

# Veterans Services

**Onondaga County Veterans Service Agency**  
1300 Civic Center, Syracuse, NY 13202  
Phone: 435-3217  
8:30 am- 4:30 Pm, Monday-Friday

- A one-stop advocacy agency for assistance in filing claims for all veterans benefits on a the local, state and federal level. Assistance is provided to all veterans, their dependents and survivors. The agency also does the Pre-registration and Registration for burial in the County Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Some of the benefits are Real Property Tax Exemption, Disability, Pension, Home Loan Guarantee, Insurance, Medical Care, Education, Burial, Civil Service, Recording of Discharges, NYS Veterans Nursing Home, and State Parks Access Pass.
- **Veterans Memorial Cemetery** - 4069 Howlett Hill Road. (484-1564) All Honorable Discharged veterans, legal spouses and dependent children under the age of 18 or a child who became totally disabled prior to age 18, are eligible. Must be a current resident or former resident for at least 5 years. Grave marker is provided at no charge by the VA and spousal information may be included at no charge. Apply at the Veterans Service Agency.

**NYS Division of Veterans Affairs**  
333 East Washington Street, Room 430, Syracuse, NY 13202-1422  
Phone: 428-4046

Provides information on benefits, offers counseling and acts as an advocate for veterans.

**Veterans Administration Medical Center**  
800 Irving Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210-2716  
Phone: 476-7461  
Telcare: 188-838-7890  
Automated Prescription Refill: 477-4885  
Provides medical and psychiatric care for veterans and their families.

**Veterans Administration Community Care Center**  
1031 East Fayette Street, Syracuse, NY 13210  
Phone: 448-7608

The Community Services Program (CSP) uses an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to providing services to veterans who need assistance with independent living, are homeless, need intensive case management and/or are in need of vocational rehabilitation. The program's goals are as follows: to promote the achievement and maintenance of independent community functioning; provide an alternative to hospitalization; provide transitional services prior to release from the Medical Center; encourage and assist in psychological skill building and recreational activities; and provide crisis intervention, health promotion, continuing therapy, support, and education for patients and their families to maintain clients in the community. Veterans with psychiatric illnesses who need continuous therapeutic support to stabilize their condition; recovering alcoholics or those with chemical dependencies, individuals are unable to function adequately in a social, academic or vocational role; individuals with schizophrenia at high risk for relapse and Geropsychiatric individuals who require support, supervision and re-socialization make up the target group of CPS.

- **Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program (HCHV)**  
National initiative designed to reach out and provide medical and mental health treat-



## **In this Section:**

**Agencies**

**VA Hospital**

**Contact # s**

**Benefits**

**Vet Groups**

ment to homeless veterans suffering from psychiatric and substance abuse disorders. Transitional, supported housing and case management services also provided.

- **Veterans Industries Program (VIP)**

Provides comprehensive vocational assessment and rehabilitative services to veterans. Using state-of-the-art techniques and facilities, the VIP assists veterans in identifying vocational/educational needs and interests; designs an appropriate individualized rehabilitative program, and implements the program using a variety of resources, including local, state and federal agencies.

## **Contacts For Veterans & Dependents**

- **Onondaga County Veterans Service Agency 435-3217**
- **Syracuse VA Medical Center (Hospital) 476-7461**
- **Syracuse VA Medical Center (Tel Care) 1-888-838-7890**
- **Syracuse VA Medical Center (Automated Prescription Refill) 477-4885**
- **VA Benefits (Federal) 1-800-827-1000**
- **VA Insurance Center 1-800-669-8477**

## **Veteran's Benefits**

### **Federal Benefits:**

- Service Connected Disability Compensation
- Non-Service Connected Pension
- Dependency & Indemnity Compensation
- Pension for Survivors & Parents
- Education Benefits
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Medical Care
- Dental Care
- Nursing Home Care
- Home Loan Guaranty Program
- Life Insurance Programs
- Special Adaptive Equipment
- Burial Benefits

### **State & Local Benefits:**

- Real Property Tax Exemption
- NY State Vietnam Veteran's & Persian Gulf Veteran's Tuition Award Supplement
- NY State Child of Veteran's Tuition Award Supplement
- Hunting & Fishing Licenses for Veterans 40% or more Service-Connected Disabled
- NY State Veterans Nursing Home
- NY State Blind Annuity
- NY State Parks Access Pass
- Distinctive License Plates for Veterans
- Civil Service Preference and Credits
- Peddler's Licenses
- Free Recording of Discharges

# Services for People with Disabilities

**For information on the  
Americans with Disabilities Act call  
1-800-514-0301**

**For additional information, see the following sections of this directory: Housing; Transportation, Home Care & Caregiver Assistance (esp. Assistive Devices & Accessibility Resources), Health & Health Benefits**

## **ARISE**

**1065 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13202**

**Phone: 472-3171**

Advocacy/service agency that maintains a staff and volunteer Board consisting of at least 51 percent people with disabilities. ARISE is a consumer directed, non-residential independent living center which bases all activities on the philosophy of self-determination. Services include: architectural, accessibility, ADA and benefits consultation, peer counseling, case management, interpreter referral services, housing advocacy, supported employment, adaptive equipment program (inc. financial aid in purchasing equipment/per eligibility), computers, integrated recreational programs. The 215 Center, located at ARISE, offers support services to individuals with head injuries or other neurological issues.

