



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Talk Tuesdays

Student Attendance, Engagement, and Support Series

February 22, 2022

Please [sign-in](#) using the chat - include your name, title, district/school or agency.

Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with SERC



***Notice: This meeting is
being recorded.***

Introductions

Please share in chat:

- Name, position, district
- Take a few minutes to consider how you feel about school climate and attendance in February compared to January? In the chat, add a few words, “What are your hopes for March?”



Checklist

1. My school/district has regular **attendance team meetings**.
2. We **unpack, analyze, and share our attendance data** with the community on a frequent basis.
3. We **use a tiered approach** to improving attendance, engagement, and school climate.
4. We engage in a **root cause analysis** to determine the appropriate research-based or promising interventions to use at each tier.
5. We regularly **monitor our progress**.
6. We take a **WHOLE child / WHOLE school approach** to improving attendance, engagement and school climate.



Agenda

1. *Welcome*

Stephen Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, SERC

2. *What's New at CSDE and Partners*

Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE

3. *Establishing Strong Community Partnerships to Strengthen Student Engagement through Mentoring*

Carli Rocha-Reaes, Director of School Counseling, Bridgeport Public Schools
Aristede Hill, Program Manager, Mentoring Services

4. *Discussion*

5. *Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings*

Notice: This meeting is being recorded.



WHAT'S NEW AT CSDE AND PARTNERS

BOOKMARK: WWW.CT.GOV/SDE



What's New at CSDE



[Superintendent's Digest
\(ct.gov\)](#)



February 18, 2022

- [Press release: Connecticut Department of Public Health and Connecticut State Department of Education Release Updated School Guidance](#)
 - [Transitioning to a Model of Routine Respiratory Disease Prevention and Enhanced Outbreak Management and Control for COVID-19 in PreK-12 School Settings](#)
 - [Considerations for Boards of Education, District Administrators, and other Local Decision-Makers Regarding Potential Changes to School COVID-19 Policies and Practices](#)

February 17, 2022

- [Phase 3 Test Kit Allocation](#)
- [Phase 3 Distribution Instructions for COVID-19 Self-Test Kits for Connecticut School Students and Staff](#)



February 15, 2022

- Important Updates: [Executive Order 13G – Vaccination of Covered Employees](#) and [Press Release: Statewide School Mask Requirements](#)



Press Release: DPH & CSDE Release Updated School Guidance



[DPH And CSDE Release New School COVID-19 Guidance \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/dph/press-releases/2022/02/22-dph-csde-release-new-school-covid-19-guidance)

HARTFORD, Conn. —The Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Connecticut State Department of Education today released two COVID-19 guidance documents for use in PreK-12 school settings.

- The first guidance document ***assists schools with transitioning to a model for COVID-19 management that aligns with the state’s public health approach to the routine management of respiratory viral diseases.***
- The second document includes ***questions to consider when contemplating potential changes to COVID-19 policies including universal masking in schools or transitioning to “mask optional” policies. The determination on whether to require masks in schools can be made at the local level effective Feb. 28, 2022.***
- Before Feb. 28, school districts can expect to receive additional shipments of self-tests to distribute two kits per student and staff member. Each kit contains two tests. In schools discontinuing universal indoor masking beginning Feb. 28, kits should be used by all staff and students to self-test just prior to the lifting of universal indoor masking. Ideally, one test should be performed at home in the morning prior to leaving for school on the first day optional masking is implemented.
- Given the widespread availability of COVID-19 vaccines, at-home testing and medications, our communities can begin to transition to these updated models of COVID-19 management. This guidance was shared late Friday afternoon with all districts and schools throughout the state’s extensive network of superintendents, school medical advisors, school nurses, local school board members, local health directors, and others who make up the school ecosystem. The guidance documents are posted on the DPH website:
 - **[“Considerations for Boards of Education, District Administrators, and other Local Decision-Makers Regarding Potential Changes to School COVID-19 Policies and Practices”](#)**
 - **[“Transitioning to a Model of Routine Respiratory Disease Prevention and Enhanced Outbreak Management and Control for COVID-19 in PreK-12 School Settings”](#)**



Track Data Early and Often...

