

Building Assets & Financial Security: Mapping Opportunities in Waterbury



Connecticut Association for Human Services

Connecticut Association for Human Services

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The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) is a statewide organization that works to reduce poverty, strengthen families, and reconnect communities through advocacy supported by outreach, research, and education.

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Bank of America



The Leever Foundation

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Introduction

The Connecticut Association for Human Services created this guide in an effort to increase access and awareness of existing community programs that help families save and invest money. We hope case managers, service providers, and individuals will use this resource in conjunction with our publications *Your Family's Money*, *Your Family's Money II: Managing Debt and Credit*, and *Your Client's Money: Practical Tools to Promote Family Economic Success*. It is our vision that individuals will use these community programs to build assets for their families' futures. We wish to thank the organizations included in this book for their cooperation and collaboration in providing information on the following asset building programs.

Additional copies of this Waterbury guide and editions for Bridgeport and Hartford are available by contacting CAHS at (860) 951-2212 ext. 222, or info@cahs.org.

Mapping Opportunities in Waterbury

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BANKING

The following information outlines how to manage and save money, the advantages of using checking and savings accounts, and where to find banks and credit unions in the greater Waterbury area. Classes on using banks or credit unions can be found under the Financial Education section of this guide.

Banking 101: Using Checking & Savings Accounts

What is a checking account?

Most banks and credit unions offer free or low-cost checking accounts. These accounts allow people to keep their money in a safe, insured location and offer different ways to manage money. With a checking or savings account banks will cash checks and or automatically deposit a check into an account for free.

Also many banks provide “starter” checks allowing access to a checking account until printed checks arrive (generally, printed checks are free unless the account holder orders a special color or design). After opening a checking account banks will also issue a debit card, which makes it possible to have money readily accessible without carrying large amounts of cash.

Lastly, banks send monthly statements of all transactions, such as deposits, cashed checks, ATM withdrawals, account fees, and even interest accrued, so it is easy to keep track of what has been spent and saved.

What is a savings account?

Like checking accounts, many savings accounts offered by banks and credit unions are free with no-minimum-balance. Unlike most checking accounts, savings accounts will earn a small amount of interest. **This means that even a small amount saved regularly will build up!**

***Note:** If your client is on a ChexSystems List, some banks will allow these individuals to open a starter savings account.*

Other Advantages to Checking & Savings Accounts:

When an individual files a federal income tax return at a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site or online and chooses to directly deposit the federal or state return, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) can deposit the tax refund directly into an individual’s checking or savings account. A direct deposit refund takes half the time of a refund by mail.

Banks and credit unions offer other services such as homeownership programs and low-interest loans and can be very helpful in suggesting additional investment options. Clients should ask about any fees or minimum balances that might apply.

What to Look for in a Bank or Credit Union:

- ★ Talk to different banks and credit unions to see what services are offered in addition to savings and checking accounts.
- ★ Compare services offered by different banks and credit unions.
- ★ Remember that credit unions often restrict membership to individuals who work for a specific company, live or work in a particular region, or worship at a local church.

Local Banks & Credit Unions

Greater Waterbury Banks

Bank of America	1-800-841-4000
Citizens Bank.....	1-800-922-9999
Naugatuck Savings Bank	1-203-757-1501
Peoples Bank	1-800-772-1090
Savings Bank of Danbury	1-203-575-3540
Sovereign Bank	1-877-768-2265
TD Banknorth	1-800-428-7000
Thomaston Savings Bank	1-203-753-1874
Wachovia.....	1-800-922-4684
Webster Bank	1-800-325-2424

Greater Waterbury Credit Unions

Greater Watertown Federal Credit Union	(860) 945-0611
Greater Waterbury Healthcare Federal Credit Union	(203) 573-6227
Knights of Columbus Sheridan Council Federal Credit Union	(203) 755-8298
Waterbury Firefighter Credit Union	(203) 753-9201
Waterbury Police Federal Credit Union.....	(203) 757-8684
Waterbury Postal Employees Federal Credit Union.....	(203) 756-2891
Waterbury Teachers Federal Credit Union	(203) 758-9500
Waterbury Telephone Federal Credit Union	(203) 755-2030
Technology Groups Federal Credit Union	(860) 274-4162

**Call for more information on branch locations, membership restrictions,
or fees associated with checking and savings accounts.**

CREDIT COUNSELING

There are many Connecticut agencies that provide credit counseling and debt management services. Several programs listed in the Financial Education section of this booklet also teach money management, skills needed to avoid debt, and how to build good credit.

