

The Advocate - Fall 2021 Programs for All!

**Programs available for SO MANY Vermonters!
Read all about it!**

New, Expanded, and Ongoing Programs & Services

SEVCA's services have increased significantly as we respond to the impacts of COVID 19 on the communities that we serve. Both SEVCA and the state of Vermont have expanded programming and, as well, income eligibility guidelines to ensure that **even more** Vermonters can access resources that will increase financial security. Read all about the new and expanded offerings, including rent and utility relief, weatherization, financial management classes, and more!

Don't miss out on opportunities to get help that can support your family OR to share this information with your family, friends, and neighbors.

You can always reach us at 800-464-9951 to make an appointment at one of our local offices- Westminster, Springfield, White River Junction, and Brattleboro. Take a look at all of the services we offer!

Community Partners and Service Providers: Last Chance to Take Our Community Assessment Survey

Community Partners and Service Providers,

Can you spare 10 minutes to help us out and take [this survey](#) by 10/31?

SEVCA is conducting its triennial community assessment, and as a part of that, we're surveying community partners and service providers. The information you share will help us:

- Better map the organizations serving our constituents, as well as the services they offer;
- Identify gaps in services and populations served;
- Identify possible solutions to closing those gaps;
- Become better partners and collaborators to meet the needs of people with lower incomes in our community; and
- Strategically plan and develop programs

Thank you in advance for your expertise, time, feedback, and support! If you have any questions about the survey or SEVCA's community assessment, please reach out to [Kelsea Burch](#).

Help Available for Those Who Rent

Did you know that there is help with current rent and utility payments for eligible Vermonters impacted by COVID who earn up to 80% of the average median income?

The Vermont Emergency Rental Assistance Program (VERAP) was created to help renters dealing with financial challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. VERAP helps tenant households with paying rent, past-due rent balances (also known as arrears), utility and home energy costs, utility and home energy cost arrears, and other expenses related to housing. Utilities include separately stated electricity, gas, water, sewer, trash removal and energy costs, such as fuel oil.

Eligible program participants, for example, include one-person households in Windham County earning up to \$43,900 and 4-person households in Windsor earning up to \$63,050.

Applications are available online [here](#). Please note that you will need a copy of your lease as well as income statements.

Need help applying? Give our staff a call at 800-464-9951 and your local office, Brattleboro, White River, Westminster, or Springfield can help!

Interested in learning more about available housing, utility and broadband supports? Learn more [here](#).

Keeping Warm: Fuel Assistance and Weatherization Services for Homeowners and Renters

There are so many ways SEVCA can help you to keep warm this winter. And, you too can help others by ensuring they stay warm as well.

It's not too early to sign up for **Seasonal Fuel Assistance**. Apply online [here](#). Need help with the application? Give SEVCA a call and let's keep everyone warm.

SEVCA **Weatherization** serves Windham and Windsor counties by providing state-of-the-art energy audits, insulation and sealing, heating system improvements, and other energy-saving measures, all at no cost to residents who meet the income guidelines.

You can receive weatherization services if you are an owner or a renter (with the landlord's participation). Contact our client representative at 800-464-9951 to find out if you are income eligible. More information including application and eligibility guidelines available [here](#).

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Some of our weatherization crew technicians pause for a smile on the job. Thank you for your hard work (L-R) Dave, Harry, Pete, Jonathan, and Matt!



Dave focused on making the perfect cut.

Did you know that ALL Vermonters, regardless of income, are eligible for the **DIY Weatherization Rebate** from Efficiency Vermont? Learn more about the \$100 rebate [here](#).

Wondering when to repair or replace your windows? Learn more [here](#)!

Vermont Everyone Eats Extended Again!

**ANNOUNCEMENT:
MEALS TO CONTINUE
THROUGH DECEMBER 31**

#VTEVERYONEEATS FOR MORE INFO:
VTEVERYONEEATS.ORG

Vermont Everyone Eats (VEE), a program developed, implemented, and administered by SEVCA has AGAIN been extended! This program is federally funded through FEMA and awarded the first 'Hub' contracts in August 2020. VEE will continue through 12/31/2021. VEE, which plays a critical role in strengthening relationships within the VT food system, brings together stakeholders statewide and, at the peak, 14 'Hubs' have provided more than 1.6 million meals as of 8/15/2021.

