

**Jefferson County
Office for the Aging
October 2025 Newsletter**

Photo by: Johannes-Plenio

Mask
Blood
Candy
Ghost
Linus
Party
Prank
Witch
Coffin
Mexico
Pirate
Seance
Haunted
Pretend
Samhain
Spirits
Black Cat
Costumes
Monsters
Pumpkins
Skeleton
All Saints
Graveyard
Harvested
Nightmare
Scarecrow
Flashlight
Trick or Treat

Look at all this candy



JEFFERSON COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

175 ARSENAL STREET
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-2529
(315) 785-3191 Fax (315) 785-5095

Public Hearing

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a required Annual Public Hearing will be held by the Jefferson County Office for the Aging on Tuesday, October 28th, 2025, at Army-Navy American Legion Post 61, 138 Sterling Street, Watertown NY. The hearing will begin at 12:30 p.m. There is no cost for the hearing. You can join via:

Public Hearing at AARP- American Legion Watertown
Tuesday, October 28 · 12:30 – 2:00pm

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/mrx-jyxp-vjn>

Or dial: (US) +1 443-671-4668 PIN: 958 944 895#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/mrx-jyxp-vjn?pin=7252820781970>

The topic is the Area Agency on Aging Plan for Funding under the Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended and for Funding through the New York State Office for the Aging. Both programs foster the development of a comprehensive and coordinated service system for persons 60 and older within the planning and implementation area.

An abstract of the Area Plan will be made available prior to the hearing at the Office for the Aging, 175 Arsenal Street, Watertown, New York 13601. Copies will also be available on the day of the Public Hearing, by calling (315) 785-3191 or visiting our website at www.co.jefferson.ny.us (Aging).

A brief overview of the Area Plan and emerging issues will be presented at the hearing to stimulate public participation on matters pertaining to the elderly. Older persons are encouraged to openly express their concerns, needs and recommendations regarding the service delivery to the community. The general public and any group affected by the Area Agency planning process are encouraged to share their views and opinions as well.

Interested parties unable to attend can mail their comments directly to the Jefferson County Office for the Aging.

Bethany Munn, Director
Jefferson County Office for the Aging
September 2, 2025



The Home Energy Assistance Program 2025-2026

If you qualify, the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) may assist you with the cost of heating your home this fall/winter. Eligible households can receive one regular HEAP benefit per program this year.

All households that received a Regular HEAP benefit in the 2024-2025 program year will receive an application in the mail automatically. Even if nothing has changed in your household or income, you still must submit an application each program year. While returning applicants can apply before the program opens to new applicants, benefits will not be issued until the program officially opens.

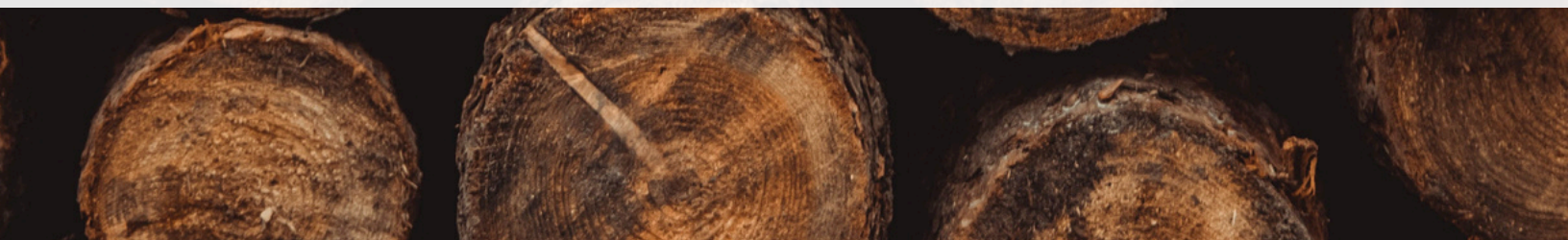
Regular HEAP opens November 3rd, and the 2025-2026 household income guidelines have not yet been released.

When HEAP opens, there are several ways to apply. You can apply online at www.mybenefits.ny.gov. To apply with a paper application, the following agencies accept applications:

Jefferson County Office for the Aging (OFA) accepts applications for regular HEAP for homeowners and renters who are age 60 or older and for those who receive disability income, either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD).