Care should be taken when choosing a debt management or consolidation plan. These plans may look like the best options for overcoming debt, but they often cost money and may lead to increased debt. For more information and a list of questions to ask when dealing with a debt management agency, go to the Federal Trade Commission's website found at www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/fiscal.htm or call 1-877-FTC-HELP.

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICES, a division of Money Management International (CCCS/MMI)

Location: 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1400, East Hartford, CT 06108-3212 or
39 Rose Street, Unit 39B, Danbury, CT 06810

Contact: Call to speak with a representative

Hours of Operation: Operators available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Telephone: 1-866-889-9347 (toll free)

Website: www.moneymanagement.org and www.creditcounseling.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish, ASL, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Czech, French, German, Greek, Malaysian, Laotian, Philipino, Polish, Samoan, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yugoslavian, Syrian, Chealdian, Vietnamese, Dioula, Ibo

Program Description: The Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Southern New England offers over-the-phone and one-on-one credit counseling, as well as debt management and consolidation plans. An individual can make an appointment with a counselor at one of six offices to learn how to manage personal debt.

Not all services are free. It is important to ask questions before agreeing to consolidate or choose a debt management plan. CCCS charges fees for some services, so using a consolidation or debt management plan may not be the best way to reduce debt.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT (UCONN) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

Location: Statewide, focusing on eastern and western Connecticut
Contacts: Lynne Grant; Faye Griffiths-Smith
Hours of Operation: M-F; 9 am-5 pm
Telephone: (203) 207-3263 - Lynne Grant ; (203) 407-3160 - Faye Griffiths-Smith
E-mail: Extension@uconn.edu
Website: www.canr.uconn.edu/ces

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions; workshops designed to train service providers, not individuals

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: UCONN Cooperative Extension Centers offer financial education training in collaboration with Connecticut businesses and community organizations. Past programs have included *Financial Fitness Checkup*, *Take the Road to Financial Security in Later Life*, *Parents, Kids and Money*, and *Financial Facts of Life*.

Call to schedule a workshop providing the skills needed to teach money and debt management or to find out more information about other available programs.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: Family and Child Nutrition Education Programs

FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Financial counseling and educational programs are offered by many nonprofits in Connecticut. These programs range from workshops geared toward a specific person's or group's financial needs to individual budget counseling provided over the phone.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS (AARP)

Location: 21 Oak Street, Suite 104, Hartford, CT 06106-8002
Contact: Call to speak with a Representative
Hours of Operation: M-F; 7 am- Midnight
Telephone: 1-866-295-7279 (toll free); 1-800-994-9422 (CT Benefit Outreach Program)
E-mail: ctaarp@aarp.org
Website: www.aarp.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: AARP offers a money management program for seniors, which includes budget counseling, bill-paying volunteer services, and appointed “representative” payee services when a client is no longer capable of managing his/her income.

In collaboration with local agencies, AARP also offers the Connecticut Benefit Outreach Program, which assists low-income seniors in finding resources to help pay for housing, food, utilities, and prescription drugs.

Contact the local AARP office for more information on services.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: Legal Services Network

Location: 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1400, East Hartford, CT 06108-3212
Contacts: Susan Kelly
Hours of Operation: M-F; 9 am - 5 pm
Telephone: (860) 282-3131 or 1-800-208-2227, ext. 3131 (toll free) - Susan Kelly
Website: www.crediteducation.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish, ASL, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Czech, French, German, Greek, Malaysian, Laotian, Philipino, Polish, Samoan, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yugoslavian, Syrian, Chealdian, Vietnamese, Dioula, Ibo

Program Description: The Center for Financial Education offers free financial and homebuyer education classes to the public. Class topics have included homebuyer education, budget basics, Credit Smart, credit scoring, identity theft, and personal financial management. Call to schedule a workshop.