The Hubs, located in all 14 counties, developed and strengthened relationships between regional social service providers, Vermont restaurants, and Vermont farmers. The program purchases \$10 per serving meals from local restaurants; meals include at least 10% Vermont produced ingredients, though on average around 25% of ingredients are sourced locally;

and regional service providers distribute those meals to Vermonters impacted by COVID. Distribution has included partnerships for meal delivery, cooperation and coordination to provide meals at local pantry sites, pick up locations around the state, and program participants can even order a meal through the Localvore app and pick it up at a restaurant nearby! This program not only supports those impacted by COVID with accessing a healthy local prepared meal, it also serves to strengthen our local economy through support of our VT restaurants and farms.

Learn more about this program and where meals are available in your area [here](#).

Plenty of "Good Buys" for the Holidays

SEVCA Good Buy Thrift Stores in Bellows Falls, Springfield, and White River are stocked and ready! It's never too early to purchase holiday gifts! We have the items you need for entertaining and, as well, we have a large supply of clothing for everyone in your household.

10% OFF

your entire purchase

Receive 10% off when you mention this ad!

Clean Energy and Savings for Our Community



We're coming to the end of the second full year of our Community Solar for Community Action program. The solar array at our Westminster office has been generating clean renewable energy and net-metering credits on 50 member households' electricity accounts, totaling almost \$17,000.

For more information on this program, please contact [Daniel Quipp](#).

Free Money Management Series

SEVCA To Offer Online Workshops in December



SEVCA is providing a series of four Financial Fitness workshops to provide training, support, and resources to help participants gain control and manage their money. Workshop topics include: creating a personal, workable budget; reducing debt; setting personal goals; modifying spending; banking basics; plus credit and repair.

Workshops are free to Vermont residents. SEVCA will provide a gift card cash incentive to those Vermont residents affected by COVID who attend Workshops 1, 2, and 3. Courses will be offered on Zoom, an online platform. Additional counseling is available to attendees.

Zoom Workshop dates and times for December 2021:

- Workshop 1: Wednesday, December 1: 6pm-7pm
- Workshop 2: Wednesday, December 8: 6pm-7pm
- Workshop 3: Wednesday, December 15: 6pm-7pm
- Workshop 4: Wednesday, December 22: 6pm-7pm

For more information please visit [our website](#) or email [Diane Heileman](#).

Wonder What Program Participants Are Saying?

"I really enjoyed the Financial Fitness workshops and found each session very interesting and informative. I never created a budget in my life... what a difference it would have made in my younger years. What valuable information you offer to everyone, but especially to young people just starting out in the world of finances. I highly recommend this workshop series. Thank you," Linda.

"I didn't realize how helpful a monthly budget could be. I wrote up my budget for April and it enabled me to determine how much I need to work and what I should try to avoid spending my money on in order to save up the amount I want for college...Thank you for helping to prepare me for my next step in life. I am in a better position now than I was 4 weeks ago," Alex.

"This workshop series has been very much a benefit. I used the handouts to determine areas I could cut expenses and am saving about \$100 per month

starting this month," Bill.

3SquaresVT

3SquaresVT Benefits Increase

Starting in October, 3SquaresVT households began receiving an increase in benefits due to the USDA's permanent update to the Thrifty Food Plan. This 21% increase comes at a critical moment as the temporary 15% pandemic increase ended on September 30th.

For more information on 3SquaresVT and what this change might mean for you, or for assistance completing an application, please contact our Family Services department by calling 800-464-9951 and following the auto-prompt for your local office. You can also fill out [this form](#) and a staff member will reach out to you.

Board of Directors News

Please join us in extending a very warm welcome to:

Ellen Taetzsch – seated in July 2021, employed by Building Bright Futures

Jonathan Johnson – seated in August, 2021, employed as the Putney, VT Town Clerk

Please join us in saying farewell and sending our best wishes to:

Karie Stevens – resigned her seat to become a SEVCA Employee

Lisa Chen – resigned to pursue other opportunities

If you are interested in becoming a SEVCA Board member please reach out to Tammie Putnam, Executive Assistant, for more information and an application by calling 800-464-9951.

New Hires

We are excited to welcome the following new staff members to the SEVCA team:

- Wesley Parks - Family Services Worker, White River Junction
- Sara Zumbruski - Family Services Worker, Brattleboro
- Pablo Tocalini - Weatherization Crew Tech
- Zachary Dickerman - Weatherization Crew Tech
- Matthew Beauchamp Weatherization Crew Tech

Employment Opportunities

SEVCA is looking for MANY new folks to join our team! Check out available

opportunities in administration & finance, weatherization, Head Start, and Family Services/Housing [here](#).

Visit our Website



Southeastern Vermont Community Action | 91 Buck Drive, Westminster, VT 05301

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