

# **GUIDE TO CONSTITUENT SERVICES**



Assemblyman Brian E. Rumpf (l), Assemblywoman DiAnne C. Gove (c) and Senator Christopher J. Connors (r).

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## **Visit Our New Website**



### **Online Constituent Services**

Under the "Constituent Help" feature of our website, constituents can access information on:

- New Jersey Homestead Rebates
- New Jersey Senior Tax Freeze
- Notary application and renewal forms
- New Jersey unemployment insurance claims

### **Additional Information**

Additional features of our new website include:

- Online Forms to Request Help
- Contact Information for the Delegation
- Links to Local Municipal Websites
- News Releases
- Directions and Interactive Map to District Office

## **Receive Important Updates by Email**

To reduce expenditures and save taxpayer dollars, our Delegation is requesting constituents' E-mail addresses for future correspondence. E-mail eliminates the considerable costs of postage, letterhead, envelopes and ink cartridges. Having this contact information will enhance our ability to provide the highest level of constituent services by improving turnaround time for responses. If you wish to be responded to by E-mail in the future, please contact us at [SenConnors@njleg.org](mailto:SenConnors@njleg.org).



## **Sign Up for Updates Online**

You can also sign up for important email updates on our website. A link to join our email list appears on every page of our site.

You can also go directly to the following page to sign up:  
<http://district9.senate.nj.com/email-updates.php>

## **Common Interest Communities**

One of the signature features of our website is a section dedicated to Common Interest Community legislation. There are several proposed bills that would affect many senior communities. You can learn more at:  
<http://district9.senatenj.com/communities>.



### **Staying Informed**

Sign the petition on our website to oppose Common Interest Community legislation and to receive updates by E-mail.

1. Go to the Delegation's website.
2. Click on Common Interest Communities graphic (see left).
3. Click on "Sign Our Petition."
4. Complete and submit the online petition.



Senator

Assemblyman

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# Connors, Rumpf & Gove

New Jersey's 9<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

## **Property Tax Reimbursement Program**

Senior Tax Freeze Hotline: 1-800-882-6597

Residents applying for the 2010 **Property Tax Reimbursement Program (Senior Tax Freeze)** must meet all the following requirements:

- For 2009 and 2010, have been age 65 or older or receiving Federal Social Security disability benefits as of December 31. If receiving Federal Social Security disability, you (or your spouse/civil union partner) must have received such benefits based on your own social security number (you do NOT qualify if you are receiving Social Security disability benefits on behalf of someone else); and
- Have lived in New Jersey continuously since before January 1, 2000, as either a homeowner or a renter; and
- Have owned and lived in the home for which the reimbursement is being claimed since before January 1, 2007; and
- Have paid the full amount of the property taxes due on the home for 2009 by June 1, 2010, and for 2010 by June 1, 2011; and
- Have total income for 2009 and 2010 that is \$80,000 or less. These limits apply regardless of marital/civil union status. However, applicants who are married or in a civil union must report combined income of both spouses/CU partners.

**Eligible applicants must file the 2010 Property Tax Reimbursement Application on or before November 1, 2011.**



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## **New Jersey Homestead Benefit**

Homestead Benefit Hotline: 1-877-658-2972

**2009 Homestead Benefit (Rebate):** The deadline for filing 2009 applications was January 3, 2011. Eligible homeowners will receive their homestead benefit for 2009 as a credit on their property tax bill for the second quarter of 2011. Tenants will not receive a 2009 rebate.

**2010 Homestead Benefit:** Information about the 2010 Homestead Benefit Program is not yet available. Tenant rebates were suspended for 2009. As a result, no tenant rebate application is included in the NJ-1040 resident return packet.

Please continue to check for updates by visiting the website of the Division of Taxation at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/homestead/statusinq.shtml>.

Additional regarding property tax benefits can be found on the Division of Taxation's website: <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/homestead/hrinfotemp.shtml>.

The district office of Connors, Rumpf & Gove can assist you in checking the status of your benefit application. Please feel free to **contact us** if you have any questions or require assistance.