The Center also offers money management training to nonprofit providers who want to become certified financial education teachers.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY (CL&P)

Location: 107 Selden Street, Berlin, CT 06037 (or mail to P.O. Box 270, Hartford, CT 06141-0270)
Contact: Community Relations Department
Hours of Operation: M-F; 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Telephone: (860) 721-4007
Website: www.cl-p.com

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions, although programs target low-income residents

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: The *Money Matters Program* teaches participants how to manage household income and reduce their overall energy burden. These workshops are free and are held at nonprofit agencies across the state.

An organization can set up a workshop or make a reservation by calling CL&P's Community Relations Department. Additional information is available by calling 2-1-1 INFOLINE.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Matching Payment Plan, NUSTART, Weatherization, Winter Protection Program, WRAP)
- Other: _____

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICES, a division of Money Management International (CCCS/MMI)

Location: 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1400, East Hartford, CT 06108-3212
39 Rose Street, Unit 39B, Danbury, CT 06810

Contacts: Call to speak with a representative

Hours of Operation: Operators available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Telephone: 1-866-889-9347 (toll free) or 1-800-208-2227 (toll free)

Website: www.moneymanagement.org and www.creditcounseling.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish, ASL, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Czech, French, German, Greek, Malaysian, Laotian, Philipino, Polish, Samoan, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yugoslavian, Syrian, Chealdian, Vietnamese, Dioula, Ibo

Program Description: The Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Southern New England offers over-the-phone and one-on-one credit counseling, as well as debt management and consolidation plans. An individual can set up an appointment with a counselor at one of 6 locations to learn how to manage personal debt.

Not all services are free. It is important to ask questions before agreeing to consolidate or choose a debt management plan. CCCS charges fees for debt management services. A consolidation or debt management plan may not be the best way to reduce debt.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

MONEY CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN

Location: Hartford
Contacts: Carol Heller, Connecticut State Treasurer's Office
Conference Date 2006: **Saturday, October 21, 2006**
Telephone: (860) 702-3146 or 1-800-618-3404 (toll free) - Carol Heller
E-mail: moneyconference@ywcahartford.org
Websites: www.state.ct.us/ott/financialeducationconf.htm;
www.ctmoneyconferenceforwomen.com

Eligibility Requirements: Open to women of all economic backgrounds

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: The Money Conference for Women, sponsored by the Office of the State Treasurer in collaboration with various Connecticut nonprofits, offers a variety of workshops for working women in the community. Held annually in Hartford, past conferences focused on *Youth and Financial Education*, *Family Economic Success*, *Latino Personal Finance and Wealth-Building*, and *The Connecticut Sullivan Financial Education Program*.

Workshop topics have included retirement planning, getting out of debt, money management, home buying, basics of investing, borrowing, and planning for college.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES OF WATERBURY, INC.

Location: 139 Prospect Street, Waterbury, CT 06710

Contact: Maritza Valentin

**Hours of
Operation:** M-F; 8:30 am-5 pm

Telephone: (203) 753-1896

E-mail: maritza.nhs@sbcglobal.net

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: Neighborhood Housing Services of Waterbury offers *Financial Fitness*, which teaches basic money management, credit fundamentals, and financial responsibilities.

Financial Fitness also provides a new framework for handling personal finances through one-on-one counseling and assists in repairing credit using non-predatory agencies. Participants receive a certificate of completion upon finishing the course.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT (UCONN) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

Location: Statewide, focusing on eastern and western Connecticut
Contacts: Lynne Grant; Faye Griffiths-Smith
Hours of Operation: M-F: 9 am-5 pm
Telephone: (203) 207-3263 - Lynne Grant; (203) 407-3160 - Faye Griffiths-Smith
E-mail: Extension@uconn.edu
Website: www.canr.uconn.edu/ccs

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions; workshops designed to train service providers, not individuals

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: UCONN Cooperative Extension Centers offer financial education training in collaboration with Connecticut businesses and community organizations. Past programs have included *Financial Fitness Checkup*, *Take the Road to Financial Security in Later Life*, *Parents, Kids and Money*, and *Financial Facts of Life*.