If you are new to HEAP (over age 60 or receiving permanent disability income) and would like to receive an application in the mail when the program opens, please call the Office for the Aging HEAP hotline at (315) 785-5019 and leave a message with your name and address.

* Please note that families receiving ongoing Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may receive HEAP automatically and do not need to apply.*



Feeling Lost When It Comes To Medicare?

Let Us Help You Get Back On Track!

Call the OFA (315) 785-3191

Open Enrollment Period Ahead!
Runs from Oct. 15th - Dec. 7th

Plans Change- So can your health!

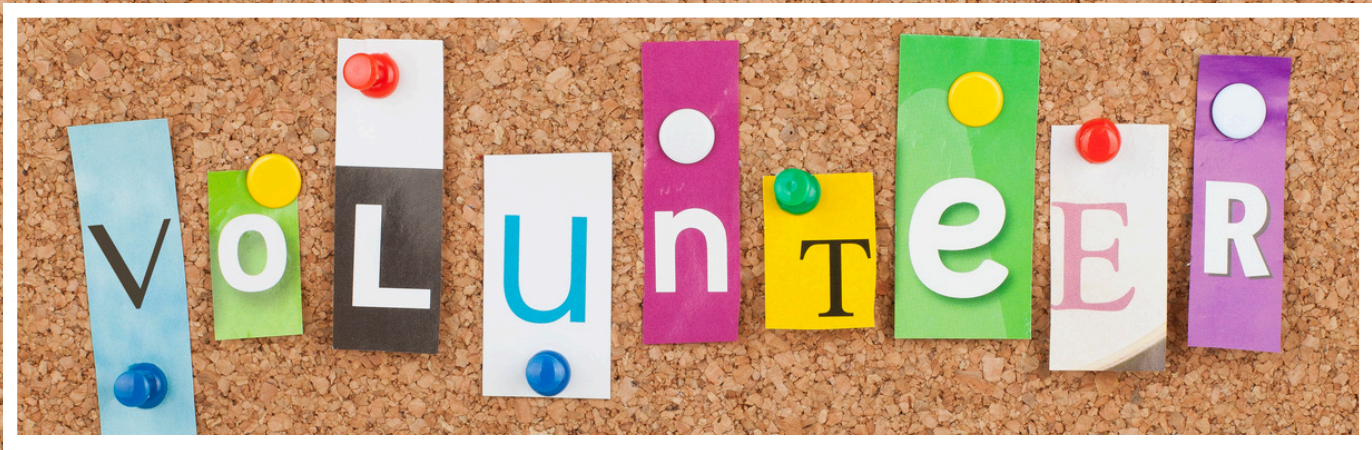
Review Annual Notice of Change Letter-
To see changes for next year

Unhappy with the new changes?
Choose new coverage to begin in January



**Health Insurance
Information, Counseling
and Assistance Program**

"This project was supported, in part by the U.S. Administration for community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy."



Looking for Volunteers

Trained volunteers assist thousands of New Yorkers each year through one-on-one Medicare counseling sessions and community education efforts.

Jefferson County Office for the Aging trains volunteers so they can help beneficiaries in their community navigate the Medicare system.

How Can You Help:

- **Distribute information**
- **Offer one-on-one counseling**
- **Staff event exhibits**
- **Conduct presentations**

Does This Sound Like You?

- **Are you looking for a purposeful and passionate way to make a difference?**
- **Do you enjoy helping others?**
- **Have you benefited from Medicare and now want to protect other older adults?**
- **Do you like working with others?**

As a volunteer, you will receive training and materials that will prepare you to answer Medicare questions from your friends, family, and members of your community. A caring attitude, strong communication skills and basic computer skills are necessary for volunteers.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer, please contact Jefferson County Office for the Aging at 315-785-3191.

If you're reading this, you might be wondering if Trualta, the caregiver support benefit from New York Office for the Aging, is meant for you and your family.

3 reasons you might think this benefit isn't for you or your family members:

- ✗ "I'm not a caregiver — I'm just helping out."
- ✗ "It's not full-time — I only do a few things."
- ✗ "I'm not the primary caregiver — someone else is."

But if you're regularly doing any of the following, you're caregiving:

- ✓ Picking up prescriptions or managing medications
- ✓ Driving someone to appointments
- ✓ Grocery shopping or preparing meals
- ✓ Helping with paperwork or bills
- ✓ Helping them stay safe at home

If you checked any of the boxes above, Trualta is for you.

