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State Senator LINDSEY M. WILLIAMS

Your District 38 Update



Events

We want to hear from you!

As we plan 2021, we need to know more about what kinds of events you want to attend. Please take a minute to fill out a brief survey to tell us what event formats and topics you want to see the most next year!

[Senator Williams Event Survey](#)



Legislative Update

Senators Williams, Muth, Schwank, Kane, and Cappelletti Propose Operating Rules Reform

This past week, I, along with my colleagues Senators Katie Muth, Judy Schwank, John Kane, Tim Kearney, and Amanda Cappelletti, continued our efforts to greatly improve the Senate operating rules in ways that will ensure transparency in the legislative process, encourage public participation, and hold all Senators accountable to our constituents. Our offices collaborated on releasing 14 individual co-sponsorship memos that each seek to amend aspects of the Senate operating rules that have effectively silenced our voices and the voices of those that we have been elected to represent.

Our Resolutions will ensure every bill, resolution, and amendment gets a vote, especially legislation with overwhelming bipartisan support; require adequate public notice of all Senate activity; and ensure all Pennsylvanians, regardless of whether

they choose to affiliate with the Majority or Minority party, have an equal seat at the table. All too often, legislation is the result of backroom deals negotiated in the shadows. Our resolutions will shine a light on the legislative process and ensure public business is conducted out in the open for all of Pennsylvania to see. I urge you to call, write, tweet or email those in power and demand that they uphold their duty to serve the public and bring these resolutions to a vote.

You can review the full list of our resolutions [here](#).



Senator Williams Renews Push for Legislation to Extend Sexual Assault Statute of Limitations after PA Constitutional Amendment Failure

At the start of the 2019-2020 legislative session, my freshmen colleagues and I began our work in the Senate advocating for victims of sexual abuse. We fought for legislation that would extend the statute of limitations on criminal prosecutions and civil suits involving sexual assault and would open a two-year window for survivors of childhood sexual assault to seek justice through civil suits when their claims had been previously barred. And while I pushed for these critical changes to be made in legislation, I acquiesced when the two-year window was included in a constitutional amendment. The process for amending our constitution would require the amendment be passed in two consecutive legislative sessions and then be placed on the ballot for the voters to decide. I did this with the hope that while justice would be further delayed, at the end of the second passage of the constitutional amendment, justice would not be denied.

Words cannot describe the hurt I felt for the countless sexual assault survivors when I heard the news that the Department of State failed to properly advertise the initial passage of the constitutional amendment for the two-year window and that the process for amending our constitution would need to start again. That is why my colleagues and I immediately began circulating a co-sponsorship memo to pass the two-year window through legislation. While there was much debate last legislative session about the constitutionality of amending the two-year window by statute, a statutory window has been supported by the Pennsylvania Attorney General and has been upheld in seven other states. Some of my fellow Senators are content with placing the blame on the Department of State, but the General Assembly has the ability to fix this mistake and it is imperative that we right this wrong.

COVID-19 Update



COVID-19 Vaccine News

Pennsylvanians were elated when Phase 1A of the [Pennsylvania's COVID-19 Vaccine Plan \(pa.gov\)](#) was expanded to include persons 65 and older and individuals ages 16-64 with certain medical conditions. Unfortunately, we quickly learned the demand for appointments outstripped the vaccine supply throughout our state. My constituents have shared their frustration with the patchwork of pharmacies, providers, and health department appointments that seem to disappear in the time it takes to enter their information.

In response to this frustration I asked the Pennsylvania Department of Health for a transparent, clearly communicated and efficient vaccine distribution plan. You can read my statement on the COVID-19 Vaccine roll out [here](#).

In the meantime, my office advises the following to increase the likelihood of scheduling your vaccine appointment:

- Subscribe to Allegheny Alerts. You can customize your subscription to include alerts from Allegheny County's Health Department which include vaccine notifications. Sign up [here](#).
- Visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Information | COVID-19 | Health Department | Allegheny County](#) regularly. Here you can schedule an appointment with the County Health Department's Monroeville clinic.
- Continually check with local health systems, pharmacies, or federally funded community clinics who are scheduling their own appointments.




Do You Have the COVID Alert PA Mobile App?

If you haven't already, help stop the spread of COVID-19 by downloading the official PA Department of Health *COVID Alert PA* mobile app: [COVID Alert PA | PA.GOV](https://www.pa.gov/covid-alert) . The app uses phone location data to alert users to COVID-19 exposure. The app never collects or reveals the identity of any person using the app, and never reveals who has been diagnosed as positive for COVID-19.

