

NEWS Release
County of Onondaga



Joanne M. Mahoney
County Executive

Departments: Department of Aging & Youth and
Veterans Service Agency

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**ONONDAGA COUNTY REACHES OUT TO SENIORS AND VETERANS
WHO HAVE YET TO FILE FOR ECONOMIC STIMULUS PAYMENTS**

Syracuse, New York - Nearly 6,000 Onondaga County residents who are eligible for an economic stimulus check have not yet received payment. Onondaga County officials are joining with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in a campaign to reach seniors, retirees and veterans who qualify for the economic stimulus payment but have not filed a claim.

According to IRS officials Onondaga County residents in this category include senior citizens, veterans and retirees who receive some form of benefits from Social Security and/or Veterans Affairs, and are not normally required to file a tax return. These individuals must have at least \$3,000 in qualifying income and file a 1040A tax return to receive their economic stimulus payments. Forms need to be filed by October 15, 2008. There is no penalty for people in this group to file late.

"This could mean as much as \$600 for an individual or \$1,200 for a couple filing jointly. That is a lot of money to go unclaimed," said Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney. "Most of these eligible people are living on fixed incomes, and this money would be a welcome supplement to their budgets. I urge any person who thinks they may be eligible, or know someone who is, to contact the Onondaga County Office of Aging and Youth or Veterans Services Agency for more information and assistance." Mahoney said.

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IRS New York Spokesperson Dianne Besunder said, "... many veterans and retirees do not normally file a tax return because their benefits are not taxable. This year, they must file in order to receive an economic stimulus payment." She also stressed to retirees that receiving the stimulus payment should have no impact on other federal benefits currently being received. The stimulus payment is not taxable.

The following free resources are also available to help retirees and veterans apply:

- The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program: 1-888-227-7669
- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): 1-800-906-9887
- In Syracuse, there is a Taxpayer Assistance Center at 100 South Clinton Street: 448-0807

For more information, call the Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth at 435-2362, the County Veterans Service Agency at 432-3217, or visit us on the web at www.ongov.net/agingandyouth.

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