



# MONDAY ALERT

New York State Alliance *fcr* Retired Americans

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## 211 New York State

Finding the right service to meet your need can be confusing, frustrating, and time consuming, to the point where you feel like giving up. 211 is an easy one-stop, free, confidential connection to local services that help people with food, housing, utilities, elder care, health & mental health, substance use, disaster assistance, and more.

Our regional 211 providers cover 100% of New York State 24/7/365. Help is available by phone, text, and online guided searches. In 2024, the 211 NY contact centers handled over 2.045 million requests for help with needs like food, housing, homeless services, mental health, and transportation.

211 also supported the disaster response and recovery efforts after the 2024 tornados in Rome and Canastota as well as the flooding in the Southern Tier.

New Yorkers can reach 211 by phone, text, or online chat to get connected with nearby services in their community. Assistance is available in multiple languages, and all calls are free and confidential.

For more information, visit [www.211nys.org](http://www.211nys.org) or simply dial 2-1-1 to speak with a trained specialist today.

211 NY is a subsidiary of the [United Way of New York State](http://UnitedWayofNewYorkState.org).

**State Retirement Systems Have Valuable Pension Information**

## Available for New Year Review

The start of the new year is always an opportunity for resolutions about how to improve your life and circumstances in the year ahead.

For Retirees, taking some time early in the new year to be sure you are maximizing your retirement benefits, tax circumstances and ease of access can be beneficial.

The public Retirement Systems has some great information and resources to help you be sure you are getting the best out of your benefits and circumstances:

<https://www.osc.ny.gov/retirement/retirees>

<https://www.nystrs.org/retirees/>

## Update From Our Partners at LiveOn NY

### Federal Updates

**Federal Budget:** This week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan \$180 billion spending package by a 397-28 vote, rejecting steep proposed cuts and funding parts of the government, including the Justice and Commerce Departments. The measure now awaits action in the United States Senate, and the White House has indicated the president would sign it. With the January 30 deadline approaching, lawmakers face another round of high-stakes negotiations, and it is possible that Congress will need to pass another short-term or possibly year-long continuing resolution to prevent another government shutdown. Please see USAging's guides here on how to advocate for Aging Specific Community programs [here](#).

**TANF Funds:** Five Democratic-led states—New York, California, Colorado, Illinois, and Minnesota—have sued the federal administration over the freezing of roughly \$10 billion in federal funding for child care subsidies, social services, and cash assistance for low-income families. The federal lawsuit argues that the funding

pause by the Department of Health and Human Services is unlawful and threatens critical programs serving hundreds of thousands of households. In New York alone, more than 200,000 families rely on these funds, which support childcare, social services, cash assistance, and Kinship Care programs that help relatives care for children who cannot remain with their parents or grandparents. State officials warn that New York could exhaust funding for these programs by the end of January if the freeze is not lifted, placing vulnerable families at immediate risk. [See NY Attorney General James announcement here.](#)

**Rural Health Grants:** According to Medicare Right's Center, late last month, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced funding awards to all 50 states through a new Rural Health Transformation Program, created as part of the Republican-passed H.R. 1 amid concerns over its impact on rural hospitals. While promoted as a way to offset harm from the bill, the \$50 billion program falls far short of compensating for nearly \$1 trillion in proposed Medicaid cuts and approximately \$186 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reductions. Critics note that many of the funds are not specifically targeted to rural communities, limiting the program's ability to protect rural health systems and access to care. [Please see this article from Politico about New York's funding.](#)

**ACA Extensions:** A group of 17 House Republicans joined House Democrats to vote for a measure which would restore ACA subsidies that lapsed at the end of 2025. All Democratic Representatives voted for the extension. **Three NYS Republican Congressional Representatives joined 14 from across the country in voting for the clean three year extension of the subsidy,** Nick LaLota (NY 1), Andrew Garbarino (NY 2) and Mike Lawler (NY 17) who also signed on to the discharge petition to get this issue to the floor over the Speakers blockage. **The other four NYS Republicans voted against extending the subsidy to prevent premiums from doubling or more.** They were Nicole Malliotakis (NY 11), Elise Stefanik (NY 21), Nick Langworthy (NY 23) and Claudia Tenney (NY 24) According to NPR, this bill is likely to fail in the Senate, but a bipartisan group of Senators say they are getting close to a compromise bill. [More on the extensions on NPR.](#)

