

# New Milford Social Services

2 Pickett District Rd, New Milford CT 06776

November-December 2023



*The mission of New Milford Social Services is to offer resources and programs to enhance the well-being and self-sustainability of New Milford residents experiencing financial hardship by addressing basic needs including food and household self-sufficiency.*

*We support our community through empowerment, advocacy, compassion and connection to opportunities to increase the resilience of our residents in need.*



*We welcome and respect the diversity of all who enter our office.*

(P) 860-355-6079

(F) 860-355-6019

Email: [socialservices@newmilford.org](mailto:socialservices@newmilford.org)

Website: [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org)



New Milford Social Services

## Our Programs

*(\*\* Please note that some programs do have qualifying income limits)*

- **New Milford Food Bank**-for families w/children, seniors, adults and persons with disabilities who are experiencing food insecurity
- **\*\*Energy (Heating) Assistance**
- **\*\*Emergency Financial Assistance**  
[Funding is limited]
  - Rent/Mortgage
  - Home bills
  - Child Expenses
  - Medical Bills
  - Transportation Costs
  - Food & Clothing
- **\*\*Basic Need Assistance**
- **Needs Assessment, Crisis Intervention & Post-Crisis Navigation**
- **Financial Literacy Information & Education**
- **\*\*Information, Referral, & Assistance** with Local, State, Federal resources and entitlement programs
- **\*\*Renter's Rebate** for disabled renters under age 60.
- **\*\*Children & Family Programs:**
  - Baby Bundle Registration
  - Camp and Enrichment Activity Scholarships for Children [limited funding]
  - Back to School Program Registration [seasonal]
  - Winter Holiday Gifts for Children [seasonal]



*Funding sources for all programs are based on State grants or community donations. All monetary and goods donations are tax deductible*

*I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do. ~ Helen Keller*

*Greetings From New Milford Social Services!*

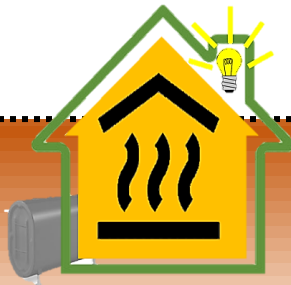
*It's here! The holiday season is upon us and, even though it took a bit longer this year, so is the cooler weather pushing us to turn up the heat. Every year we know this time of year is coming, we see it coming, it crosses our minds several times, but did we take those occasional moments to plan and prepare for a time of year that can bring so much joy for some but end with more debt and stress for many. It is not too late to consider a few tips while you prepare to celebrate, shop and entertain for the holidays. Remember the most memorable moments are based on the quality of time spent together, expressing love, friendship, and compassion- not the quantity of gifts or feasts that are shared. Even our children will remember more the time their parents sat with them, sang with them, read to them, and listened to them. Here are a few spending tips an old friend once shared with us. And from all of us to all of you- May you have a safe, peaceful and joyful Holiday Season!*

*~Ivana, Maria, Monika, Alyssa and Wanda*

*"I hope that you will find a few that will be a "YES!" for you:*

- ✓ Simplify your life (eliminate what you don't need; don't keep buying "more")
- ✓ Turn down the thermostat in the winter and up in the summer; turn the hot water thermostat down
- ✓ Keep the things you have longer; take care of things so that they don't need to be repaired/replaced
- ✓ Recycle as much as possible. Consider reusing wrapping paper, jars, shopping bags, boxes, etc.
- ✓ Don't purchase products you don't really need or use just because you have a coupon or it's on sale
- ✓ Shop with a list and stick to it and comparison shop
- ✓ Never impulse buy!
- ✓ Do holiday, birthday and other occasion shopping throughout the year and at sales
- ✓ Bring your lunch to work instead of eating out
- ✓ Cut down on restaurant and take-out meals and frozen foods; scratch cooking saves a lot of money
- ✓ Make your own greeting/holiday cards
- ✓ Shop dollar stores for wrap, gift bags, etc.
- ✓ Pay your bills on time to avoid late fees and improve your credit score (or maintain a good one!)
- ✓ Don't forget about programs such as CT Energy Assistance, Operation Fuel, New Milford Food Bank, Santa Fund. Ask us and we can help connect you!

