



ATLANTIC

CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2022 • VOL. 2



Photo caption: Hands wearing blue gloves holding a red heart made of yarn against a snowy background.

From our ACIL family to yours...

Atlantic Center for Independent Living is excited to welcome, Independent Living Specialist, Jenny Walker, and Transition Specialist, Ana Then, to our team! Jenny will be available during evening hours, Mon-Friday 5:00-8:00pm and Saturdays 10:00am-3:00pm. She will also be providing evening life skills activities starting this Thursday at 6pm. Ana is excited to support students and seniors as they work towards their independent living goals.

We wish you a happy and healthy February full of connection and self-care!

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, INC

1

In this month's edition...

Core Services • Page 2

Covid-19 Test Kits • Page 3

Our Stories • Page 4

WorkAbility • Page 5

Mortgage Assistance • Page 6

Calendar & Activities • Page 7, 8

New Evening Activities • Page 9

Collaboration & MHA • Page 10

Atlantic Center for Independent Living

160 S. PITNEY RD., UNITS 3 & 4, GALLOWAY, NJ 08205
PHONE: (609)748-ABLE (2253) | ATLANTICCIL.ORG

Our Mission

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, Inc. is a center that assists individuals with disabilities to live and work as independently as possible.

Our core services include:

Information & Referral

Information about & referrals to services and organizations that can help you achieve your independence.

Advocacy

Staff assist individuals with personal issues to advocate for what they need. Systems advocacy identifies issues that affect others within the community and develop strategies to bring about systems change.

Peer Support

We believe that individuals experiencing the same issues (peers) are in the best position to support one another dealing with similar experiences.

Life Skills Training

Services are designed to assist you in gaining the skills necessary to live independently in your community.

Transition Services

Youth: Our youth services provide support and guidance to students transitioning from school to adult life with a strong emphasis on employment.

Seniors: Atlantic staff can assist seniors living with disabilities to ensure they are receiving benefits and services designed to ensure the greatest independence possible with the goal of remaining within their communities.



At Home Covid-19 Tests Available



Photo caption: Representation of an at home covid-19 test kit.

Americans can now order free at-home COVID-19 test kits. Residential households in the U.S. can order one set of 4 free at-home tests from USPS.com. Here's what you need to know about your order:

- Limit of one order per residential address
- One order includes 4 individual rapid antigen COVID-19 tests
- Orders will ship free starting in late January

Place Your Order for Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests via
<https://special.usps.com/testkits>

DHS Isolation Survey

The State of New Jersey Dept. of Human Services is conducting a survey to study social isolation among four specified groups: those who served or are serving in the military, individuals with disabilities, mental illness, and those 65 and older. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses will not affect the services you receive. To participate visit: [Survey](#)

Our Stories



Photo Caption: Edwin Fisher with distant mountains and river in background.

Edwin Fisher grew up in a close-knit supportive family. They took family trips, were active in their church. Edwin loved playing basketball; his Dad was even his coach. As he got older and changed schools, he started meeting new friends and was exposed to a different lifestyle. “I started hanging with people who experimented with drugs, and this was not their fault, but before I knew it, I got caught up in it,” Edwin explained.

Edwin would go on to live with substance use issues, mental, and emotional disabilities. His experience would be exacerbated by post-traumatic stress related to witnessing his Dad’s passing. He had trouble staying in school, would experience homelessness and the revolving door of the justice system. Five years ago, Edwin decided to get clean. With the support of his Mom, he had a place to stay and together they were connected with Independent Living Specialist, Dawn Padick at Atlantic CIL.

“Meeting Dawn was a blessing, ” Edwin explained. She would provide much needed peer support, keep him accountable for making it to therapy and other appointments. One of their biggest revelations was finding out that Edwin was supposed to have received social security benefits after his dad’s passing. The work it took, not only to uncover this mistake, and then correct it, required consistent pressure, and follow up. Eventually, Edwin received 13 years back pay. This was huge for Edwin and his Mom because they were able to buy a house.