Now on EdSight



Just released:
January 2022

2020-21 Chronic Absence Rates



- State
- District
- School
- Student groups (Els, SWDs, Grade, F/R Meals)

January 2021 Attendance Data

- Attendance Rates for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab (.xlsx)
- Chronic Absence Rates and Remote Attendance Information for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab (.xlsx)
- Attendance Rates for Schools (.xlsx)



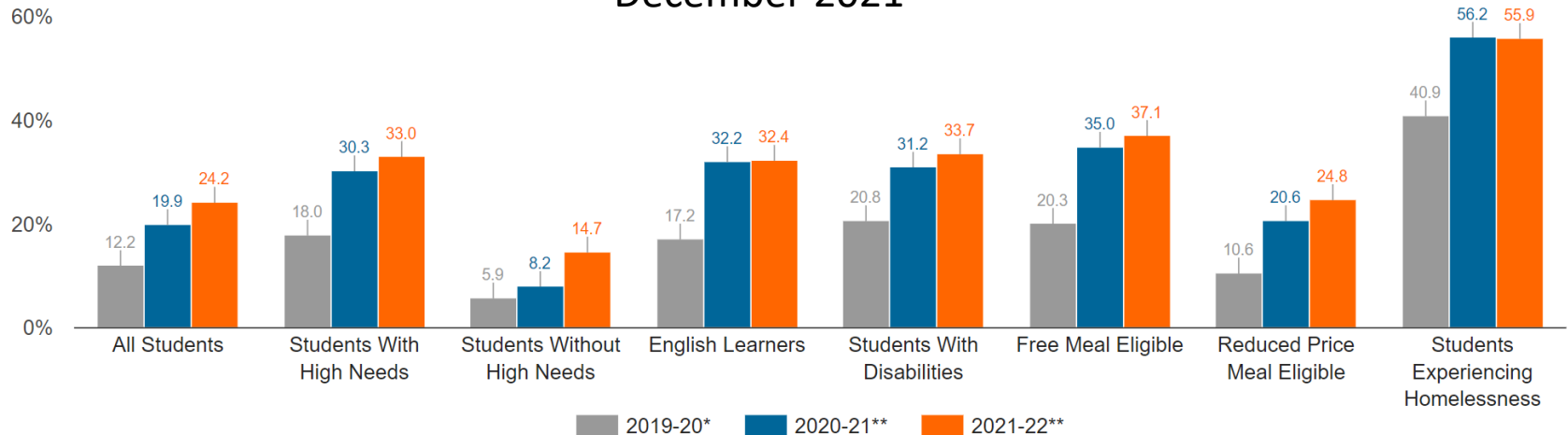
<https://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/Supporting%20Student%20Participation%20in%202020-21.html>



Percentage of Students Chronical Absent by Student Group

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of December 2021 compared to 2020-2021 and 2019-20)

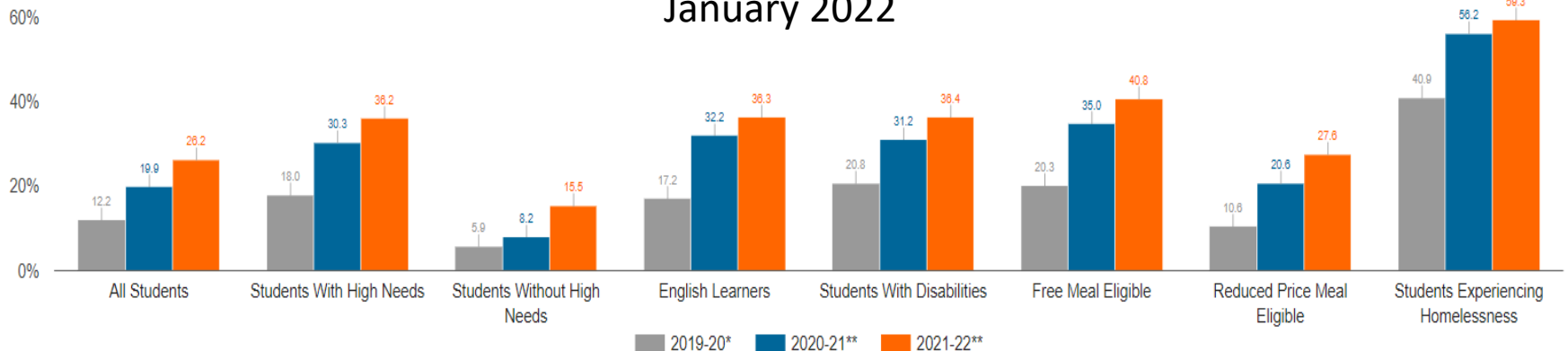
December 2021



*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. **Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of January 2022 compared to 2020-2021 and 2019-20)

January 2022



Connecting Relationships To School



Do you work at the intersection of families and learning?
Would you like to network and learn from others in the field?