*Most important: somehow, some way (when you get paid for a few extra hours, receive a \$ gift, etc.) build up an emergency fund so that you have a bit of money for the unexpected and can manage your money's comings and goings better!! "*



**ENERGY ASSISTANCE - HEATING AND UTILITY:**  
**Important Information!**

*New Milford Social Services is the local intake site for residents under the age of 60 seeking to apply for the following heating and utility assistance programs. Please contact our office for more information and guidelines to apply. [If you are over the age of 60, please contact the New Milford Senior Center]*

- **CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)** – *The Heating Season is Open!* If you have not done so already, please call us for a heating assistance application. **Please Do Not Wait Until You Are Out of Oil!** We are prioritizing people with deliverable fuels or those with electric heat and in crisis. Call us for an in-person appointment or for an application packet to fill out and send back to us. You will need to include all required income and relevant documentation for every member of your household. An incomplete application will slow down the process with the certifiers.
- **May 31, 2023 is the last day to apply.**
- **There is an income limit to this program: See chart below-**

**60% OF 2023 STATE MEDIAN INCOME GUIDELINES**

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Annual Income	\$41,553	\$54,338	\$67,124	\$79,910	\$92,695	\$105,481	\$107,878	\$110,275

- **NEW LOW INCOME DISCOUNT RATE-** will take effect in December 2023. If you qualify for hardship, you will qualify for either Tier 1 or Tier 2 rates. Each Tier is based on household income. Tier 1 will be a 10% discount up to a certain kilowatt based on your heat source. Tier 2 will be a 50% discount up to a certain kilowatt based on your heat source. To qualify for Tier 1- household income must be below the amounts in the above chart. To qualify for Tier 2, household income must be below 160% FPL and/or active in a qualified State/Fed program (see our office for the list).
- For **electric heated households**, we believe you will be auto-enrolled back onto the Matching Payment Program (MPP), if you are currently on it. However, **your budget will be reset and based on your Tier Rate and may look a lot different than you are used to. Do the best you can to keep up with your budget amount and contact us if you need assistance.** Until this new Tier is fully administered we are not sure of what other resources are available but we will continue to seek them out.
- Another note, **if you use Solar panels** to offset your electric bill, you may qualify for NewStart, if you fall behind in your bill. This is a new opportunity for solar households. Reach out to us and we can discuss eligibility.
- **If you are not on a budget program and are at risk of an electric shut off**, please contact us- you may qualify to be coded hardship to prevent a termination of service.
- **If your income is above 60% SMI for CEAP but below 75% SMI, you may qualify for Operation Fuel.** We are the New Milford intake site for Operation Fuel for residents under 60 years old. Operation Fuel CLOSED their season early but will reopen in January 2024. *If you are in need, sooner, please contact our office to explore other resources*

**75% OF 2023 STATE MEDIAN INCOME GUIDELINES**

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Annual Income	\$51,941	\$67,923	\$83,905	\$99,888	\$115,870	\$131,852	\$134,848	\$137,845



**OPEN ENROLLMENT**

**November 1, 2023 – January 15, 2023**

**Register for a Healthy Chat** to learn more about health and dental insurance.

Or go on their website if you are ready to apply  
**[www.accesshealthct.com](http://www.accesshealthct.com)**

**We're here to help... and all help is FREE**



**Online Chat Support**



**Free In-Person Help**



**Find Brokers and Enrollment Specialists**



**Call:  
1-855-805-4325**

CT has also launched  
**[www.health.ct.gov](http://www.health.ct.gov)** to assist you  
connecting to a full array of health  
and wellness services



**Office of Healthcare Advocate  
can help with:**

- healthcare insurance enrollment, coverage or billing questions
- claim denials or pre-authorization issues
- explanations regarding a healthcare benefit, program or coverage
- an assessment of the healthcare plans offered in Connecticut
- your rights and responsibilities as a healthcare plan member
- referral and pre-authorization procedures required by your healthcare plan
- your healthcare plan's internal and external appeals processes

Call 1-866-466-4446 or email: [Healthcare.advocate@ct.gov](mailto:Healthcare.advocate@ct.gov)



*A Message from Alyssa:*



### Is it the Winter Blues or something else?

While this time of year can be joyous for some, for many the fall and winter months can be hard. The days get shorter and colder. There are often additional time restraints and financial stressors. We don't always get enough time outdoors. Sunlight and physical activities can be limited this time of year, so it's normal to not feel your best during these months. When it starts to impact your appetite, mood and sleep it could be signs and symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). It is more common in the northern U.S. and impacts 5% of adults. Women are at a significantly higher risk of developing SAD. Most individuals start to notice symptoms between the ages of 18 and 30. In some cases SAD can be severe. Please reach out to a mental health professional if you experience symptoms such as depression and feelings of hopelessness.