**HUD Homelessness Funding:** In late December, a federal district court [issued a](#)

[preliminary injunction](#) in litigation over the Department of Housing and Urban Development's efforts to overhaul its primary homeless assistance program. HUD is seeking to upend the Continuum of Care (CoC) program by slashing funds for permanent supportive housing (PSH) and enacting other sweeping changes around homelessness funding. [The court's order](#) temporarily blocks HUD from proceeding with these proposals. Congress, meanwhile, is still considering measures to renew current CoC grants for another 12 months as part of an appropriations bill. Extending current grants would ensure stability for the CoC program this year and delay any harmful changes. HUD's proposed cuts to PSH would disproportionately harm older adults, who are the fastest-growing group among people experiencing homelessness. [Read more from Justice in Aging](#) and [urge Congress today to protect PSH and CoC funding.](#)

## **New York to Improve and Adequately Fund Universal Pre-K To Relieve Child Care Strain on New York Families while Two New Studies Detail the Challenges of Family Elder Care**

The well-respected Fiscal Policy Institute is applauding an historic agreement between New York Governor Kathy Hochul and newly' elected New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani to improve access to affordable, high quality childcare.

The issue is particularly relevant for New York's Seniors since a significant percentage of families rely on older family members to provide child care support.

The agreement includes expanding Universal pre-Kindergarten access and ensuring that it is adequately funded.

FPI has conducted significant research on the value and relationship of child care support and New York's economic vitality. Learn more: <https://fiscalpolicy.org/a-tax-plan-for-statewide-universal-childcare>

Meanwhile, many families also feel the strain of providing elder care and support for family members and two new studies demonstrate the broad and sizable challenge.

According to review by the Center for Retirement Research, the latest updates to

ongoing research on elder care trends shows a number of fresh insights, particularly involving the use of technology to provide assistance and maintain contact: <https://crr.bc.edu/family-caregivers-how-many-and-who-are-they/>

## **Media Reports Reveal How “Social Security Has Gotten Worse Under Trump”**

The Social Security Administration’s (SSA) ability to serve the public has been significantly diminished due to staffing cuts and policies implemented by the Trump Administration, according to internal SSA data and interviews published in *Newsweek* and *The Washington Post* last week.

Nearly 7,000 workers, about 12% of the SSA workforce, have been forced out of the agency since January 2025. As a result, the remaining workforce has struggled to keep up with the agency’s workload. *The Washington Post*’s analysis found record backlogs of approximately 6 million pending cases in SSA processing centers and another 12 million field office transactions. An estimated 25 million beneficiaries are either getting disconnected or never receiving a callback, and there is only one field office employee for every 4,000 beneficiaries on average.