THEN COME TO FRIDAY CAFE'!

fridaycafe.org



March 4, 9:30-11:00am

Language Justice: Everyone's Fundamental Right to be Heard



Mental Health Wellness Days



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools
FROM: Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer
John D. Frassinelli, Division Director
DATE: January 24, 2022
SUBJECT: Mental Health Wellness Days

This memorandum serves to provide information related to new legislation passed during the 2021 Legislative Session. [Public Act 21-46, An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health Safety and Education of Children](#), Section 19 (a) and (b), defines and allows students to have two Mental Health Wellness (MHW) Days in a school year. The new legislation is as follows:

Sec. 19. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2021) (a) As used in this section and section 10-108b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, "mental health wellness day" describes a school day during which a student attends to such student's emotional and psychological well-being in lieu of attending school.

(b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, a local or regional board of education shall permit any student enrolled in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, to take two mental health wellness days during the school year, during which day such student shall not be required to attend school. No student shall take mental health wellness days during consecutive school days.

Districts should consider the following when developing local policies and requirements of Public Act 21-46, Section 19 (a) and (b).

Tracking and Monitoring MHW Absences

When tracking MHW absences, district policies should consider the following:

1. Students are limited to two MHW days per school year;
2. MHW days cannot be taken on consecutive school days (e.g., Friday and Thursday);
3. MHW absences should always be excused when parent or guardian permission is documented, regardless of the number of absences a student has accrued in the school year (i.e., Level 1 or Level 2) as per the [Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)*;
4. MHW absences should not be included in reporting or referrals related to truancy;
5. MHW absences will count towards chronic absence calculations as students are missing opportunities to learn; and
6. Districts are encouraged to create codes in their student information systems for tracking and monitoring use of MHW days.

* The [Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences](#) will be updated in the future to include reference to MHW days.

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Supporting Students and Families in the Use of MHW Days

When students feel it necessary to be excused from school to tend to their mental health, it is an opportunity for conversations with school personnel regarding their wellness and connecting students and families to additional supports.

Districts and schools may consider systems for monitoring and supporting students and families when MHW days are taken. A protocol for when a student takes a MHW day could include wellness screening and communication with the family and student regarding available systems of support within the school. Proactive, preventative programming to support student health and wellness could help reduce the need for MHW days.

It will be critical for schools to carefully consider how they will communicate the use of these days with students/families, follow up with any needed resources or support, and support students proactively by educating students on self-care.

The [CSDE Chronic Absenteeism webpage](#) has additional information to improve attendance and engagement. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact:

Resources, Strategies and Best Practices
Kari Sullivan Custer
Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov

Data Collection and Reporting
Kendra Shakir
Kendra.Shakir@ct.gov

JDF:ks



Tracking and Monitoring MHW Absences

When tracking MHW absences, district policies should consider the following:

1. Students are limited to two MHW days per school year;
2. MHW days cannot be taken on consecutive school days, (e.g., Friday and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday);
3. MHW absences should always be excused when parent or guardian permission is documented, regardless of the number of absences a student has accrued in the school year (i.e., Level 1 or Level 2) as per the [Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)*;
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* The [Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences](#) will be updated in the future to include reference to MHW days.



Resources for Families and Students

This resource document is being provided pursuant to Public Act 21-46: An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health, Safety and Education of Children. This Act requires the Connecticut State Department of Education to develop, and annually update and distribute, a document for use by local and regional boards of education that provides information concerning educational, safety, mental health, and food security resources and programs available for students and their families.

The Department will continue to update this document as additional resources are identified.



December 2021

Service	Description	Contact Info
211	2-1-1 is a free, confidential information and referral service that connects people to essential health and human services 24 hours a day, seven days a week online and over the phone. 2-1-1 is fully certified in crisis intervention by the American Association of Suicidology and is certified by The Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS).	2-1-1

Food Security

Service	Description	Contact Info
School Nutrition Programs	The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school nutrition programs are administered through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in collaboration with the USDA Northeast Regional Office (NERO) in Boston. Eligible institutions enter into written agreements with the CSDE to operate local programs that provide for the nutritional needs of those in their care.	See hyperlink
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits	See hyperlink
Connecticut Foodshare	Connecticut Foodshare is the food bank serving all of Connecticut through a network of more than 700 community-based hunger relief programs, including food pantries, community kitchens, and emergency shelters, while also working on long-term solutions to food insecurity.	See hyperlink