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Important State Services

Senior Gold	<b>1-800-792-9745</b>
Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged & Disabled (PAAD)	
Lifeline Programs	
Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (HAAAD)	
Prescription Drug Price Registry	<b>Phone:</b> 1-800-242-5864 <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.njdrugprices.nj.gov">www.njdrugprices.nj.gov</a>
New Jersey Transit	1-800-772-2287
Amtrak	1-800-872-7245
Senior Citizen Pass (for passes to parks, forests and historic sites)	1-800-843-6420
Reduced Fees – Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife	1-609-292-2965

Important Federal Services

Social Security Hotline	1-800-772-1213
Medicare Hotline	1-800-633-4227
Medicaid Hotline	1-800-356-1561



<u>Important County Services</u>	
<b>Office of Senior Services</b>	Ocean: 1-800-668-4899 Atlantic: 1-888-426-9243 Burlington: 1-877-222-3737
<b>County Clerk</b>	Ocean: 1-732-929-2018 Atlantic: 1-609-645-5858 Burlington: 1-609-265-5122
<b>County Surrogate</b>	Ocean: 1-732-929-2011 Atlantic: 1-609-645-5800 Burlington: 1-609-265-5005
<b>Consumer Affairs</b>	Ocean: 1-732-929-2105 Atlantic: 1-609-343-2376 Burlington: 1-609-265-5054
<b>Board of Social Services</b>	Ocean: 1-732-349-1500 Atlantic: 1-609-348-3001 Burlington: 1-609-261-1000
<b>Veterans Services Bureau</b>	Ocean: 1-732-929-2096 Atlantic: 1-609-441-3060 Burlington: 1-609-265-5008





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## **STATE SUPPORT FOR VETERANS**

### Veterans Property Tax Deduction

**Amount:** There is an annual property tax deduction of \$250 dollars.

**Eligibility:** You must: have been in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, and honorably discharged or released under honorable conditions from active service in a wartime period; be a citizen of the United States, a resident of New Jersey, and own the property, wholly or in a part or hold legal title to the property to the dedications being claimed.

**Application:** File the completed form with your municipal tax assessor or collector from October 1 through December 31 of the pre-tax year.

## **STATE SUPPORT FOR VETERANS**

### Veterans Property Tax Exemption

**Eligibility:** You must: have served during specific wartime periods, received an honorable discharge or have been released under honorable conditions, rated 100 percent permanent service-connected disabled by the VA, wholly owned the house being claimed for deductions and use it as your principal residence.

**Application:** The application at the municipal property tax assessor's office is signed and filed with the following documentations:

- a) Property deed, discharge (DD214) and VA Property Tax Exemption Letter needed at signing.
- b) The VA Property Tax Exemption Letter must be requested by contacting the VA.

For additional information contact VBB: 609-530-7052

# **FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR VETERANS**

## U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### **Benefits and Services Available**

VA provides a wide range of benefits including, Disability, Education and Training, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, Home Loan Guaranty, Dependant and Survivor Benefits, Medical Treatment, Life Insurance and Burial Benefits. VA Benefits in Brief is a printable document that provides an at-a-glance description of VA benefits, as well as contact phone numbers and locations.

More detailed information is available of the VA website: <http://www.va.gov>

### **Eligibility for VA Benefits**

You may be eligible for VA benefits if you are a:

- a) Veteran, Veteran's dependent
- b) Surviving spouse, child or parent of a deceased Veteran
- c) Uniformed service member



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## **FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR VETERANS**

<u>Toll Free Federal Services</u>	
Benefits Information & Assistance	1-800-827-1000
Health Care	1-877-222-8387
Education & Training	1-888-442-4551
VA Life Insurance	1-800-669-8477
Office of SGLI	1-800-419-1473
CHAMPVA	1-800-733-8387
Helpline (Agent Orange & Gulf War)	1-800-749-8387
Direct Deposit	1-877-838-2778
Headstones (status of claims only)	1-800-697-6947
Telecommunication Device for Deaf (TDD)	1-800-829-4833



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## **ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### Lifeline Program

Lifeline is administered by the Department of Health and Senior Services, provides a \$225 energy benefit to seniors and the disabled who meet the PAAD eligibility requirements or who receive SSI. The benefit is also available to customers who have electric and gas costs included in their rent. For more information about Lifeline, please call 1-800-792-9745.