## **Aurora of CNY**

**518 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203-2219**

**Phone: 422-7263, TDD: 422-9746**

Offers a wide range of services to individuals and their families who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing in Onondaga and surrounding counties. Services include:

instruction in daily living skills, safe and independent travel training, instruction in adaptive technology for people with vision loss, information and referral, counseling, outreach, volunteer services (assessment and training), the Marjorie Clare interpreter referral services, and alcohol and substance abuse/prevention services geared to the cultural and linguistics needs of the deaf community.

**Central New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office (CNYDDSO)  
800 Wilbur Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204**

**Phone: 473-5050**

Provides community outreach and assistance to persons of all ages who are mentally retarded or developmentally disabled and their families. Screening for placement in family care homes or CNY-DSO.

**Enable**

**1603 Court Street, Syracuse, NY 13208**

**Phone: 455-7591**

Enable offers home care through its Self-Directed Personal Services (SDPS) program. It is a service in Onondaga County that allows people with disabilities to have control over their personal services. SDPS participants screen, interview, hire, train, supervise and dismiss their personal assistants. Enable is authorized to offer SDPS in Onondaga County, and act as a go-between for the participant and Medicaid. To qualify for SDPS, individuals must live in Onondaga County, be eligible for Medicaid, have a disability that qualifies for personal services and be able to assume responsibility for the supervision of home care. Funding comes from Medicaid, and the personal assistant is paid by Enable. Enable is affiliated with United Cerebral Palsy and a member of United Way of CNY.

**Exceptional Family Resources**

**1065 James Street, Suite 220, Syracuse, NY 13203**

**Phone: 478-1462**

Services include "Take A Break" respite services, advocacy, family support, outreach, recreation, case management, residential habilitation and a directory of services for people with developmental disabilities (including mental disabilities) in Onondaga County. Facilities are fully accessible, interpreters arranged as needed. Their **Senior Caregivers Project** assists families in accessing services for their developmentally disabled family member including respite, day programming and employment services, etc., to apply for Medicaid or SSI for their family member and to plan for the future including guardianship, wills, etc.

**Huntington Family Centers, Inc.**

**Project Choice**

**401 South Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13209**

**Phone: 474-6823**

Project Choice offers opportunities for senior citizens with developmental disabilities to utilize community based retirement and leisure time activities. Hot noon meal. Must be 60 years and older with developmental disability.

**Invested Family Services, Inc.**  
**103 Dewberry Lane, Syracuse, NY 13219**  
**Phone: 488-3688**

Assists people with disabilities to a respected place in their community. Recruitment of Day Habilitation and Residential Habilitation support people on a one-to-one basis taking into consideration specific needs of each individual. IFS provides Medicaid Waiver Case Management as well.

**OCPL Special Services for the Disabled**  
**See also EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**  
**Phone: 435-1876; TDD: 435-1872**

Talking books program, large print collections, described videos, reference and referrals.

**Onondaga Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC)**  
**600 Wilbur Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204**  
**Phone: 476-7441**

Provides a variety of opportunities to adults including sixteen residential sites, vocational assessment, job training and employment, skill enhancement including transportation and social skills and a program specifically designed for seniors.

**Person to Person: Citizen Advocacy**  
**650 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203**  
**Phone: 472-9190**

Recruits and provides volunteer Citizen Advocates to individuals with a disability. Citizen Advocates may become a spokesperson, friend, ally, helper or advisor. Some assume more formal roles like becoming a guardian, trustee, or adoptive parent.

**Syracuse Developmental Center**  
**800 South Wilbur Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204**  
**Phone: 473-5034**

Senior Companions serve clientele (Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities) 20 hours a week in work sites or group homes. Companions provide one-on-one attention at the worksite or on shopping and recreational trips.

**VESID (Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities)**  
**333 East Washington Street, Syracuse, NY 13202**  
**Phone: 428-4179**

Vocational and educational services for persons with permanent disabilities and substantial vocational handicaps. Services include: evaluation, rehabilitation counseling and planning, adaptive equipment, work training, placement, special transportation and maintenance. Some services are based on State financial need standards. Homemaker services are also available.

# **Housing**

**(See Housing and Home Care Sections)**

## **ERIE (Enriched Resources for the Independent Elderly) at Toomey Abbott Towers**

1207 Almond Street

Terrace Level

Syracuse, NY 13210

(315) 428-8562; Fax: 428-0621

**Residential care for functionally-impaired elderly (non-institutional setting).**

**Accommodations:** Up to 86-bedroom apartments with a kitchen and combined living/dining room; provisions for couples to live together.