Mental and Behavioral Health

Service	Description	Contact Info
Supports & Services Wrap CT (connectingatocarect.org)	This resource identifies locations within the six regions in Connecticut where various mental and behavioral services can be accessed including: Outpatient Psychiatric Clinics for Children (OPCC), Extended Day Treatment (EDT), Care Coordination (CC), Mobile Crisis, Modular Approach to Therapy for Children (MATCH) and Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)	See hyperlink
Community Collaboratives	Community Collaboratives bring providers, community members, caregivers, family members and youth together in their communities to work collaboratively to most effectively utilize resources and ensure services meet the changing social, emotional, and behavioral needs of children, adolescents and their families. The Collaboratives track service/resource gaps and advocate for system level change. Collaborative meetings are open to everyone in the community. Family, caregiver and youth participation are necessary at every level to align with overarching System of Care values and principles.	Supports and services by area

Mental and Behavioral Health, continued

Service	Description	Contact Info
Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs)	Each RBHAO will be responsible for a range of planning, education, and advocacy of behavioral health needs and services for children and adults within one of DMHAS' Uniform Regions. Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the behavioral health needs of children, adolescents and adults across the regions. Develop Regional Priority Reports to highlight recommendations for prevention, treatment and recovery services (see below for regional reports) Administer the Local Prevention Council (LPC) grants to municipalities to stimulate the development and implementation of prevention activities. Build the capacity of local communities to understand and address problem gambling. Raise awareness and provide advocacy to the general public related to mental health promotion and substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery. Leverage funds to support prevention, treatment and recovery activities across each region. Maintain the statutory requirements for meetings and membership for the organization. Serve on local, regional and statewide advisory and planning bodies. Provide naloxone (Narcan) training and kit distribution to communities 	List of Contacts
CT Network of Care	Connecticut's Network of Care for Behavioral Health is committed to promoting access to behavioral health care information for all residents of Connecticut.	See hyperlink
Youth Service Bureaus	YSBs provide a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth, and their families. A wide range of services and programs are offered with the goal of helping youth to develop positively and to function as responsible members of their communities.	List of area YSBs
Extended Day Treatment	EDT is a community-based program that offers a structured, intensive, therapeutic milieu with integrated clinical treatment services. Services are provided year-round during non-school hours for an average period of six months. A team of multi-disciplinary staff including psychiatrists, master's level clinicians, and para-professional direct care staff provide a broad range of treatment services and psycho-social interventions.	See hyperlink
Intensive Home Based Services	Intensive Home-Based Services are clinical services provided in the child's home and community. Services are provided to children and youth who have returned or are returning home from out-of-home care or psychiatric hospitalization and require intensive community based services, or are at imminent risk of placement due to mental health issues, emotional disturbance, or substance abuse.	See hyperlink
Mobile Crisis Intervention Services	EMPS Mobile Crisis Intervention Services for children and adolescents experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis that is accessed by calling 2-1-1. Funded by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families and in partnership with the United Way of Connecticut and the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), the program comprises a team of nearly 150 trained mental health professionals across the state that can respond immediately by phone or face to face within 45 minutes when a child is experiencing an emotional or behavioral crisis.	See hyperlink

