



Newtown Senior Center, Center for Active Living

Handbook for Members & Guests

INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

We hope that you will find the Newtown Senior Center a warm and welcoming place where you can come to recreate, socialize, access helpful services and information, and find intellectual stimulation. The staff look forward to welcoming you and are available to assist you.

The Newtown Senior Center Handbook was established to ensure a friendly and supportive environment for all who participate and work at the Center. We hope these guidelines will allow for participants to feel at ease, create an enjoyable atmosphere for all, and maintain the facility for the community.

The Senior Center operates under the Department of Human Services.

Mission of the Department of Human Services:

Supporting a high quality of life for the Newtown Community through services, programs and information that promote mental, physical, and social well-being.

Mission of the Newtown Senior Center:

The Newtown Senior Center, Center for Active Living serves as a community focal point providing, programs, and services for our older citizens with a place to gather in a friendly environment where they may participate in social, cultural and educational activities. Enhancing independent living, and supporting mental, physical and social well-being.

CONTACT US

Main Telephone Line	203-270-4310
Address	8 Simpson Street, Newtown, CT 06470
Website	www.newtown-ct.gov

LOCATION AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The Newtown Senior Center is a public building owned by the Town of Newtown and is under its jurisdiction. The Senior Center is located at 8 Simpson Street in Fairfield Hills. The Senior Center is attached to the Newtown Community Center. The entrance can be found on the right side of the building. Parking, including handicapped parking spaces, is available on a first-come, first served basis.

The Newtown Senior Center welcomes its members Monday through Friday, 9:00 am till 4:00pm. We are closed on all major holidays, including: *Martin Luther King Day, Columbus Day, Presidents Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.*

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When inclement weather poses a threat, The Newtown Senior Center may adjust or cancel scheduled hours of operation, programs and/or special events.

In the case of inclement weather please look out for an email blast with more information, or call the Senior Center at 203-270-4310 to speak with staff or hear a recorded message in the event of closure.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Newtown Human Services Department is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the personal information provided by participants. The Department is compliant with all applicable laws and regulations relating to such information.

All information obtained from participants is for use by Human Services staff only. Participants' personal information will not be provided to anyone who is not an employee of the Town of Newtown, except in the case of a medical emergency, or with written consent.

SENIOR CENTER MEMBERSHIP

Those wishing to use Senior Center services must register. Membership is open to anyone 55 years of age and up. Newtown resident fee is \$20 and \$25 for out of town members. Walk in day fee \$5. Cash or Check accepted. Checks are made payable to The Town of Newtown. Your membership puts you on our newsletter Email list (mailed copy available upon request), weekly email blasts, and entitles you to participate in our programs and activities. Existing members must complete a membership application to renew your membership for each fiscal year (on or before July 1st).

Membership is required to participate in activities scheduled at the Newtown Senior Center. Only new members will receive a FOB card. If you lost your FOB card, replacement cards are available for a \$5 fee.

ELIGIBILITY & PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Individuals must be age 55 or older to participate in Senior Center activities or to utilize items designated for Senior Center participants. **Please note that participation in Senior Center trips may differ.
2. Participants are required to check-in at the *MySeniorCenter* kiosk upon entering the Senior Center.
3. Individuals must be independent and oriented. At the discretion of the Director of Human Services, those who are not independent and oriented may be required to have an aide accompany them while they are on Senior Center grounds or utilizing transportation services. An aide could be a home-health aide, companion, caregiver or family member. **Staff members are not permitted to provide hands-on assistance.** If a person requiring an aide is attending an event/trip that requires a fee, the same fee shall apply to the aide. Individuals who require an aide must be accompanied by them at all times while on Senior Center grounds. In the event the aide does not provide adequate assistance or leaves the individual unattended, staff members will immediately contact the emergency contact person on file and the emergency contact will be required to come to the Senior Center to assist the individual. On-going failure to provide necessary assistance to the individual may result in their inability to participate in the future.

4. Individuals with assistance needs that cannot be managed by their aide may be unable to participate. These may include but are not limited to:

- Wandering
- Poor personal hygiene
- Abusive or harmful behavior
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Cognitive impairment
- Inability to toilet independently
- Behavioral health issues

- Chronic unmanaged incontinence
- Regular occurring seizures
- Chronic contagious disease
- Prescription drug monitoring
- Contagious disease
- Inability to feed oneself
- Inability to ambulate independently

5. If necessary, minor age children may accompany an individual to the senior center on an occasional basis upon approval from the Human Services Director. Minors must be adequately supervised at all times.