What Are The Dangers Of Nighttime Wandering?

By: Trualta

Wandering at any time of day or night is dangerous. A person with dementia can:

- Get lost or hurt
- Be victimized
- Get hungry
- Become dehydrated
- Suffer from exposure to the elements

Nighttime wandering is particularly dangerous because:

- It's easier to get lost in the dark at night.
- Your loved one is more likely to be confused at night.
- There are fewer people outside who are likely to notice help.
- If you're asleep, you might not notice they are missing until morning.

7 Tips For Carers To Prevent Night Wandering

Providing a safe environment for your loved one with dementia means addressing the issue of wandering, including nighttime wandering. Their cognitive decline and memory loss mean they need careful supervision. While supervision can prevent a lot of wandering, you can also address the issue with other measures, like the following.

1. Find The Triggers For Wandering

Wandering looks purposeless to others, but there is often an underlying reason or cause. If you can find what triggers your loved one's wandering, you can change or avoid it. Observe what's happening, how they're acting, and how they feel when they start to get restless or leave or attempt to leave.

Wandering triggers include:

- Physical discomfort or pain
- Reminders of the past
- Changes in routine
- Agitation
- Distress



A night, wandering might occur because they can't sleep or have to go to the bathroom, but then get lost. They might seem confused about what time of day it is.

Some people wander when they get confused about past obligations. For example, They might wake up at night and think they need to get to work. When you know the cause or triggers of night wandering, you can come up with a more targeted plan for preventing it.

2. Keep a Regular Schedule

A person with dementia benefits from a schedule and routine in many ways. They get confused easily, so changes or disruptions can be distressing. Create a routine that schedules all daily activities by the hour. When they know what to expect, dementia patients are typically calmer.

Consider using a big wall calendar with scheduled activities that your loved one can see. Try to prepare them in advance of any upcoming changes, like a doctor's appointment. These steps can help them feel safe and less likely to wander.

3. Get Exercise During The Day

It's not uncommon for a person with dementia to become agitated or restless at night, even in a familiar place. Exercise during the day, like a supervised walk outside, can disperse some of this energy and reduce the risk of nighttime restlessness.

If it's appropriate and safe for your loved one, take them out for a walk during the day. You should be with them at all times. If they're prone to wandering or have risk factors for this behavior, you cannot safely leave them alone, even for a short period.

You can also ask their doctor if it's safe for them to do a seated exercise routine.

It may be especially helpful to get them outside for exercise. Alzheimer's and other dementias disrupt the natural sleep-wake cycle, and sun exposure during the day can reduce nighttime confusion in these patients.

4. Improve The Sleep Routine

Your loved one may wander at night because they can't sleep, becoming confused, agitated, or restless and experiencing disorientation. Anything you can do to help them sleep better and more soundly will reduce the risk of wandering behaviors.

Start and maintain a relaxing sleep routine for your loved one. Use soft, comforting music and enjoyable but low-energy activities before bed. Limit anything stimulating, like television shows or visits from friends and family. Exercise during the day can also improve nighttime sleep, as can avoiding afternoon naps, if possible.

Your loved one's medical team can also help. Managing their health conditions, evaluating medications, and addressing mental health concerns should improve their sleep.



5. Plan Relaxing Evening Activities

While a relaxing, calming evening routine is important for sleep, boredom can also trigger wandering. Plan evening activities to keep your care recipient engaged but also calm.

Easy activities include a simple game they enjoy or even chores they can do successfully, like matching socks from the laundry. A familiar movie or music can also help keep them engaged, relaxed, and calm.



6. Catch Wandering In Its Tracks

If, despite your best efforts, your loved one gets restless and tries to leave, you'll need to stop them. Try to determine what caused their urge to leave and address that issue.

For example:

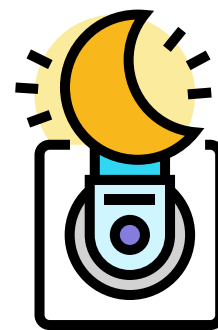
- If they're too hot, suggest changing into different clothing or setting up a fan.
- If they think they have to go to a job they haven't had in years, try telling a "therapeutic fib" by saying something like "you have the day off today."

You can also try to distract your loved one if they're intent on leaving. Redirect their attention to something indoors, like a game, a photo album, or a chore they can help you with.