Today Edwin is thriving. He describes, “Everything has changed for the better, life is hard enough without drugs and the trouble that comes along with that. I am back in contact with family who disowned me, I have their support and that means so much to me.”

Landmark WorkAbility Legislation

On January 10, 2022, a landmark legislation on NJ WorkAbility became law, thereby removing a major barrier to employment and career advancement of New Jerseyans with disabilities. The new law expands access to NJ WorkAbility in the following five ways:

1. **Complete removal of the Unearned Income Limit**, previously at **100% of the Federal Poverty Level**.
2. **Complete removal of the Earned Income Limit**, previously at **250% of the Federal Poverty Level**.
3. **Continuation of Medicaid coverage** through WorkAbility for **one year** after a **job loss**. The new law allows unemployed WorkAbility enrollees to focus on job search and their return to work.
4. **Complete disregard of spousal incomes and assets** in financial eligibility determination of the individual.
5. **Removal of the upper-age limit** for WorkAbility enrollees. Currently, individuals ages 65 and older are not eligible for NJ WorkAbility. The new law does not change WorkAbility's asset limit, currently at \$20,000 for an individual. Primary home, a car, and assets in 401 (k) / IRA are not countable in WorkAbility's financial determination. ABLE account is another option for eligible individual's asset accumulation.

The WorkAbility law allows significantly more New Jerseyans with disabilities to work at their full potential while keeping their Medicaid. We are grateful to all legislators who supported the bill and to the Governor who signed it into law.



Emergency Rescue Mortgage Assistance Program



Photo caption: Helping hands supporting a small green house










The Emergency Rescue Mortgage Assistance Program (ERMA) will launch on February 8, 2022. Financed by the Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF), this program provides up to \$35,000 in assistance to cover mortgage arrearages and other housing cost delinquencies for eligible homeowners negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The ERMA application portal opens on Tuesday, February 8 at 9 AM. Access the application portal at <https://njerma.com>.
- Free housing counseling is available to assist with applications. Find a participating counselor [here](#).
- Contact (855) 647-7700 or HAFservicing@njhmfa.gov for additional support.
- Learn more, [here](#).

Monthly Calendar
































Weekly Activities

-  **Sketch Book Club**
Monday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Life Skills Activities**
Tuesday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Current Events with Donald**
Tuesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Chronic Pain & Illness Support Group**
Wednesday | 2pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Advocacy Group**
Wednesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Life Skills Activities**
Thursday | 6pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Socialization and Wellbeing Group**
Friday | 11am | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **College Survival Club**
Friday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Building a Support Network**
2nd Tuesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
-  **Communication Skills**
3rd Thursday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)



February

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 	2  	3 	4  	5
6	7 	8 	9  	10 	11 	12
13	14  	15 	16  	17 	18 	19
20	21  	22 	23  	24 	25 	26
27 	28 					

Contact us for more information at jburke@atlanticcil.org | (609)748-2253 ext. 4

Support Groups

BUILDING A SUPPORT NETWORK

2ND TUESDAYS AT 3:00PM

A monthly support group to discuss ways to build your support network.

Zoom ID #: 864 0593 0624
Passcode: 206910



The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jennifer at jburke@atlanticcil.org (609)748-2253 ext. 4





A weekly group keeping up to date with current events with the Director of ACL.

CURRENT EVENTS with Donald

Tuesdays @ 3pm

Zoom Meeting ID #: 832 3836 6293 Passcode: 955834

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS SUPPORT GROUP


A MONTHLY DISCUSSION OF EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE.