The good news is that there are some very effective natural remedies, including bright light treatment. Getting plenty of rest, working on stress management, spending time outside and physical activity are all great natural ways to manage and treat SAD. New Milford Social Services is here to help connect you to resources, so please let us know if you need guidance and support.

*On Page 5 of this newsletter, we have listed some of those resources*

## Did You Know?

### Our Public Library Has A Lot to Offer for Free!



*Come and visit the New Milford Public Library—right on the Green.*

#### ❖ *There are so many fun events for kids, teens, and adults!*

We have **Storytimes** on the weekday mornings, including Spanish Story Time on Tuesdays. **For teens**, we have art and gaming programs, plus creative writing and Dungeons and Dragons. This month, there is button-making, estate planning, holiday card-making, and more for adults. We'd like to start a Chat Space program, in which Spanish speakers pair up with English speakers and practice each other's language. Please email Amy Berkun if you're interested in this program at [aberkun@biblio.org](mailto:aberkun@biblio.org). And be sure to check out our calendar of events on our website, [www.newmilfordlibrary.org](http://www.newmilfordlibrary.org)



#### ❖ *The New Milford Public Library also has many digital resources for its patrons.*

You can borrow e-books and e-audiobooks and stream movies on **Hoopla and Kanopy**, which can be accessed through our website and with your library card. If you need a library card, you can fill out the online form on our website—or stop by the library and get your card on the spot. If you need any technology help, you can make an appointment with Connor, our digital literacy specialist. Are you job hunting? There is a program called **JobNow** on the library website that shows you how to create a resume, practice interview skills, and more.

*We also have resources on citizenship, travel, and test preparation guides.*



#### ❖ *Of course the library has books to borrow, too!*

We have many titles in other languages, French and Spanish, to name a few. We also have an extensive collection of foreign films to check out. We strive to provide anything that people need to make their lives richer. We even have “things” for you to borrow in our Library of Things, including Hot Spots, board games, and much more. Call 860-355-1191 with any questions you have—or to request materials.

***Stop by the library anytime! We're open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10:00am-5:00pm; Tuesdays and Wednesdays 10:00am- 8:00pm; and Saturdays from 9:00am-5:00pm. We'll have a smile waiting for you!***

## Food Programs of New Milford Social Services:



"This institution is an equal opportunity provider"

A choice food pantry serving local individuals, seniors & families with children who are food insecure. Walk-in and choose from many nutritional and traditional items.

We follow SWAP guidelines: **S**upporting **W**ellness **A**t **P**antries by offering nutritional products and information

Food Bank days for distribution:  
We offer Open Distribution HOURS  
**On Thursdays: 9 a.m. -4 p.m.**  
**Or by appointment M, T, W, F,**  
**including late appts.**  
**@ New Milford Social Services**  
**2 Pickett District Road**

Nutritional  
Buddies  
Recipe on  
pg. 5!



**The New Milford Food Bank is CLOSED on Thanksgiving Day 11/23.**

December days are Thursday, 12/7, 12/14, 12/21, 12/28.

**Please Keep in Mind that if the Weather is Bad (Snow, Ice, etc.), we may have to close or delay our opening.**

**We post these warnings on CT News 30 on Channel 4 and CT CBS News on Channel 3.**

Check out Page 5 for a delicious holiday recipe.  
*Bet you never tried this before!*

## Other Local Food Programs:



**Our Daily Bread**  
**A mission of NMUMC**  
68 Danbury Road  
New Milford, CT 06776  
860-354-4596

Food Distribution:

Thursdays 3pm-6pm, Upper Level

*Our mission provides food and personal items once a week for any individual who is in need.*



**Camella's Cupboard**  
**Food Pantry for Children**  
New Milford, CT 06776

*Serving Families with Children in the Greater New Milford area who are struggling with food insecurity.*

Food Distribution: Fridays  
4:30pm-6pm, Drive up.

Register through their website:  
[www.camellascupboard.com](http://www.camellascupboard.com)

**United Way of Coastal & Western CT**  
**HEALTHY SAVINGS** Healthy Savings Program:

Receive \$10 of free produce every week at participating grocery stores.

Sign up through Prosperi~Key (a digital marketplace for families living paycheck to paycheck)

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



Schedule



**MOBILE FOOD PANTRY- In NEW MILFORD**

2x's a Month on Wednesdays at 4:30pm.