7. Talk To The Medical Team

If you continue to struggle with nighttime wandering and safety, talk to your loved one's doctors. They may be able to identify an underlying cause, change medications, or help you better manage dementia symptoms that are leading to wandering.

Tools For Keeping Dementia Patients Safe At Night



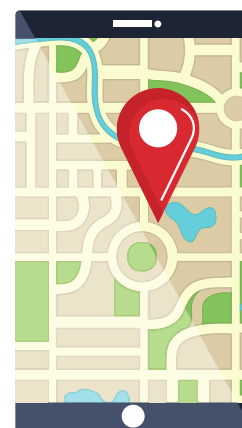
- **Night Lights.** Night lights installed in the home can help your care recipient find their way around if they get up at night. They might be looking for the bathroom or kitchen and accidentally leave through an exterior door.
- **Door Signs.** Clear door signs your loved one can read with adequate night lighting can also help them find their way around the house if they get lost or confused. Label the doors for the bathroom and the bedroom. Put large “stop” or “do not enter” signs on exterior doors or use safety gates as signals not to leave.



- **Door Covers.** Anything that camouflages or hides exterior doors can prevent your loved one from leaving the house at night. You can cover doors with curtains or use large peel-and-stick images that make the door look like a part of the wall. If windows are accessible, these should also be covered.

- **Door & Window Locks Or Alarms.** For persistent wanderers, locks that they cannot access or operate improve nighttime safety. You can find special locks that are difficult to operate, or use deadbolts. When installed out of their line of sight, many individuals with dementia don't see them. Alarms can also be useful. You can set them to signal when a door or window has been opened from inside or outside.

- **Tracking Devices.** While using technology to track your loved one's location might seem like an invasion of privacy, it can be life-saving. [Read about the pros and cons here.](#) If they get past your other barriers to wandering, a tracking app on their phone, watch, or other device can help you find them before they get lost or hurt. These technologies can also send you an alert if your loved one gets a certain distance away from you or the home.



- **Safe Return Programs.** Consider enrolling your loved one in a program like the [MedicAlert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return®](#). These programs offer a nationwide, 24-hour emergency service to help find missing seniors with dementia.

Keeping your loved one safe is a top priority as a family caregiver. Providing care from the home instead of a staffed facility can make safety more difficult. This is especially true for dementia patients who wander. Use these tips and tools to help keep them safer during the day and at night.

Answers on back of first page

Use the words from the last page to fill out the word search!

S S R E T S N O M E T A R I P
T S O H G P T H M L P A R T Y
I H F S R O A S O E K E R A S
R O G A N U T S A G X I G C A
I P N I N I K N R M C I A L N
P K R T L E K A I K H R C S I
S M E E L H V P O F E A E O G
L D A E T E S R M C F A I L H
Y I T S Y E T A R U N O K N T
Y O N A K R N O L C P T C Y M
N H R U E I W D E F G S C D A
J D D A S T N I A S L L A N R
A N T S H A R V E S T E D A E
W I T C H S E M U T S O C C D
Y D O O L B L A C K C A T D F

Enter the unused letters from the puzzle, in order:

— — — — —

— — — —

— — — — —

Copy boxed letters to form your hidden message:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Governor Hochul Warns New Yorkers About Scam Texts and Imitation Websites Seeking Personal Information

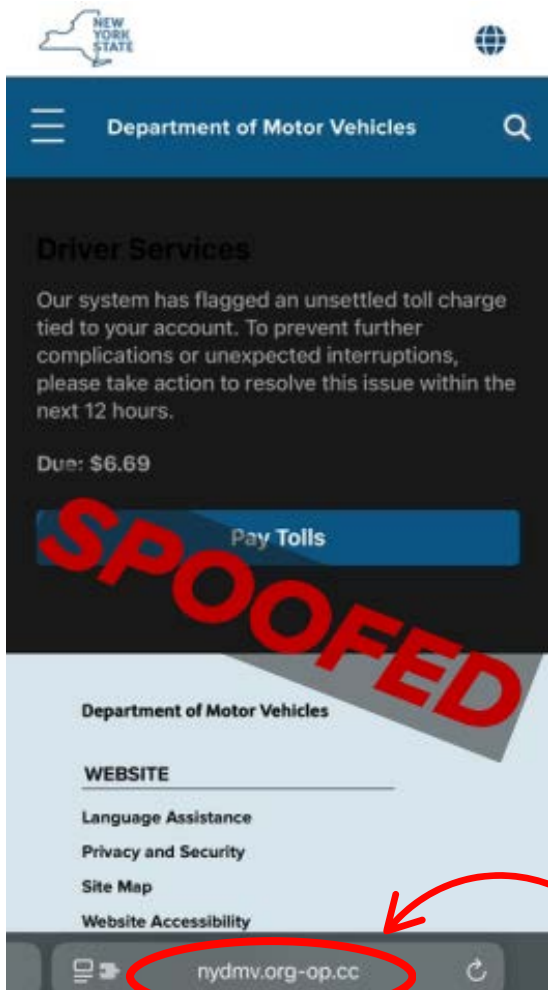
Scams Claim Customer Owes Fines for Traffic Tickets or E-Z Pass Fees