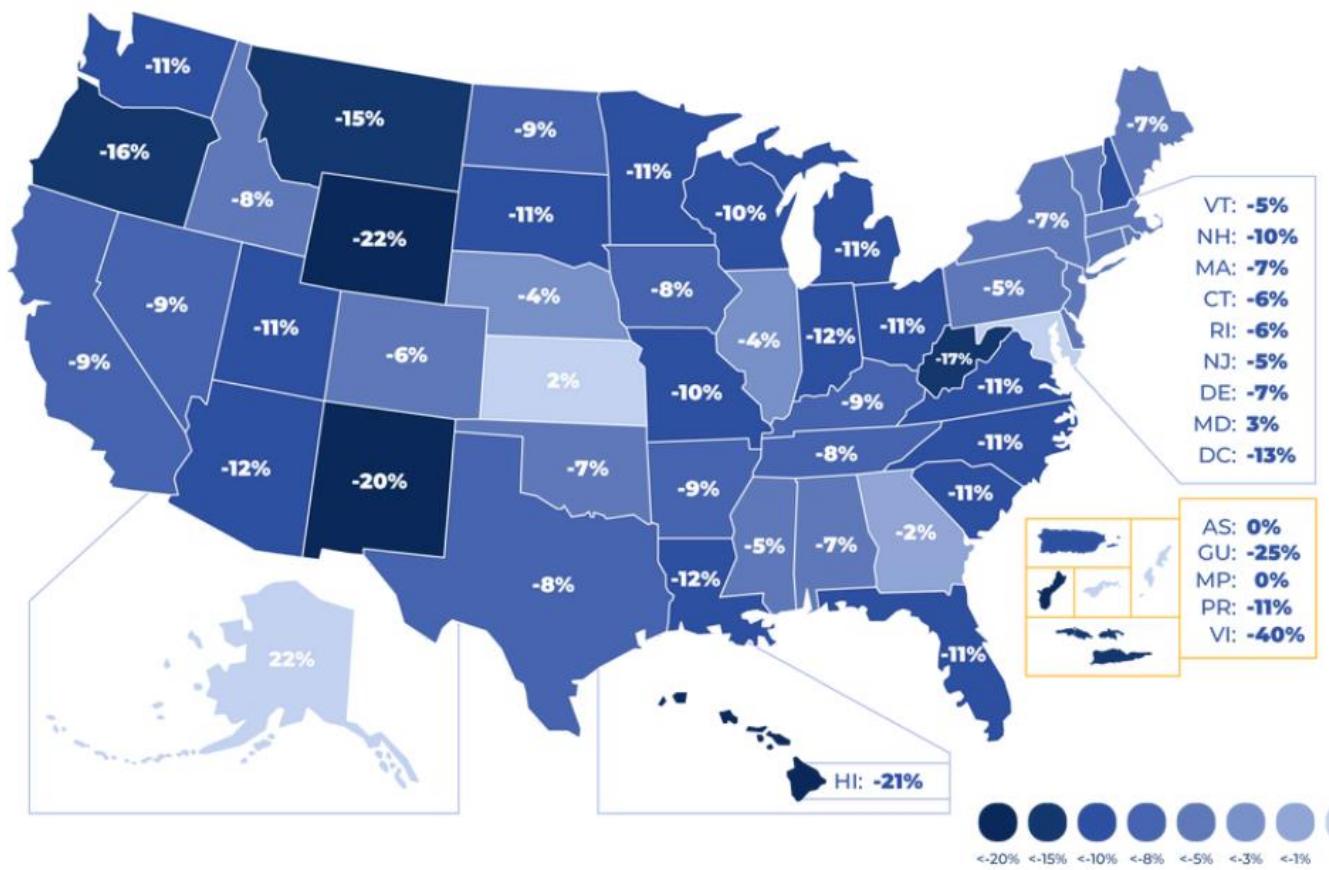
The impact of the staff cuts varies by state. Wyoming, for example, went from one field office worker per 5,814 beneficiaries in March 2024 to one per 7,429 in August 2025, a 28 percent increase in caseload per worker. Hawaii, New Mexico, West Virginia, and Oregon also experienced staffing losses of close to or higher than 20 percent.

SSA officials claim that customer service has improved because wait times for many callers have reached single digits. However, that figure fails to account for the time it takes to actually receive a callback or whether beneficiaries are able to get their issues resolved. SSA staff say the current culture emphasizes increasing the number of calls handled rather than improving call quality.

“Retirees paid into Social Security with every paycheck. We earned our benefits, pay for the operations of the SSA, and deserve better,” said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “This situation is intolerable for beneficiaries and for workers at the SSA who are trying their best to keep the agency afloat. We call on every member of Congress to

pass strong legislation requiring the Administration to fully staff the SSA and keep field offices open before even more damage is done.”

