

Notice of Class Action Settlement for Recipients of Public Assistance Who Participated in a Work Experience Program (WEP)

BACKGROUND

This is an important notice about Public Assistance (PA)! Please read it carefully if:

- You have received Public Assistance; AND
- You participated in the Work Experience Program as a condition of receiving Public Assistance.

A settlement in a class action lawsuit, Andersen v. Hein (Index No. 901412-17, Albany County) may affect your legal rights. Under New York Law, Public Assistance you received is considered an obligation that you are required to repay if you receive money from winning a lottery prize, receiving money paid out from an insurance policy, inheritance, or personal injury settlement. Under this settlement, the district will reduce the amount of the Public Assistance obligation for eligible individuals based on time spent participating in a district assigned WEP activity if the district's recovery of the Public Assistance obligation happens on or after August 10, 2020.

WHAT IS THE SETTLEMENT?

You can see the entire settlement at the website of the organizations listed in this paragraph. The Court has appointed lawyers from Empire Justice Center (www.empirejustice.org) and the National Center for Law and Economic Justice (www.nclej.org) to represent the Plaintiff Class in this case.

Who is included in the settlement?

Current or Past Recipients of Public Assistance who:

- Received Public Assistance in New York State; and
- Owe or have owed a Public Assistance obligation to a district or OTDA as a result of public assistance received;
- and Are subject to a lottery intercept OR claim against your insurance payment, inheritance or monetary settlement or award from a court case, because of your public assistance obligation.

Will I Receive Any Benefits? Do I Have to Do Anything?

Anyone who has received Public Assistance and participated in WEP will receive a document in the mail letting them know how the WEP credit was calculated and applied to their public assistance obligation when they are subject to a public assistance recovery from insurance proceeds, personal injury settlement or inheritance.

If you have had a Public Assistance obligation recovered since August 10, 2020, your local district will recalculate the applicable WEP credit using the methodology approved in this settlement.

If your Public Assistance obligation is recovered in the future, the district will utilize the methodology approved in this settlement to make sure to you receive the credit for your WEP activity.

What Should I Do if I Have Questions?

You can contact Empire Justice attorneys with any questions at 518-935-2848 or by email at: PAdebtrelief@empirejustice.org. You do not have to pay to speak to lawyers at Empire Justice Center about your questions