'Spoofed' Websites Are Designed to Look Like Official DMV or Toll Collection Web Pages

Governor Kathy Hochul today alerted New Yorkers to the newest efforts to steal their personal information by people pretending to be the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles or tolling agencies. The culprits design phony websites and phishing text messages to look legitimate, all to trick people into providing personal information that can be used to commit identity theft and fraud.

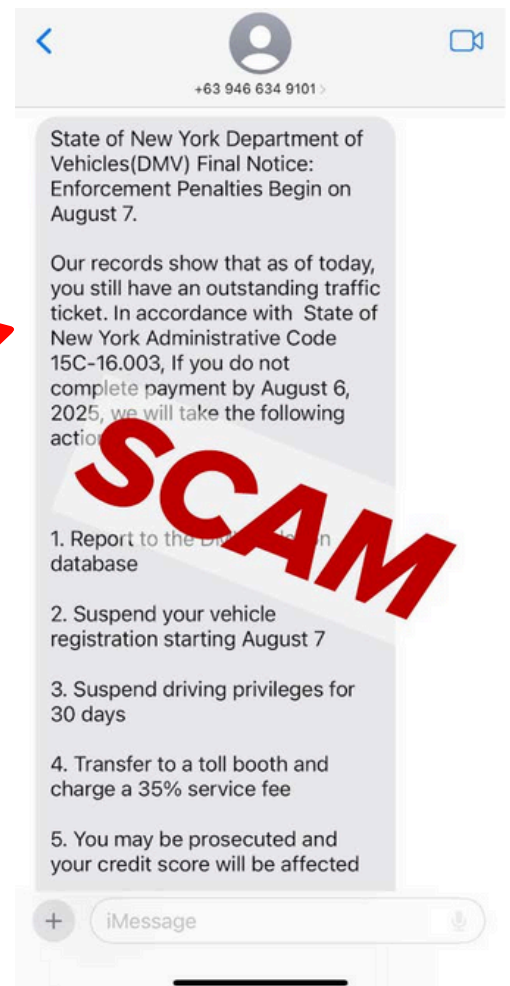
Scammers often target older adults and other vulnerable New Yorkers, using urgent language to pressure victims into acting quickly. New Yorkers are urged to check in with relatives, friends or neighbors who may be at greater risk of falling victim to these schemes.

The scams claim to be from DMV and that a driver's license is about to be suspended. A very short window of time is then given for payment. Previous scams have claimed that E-ZPass accounts were about to be suspended. **The official DMV website is dmv.ny.gov.**



The DMV & E-Z Pass will NEVER text you!

**Pay attention to the website domain!
The official DMV website is dmv.ny.gov.**



The New York State Department of Information Technology Services offers this advice on avoiding these phishing attacks:

- Be cautious about all communications you receive, including those that claim to be from "trusted entities." Be careful when clicking any links contained within those messages. If in doubt, do not click.
- Do not send your personal information via email. Legitimate businesses will not ask users to send sensitive personal information through email.
- Keep an eye out for telltale signs: poor spelling or grammar, the use of threats, or the URL does not match that of the legitimate site.
- Be wary of how much information you post online. The less information you post, the less data you make available to a cybercriminal for use in developing a potential attack or scam.
- If in doubt, call E-ZPass at 1-800-333-8655 or Tolls by Mail at 1-844-826-8400 for assistance.