Unemployment Compensation Update

UPDATES ON PUA PROGRAM

January 29, 2021

- ✓ Claimants who filed for the week ending 12/26/20 or attempted to reopen their claim in January 2021 are now able to file for the weeks ending Jan. 2, 9, 16, and 23.
 - Claimants who already successfully filed for any of these claim weeks may still see those weeks as available but will be unable to complete the filing process for that week since there is no need for the week to be filed again.
 - ✓ The “endless loop” issue has been fully resolved.
 - ✓ The “disappearing claim” issue of when claimants could access their dashboard but not all parts of their claim has been resolved.
 - ✗ Some claimants only received payments for the week of Jan. 23 but not Jan. 2, 9, or 16, even though they filed for these weeks prior to this week. These weeks are still being recalculated and payments should begin appearing in claimants’ accounts soon.
- ✉ Claimants with other questions or concerns about their claims are encouraged to reach out to L&I at ucpua@pa.gov.  Claimants are asked to email from the email address on file for their claim and to refrain from sending attachments.
- INFORMATION AND UPDATES
www.uc.pa.gov

PUA Program Fixes Finalized

After weeks of waiting the PUA system is backdating claims and will be releasing payments soon. Log on to your dashboard to certify for weeks between December 26, 2020 and Jan 23, 2021. Claimants are reporting long wait times in a “waiting room.” This is not an error, but a system feature that automatically comes online when the volume of visitors to the PUA website reaches a certain amount. Logging in early in the morning or late at night is best.



VIEW & PRINT YOUR 1099-G

UPDATES AND INFORMATION
www.uc.pa.gov

1099G Tax Forms Available

All unemployment recipients have been mailed their 1099G -- unemployment income tax forms. Income reported on the 1099G includes all GROSS unemployment payments from UC, PEUC, EB, FPUC, PUA, FPUC, and LWA. Copies can be downloaded at uc.pa.gov or on the PUA dashboard.

Fraud Notice: Because the 1099 forms are automatically generated for all claimants receiving unemployment compensation payments, the receipt of a 1099 form by a person who didn't file for unemployment may indicate a case of identity fraud.

If someone who didn't file for unemployment receives what looks to be a 1099 tax form in the mail, [they should report this suspected fraud immediately](#) so L&I can correct their income with the IRS and prevent any issues with the victim's taxes.

The graphic is a blue rectangular banner. At the top left is a red alarm bell icon. To its right, the words "FRAUD ALERT" are written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, the text "Please REPORT this Facebook account:" is written in white. In the center is a screenshot of a Facebook profile for the "PA Department Of Labour & Industry", labeled as a "Government Organization". A red arrow points from the text "Missing verification checkmark" (in red) to the profile picture area of the Facebook post. Below the screenshot, there is a red circle with a diagonal line through it (a prohibition sign) to the left of a red rectangular box containing the words "UNVERIFIED ACCOUNT" in white capital letters. At the bottom right, the text "INFORMATION AND UPDATES" is above the website "www.uc.pa.gov".

PA Department of Labor and Industry Facebook Fraud Alert.

If you do not see a blue circle with a white check mark on a PA Department of Labor and Industry Facebook post it is fraudulent. These posts solicit personal information to unemployment claimants over social media. L&I never asks for personal information on social media. Be careful!