**Sources of Payment:** Private pay, Medicaid

## **Community Living Intake Process (CLIP)**

Central New York DSO

800 South Wilbur Avenue

Syracuse, New York 13204

Phone (315) 425-8501

CLIP is a single point of referral process for residential services for developmentally disabled individuals within Onondaga County. This multi-agency committee receives referrals for residential services, coordinates the initial screening and referral to specific residential agencies for admission and intake consideration.



# **Accessibility Modification**

## **Architectural Accessibility Program (Through Arise)**

**472-3171 Extension 155**

On-site evaluations and recommendations addressing accessibility issues in residential, community and business facilities.

## **Family Support/Home Services (A Program of Enable)**

**455-7591**

Visits homes, schools and work sites for referral and service-coordination regarding adaptations. Consults on ADA compliance.

## **Home Access Program (Through Arise)**

**472-3171 Extension 154**

A program to assist mobility-impaired people in their homes and apartments. Coordinates the installation of handrails, landings and ramps.

# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

As a grandparent, if you are thinking of taking over the care of your grandchildren or already have, it is important to first review the legal rights and responsibilities of all the family members involved. This can help protect you and your grandchild legally and financially. A complete listing of attorneys and their specialties are located in the yellow pages. For free or discounted legal services, please refer to the Legal section of this directory.



## Grandparent Caregiver's Glossary

**Adoption** - A legal process to permanently transfer all parental rights to the adoptive parents, ending the relationship between natural parents and the child. Few grandparent caregivers choose to adopt a grandchild in their care because of the loss of financial benefits and the potential negative impact on the relationship with their own child.

**AFDC** - Aid to Families with Dependent Children is a joint federal/state program that provides cash assistance to needy families with children, including those headed by grandparents retaining grandchildren, enabling them to meet their basic needs.

**TANF** - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families provides cash and medical assistance to children under the age of eighteen.

**Custody** - An arrangement granted by a court to give a grandparent or other caregiver certain legal rights and responsibilities including registering the child in school, making medical decisions, allowing the child to visit relatives and family friends, and making other decisions about a child's life. Even when a transfer of custody occurs, the child's parents retain certain rights, such as visiting the child. Custody does not have to be permanent; if circumstances change, one or both parents may ask the court to return custody to them.

**Guardianship** - A formal legal arrangement that gives the grandparent or other caregiver legal responsibility for the child in the parent's absence, allowing the caregiver to enroll the child in school and consent to medical care. Guardianship is not necessarily permanent and lasts as long as necessary to meet the needs of the child, remaining in effect until the child turns 18 years old or it is terminated by a court order.

**Standby Guardianship** - A formal legal arrangement where a person is appointed by the court to care for a minor and/or the minor's property upon the incapacity or death of the child's parent or upon consent of the parent.

**Kin** - Any relative by blood or marriage, or any person with close personal, emotional or familial ties to another.

### In This Section:

**Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP)**

**Helpful Phone #**

**Parenting Classes**

**Kinship Care** - Any form of residential caregiving provided to children by kin, whether full-time or part-time, temporary or permanent, and whether initiated by private family agreement or under the custodial supervision of the child welfare agency. Kinship care includes kinship foster care and private kinship care as defined below.

**Kinship Foster Care** - Kinship care provided for a child who is in the legal custody of the State. Relatives (kin) become the foster parents of the child who was removed from his or her parent's home due to abuse or neglect. The State makes all decisions regarding the child's health and welfare. Also called formal foster care.

**Private Kinship Care** - Kinship care entered into by private family arrangement. Also called informal kinship care.

**Skipped Generation Family** - A family in which a grandparent, or other older kin, is raising a child because the child's parents are unable to perform this responsibility.

## **Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP)**

RAPP assesses the problems and needs of kinship caregivers in Syracuse and Onondaga County and advocates for programs to provide information, outreach, support and education.

- **Dunbar Center Group** - Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.; Dunbar Center, 1453 South State Street, Syracuse. For more information, call 476-4269.
- **Exceptional Family Resources Group** (for grandparents raising developmentally disabled grandchildren) - Meets quarterly for special events. For information call 478-1462.

***For more information, call  
Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth  
at 435-2362.***

# Helpful Phone Numbers

## Social Services

If you are in need of financial assistance to care for your grandchild you should contact the following services to see what you and your grandchild are entitled to.

**Public Assistance**

(315) 435-2526

**Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)**

(315) 435-2547

**Child Protective Services**

**(Child Abuse/Maltreatment Reporting 24 hour Hotline)**

(315) 422-9701

**Medicaid**

(315) 435-2928

**Food Stamps**

(315) 435-2935

## Parenting Classes

These classes can help brush up your parenting skills or assist you in dealing with a child who is having trouble coping with the separation from their parents.

**Catholic Charities**

(315) 424-1840

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**

(315) 424-9485

## Grandparent Websites

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

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

Grandparents and Special Other Raising Children

[www.grandsplace.com](http://www.grandsplace.com)

Intergenerational Connections "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren"

[www.nnfr.org/igen/GRG](http://www.nnfr.org/igen/GRG)