New York State Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Mark J.F. Schroeder said, "DMV does not send texts to our customers demanding immediate payment, and our website provides information at the top to help users know it is legitimate." If you provided personal information through one of these scams, you should review your financial account statements to check for unauthorized charges."

New York State Thruway Authority Executive Director Frank G. Hoare said, "The Thruway Authority is committed to the safety and protection of our customers' personal information. The increase of text message scams and other fraudulent attempts by scammers to collect personal data puts consumers at risk. We strongly encourage everyone to stay informed about these scams to protect their personal data. When in doubt, customers can contact E-ZPass or Tolls by Mail directly, over the phone or on the official website, before clicking any link sent via text message."

MTA Bridges and Tunnels President Catherine Sheridan said, "If people receive a text from an unknown number instructing them to pay the Congestion Relief Zone toll, it is not an authorized communication from E-ZPass or the MTA. Text messaging scams from "NY Toll Services" or other fictitious names are seeking to collect tolls for the Congestion Relief Zone. We advise you to not access any links sent within the message or engage with the message."

Smishing: Package Tracking Text Scams

United States Postal Inspection Service | Updated 5/19/25

Have you received unsolicited mobile text messages with an unfamiliar or strange web link that indicates a USPS delivery requires a response from you?

If you never signed up for a USPS tracking request for a specific package, then don't click the link! **This type of text message is a scam called smishing.**

Smishing is a form of phishing that involves a text message or phone number.

Victims will typically receive a deceptive text message that is intended to lure the recipient into providing their personal or financial information. These scammers often attempt to disguise themselves as a government agency, bank, or other company to lend legitimacy to their claims.

USPS utilizes the 5-digit short codes to send and receive SMS to and from mobile phones.

The Postal Service offers free tools to track specific packages, but customers are required to either register online, or initiate a text message, and provide a tracking number.

USPS does not charge for these services! USPS will not send customers text messages or e-mails without a customer first requesting the service with a tracking number, and it will NOT contain a link. So, if you did not initiate the tracking request for a specific package directly from USPS and it contains a link: **don't click the link!**

If you suspect the text message you have received is suspicious but are expecting a parcel, please do not click on any links. Rather, report it and visit USPS.com from your mobile device or computer for tracking and additional resources.

If you have interacted with the website that the scammers provided, even if you did not click "submit", please notify your bank or financial institution.

Report to the scam to the United States Postal Inspection at **uspis.gov/report** or send a email to **spam@uspis.gov**

The USPS package arrived at the warehouse but could not be delivered due to incomplete address information. Please confirm your address in the link.

http://usps.rps.sei/ **SCAM**

(Please reply Y, then exit the text message and open it again to activate the link, or copy the link and open it in your Safari browser).

The USPS team wishes you a wonderful day!



Think

Verify the identity of the sender and take the time to ask yourself why the sender is asking for your information.



Don't Reply

And don't click on links provided in text messages. Doing so can install malware, take you to fake websites that look real, and steal your information.



Delete Text Messages

Legitimate companies will not ask you to confirm or provide personal information.



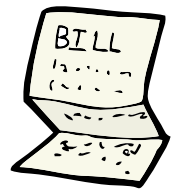
Report

Contact the bank, government agency, or company that the scam artist is impersonating so it can alert others and work with law enforcement to investigate the activity.



Block Spam Messages

Call your carrier's customer service number (usually 611) and instruct them to "Block all text messages sent to you as email" and "Block all multimedia messages sent to you as email." You also might be able to log into your account and activate these blocks there.



Review Your Cell Phone Bill

Regularly monitor your bill for unauthorized charges, and report them to your carrier.



Treat Your Personal Information Like Cash

Your Social Security number, credit card numbers, and other personally identifiable information can be used to steal your money or open new accounts in your name without your knowledge or approval.



Security Updates

Use the same safety and security practices on your cell phone as you do on your computer: keep your security software and applications up to date; be cautious of text messages from unknown senders, as well as unusual text messages from senders you do know.

Fake USPS® Emails

United States Postal Inspection Service | Updated 5/19/25

USPS® and the Postal Inspection Service are aware of the circulation of fake emails/email scams claiming to be from USPS officials including the Postmaster General.

Please know USPS officials would never reach out directly to consumers and ask for money or Personal Identifying Information (PII).

If you ever receive an email about a package delivery or unpaid online postage charges, be careful.