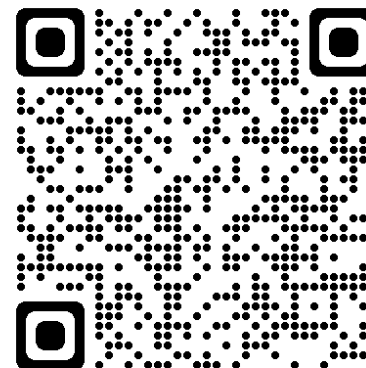


Mental and Behavioral Health, continued

Service	Description	Contact Info
Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)	TF-CBT is a clinic-based, short-term treatment (16 to 20 sessions) for children, ages 4 to 18 who have significant behavioral and emotional problems that are related to traumatic life events, even if they do not meet full diagnostic criteria for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). TF-CBT is an evidence-based model of psychotherapy that combines trauma-sensitive interventions with cognitive behavioral therapy. Individual sessions with the child and parent as well as joint parent-child sessions are provided.	See hyperlink
Beacon Health Options: Voluntary Care Management Program	The Voluntary Care Management program serves families and youth with serious emotional challenges, mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders.	877-381-4193 See hyperlink
State Education Resource Center	Universal Opioid and Other Substance Misuse Prevention Planning in Schools – Guidance Document, Self-Assessment, Training and Technical Assistance	See hyperlink
Governor's Prevention Partnership	The Governor's Prevention Partnership equips, empowers, and connects organizations, communities, and families to prevent substance abuse, underage drinking, and violence among youth and promotes positive outcomes for all young people in Connecticut. Services include training and mentoring supports.	See hyperlink
Connecticut Clearinghouse	Connecticut Clearinghouse is a statewide library and resource center for information on substance use and mental health disorders, prevention and health promotion, treatment and recovery, wellness and other related topics. Materials from our specialized library and resource center are available to Connecticut families, teachers, students, professionals, communities and children	See hyperlink
School Based Health Centers	SBHCs are comprehensive primary care facilities located in or on the grounds of schools. They are licensed by DPH as outpatient or hospital satellite clinics. SBHCs assure that students, particularly those that are uninsured and under insured, have access to comprehensive health and preventative services needed to be healthy, in school, and ready to learn. SBHCs help schools do their job of educating by improving the health and well-being of students and addressing the health issues that interfere with learning.	See hyperlink
Department of Children and Families	Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect The Office of Community Relations serves clients, foster and adoptive parents, providers and citizens to respond to inquiries and resolve issues concerning DCF in the best interests of children. Please call 866-637-4737.	If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please contact the DCF Careline at 800-842-2288
Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security	The resources and information on this page have been compiled to assist community leaders, emergency management directors, educational professionals and emergency responders in developing and growing comprehensive and collaborative school security programs within their local communities.	See hyperlink

Technology (devices, virtual learning, internet access)

Service	Description	Contact Info
Everybody Learns Initiative – Closing the Digital Divide	Everybody Learns initiative aims to close the digital divide in Connecticut and empower students across the state to learn from home. The CSDE is allocating state-level funding from the CARES Act and working closely with the Office of the Governor to dedicate portions of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund toward the Everybody Learns Initiative and fill any device and/or connectivity gaps that may still remain. Priority in the fulfillment of these gaps will be given to high-need districts, so districts are strongly encouraged to rely on local resources when feasible.	Connectivity Info Device Info Emergency Broadband Benefit Program
Digital Learning Resources	CSDE procured two digital resources to support learning acceleration at no cost to districts. Apex Learning for grades 6-12 can be used to access digital curricula for credit accumulation, recovery, enrichment, and personal learning. Defined Learning provides online curricula for project and career-based learning with digital portfolios for grades K-12.	Apex Learning Defined Learning
Home Connectivity	A number of federal and state programs exist to help students and families connect to the Internet for remote and blended learning.	See hyperlink



[Download flyer!](#)

Struggling to pay your electric or heating bill? We have programs to help.

For more information on these assistance programs, scan the QR code below, visit Eversource.com/BillHelp or call us at 800-286-2828. We'll work with you one-on-one to find the best program for you.

Protection from Shutoff for Hardship Customers

For qualifying gas or electric customers experiencing financial hardship, service cannot be turned off between November 1 and May 1.

Medical Protection

If you or a member of your immediate household has a serious or life-threatening medical condition, you may be eligible for protection from service disconnection for non-payment. Please call us at 800-286-2828 to learn more or enroll.

Matching Payment Program *(For electric heating and gas heating customers)*

Reduce your past due balance with affordable monthly payments. Call us at **800-286-2828** or visit **21ct.org** to find your local community action agency to enroll and apply for state energy assistance funds. Once enrolled, Eversource will match your payments, plus the amount of energy assistance you receive on your account, down to a zero balance. If you receive public assistance benefits, your payments can be reduced to as low as \$50.

New Start *(for electric customers)*

Have your outstanding balance eliminated in as little as 12 months. We'll establish a monthly budget payment for you based on your usage. Make your scheduled New Start monthly payment, and a portion of your past-due balance will be eliminated or "forgiven," reducing the amount you owe each month.

Home Energy Solutions

Whether you rent or own your home, save money and energy with an in-home energy efficiency evaluation and service at no cost. Please call 1-877-WISE USE (947-3873) or visit Eversource.com/BillHelp for an application.