For any individual who is deemed not to have met any of the above requirements, the Director of Human Services shall meet with the individual and/or his or her family. Whenever possible, areas for assistance will be identified, solutions offered, and a plan of action will be established. Failure to comply with the recommended action plan will result in the individual's inability to participate in the future.

TRIPS

The Newtown Senior Center offers a variety of Day Trips/Tours that greatly improve the health and well-being of our members. Trips will be announced in our monthly newsletter. Members must register at the front desk. Payment in full is required at the time of registration. Members may register for one additional participant only. Please consult the following Trip/Tour policies and procedures:

1. Trips are open to any registered members. Unregistered members may attend, however priority is given to current members.
2. Participants must be able to function independently without one-to one assistance or supervision, or provide a companion or aide to provide assistance. Companions travel at the same price as other passengers and due to space constraints on the Senior Center bus, must follow behind in their own vehicle with or without the person in need of an aide.
3. Participants will abide by the information and instructions provided by staff while on any trip. Failure to meet at appointed locations and/or departure times, observe safety practices or other instructions could result in suspension from participation in future trips.
4. Some trip destinations involve extensive walking, physical exertion or limited accessibility due to the nature of the trip or facility visited. This information is included in the monthly newsletter with descriptions of the event. Individuals must determine their ability to participate.
5. If you are unable to attend a trip for which you have signed up, you must notify the senior center as soon as possible. Cancellations that are received within two weeks of the scheduled date of the trip will be refunded. No-shows are non-refundable.
6. Payments will be reimbursed if the trip is cancelled.

HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

In the interest of maintaining the health, safety and well-being of members, visitors, and staff, the following must be adhered to:

1. **Weapons:** Weapons are not allowed inside the Newtown Senior Center, or anywhere on its campus. Any visitor or member found in the possession of a weapon will be asked to leave the Senior Center. Repeat incidences will be reported to the Newtown Police Department, and membership privileges may be revoked. Weapon

- includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, explosives and components, fireworks, or any other object that could be used to inflict harm upon another person.
2. **Tobacco:** The Newtown Senior Center is a tobacco-free facility. No tobacco use is allowed inside or outside the doors of our building, or on the Senior Center bus. This includes the use of cigarettes, E-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars, or any other tobacco product. Smoking is permitted in the designated area located in the back of the building outside the Multipurpose Room. Per CT State regulations you must be at least 25 feet from the building. In order to maintain a litter-free campus, we ask that cigarette and cigar butts be properly disposed of in designated containers.
 3. **Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverages are not permitted within the building or on the grounds, unless provided by a Town entity for an approved function/event. If a participant is found in possession of alcohol or under the influence of alcohol while inside the Senior Center, your emergency contact will be notified and/or the Newtown Police. The individual may be banned from the center.
 4. **Hand Sanitizer:** Participants are encouraged to use the hand sanitizers located throughout the facility. If you are ill or have a fever, seek medical attention and please remain at home.
 5. **Pets:** Pets are not permitted inside the facility, except during approved programs. Service animals are only allowed with proper documentation.
 6. **Food and Beverages:** The Newtown Senior Center is licensed as a food service establishment. For the safety of all and to comply with State and local health codes only staff members and registered food service volunteers are allowed in the kitchen area. Public Health Code 19-13-B42(p)(1) prohibits public access through food preparation areas, as such unauthorized personnel are prohibited from entering the kitchen. A staff member with QFO (Qualified Food Operator) certification oversees all food service operations and enforcement of regulations. Members are **NOT** allowed to remove food that is prepared or served in the center from the building. Individuals are permitted to bring food and beverages into the Senior Center, only for their own consumption at that time. Storage of personal food and beverages is not permitted.
 7. **Photo in My Senior Center:** all members must have a photo in My Senior Center attached to their member profile.
 8. **Medical Emergency:** In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911 and notify Director of Human Services. The emergency contact will then be notified. Senior Center members should not provide any assistance to those with a medical emergency or that have fallen. Members who are fully conscious may refuse medical assistance only after emergency personnel have arrived and their medical condition has been evaluated. If emergency personnel recommend further treatment and the member refuses to cooperate, the Senior Center is not liable as per Waiver of Liability. Members who refuse the recommended medical attention must immediately vacate the premises and the emergency contact person or designee will be responsible for transporting the participant and ensuring their well-being.