Some postal customers are receiving bogus emails featuring the subject line, **“Delivery Failure Notification.”**

These emails appear to be from the U.S. Postal Service® and include language regarding an unsuccessful attempt to deliver a package.

The email will prompt you to confirm your personal delivery information by clicking a button or downloading an attachment, that, when opened, can activate a virus and steal information—such as your usernames, passwords, and financial account information.

Report to the scam to the United States Postal Inspection at **uspis.gov/report** or send a email to **spam@uspis.gov**

If you receive something like this in your email, **its a scam!**



Please Confirm your address

--

DEAR CUSTOMER,

I AM [REDACTED], DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS). WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO CONTACT US FOR YOUR PARCEL THAT HAS BEEN REGISTERED WITH US FOR SHIPMENT TO YOUR RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS. WE THOUGHT THAT THE SENDER GAVE YOU OUR CONTACT DETAILS. IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW THAT A CASHIER CHECK OF \$2MILLION IS ALSO ADDED TO YOUR PARCEL.WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE CONTENT OF YOUR PARCEL IT SELF IS A MONEY ORDER WORTH \$50.000.00 US DOLLARS, \$1,000.00 US DOLLARS FOR EACH MONEY ORDER COPY ALL IN THE ENVELOPE, EMAIL ME URGENTLY WITH YOUR ADDRESS FULL NAME/ ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER. SEND THEM TO OUR EMAIL BELOW

YOURS.

[REDACTED]
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]



Senior Living Seminar

Thursday, October 16, 2025

Let us help you prepare for the next phase of your life, whether you're in retirement or planning for retirement and searching for more information about laying the foundation so that you are cared for as you age.

Samaritan Summit Village is hosting a Senior Living Seminar on **Thursday, October 16th, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Hear from professionals in senior care, legal matters, financial planning, and tour the beautiful Summit Village grounds. Speak with local community agencies that offer resources. Help prepare yourself.

**The event is free, and lunch will be provided.
Open to anyone who is planning or helping to plan senior care.**

Learn more and RSVP at
samaritanhealth.com/seniorseminar
315-785-4584

**Each participant will be
entered to win an iPad!**



Saturday

To sign up for classes and activities call 315-686-3553 or email: payntercenter@gmail.com

Watertown Senior Center October Calendar

	Wednesday 10/1	
Every Day - 9am Meet & Greet Every Day - 3pm Close	9:30am / Song Burst 11am / Chair Exercise 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 1pm / Games	9:30am / Social Hour 11am / Lifespan of Greater Rochester - Fraud Prevention 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Family Feud
<u>Sign up for OFA's Lunches at (680)222-7038</u> <u>48 Hour Prior Notice Required</u>		
Monday 10/6	Wednesday 10/8	Friday 10/10
9:30am / Trivia w/ Mike & Cee Cee 11am / Cardio Drumming 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Nickel Bingo	10am / Discover Live Tour- Singapore w/ Kyle 11am / Chair Exercise 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 1pm / Halloween Craft's (Sign Up Limit 10)	10am / Crafts w/ Mary (Sign Up Limit 8) 11am / Chair Exercise 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 12pm / \$5 Pizza Party (Sign Up at Front Desk) 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Song Burst
Monday 10/13	Wednesday 10/15	Friday 10/17
Closed For Columbus Day		
Monday 10/20	Wednesday 10/22	Friday 10/24
11am / Cardio Drumming 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch by Samaritan (Sign Up at Front Desk) 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Dr. Bilen Chokshi - Services at Samaritan - Orthopedic Services 1:30pm / Discover Live Tour- Ljubljana, Slovenia	9:30am / Chair Exercise 10:30am / PIVOT WISE Presentation Class 2 (Registration Closed) 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 1pm / Puzzle Contest (Sign Up at Front Desk)	11am / Chair Exercise 12pm / OFA Lunch 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Cornell Cooperative Extension Presentation w/ Carson
Monday 10/27	Wednesday 10/29	Friday 10/31
11am / Cardio Drumming 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean 1pm / Family Fued	9:30am / Chair Exercise 10:30am / PIVOT WISE Presentation Class 3 (Registration Closed) 12pm / OFA Lunch or BYO Lunch 1pm / Halloween Movie & Popcorn	10am / Book Club 11am / Chair Exercise 12pm / OFA Lunch 12pm / Ice Cream Social / Halloween Party 12:30pm / Basic Sign Language with Jean