crisis Service.....	203-235-4444
Meriden.....	203-235-4444
Middletown.....	860-635-4424
Rape Crisis Center of Milford.....	203-878-1212
New Britain YWCA Sexual Assault Crisis Service..	860-223-1787
Greater New Haven Sexual Assault Crisis Service..	203-624-2273
Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut	
Sexual Assault Crisis Service.....	860-442-4357
Northeastern Connecticut Sexual	
Assault Crisis Service.....	860-456-2789
Susan B. Anthony Project for Women	
(Serving Northwestern Connecticut).....	860-482-7133
Women's Emergency Shelter Sexual Assault	
Crisis Service(serving greater Waterbury.....)	203-753-3613
Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Center	
(Lower Fairfield County).....	203-329-2929

Youth Crisis:

Contact the nearest Youth Service Bureau through your town hall or call Connecticut Youth Services Association.....860-525-3298

LEGAL RESOURCES**Lawyer Referral Service:**

This service can recommend a private lawyer who, for a small fee, will assess a case and give an estimate of charges.

Fairfield County.....	203-335-4116
Hartford.....	860-525-6052
New Haven.....	203-562-5750
New London/Norwich.....	860-889-9384
Waterbury.....	203-753-1938

Legal Assistance Programs:

These organizations give free civil legal help to income eligible people. This help includes telephone advice, referrals, direct representation, and giving out self-help material, depending on the priorities and resources of the organization.

STATEWIDE.....	Statewide Legal Services.....1-800-453-3320
	in Middletown.....860-344-0380

Statewide Legal Services screens cases for all legal assistance programs in the state, giving brief service and advice, community education materials, and referrals to local legal services offices for non-criminal cases.

Bridgeport	Connecticut Legal Services.....203-336-3851
Danbury	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-541-8909
Hartford	Greater Hartford Legal Assistance (serving
	Greater Hartford and, through an Older Americans grant, senior
	citizens in the following towns that are also served by CLS:
	Andover, Berlin, Bolton, Columbia, Ellington, Hebron, New
	Britain, Plainville, Plymouth, Somers, Southington, Stafford,
	Tolland and Vernon.....860-541-5000
Meriden	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619
Middletown	Connecticut Legal Services.....860-225-8678
New Britain	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-233-7619
New Haven	New Haven Legal Assistance.....203-946-4811
New London	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7798
Norwalk	Connecticut Legal Services.....203-348-9216

Rockville	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7796
Stamford	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-541-8909
Torrington	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7797
Waterbury	Connecticut Legal Service.....1-800-413-7797
Willimantic	Connecticut Legal Services.....1-800-413-7796
	Legal Assistance to Medicare Patients.1-800-413-7796

Connecticut Legal Rights Project.....860-262-5030

This organization helps mental health clients, residents of mental health facilities, and out-patient clients of community residential facilities.

Disabilities:**Connecticut Office Of Protection and Advocacy For Persons With Disabilities**

60B Weston Street
Hartford CT 06120
Tel.: 860-297-4300
Hartford Area TD: 860-566-2102
Toll Free and TD: 1-800-842-7303

**Discrimination:****Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**

Capitol Region:
1229 Albany Avenue
Hartford, CT 06112
Tel.: 860-566-7710
TD: 860-566-7710

Southwest Region:
1057 Broad Street
Bridgeport CT 06604
Tel.: 203-579-6246
TD: 203-579-6246

West Central Region:
50 Linden Street
Waterbury CT 06702
Tel.: 203-596-4237

Eastern Region:
City Hall, Room 210
100 Broadway
Norwich CT 06360
Tel.: 860-886-5703
TD: 860-886-5707

Central Office
21 Grand Street
Hartford CT 06106
Tel.: 860-541-3400
1-800-477-5737
FAX: 860-246-5068

**Social Security:**

Ansonia.....	203-735-6201
Bridgeport.....	203-365-8452
Bristol.....	860-584-2716
Danbury.....	203-748-3569
East Hartford.....	860-290-5420
Hartford.....	860-493-1857
Meriden.....	203-238-0346
Middletown.....	860-347-8562
New Britain.....	860-229-4844
New Haven.....	203-787-7771
New London.....	860-443-8456
Norwich.....	860-886-7116
Stamford.....	203-359-0030
Torrington.....	203-756-7476
Waterbury.....	203-756-7476
Willimantic.....	860-423-6386

Web Sites of Interest To Native Americans:

Nipmuc Indian Association
of Connecticut...<http://www.lib.uconn.edu/NativeTech/Nipmuc/>
Pine Tree Legal
Assistance.....<http://www.ptla.org/quinnehtukqut/qllegal.htm>