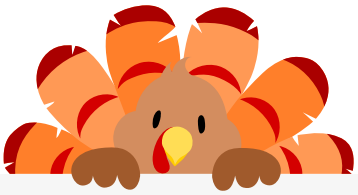
The Arc Allegany-Steuben New York



FI Connect Newsletter

November 2026

OTPS Utilities – Budget Billing

We have received updated information from OPWDD that OTPS Utilities reimbursements can only reimburse actual usage each month. **We are no longer able to reimburse Budgeted amounts on Utility bills.**

OPWDD recommends that people do not utilize Budget Billing with their Utility company. This allows people to pay the actual usage amount and be reimbursed for that same amount. Budget Billing creates under and over payments for people supported, which can create difficulties in meeting financial needs each month. For any questions, please reach out to your FI Coordinator.

Self-Hire Availability Reminder

A friendly reminder that Self-Hires who are hired as Part-Time or Full-Time employees are expected to maintain their minimum required hours each pay period. **Part-Time** employees must work **at least 40 hours bi-weekly**, and **Full-Time** employees must work **at least 72 hours bi-weekly**. If these minimum hours are not met on an ongoing basis, employment status may need to be reviewed and adjusted.

To help ensure services continue running smoothly, **please keep your FI informed of any changes to a Self-Hire's availability or typical work schedule.**



This may include changes related to:

- School or college schedules
- Vacations or planned time off
- Medical concerns
- Additional employment
- Personal commitments that may affect availability

Keeping your FI updated allows us to make any needed adjustments, avoid service interruptions, and ensure supports remain in place. Thank you for helping us keep information current and services on track!

Help Us Improve Self-Direction!



The Arc Allegany-Steuben has partnered with Syracuse University to conduct a brief survey for people receiving Self-Direction services and their families. The survey takes just a few minutes to complete and provides an opportunity to share your experiences, feedback, and ideas. Responses will help us better understand what is working well and identify areas where we can improve services and supports.

Your input is valuable and will help guide future improvements to ensure we continue meeting the needs of the people and families we serve.

We encourage anyone participating in Self-Direction, and their families, to take a few moments to complete the survey **using the QR code above**. Thank you for helping us make our services even better!

Mark Your Calendar

Thursday, November 26th, 2026 &
Friday, November 27th, 2026

This is a reminder that Thursday, November 26th, 2026 and Friday, November 27th, 2026 are Agency Holidays. **Self-Hires should not be working on these days** unless they have received **prior approval** from their FI Coordinator. Wishing everyone a restful and enjoyable Thanksgiving, however you choose to spend it!

The Arc Allegany-Steuben New York

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continued...

Relias Training Reminder

All Self-Hires are required to complete the following trainings:

Due 10/31/2026

1. **Abuse Prevention & Incident Reporting Annual Update 2026**
2. **Justice Center Code Of Conduct Training**

It is crucial that all Self-Hires remain informed and compliant with all New York State and OPWDD requirements. **Failure to complete these trainings by the due dates can result in disabled eVero access, corrective action, and termination**. If your Self -Hire need assistance with the Relias System—such as logging in, resetting a password, or navigating tests please contact your FI Coordinator or email the training department at the following address: **Training@thearcas.org**

Annual Christmas Card Contest

Show off your holiday creativity! The Arc Allegany-Steuben's Annual Christmas Card Contest is **open to all people receiving services and Arc associates.** Two winners will receive an Arc t-shirt and a box of Christmas cards featuring their artwork.

Deadline - Friday, November 13, 2026, by 4:00 PM

Submit original artwork or photography along with:

- Artist's name and location
- Title of artwork
- Contact name (or work location for Arc associates)



Additional info:

- Entries must be on 8.5" x 11" white paper.
- Original artwork or photography only.
- No computer-generated artwork, tracing, framing, matting, or 3-D pieces.
- Digital photos must be at least 300 dpi.

Questions? Contact Myriah Perry at myriah.perry@thearcas.org or 607-622-1893.



Contemporaneous Documentation Reminder

Accurate and timely documentation is an important part of the services we provide. In accordance with guidance from OMIG, service documentation must be completed within 24 hours of the service being provided.

Please keep the following expectations in mind:

- Complete your service note within 24 hours of delivering the service.
- Whenever possible, documentation should be completed before the end of your shift.
- If you are unable to access the Electronic Health Record (EHR/eVero), use the approved manual documentation form.
- Any manual documentation must be submitted to your supervisor within the same 24-hour period.

Timely documentation helps ensure compliance, supports accurate records, and reflects the quality services being provided to the people we support.



Stay Connected

For any questions regarding information found on this newsletter, please email: **FIConnect@thearcas.org**



The Arc Allegany-Steuben's mission is to support and respect people's choices on their journey to independence.