Call to schedule a workshop providing the skills needed to teach money and debt management or to find out more information about other available programs.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: Family and Child Nutrition Education Programs

HOMEOWNERSHIP

One of the first steps to homeownership or responsible renting is becoming aware of local education and financial assistance programs. In Connecticut, many nonprofit and state agencies offer homeownership and financial education classes, which may lead to low-interest mortgages, or financial assistance with downpayments, closing costs, and foreclosure prevention. The following agencies provide these services for Waterbury residents.

ACORN

Location: 621 Farmington Avenue, 2 Floor, Hartford, CT 06105
Contact: Steve Burdo
Hours of Operation: M-F; 9 am-5 pm
Telephone: (860) 523-1017
E-mail: ctacornha@acorn.org
Website: www.hartford.acorn.org or www.acorn.org

Eligibility Requirements: Low or moderate income

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: ACORN holds group information sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 pm. After this initial intake, clients meet one-on-one with a counselor to go over credit, income, and savings. After a credit check, ACORN counselors create a housing counseling plan to prepare clients for homeownership.

Case managers offer credit counseling, budgeting, and then refer clients to a collaborating bank with the lowest interest rates possible. In addition to these services, ACORN offers pre- and post- purchase counseling, as well as home improvement and rehabilitation counseling, mortgage delinquency and default resolution counseling and loss mitigation.

Call to sign up for an information session and to learn about any specific eligibility requirements for Waterbury. ACORN's services are free.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDA)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY (CHFA)

Location: 999 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT
Contact: Call to speak with a representative
Hours of Operation: M-F; 8:30 am- 5 pm
Telephone: (860) 571-3502
E-mail: info@chfa.org
Website: www.chfa.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions, however, CHFA places restrictions on cost of the home based on its location within the state.

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: CHFA offers a variety of homeownership programs that help Connecticut residents finance home purchases. These programs include: *Homebuyer Mortgages; Downpayment Assistance Loans; Rehabilitation Mortgage Loans; Home of Your Own (HOYO); Military Homeownership; Teachers Mortgage Assistance; Police Homeownership; Apartment Conversion for the Elderly; and Section 8 Housing Choice Homeownership Programs.*

CHFA also offers free counseling sessions to Connecticut residents who are CHFA borrowers or who are looking for more information on home buying. These classes include financial education and credit counseling.

Call for more detailed information on the requirements of each CHFA program or to register for a counseling class.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICES, a division of Money Management International (CCCS/MMI)

Location: 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1400, East Hartford, CT 06108-3212
39 Rose Street, Unit 39B, Danbury, CT 06810

Contact: Call to speak with a representative

Hours of Operation: Operators available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Telephone: 1-866-889-9347 (toll free)

Website: www.moneymanagement.org and www.creditcounseling.org

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish, ASL, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Czech, French, German, Greek, Malaysian, Laotian, Philipino, Polish, Samoan, Serbo-Croatian, Albanian, Yugoslavian, Syrian, Chealdian, Vietnamese, Dioula, Ibo

Program Description: Consumer Credit Counseling Services offers pre-purchase, post-purchase, reverse mortgage, and foreclosure prevention counseling. As well as, home financing in collaboration with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Fannie Mae, and Freddy Mac.

Other homeowner services include: home equity conversion, mortgage delinquency, and default resolution counseling, homebuyer education, loss mitigation, and renter's assistance. CCCS offers free financial education and over-the-phone or one-on-one credit counseling. **Debt management and some housing services have fees associated.**

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Location: 161 North Main Street, Waterbury, CT 06720
Contact: Call to speak with a representative
Hours of Operation: M-F; 8:30 am– 4:30 pm
Telephone: (203) 596-0014
E-mail: BUDBELMAN@aol.com
Website: www.habitat.org *and* www.waterburyhabitat.org

Eligibility Requirements: Based on Hartford County Median Family Income Guidelines. Call for eligibility information.