@ Faith Church, 600 Danbury Rd #1,  
New Milford, CT 06776

**Loaves and Fishes Hospitality House**  
**Of New Milford**



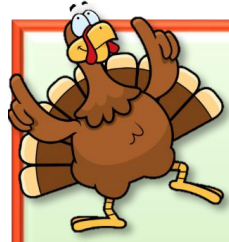
*We are neighbors helping neighbors who feed the hungry, empower the weak, and nourish the soul.*

Daily Meals served 4:30pm-5:30pm at our kitchen at 40 Main St, New Milford

**Members of:**

**NEW MILFORD**  
**FIT**  
Food Insecurity Team





## Did You Register?

**HOLIDAY PROGRAMS!**  
Thanksgiving Distribution is  
Monday, 11/20 from 11pm-5pm.  
You Must Be Registered\*

Santa Fund Distribution is Tuesday, 12/12  
from 9am to 5pm.  
You Must Be Registered\*

Disabled Adult Holiday Gift Cards will be  
ready on Thursday, 12/21 during food bank.  
You Must Be Registered\*

\*Proof of income and residency is required for  
these programs.

If you have not shared your 2023 income with  
our office, now is the time to do it!



## NMFB "BUDDY" RECIPE OF THE MONTH!

### PUMPKIN PUREE CHILI!

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 diced bell pepper
- 1 can of beans (Your Choice: Kidney, Pinto, Black or our little Buddy the Great Northern White Bean!)
- 1 can dice tomatoes (14.5 oz.)
- 1 can pumpkin puree
- 2 cups water or Broth
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp cumin
- Optional: 1/3 cup finely chopped walnuts
- Optional: 1 tbsp. chili in adobo



#### Instructions:

Add all ingredients into a soup pot!  
Bring to a boil then cover and simmer for 25 minutes  
Serve hot with sour cream, cilantro, avocado and even  
tortilla chips!

Enjoy!



## DID YOU SIGN UP FOR CT'S FREE DISCOUNT PRESCRIPTION CARD!!!!



CT residents can go online to ArrayRx: [www.arrayrxcard.com](http://www.arrayrxcard.com) to sign up for a **FREE prescription discount card** that can be used at ~98% of CT pharmacies. A valid physical CT address and an email address are required to enroll.

A digital card can be downloaded to your smartphone wallet or you can request an email of it that you can show the pharmacy. You can sign up each member of your family, including your children.

Present the card when purchasing prescription drugs to receive savings up to 80% on certain medications. All FDA-approved drugs are eligible for a discount.

ArrayRx  
Sign up Rx Tools FAQs Login

Sign up to get your digital discount card!

Already a member? Access your card by logging in to your Member Dashboard or recover a forgotten username/password

Your name and birthday will need to match your prescription to use your discount card at the pharmacy.

First name\*

Last name\*

Email address\*

Re-type email \*

Date of birth  
Month \* Day \* Year \*

Using this digital card can help you save up to 80% on medications

- All Connecticut, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington residents qualify
- No membership fee to join
- No age or income restrictions
- Only takes a minute to enroll
- All FDA-approved prescriptions are eligible for discounts
- Each user signs up and gets their own digital card with a unique ID number



## We all can benefit from support-

### Resources for Mental Health Support

- Call or Text **988** for Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- CTSafeConnect:** CT's Domestic Violence Resource Line (888)774-2900
- Greater Danbury Domestic Violence Hotline** (203)731-5206
- Call **211** for Mobile crisis
- Regional Hotline** for Western CT Mental Health Network (888)447-3339
- Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals**  
-25 South Street, Litchfield, CT 06759  
(860)567-44437
- The Fortitude Center for Mental Health and Addiction Counseling:** 143 West Street Suite V, New Milford, CT 06776  
(860)799-5750
- Apex Community Care** for substance abuse, medical services etc. 16 Hospital Ave. Danbury, CT 06810 (203)778-2437
- The Center for Empowerment & Education-** offers free, confidential counseling and several support groups including divorce, abusive relationships and past trauma, and surviving sexual assault for women and men. For more info, call 203-731-5200; [www.thecenterct.org](http://www.thecenterct.org)
- New Milford Youth Agency:** 860-210-2030
- Family & Children Aid:** NM office offers many services for parents & children: 860-354-8556.
- New Milford Hospital Behavioral Health:** Located at 23 Poplar St., 860-210-5350