3RD THURSDAYS @ 3:00PM

Zoom ID #: 874 8523 8023 Passcode: 688079



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Chronic Illness Support Group

Wednesdays @ 2pm

Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, Fibromyalgia, Chronic Pain, Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, Migraines, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Zoom Meeting ID #: 854 4918 0096
Zoom Link

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Socialization & Well-Being Group



Fridays @ 11am

Zoom Meeting ID #: 885 5846 6172 | [Zoom Link](#)



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Disability Advocacy Group

Wednesdays @ 3pm

Zoom Meeting ID #: 891 4057 9138
Passcode: 844261
[Zoom Link](#)



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Weekly Life Skills Activities



The 5 Second Rule

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 | 1pm

Procrastination is difficult to overcome! The 5 second rule is a strategy for breaking away from the next moment of inaction to the first moment of action. [Zoom Link](#)



Songs We Love

Tuesday, February 8, 2022 | 1pm

Music makes us feel many emotions, takes us back in time, and can even help motivate us. What songs are meaningful to you?

[Zoom Link](#)



Daily Exercises

Tuesday, February 15, 2022 | 1pm

Exercise can benefit your overall mental and physical health! Discuss ways to make modifications to create a routine accessible for all abilities. [Zoom Link](#)



Creating A Cleaning Routine

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 | 1pm

Keeping your living space tidy can be overwhelming. Learn organizational practices and discuss how to create habits that will assist you with daily/weekly/monthly tasks.

[Zoom Link](#)

New Evening Activities!

Thursdays at 6pm | Zoom Link



Live out your year by setting an Intention using "One Word". Every year we make resolutions and set intentions and life gets the best of us causing us to lose sight of our goals! Come in join me and together lets set up our year focusing on "One Word"

Feb 03, 2022 6pm-7pm
Zoom ID# 89099624974
passcode#582542

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89099624974?pwd=NHQ2a3BxM20yZ3ZSMXordHlVScHh3UT09>

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How to make
30 Minute Meals for the whole family to enjoy!!
Feb 10, 2022 @ 6pm-7pm
Learn some new and delicious recipes

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88207331006?pwd=QFh0aUJhbnZlZ3ZSMXordHlVScHh3UT09>

ZOOM ID
#88207331006
PASSCODE#994693

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Family FUN DAY

Stress due to Covid and working at home can sometimes be unbearable. Come hang out and lets have some fun learning how to do some fun projects!!

Feb 17, 2022 @6pm-7pm

ZOOM ID# 89407569214
passcode#47649

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89407569214?pwd=RHh0aUJhbnZlZ3ZSMXordHlVScHh3UT09>

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EASY BREEZY CLEANING IDEAS USING AT HOME INGREDIENTS

FEB 24, 2022 @6PM-7PM

COME HANG OUT WITH ME AND LEARN SOME NEW LIFE HACKS!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81327681938?pwd=ZlB0aUJhbnZlZ3ZSMXordHlVScHh3UT09>

Zoom ID#81327681938 passcode#148517
Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcil.org or (609)748-2253 ext #3

For more information contact
Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcil.org

Collaboration Activity & More From MHA

Sketch Book Club

Let's explore our creativity through art!
Drawing is a fun and relaxing way to unwind.
Join us for a new topic each week.
Create a realistic or expressive drawing using
any supplies you have handy.



Mondays | 1:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID #: 838 5439 1536
Passcode: 196590

[Zoom Link](#)



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**Mental Health
Association
in Atlantic County**

Mental Health Association Atlantic County
4 E Jimmie Leeds Rd. Ste. 8
Galloway, NJ 08205
Phone: 609-652-3800

Free Peer-Led BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

Mondays 6pm

- SHARE IDEAS & EXPERIENCES
- BENEFIT FROM MUTUAL SUPPORT
- DEVELOP TOOLS FOR HEALTHIER LIVING AND SELF-CARE

Call/email for Zoom meeting information or join the
virtual wellness center at no cost using this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>

📞 609-652-3800 ✉ Unitedbywellness@mhanj.org

This is a Group of United By Wellness:
MHANJ's Virtual Wellness Center

mhaac.info/ubw

Virtual Wellness Center

Sign Up: Survey