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: Habitat for Humanity offers assistance in funding and building homes for families. Program participants are required to put in 150-200 hours of sweat equity or time spent assisting in the construction of their homes or another Habitat house.

Those interested in learning about Habitat programs or applying for homeownership assistance must attend an applicant meeting for detailed information and application materials.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: Youth Build (construction training and educational development)

HILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF NEW HAVEN

Location: 649 Howard Avenue, New Haven, CT 06519
Contact: Call to speak with a representative
Hours of Operation: M-F; 8:30 am- 4:30 pm
Telephone: (203) 776-3759
Website: www.hdcfnhnewhaven.org

Eligibility Requirements: Varies based on program, generally low or moderate income.

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: The Hill Development Corporation of New Haven is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing economic progress and improved quality of life to the urban neighborhoods of New Haven County.

HDC currently provides homeownership counseling and credit counseling. Homeownership counseling classes are offered on a quarterly basis. Some funding is available to assist potential first time homeowners with down payment and closing costs.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

HOUSING EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER (HERC)

Location: 901 Wethersfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06114
Contact: Karin Nigol
Hours of Operation: M-F; 9 am- 5 pm; Housing Counseling Hotline: T-F; 9 am- 5 pm
Telephone: (860) 296-4242, ext. 101- Karin Nigol
E-mail: KarinN@HERC-inc.org
Website: <http://ursamajor.hartnet.org/herc/home.asp>

Eligibility Requirements: Low or moderate income

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: HERC offers housing counseling (including pre-purchase, post-purchase, and mortgage delinquency counseling) daily on an informational landlord tenant hotline, as well as in an individual or group seminar setting.

In addition, HERC hosts classes on homeowner education and predatory lending awareness for CHFA homeowners. Also, HERC operates the North Central Mobility Program for Northern and Central Connecticut residents who participate in the State Department of Social Services rental subsidy voucher program.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES OF WATERBURY

Location: 139 Prospect St., Waterbury, CT 06710

Contact: Maritza Valentin

Hours of

Operation: M-F; 8:30 am-5 pm

Telephone: (203) 753-1896

E-mail: maritza.nhs@sbcglobal.net

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: Neighborhood Housing Services of Waterbury works to revitalize inner city neighborhoods and provide housing opportunities for low- to moderate-income buyers.

Prior to homeownership NHS offers *Financial Fitness*, which teaches basic money management, credit fundamentals, and housing responsibilities. Participants receive a certificate of completion, which will help in securing a low- interest rate mortgage.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

PEOPLE'S BANK

Locations: 240 Chase Avenue, Waterbury Plaza, Waterbury, CT 06704
920 Wolcott Road, Naugatuck Valley Shopping Center, Waterbury, CT 06705
255 Bank Street, Waterbury, CT 06702

Contact: Ask to speak with a representative

Hours of Operation: M-F; 8 am -8 pm; S; 8 am-12 pm (Branch hours may vary)

Telephone: 1-800-772-1090

Website: www.peoples.com

Eligibility Requirements: No income restrictions

Languages: English

Program Description: People's Bank provides a free four-part homebuyer education program called "Unlocking the Possibilities of Homeownership." The program covers topics such as qualifying for a mortgage, credit and financial profiles, affordable mortgage programs, applying for a mortgage, and developing a realistic and affordable work plan for homeownership.

Sessions are three hours long with four sessions per program. Upon completion, participants receive a Homebuyer Education Certificate, which may help them qualify for low-cost mortgage programs.

Call for class locations and times.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

Location: Statewide
Contact: Call to speak with a CT employee
Hours of Operation: M-F; 9 am - 5 pm
Telephone: (860) 240-4800
E-mail: CT_Webmanager@hud.gov
Website: www.hud.gov

Eligibility Requirements: Varies based on HUD program and partnering agency

Languages: English, Spanish; (May vary)

Program Description: The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) insures high-risk loans for low- to moderate-income homebuyers. HUD partners with many local and national agencies to provide housing subsidies to those who meet income guidelines.