*A Special Message to our Diverse Community from our Social Worker:*

**María De Oliveira [Habla Español] [Fala Português]**  
**860-355-6079 Ext 4 o mdeoliveira@newmilford.org**

*Un mensaje especial a nuestra diversa comunidad de nuestro trabajador social*

Conéctese a la biblioteca, hay excelentes recursos para todos y todas las edades. ¡Hay tantos eventos divertidos para niños, adolescentes y adultos! Tenemos Hora de Cuentos las mañanas de lunes a viernes, incluida Hora de Cuentos en Español los martes. Para adolescentes, tenemos programas de arte y juegos, además de escritura creativa. Este mes, hay confección de botones, planificación patrimonial, elaboración de tarjetas navideñas y más para adultos. Nos gustaría iniciar un programa Chat Space, en el que las personas que hablan Español se juntan con los que hablan Inglés para practicar el lenguaje de cada uno. Envíe un correo electrónico a Amy Berkun si está interesado en este programa en [aberkun@biblio.org](mailto:aberkun@biblio.org). Y asegúrese de consultar nuestro calendario de eventos en nuestro sitio web, [www.newmilfordlibrary.org](http://www.newmilfordlibrary.org). La biblioteca pública de New Milford también tiene muchos recursos digitales para sus usuarios. Puede pedir prestados libros electrónicos y audiolibros electrónicos y transmitir películas en Hoopla y Kanopy, que pueden ser. Se accede a través de nuestra web y con el carnet de la biblioteca. Si necesita una tarjeta de la biblioteca, puede completarla el formulario en línea en nuestro sitio web, o visite la biblioteca y obtenga su tarjeta en el momento. Si necesita ayuda tecnológica, puede programar una cita con Connor, nuestro especialista en alfabetización digital. ¿Eres ¿la búsqueda de empleo? Hay un programa llamado JobNow en el sitio web de la biblioteca que le muestra cómo crear un currículum, practicar habilidades para entrevistas y más. También tenemos recursos sobre ciudadanía, viajes y guías de preparación para exámenes. Hay una variedad de libros para prestar, incluidos diferentes idiomas. Hot Spots, juegos de mesa y mucho más. Llame al 860-355-1191 si tiene alguna pregunta o para solicitar materiales.

*Uma mensagem especial para nossa comunidade diversificada de nosso assistente social*

Conecte-se à biblioteca, há ótimos recursos para todos e todas as idades. Há tantos eventos divertidos para crianças, adolescentes e adultos! Temos Story Time de segunda a sexta de manhã, incluindo o Story Time em espanhol às terças-feiras. Para adolescentes, temos programas de arte e jogos, bem como escrita criativa e Dungeons and Dragons. Este mês, há confecção de botões, planejamento imobiliário, confecção de cartões de Natal e muito mais para adultos. Gostaríamos de iniciar um programa Chat Space, no qual pessoas que falam espanhol se reúnem com quem fala inglês para praticar o idioma uns dos outros. Envie um e-mail para Amy Berkun se você estiver interessado neste programa. em [aberkun@biblio.org](mailto:aberkun@biblio.org). E não deixe de conferir nosso calendário de eventos em nosso website, [www.newmilfordlibrary.org](http://www.newmilfordlibrary.org). A Biblioteca Pública de New Milford também possui muitos recursos digitais para seus usuários. Você pode emprestar e-books e e-audiolivros e transmitir filmes no Hoopla e Kanopy, que podem ser. Ele é acessado através do nosso site e com o cartão da biblioteca. Se precisar de um cartão de biblioteca, você pode preenchê-lo o formulário online em nosso site, ou visite a biblioteca e retire seu cartão na hora. Se precisar de ajuda tecnológica, você pode agendar uma consulta com Connor, nosso especialista em alfabetização digital. São Procura de emprego? Existe um programa chamado JobNow no site da biblioteca que mostra como criar um currículo, praticar habilidades de entrevista e muito mais. Também temos recursos sobre cidadania, viagens e guias de preparação para testes. Há uma variedade de livros para emprestar, incluindo diferentes idiomas. Hot Spots, jogos de tabuleiro e muito mais. Ligue para 860-355-1191 se tiver alguma dúvida ou para solicitar materiais.

“It is written that ‘Everywhere, hands lie open to catch us when we fall.’ Let us give thanks today for this invisible support.” ~author unknown



**Fechada Cerrada**

**This office will be CLOSED on the following days:**



Thursday, November 23, 2023

Monday, December 25, 2023

Friday, November 24, 2023

Monday, January 1, 2023



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

860-355-6079

NEW MILFORD SOCIAL SERVICES  
2 PICKETT DISTRICT RD  
NEW MILFORD CT. 06776



PRESORT STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
NEW MILFORD CT 06776  
PERMIT NO. 10