## FIGURE A: PERCENT CHANGE IN ACTIVE SSA FIELD OFFICE WORKERS BY STATE OR TERRITORY, MARCH 2024-AUGUST 2025



Source: Strategic Organizing Center

## House Passes Measure to Extend Affordable Care Act Subsidies as Senators Work on Possible Compromise

On Thursday, the U.S. House of Representatives [voted](#) 230 to 196 to renew the Affordable Care Act tax credits, which expired on January 1. Seventeen House Republicans joined Democrats to pass the so-called “clean” extension, which calls for continuing the subsidies for three more years without any changes.

Democratic leaders in the U.S. Senate are already urging colleagues to pass the House

bill, but it's unlikely given GOP leadership's opposition. A group of Senators led by Senator Bernie Moreno (OH) is working on a possible compromise that would extend tax credits for two years, add an income cap, and provide more Health Spending Account (HSA) options.

Since the subsidies expired, 22 million Americans who purchase health insurance through the ACA exchanges have seen their premiums spike. Researchers estimate that premiums could [skyrocket](#) from an average of \$888 last year to \$1,904 if the tax credits are not renewed.

"We're grateful that a majority of House members took action to help Americans get the health care they need today," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "We urge Senators to follow suit and ensure that Americans have access to quality, affordable health care."

## **Reminder: Alliance National Membership Meeting is this April**

The Alliance looks forward to seeing you at our National Membership Meeting in April at the recently renovated [Sahara hotel](#) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Come celebrate the Alliance's 25th anniversary and chart our path forward in fighting for retirement security and older Americans!



**The event will kick off with a late afternoon welcome reception on Monday, April**

**27, and concludes by 12 PM on Thursday, April 30.** Attendees will elect the Alliance's officers, participate in special workshops, learn about emerging issues and what's at stake in the 2026 elections, and ways to grow our retiree activism. They will also attend a special "Senior Prom Ball and Dinner" celebrating the Alliance's anniversary.

The registration fee is \$150 and covers all meeting activities and most meals. The hotel rate is \$69 per night, plus tax, with no resort fee and free parking.

Final registration details and the code to use when booking your hotel room will be available later this month. In the meantime, please contact Joni Jones at [jjones@retiredamericans.org](mailto:jjones@retiredamericans.org) or call 888-373-6497 with any questions.

**[Click here to get an email as soon as registration becomes available.](#)**

## **You're Invited: Special Webinar to Stop the Scam and Protect Older Adults from Social Media and AI-Driven Fraud**

Scams targeting older adults are rapidly evolving, fueled by social media platforms and increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence tools. From fake ads and impersonation messages to cloned voices and deceptive videos, scammers are exploiting trust and technology at unprecedented levels. Older adults are being disproportionately harmed, yet education, consumer protections, and accountability have not kept pace.

Join us **January 29 at 4 PM ET** for a webinar introducing the Alliance's **Stop the Scam Campaign**, a year-long public education initiative to raise awareness, share real experiences, and mobilize action to protect older adults from social media and AI-driven scams.

During this session, participants will:

- Learn how social media and AI technologies are being used to target and deceive older adults
- Hear how organizations, advocates, and community leaders can participate, share stories, and help amplify prevention efforts
- Understand how education and collective action can support stronger

protections and safer online environments

This webinar is open to all. Together, we can raise awareness, protect our loved ones, and help stop the scams before more harm is done.

Registration Link: <https://www.mobilize.us/allianceforretiredamericans/event/883590/>

***KFF Health News: Solving the Home Care Quandary***  
**By Paula Span**

You're ready to leave the hospital, but you don't feel able to care for yourself at home yet.

Or, you've completed a couple of weeks in rehab. Can you handle your complicated medication regimen, along with shopping and cooking?

Perhaps you fell in the shower, and now your family wants you to arrange help with bathing and getting dressed.

There are facilities that provide such help, of course, but most older people don't want to go there. They want to stay at home; that's the problem.