For rental assistance: www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=ct&topic=renting

For homeownership: www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=ct&topic=homeownership

For fair housing: www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/atyourservice.cfm

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: Provides loans to approved CT lenders

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: _____

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS (IDAS)

The goal of the Connecticut Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative is to strengthen Connecticut families and communities by offering a unique and effective way to save money. IDAs are matched savings accounts that allow participants' savings to grow quickly and encourage asset building such as through the creation of a small business, pursuit of a post-secondary education, or as a deposit on a house, an apartment, or car.

For more information, contact the Connecticut Department of Labor, 200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109-1114. Telephone (860) 263-6794.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES, INC.

Location: 232 North Elm Street, Waterbury, CT 06702
Contacts: Bill Rybczyk
Hours of Operation: M-F; 8 am - 4 pm
Telephone: (203) 575-9799, ext. 238
E-mail: wrybczyk@newopportunitiesinc.org
Website: www.newopportunitiesinc.org

Eligibility Requirements: Three types of IDAs offered. Income eligibility depends on program.

Languages: English, Spanish

Program Description: New Opportunities' IDA program is part of a statewide IDA collaborative. Program participants have the opportunity of saving up to \$6,000 over a five-year-period. Individuals agree to take financial education courses and regularly deposit money into a custodial matched-savings account.

Call for eligibility and financial education information. New Opportunities' services are free.

Asset Building Services Offered:

- Banking
- Basic Benefit Outreach
- Credit Counseling
- Financial Literacy/Education
- Homeownership
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Job Training
- VITA/AARP Tax Sites
- Other: _____

Additional Services Provided:

- Child Care
- Community Employment Services (Life skills/Literacy)
- GED/ESL Classes
- Housing Support, Shelter, Mediation
- Rental/Mortgage Assistance (Eviction Prevention)
- Utility Assistance (CEAP, Weatherization)
- Other: Meals on Wheels; Criminal Justice Program; Community Arts; Neighborhood Services

Appendix

COMMUNITY LITERACY PROGRAMS

ESL (English as a Second Language)

Tutoring programs sponsored by nonprofit agencies to teach English to foreign language speakers.

GED (General Educational Development)

High school equivalency test, which helps increase the wages of low-income workers who did not graduate from high school.

UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

CEAP (Connecticut Energy Assistance Program)

Connecticut Light & Power provides energy assistance for low-income families and individuals. Individuals are eligible if they are already participating in Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), State Supplement to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (SSI), Refugee Cash Assistance Program, or Food Stamps, or if their gross income is at or below 150% of the federal poverty level.

Matching Payment

Matching Payment provides year-round electric service and possible forgiveness of past-due balances for low-income customers who heat their homes with electricity. CL&P matches every dollar paid on the customer's behalf, up to a zero balance. During last year's heating season, approximately 2,000 customers enrolled in the program and more than \$330,000 in utility debt was forgiven.

NUSTART

CL&P helps low-income customers maintain year-round electric service. Customers can reduce and eliminate past-due balances while earning monthly arrearage credit. To qualify, customers must have income levels at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, have a past-due balance of \$100 or more on a CL&P bill that is 60 or more days overdue, and agree to pay a monthly budget amount.

WRAP (Weatherization Residential Assistance Program)

Connecticut Light & Power provides ways to save energy and reduce your utility bills during winter months. CL&P will test homes for heating and electrical efficiency, and provide energy-efficient showerheads and fluorescent light bulbs to help save water and electricity. To sign up for WRAP call 1-800-388-9727.

OTHER

ChexSystems List

Banks use "ChexSystems" to help determine whether or not a person has a history of mishandling financial accounts. If an individual is on a ChexSystems' list then he or she may not be able to open a checking account. There are steps that can be taken to improve credit status with ChexSystems. For a credit report or to dispute information on a ChexSystems report, write to:

ChexSystems
Attn: Customer Relations
7805 Hudson Road, Suite 100
Woodbury, MN 55125

Debt Consolidation

Debt is combined into a single loan with a fixed rate. Instead of paying multiple creditors who charge different rates at different times of the month, one larger loan is taken out, which pays off all accounts with a single monthly payment. Be sure the costs of the new loan will be less than what is already being paid to different creditors.