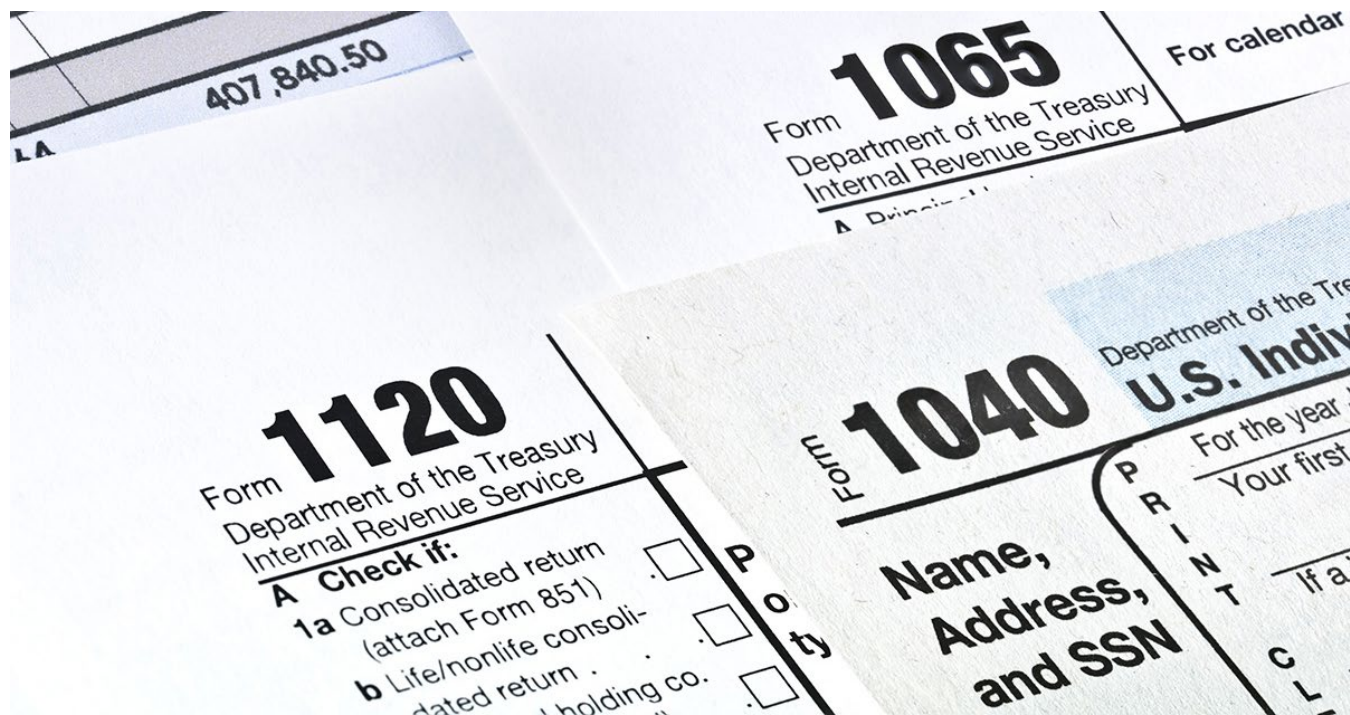
Tax Information



AARP Senior Tax Preparation Cancelled for North Hills Sites.

TaxAide suddenly cancelled the North Hills free senior tax preparation services for 2021. All appointments at **Undercliff VFC** in Shaler and **Cooper-Siegel Community Library** in Fox Chapel **are cancelled**.

Senator Williams' office assists the AARP by scheduling appointments for them every tax season. If you scheduled an AARP tax preparation appointment at Undercliff VFC through Senator Williams' office, you have already received a phone call from our staff cancelling your appointment. Alternative senior tax preparation appointments may be available through the United Way after February 15, 2021. Dial "211" from any phone for information.



Federal and PA Tax Processing begins February 12, 2021.

If you file your federal or PA taxes in the next three weeks, you may see a delay in the processing of your return or refund.

The Pennsylvania Department of Revenue and the IRS announced 2020 income tax return processing will begin on Friday, Feb. 12, 2021. The IRS attributes the delay in the start of the “filing season” — which typically occurs in January — to necessary programming and testing work on IRS systems. Because PA taxes are linked to the IRS, filing seasons must align.

INTRODUCING MYPATH

A NEW ONLINE FILING SYSTEM FOR PA TAX RETURNS

myPATH is a free, user-friendly system that allows taxpayers to seamlessly file the Pennsylvania Income Tax Return (PA-40) and make income tax payments, as well as offering other services.



Learn more at
mypath.pa.gov



You Can File Your PA Return Online!

Remember taxpayers interested in filing their Pennsylvania returns can do so immediately by visiting the new free electronic filing option available at mypath.pa.gov. myPATH is accepting 2020 returns and payments.



Snow Removal Issues?

Snow and ice removal issues on your road? Visit <http://alleghenycounty.us/whoplowsmyroad> to find out whom to call.

Good News

Pennsylvania
pursue your happiness™

Check out Pennsylvania's Happy Traveler Travel Guide!

The [Pennsylvania Tourism Office](#) announced the release of its 2021 [Happy Traveler](#) travel guide, a resource to inspire all to continue dreaming of and planning for future getaways in

Pennsylvania. As Pennsylvanians continue to take precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19, looking ahead to a future trip has real benefits for our energy and happiness.

Featured in the guide are culinary trails such as Picked – An Apple Trail, Baked – A Bread Trail, Chopped – A Charcuterie Trail, etc. Other special features in the guide include:

- Uncommon history lessons from haunted locales to distilled spirits;
- Urban green spaces, children’s museums, and waterside must-sees;
- Great pasta points of interest, snack food tours, and Amish delight destinations;
- The greatest gravel trails, fall foliage hot spots, and on-the-water adventures;
- RV rendezvous from state parks to castles; and
- Virtual events and museum experiences

Better days are in our future!

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have by phone at 412-364-0469 (Ross Office), 724-224-2131 (Harrison Office) or by email at SenatorLindseyWilliams@pasenate.com. My staff will return your call/email within 24 hours (Monday-Friday).



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