COVID-19 Specific Guidelines:

1. All participation in indoor/outdoor activities is voluntary.
2. Current membership to the Newtown Senior Center and the completion of the 2022/2023 membership form is required for participation.
3. Program participation will be limited. Group size will be determined by the Senior Center staff based on safety precautions.
4. Members must pre-register for each event by calling the Senior Center at 203-270-4310. Members must call each week to reserve their spot. Members that do not call ahead of time may be turned away.
5. Members are encouraged to wear a face covering at all times when indoors if they have had a possible exposure.
6. Members must comply with spacing configurations laid out by staff for each program, and ensure a safe distance is maintained from members, staff, and instructors at all times.
7. Members are encouraged to utilize hand sanitizer which will be provided in various locations throughout the Senior Center.
8. Shared equipment is not encouraged.

If a member is unable to follow the guidelines above they will not be able to continue to participate so that the safety of others is not compromised. If a member does not feel ready to participate in an organized program, they should feel free to abstain and wait- we will welcome you when you are ready.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Town of Newtown recognizes that an active Senior Center needs to flourish in an environment that is supportive, inviting and secure for its staff, participants, and guests. In order to create a positive environment and sense of community within the Senior Center, all individuals should always conduct themselves appropriately and treat each other and the staff with courtesy, respect, and cooperation. This is a zero-tolerance facility as it relates to individuals' inappropriate conduct, behavior, and/or actions. To ensure a safe, respectful, and positive environment, the following Code of Conduct has been created. Actions leading to exclusion include, but are not limited to:

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Intentionally damaging equipment or damaging property of the Senior Center.
3. Conduct that creates excessively loud or disruptive noise.
4. Possession of or use of illegal substances.
5. The use of obscene or profane language, gestures, or verbal abuse, sexual harassment, directed at staff, volunteers, or another participant or guest; this could be gestures, bullying, verbal, written or physical in nature.
6. Sexual harassment of a verbal, written, or physical nature, including making unauthorized physical contact with another person.
7. Making disparaging remarks to another person about their race, national origin, age, disability, marital status, gender identification, sexual orientation, religion, veteran/military status or any other status.
8. Abusive, aggressive, disrespectful, violent and/or bullying behavior towards people at the Senior Center.
9. Theft of any kind.
10. Exchange of money of any kind, including gambling. Additionally, coercing or badgering others for money or transportation to buy any goods or services is not permitted.

Disciplinary Procedures for Misconduct:

Members who do not adhere to this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately. If the violator refuses to leave the premises, the Newtown Police will be called. The Director of Human Services will then assess the situation and determine a course of action consistent with the behavior. Persons creating a serious disruption may have their membership suspended. All incidents of harassment of staff will be reported to the Human Resources Department.

Filing a Complaint Regarding the conduct of Another Individual:

If an individual at the Senior Center feels threatened or in harm's way due to the conduct, action, or behavior of another person or feels such is disruptive/inappropriate, this should be immediately brought to the attention of a staff member. The Director of Human Services will be notified and a meeting will be held to discuss the incident. If an individual is witness to a violation of the Code of Conduct, that person should immediately notify a staff member to arrange a meeting with the Human Services Director. **All conversations will be handled discreetly and confidentially when possible.**

VISITORS AND SOLICITATIONS

The Newtown Senior Center welcomes visitors. If you would like to attend for the day, a walk in form must be completed and a \$5 fee will be collected. Please note visitors should meet the requirements of membership, unless otherwise approved by Senior Center staff.

Soliciting, selling, or collecting money or items within the Senior Center are not permitted, except when part of a fundraising project or event sponsored or approved by the Senior Center. Outside vendors, presenters, or contractors are prohibited from collecting any personal or contact information from members.

Posters advertising events hosted by outside organizations are allowed to be displayed only with the pre-approval of the Human Services Director.

CONGREGATE MEAL PROGRAM

The congregate meal program is currently on hold. When in operation this program is made possible by grant funding through the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging (WCAAA) and partnership with a 3rd party caterer. Funding allows the diner contribution to the meal to be minimal per person, with the remainder of the cost subsidized by our grant. Meals are served at noon in the Multipurpose Room. Menus can be found in the monthly newsletter and at the Front Desk. Reservations for lunch may be made with the front desk at the start of each month.

