



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Evan Latainer
Director
Office for People with Disabilities

Board of Legislators 2018 Budget Presentation

The Office for People with Disabilities continues its mission of offering referrals and information to Westchester County residents while also providing an array of additional services which are detailed in the following overview below.

Positions:

No changes in office staffing from 2017 to 2018 and will maintain 11 positions in total.

- 4 positions Office for People with Disabilities
- 7 positions ParaTransit

The Office for the People with Disabilities continues to act as the **ADA Coordinator** for Westchester County providing assistance to all county departments for both personnel and consumers per all requests related to reasonable accommodations.

The Office for the People with Disabilities continues to act as the **Handicapped Parking Education Coordinator** for Westchester County. Through this program this office also provides the following program and services.

Disability Awareness Program

- Providing Disability Awareness trainings to local school districts, undergraduate and graduate programs sharing with these students the day in the life of a person with a disability. Provide real life experiences through demonstrations, Kids on the Block puppet show, question and answers sessions and policies and procedures associated to the American Disability Act.
- **BEAT Plus Program:** A hands on travel training education program which is brought into the special education classroom or service providers daily activities. To provide educators the necessary tools needed to incorporate travel training skills into the core curriculum.
- The above 2 programs continue to touch over **1,000** individuals yearly.

Highlights:

Day at Playland for People with Disabilities:

- The 2017 event hosted over **9,400** participants this past July 28, 2017.
- Funding for 2017 was again secured from an outside source. 2018 funding has again been secured.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

- Co-sponsored the annual employment breakfast with the Westchester Employment Network honoring disabled employees and employers this past October 6, 2017. **225** people attended.

Disability Mentoring Day

- Co-sponsored this event with CAREERS for People with Disabilities and ACCES-VR providing individuals with disabilities the opportunity to shadow various Westchester County department staff in a day of work while also providing actual on the job experience to those participants. This year **13** county departments participated with **17** individuals from local agencies providing vocational training and job placement.

Westchester County Disabilities, Access and Functional Needs Emergency Preparedness:

- Co-sponsoring this committee with the Department of Emergency Services while partnering with local Independent Living Agencies (WILC & WDOM) and agencies that provide day to day programs for the disabled community. The goal is to update the county's response to the necessary evacuation procedures and policies in providing our disabled community the necessary plans in dealing with emergencies in general. This committee has developed key areas for the county to target and develop.
- Coordinating efforts with the Dept. of Emergency Services in updating the county's emergency preparedness plan for the disabled community throughout the county when evacuation's is required. Inclusion of the appropriate county departments, municipalities and not for profits organizations have been part of this process. The Dept. of Emergency Services is the lead agency in this effort.

The Miracle League of Westchester:

- Children's Program operates on Saturday & Sundays from April to October with an average of **175** children participating.
- Adult Program operates Monday through Friday with an average of **500** participants from various day programs in Westchester. ARC, Cerebral Palsy of Westchester, KEON Center, Ability Beyond, and Jawonio are some of our participating agencies.

Disability Resource Guide provides a listing of local agencies and organizations that describes various services to the disabled community. This guide provides residents with a localized resource providing the organization mission statement, contact information, programs offered, area of specialty and ages groups.

Sign Language Interpreter Service Referrals

- Coordinate for county departments all referrals for a sign language interpreter for constituent needs.
- Coordinate referrals for local school districts, doctors and other organizations when a sign language interpreter is needed.

ParaTransit:

In 2017 Westchester County contracted with 4 vendors to provide ParaTransit services.

1. Suburban ParaTransit serving all of Westchester County
2. Act Now Limousine serving the Peekskill and White Plains contract.
3. Blue Bird Taxi serving the New Rochelle contract.
4. All County Taxi serving the Yonkers contract. Note contract ended September 30, 2017. Finalizing a new RFP to secure a new vendor for the City of Yonkers at this time to have program up and running as of January 1, 2018.

Para Highlights:

- Purchase of new para vehicles- wheelchair accessible vans, Dodge Caravans and Toyota Prius.
- The new online reservation system continues to grow and provide our ridership with alternatives to making reservations by offering 24 hour a day 7 days a week ability to book a reservation.
- Current phone line for reservations has seen significant improvements related to call volume and hold times. The average call time to book a reservation averages to 1 minute 30 seconds.
- Implementation of Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's) for all para vehicles was completed in the summer of 2017.
- Coordination of the County's Reduce Fare Program for the Bee Line Bus System allowing Westchester residents to ride the Bee Line at half fare.



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What We Can Do For You?

Westchester County is committed to doing everything it can. The Office for People with Disabilities is here to answer your questions, provide assistance and/or direct you to resources and provides opportunities to people with disabilities.

- Equal Access Westchester
- Disability Resource Guide
- Bee-Line ParaTransit
- Bee-Line Taxi and/or Car Service -- This program gives ParaTransit riders the option to take a taxi instead of the traditional ParaTransit vehicle in the following cities:
New Rochelle Peekskill Yonkers White Plains
- Travel Training Program -- The County offers a travel training program which teaches people with developmental disabilities to use the regular Bee-Line buses.
- Reduced Fare Fee -- for those who qualify.
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Miracle League -- The County's first baseball field, designed specifically for people with disabilities, is located at Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale NY. The field is the result of a partnership between Westchester County and the Miracle League of Westchester, a non-profit organization, which aims to make baseball accessible to every child and adult regardless of disability.
- Our office also ensures that the county is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that guarantees basic civil rights to everyone.
- B.E.A.T. Plus (Be Educated About Transit) A travel training development program.
- Handicapped Parking Education and Disability Awareness Presentations

***Our main office number is 914-995-2957; we are here to assist you,
please feel free to call us.***

1/2017 FA

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