### NJ SHARES

NJ SHARES is a non-profit corporation that provides assistance to individuals and families living in New Jersey who are in need of temporary help in paying their energy bills. To qualify for NJ SHARES, a person or family must be facing a financial crisis and not be eligible for welfare or other income-based energy assistance programs. Recipients must also have a history of good-faith payments of their utility bills. Applications for NJ SHARES grants can be made at any of the more than 150 participating social service agencies throughout the state. Upon approval, recipients may receive a one-time grant of up to \$700 for gas and up to \$300 for electric (or up to \$700 for an all-electric home).

Please call NJSHARES at 1-866-657-4273 or visit them at [www.njshares.org](http://www.njshares.org)



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## **ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### LIHEAP

This program, which is administered by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, helps you pay for heating costs and may cover certain medically-necessary cooling expenses. Even if your heat is included in your rent, you may qualify, if you meet the eligibility criteria. You may submit an application for LIHEAP from November 1st, through April 30<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, please call 1-800-510-3102

### Universal Service Fund - USF

The USF helps make energy bills more affordable for low income customers. If you are eligible, USF can provide you a credit on your bill that lowers the amount you have to pay for natural gas and electricity.

For applications, contact Jose Sanchez at 1-866-240-1347 or [EnergyAssistance@dca.state.nj.us](mailto:EnergyAssistance@dca.state.nj.us)



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## **ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### Weatherization Assistance - WAP

WAP provides assistance to elderly, handicapped and low-income persons to weatherize their homes, improving their heating system efficiency and conserving energy. Assistance is provided to low-income occupants and community-based agencies assisting low-income occupied dwelling units.

Procedure for Applying: Submission of an application to a designated community-based agency.  
Contact: 1-866-551-7165 or [EnergyAssistance@dca.state.nj.us](mailto:EnergyAssistance@dca.state.nj.us)

### Winter Termination Program - WTP

Administered by the BPU, the Winter Termination Program (WTP) protects specific categories of customers from having their gas or electric shut off between November 15<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup>. Those enrolled in specific programs (such as SSI, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, USF and Lifeline) are protected by WTP, and an additional "catch-all" category is included for people unable to pay their utility bills because of circumstances beyond their control such as unemployment or illness

For more information on the Winter Termination Program, please call 1-800-624-0241.

## **ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### Comfort Partners

This Program is designed to improve energy affordability for income eligible households through direct installation of free energy efficiency measures and education about steps everyone can take to save energy. Participants are asked to partner with the program to develop and carry out a household energy savings Action Plan.

For more information please call 1-888-773-8326 .

### New Jersey Clean Energy Program

Assessments are currently being offered to New Jersey homeowners for **just \$125** (a \$300 value). Based on air-sealing opportunities found during the home assessment, you may also be eligible to **receive up to \$1,000 of air-sealing work at no cost to you**. If additional upgrades are implemented, you may qualify for **rebates as high as \$5,000 or low-interest financing**. Additionally, special financial incentives are available for income-eligible households. Contact one of the participating certified contractors, call **1-866-NJSMART** or visit New Jersey's Clean Energy Program website to learn more or get started.

<http://www.njcleanenergy.com/residential/home/home>



## **SERVICES FOR SENIORS**

### **NJ EASE**

NJ EASE (New Jersey Access, Single Entry) is the easy way for seniors and their families to get information about and access senior services. NJ EASE is one toll-free telephone number to put you in touch with someone to help you learn about and apply for important programs and benefits. NJ EASE staff members are trained to provide you with answers and information on a wide variety of topics, including:

Healthcare

Insurance

Home Care Services

Long Term Care Options

Transportation

Social Activities

Nutrition

Volunteer Opportunities

And More.....

NJ EASE promotes independence, dignity and choice for New Jersey's older adults. For more information call 1-877-222-3737 or visit <http://www.state.nj.us/health/senior/sanjease.shtml>.