To be eligible for income-based assistance programs, your household income must be at or below 60% of the State Median Income:

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Income Level	\$39,027	\$51,035	\$63,044	\$75,052	\$87,060	\$99,069	\$101,320	\$103,572
Household Size	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Income Level	\$105,823	\$108,075	\$110,326	\$112,578	\$114,830	\$117,081	\$119,333	\$121,584

Operation Fuel: 860-243-2345
United Way Infoline: 211

Other Help: Public Utilities Regulatory Authority: 800-382-4586
UniteCT: Help with rent and utility expenses: bit.ly/unitect or call 844-864-8328

Scan here for more information



EVERSOURCE



¿Estás Teniendo Problemas para Pagar tu Recibo de Luz o Calefacción? Tenemos Programas para Ayudarte.

Para más información sobre estos programas de ayuda, apunta tu cámara en el código QR abajo, visita Eversource.com/Ayuda o llámanos al 800-286-2828. Te ayudaremos a encontrar el mejor programa para ti.

Protección Contra la Desconexión para Clientes con Dificultades

Para clientes de gas o electricidad que cumplan con los requisitos y estén teniendo dificultades económicas, el servicio no puede desconectarse entre el 1 de noviembre al 1 de mayo.

Protección Médica

Si tu o un miembro en tu hogar tiene una condición médica seria o que pone la vida en peligro, podrías ser elegible para la protección de desconexión de servicio por falta de pagos. Por favor llámanos al 800-286-2828 para informarte o inscribirte.

Programa de Igualación de Pagos *(Para clientes de calefacción eléctrica y calefacción de gas)*

Reduce tu saldo adeudado con pagos mensuales módicos. Llámanos al **800-286-2828** o visita **21ct.org** para encontrar tu agencia de acción comunitaria local para inscribirse y solicitar fondos estatales de asistencia energética. Luego de inscribirte, Eversource igualará tus pagos, más la cantidad de asistencia energética que recibas en tu cuenta, hasta cubrir todo el saldo. Si recibes beneficios de asistencia pública, tus pagos se pueden reducir hasta \$50 dólares.

Nuevo Comienzo o New Start *(para clientes de servicio eléctrico)*

Elimina tu saldo atrasado en tan sólo 12 meses. Estableceremos un pago mensual basado en tu consumo de luz. Haz tu pago mensual de Nuevo Comienzo programado y parte de tu saldo atrasado será eliminado o "perdonado," reduciendo la cantidad que debes cada mes.

Home Energy Solutions *(Soluciones de Energía Para el Hogar)*

Ya sea que rentes o seas dueño de tu casa, ahorra dinero y energía con una evaluación de energía y servicio para el hogar sin ningún costo. Por favor llama al 1-877-WISE USE (947-3873) o visita Eversource.com/Ayuda para aplicar.

Para calificar para los programas de ayuda basados en los ingresos, los ingresos de tu hogar deben ser igual o menos del 60% del Ingreso Medio Estatal:

Residentes en el Hogar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Cantidad de Ingresos	\$39,027	\$51,035	\$63,044	\$75,052	\$87,060	\$99,069	\$101,320	\$103,572
Residentes en el Hogar	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Cantidad de Ingresos	\$105,823	\$108,075	\$110,326	\$112,578	\$114,830	\$117,081	\$119,333	\$121,584

Ayuda Adicional:

Operation Fuel: 860-243-2345
Línea de Información de United Way: 211
Public Utilities Regulatory Authority: 800-382-4586 (Autoridad Reguladora de Servicios Públicos)
UniteCT: Ayuda con los pagos de renta y servicios públicos: bit.ly/unitect o llama al 844-864-8328

Apunta tu cámara aquí para más información.



EVERSOURCE

[Download flyers!](#)



Ideas for improving attendance over the next several months?

Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

Talk Tuesday

Tuesday, **February 8, 2022**

Have a **promising practice or success**
you want to share?

Concerns you want to share through peer discussion?

Send ideas for topics for discussion to
Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov.

Attendance & Engagement
Community of Practice

Thursday, **February 17, 2022**

Fall 2021 Data Analysis

Ajit Gopalakrishnan

CSDE Chief Performance Data

Save the dates!

All CoPs are held on the 3rd Thursday
of the month from 10 to 11:30 a.m.



KEEP IN TOUCH!

Kari Sullivan Custer, CSDE

Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov

860-807-2041

Stephen Proffitt, SERC

proffitt@ctserc.org

860-632-1485, ext. 322