Debt Management Plan (DMP)

The credit counseling agency collects a monthly payment and uses this money to pay the person's creditors. A debt management plan may or may not be the best way to handle debt. A good credit counselor will help determine whether or not to establish a debt management plan.

Debt Negotiation

Individuals can negotiate with creditors to set up an affordable payment plan, re-age the debt (or "turn back the clock" to help repair negative credit history), or ask for a lower interest rate on money owed. There are nonprofit credit counseling agencies that help with this negotiation process. For-profit debt negotiators may claim to reduce debt by 50% or erase negative credit history after the debt is paid off, BUT these services have high fees and may fail to reduce total debt owed.

Federal Poverty Level/Guidelines

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) releases Federal Poverty Guidelines as a measure of poverty in America. Federal Poverty Guidelines (or the Federal Poverty Level) is often used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal programs. HHS releases new Federal Poverty Guidelines in the month of February for that year (for example Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2006 were released February 2006).

See chart for 2006 Federal Poverty Guidelines:

FAMILY SIZE	FPG (100%)		125% of FPG		150% of FPG		175% of FPG		185% of FPG		200% of FPG	
	YEAR	MONTH	YEAR	MONTH	YEAR	MONTH	YEAR	MONTH	YEAR	MONTH	YEAR	MONTH
1	\$9,800	\$817	\$12,250	\$1,021	\$14,700	\$1,225	\$17,150	\$1,429	\$18,130	\$1,511	\$19,600	\$1,633
2	\$13,200	\$1,100	\$16,500	\$1,375	\$19,800	\$1,650	\$23,100	\$1,925	\$24,420	\$2,035	\$26,400	\$2,200
3	\$16,600	\$1,383	\$20,750	\$1,729	\$24,900	\$2,075	\$29,050	\$2,421	\$30,710	\$2,559	\$33,200	\$2,767
4	\$20,000	\$1,667	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$30,000	\$2,500	\$35,000	\$2,917	\$37,000	\$3,083	\$40,000	\$3,333
5	\$23,400	\$1,950	\$29,250	\$2,438	\$35,100	\$2,925	\$40,950	\$3,413	\$43,290	\$3,608	\$46,800	\$3,900
6	\$26,800	\$2,233	\$33,500	\$2,792	\$40,200	\$3,350	\$46,900	\$3,908	\$49,580	\$4,132	\$53,600	\$4,467
7	\$30,200	\$2,517	\$37,750	\$3,146	\$45,300	\$3,775	\$52,850	\$4,404	\$55,870	\$4,656	\$60,400	\$5,033
8	\$33,600	\$2,800	\$42,000	\$3,500	\$50,400	\$4,200	\$58,800	\$4,900	\$62,160	\$5,180	\$67,200	\$5,600
*	\$3,400	\$283	\$4,250	\$354	\$5,100	\$425	\$5,950	\$496	\$6,290	\$524	\$6,800	\$567

*For family units over 8, add the amount shown for each additional member.

Source: Federal Register: January 24, 2006 Volume 71, Number 15, Pages 3848-3849.

Median Area Income

Median Area Income is another way to determine poverty levels in a given area. Similar to Federal Poverty Guidelines, Median Area Income guidelines can be used to determine eligibility for programs who serve clients with low- to moderate incomes. If a program uses median area income guidelines to determine eligibility, call for information on specific area guidelines.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

The VITA program offers free tax help to low to moderate income individuals and households. VITA sites use certified community volunteers to help residents file income tax returns including special tax credits, such as Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit, and Credit for the Elderly. Sites offer electronic filing (e-filing), which shortens the amount of time it takes to receive a tax return. Individuals who e-file and have their refund deposited directly into their bank account will receive it in 8 to 10 days. VITA sites are found at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. To locate the nearest VITA site dial 2-1-1 INFOLINE, or 1-800-829-1040.



Connecticut Association for Human Services

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Hartford, CT 06106

(860) 951-2212

www.cahs.org