Please note that the lunch menu is subject to change due to supply and demand, and access to featured ingredients by the Meal Provider. All guests must follow the regulations defined by the Health District and the Newtown Senior Center, including:

- Lunches may only be enjoyed in our lunch room. NO food is permitted to be taken out of the Senior Center or stored in the refrigerators at the Center.
- Only staff are permitted in the kitchen during the hours that the meal program is operating.

The Senior Center does not receive the grant subsidy for any "no shows". If you need to cancel your reservation please do so as soon as possible. The Senior Center understands that a cancellation may necessary due to unexpected circumstances. However, if a member is repeatedly a "no show" the Senior Center may invoice the member for the full cost of the meal (\$8.00).

As required by the State of CT to receive the grant subsidy from WCAAA ALL participants must have a FORM 5 on file with the Newtown Senior Center

POLITICAL & RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY POLICY

The Newtown Senior Center is non-denominational, respecting all religious choices of its members. It is the policy of the Center to remain neutral on any political topic or candidate. Formal and informal visits by candidates for public office and distribution of political literature is allowed by scheduling in advance and with approval from the Director.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Senior Center does not provide fax or copy services for general use by members. Use of the copy machine can be utilized by staff on behalf of instructors and facilitators for the purpose of programming.

Wi-Fi is available to members and visitors. See Center staff for login details.

PERSONAL ITEMS

The Senior Center is not responsible for personal items brought into the Center. Please be mindful of your belongings while participating in events and programming. Any personal items that are found will be placed in the lost and found located in the lobby.

COMMISSION ON AGING (COA)

The Commission on Aging was established by Ordinance with powers of Commissions on Aging set forth in the Connecticut General Statutes including:

1. Study the needs of elderly and aging persons in Newtown.
2. Coordinate programs for the elderly and aging in Newtown
3. Make applications for grants to State and Federal governmental agencies.
4. Prepare written opinions on the merits of programs for which grants are proposed.
5. Act as agent for other Federal, State or Town Boards, Commissions or agencies or local private groups to carry out programs for the elderly and aging in Newtown as from time to time are specifically authorized by such Boards, Commissions, agencies and groups.

The COA meets once a month. Meeting details, along with contact information for Commissioners, is located on the Town website.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Fire:

1. At the sound of the fire alarm, evacuate the building immediately. Inform all of the participants of the evacuation through word of mouth. Close all doors behind you, but do not lock any doors.
2. Do not go to another area of the building. Leave the building and go into the parking lot away from the building. Go to the Senior Center designated area for evacuation.
3. If one of the exits should be blocked, move immediately to an alternate exit. Look around to find the nearest, safest exit prior to going to the most common exit. Stay calm so you may think clearly and reasonably. Do not walk upright if smoke is present. Crawl on the floor to breathe clean air and avoid smoke inhalation.
4. Do not re-enter the building until the fire department allows.

Power Failure/Gas Oder:

1. Staff will call 911 for life threatening/serious situations then evacuate the building immediately.
2. If no supervisor is present, another Town Director will be called.
3. Clear and secure all program areas and account for all participants and staff.
4. If it is determined that power failure is not due to fire or other emergency, a staff member will guide members to retrieve your belongings, and you may leave.

Chemical or Toxic Substance:

1. In case of an exposure, immediately wash your hands after the incident with soap and water. Contact staff immediately.
2. Give details of the emergency to a staff member, including what kinds of chemicals are involved.
3. A staff member will call 911.

4. Evacuate the building if necessary and meet in the designated area.
5. You may be required to fill out a Material Safety Data Sheet. It will be provided by the Director of Human Services.

Bomb Threats:

1. All threats will be treated as though they are real. Please report all suspicious packages, actions or conditions to a staff member.
2. Evacuate the building.
3. A staff member will call 911.

Tornados, Hurricanes, Severe Weather:

1. Changing weather may pose a hazard to safe access and egress from the Senior Center.
2. The Director of Human Services is responsible for building modifications and/or closures.
3. In the event of a weather hazard, you may be directed to shelter in place. Please stay away from the windows and wait for a staff member to guide you to the safest part of the building.

VOLUNTEERS

The Newtown Senior Center appreciates volunteers and their assistance in making this a thriving center. If you are interested in volunteering, please inform the front desk.

7/2022