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Hamtramck

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January 30, 2026

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Quick Hits

Good news for those who lost a house to taxes

By Charles Sercombe

For those who lost their house or building because of a tax foreclosure in Wayne County, there is relief coming your way.

That's the result of a recent court ruling that now provides a path for former owners to receive compensation from the sale of tax foreclosed properties.

Specifically, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that former property owners and interest holders may be entitled to receive money left over after their foreclosed properties were sold at auction.

Since then, the Wayne County Treasurer's Office has begun issuing payments to former owners and interest holders – whose claims have been approved by the Wayne County Circuit Court.

So far, more than \$3.8 million has already been returned to eligible claimants in Wayne County.

The Treasurer's Office is making sure people know they might be eligible to receive remaining proceeds. The office carried out an extensive informational campaign designed to reach former property owners and interest holders who may be qualified to file a claim.

"This is money that belongs to the people," said Wayne County Treasurer Eric R. Sabree in a press release. "When someone is legally entitled to proceeds from the sale of tax foreclosed property, we believe it's our responsibility to inform people that those dollars are available and can be returned to them."

The Treasurer's Office stresses that its top priority is preventing foreclosure in the first place. Through payment plans, tax assistance programs, and commu-

wish with the ad-

ministration was to be ambassador to Kuwait, but that fell flat during his Senate confirmation hearing – largely due to his past comments and activity on social media.

He has been saying, more or less, that any day an announcement would be made about his new job.

We were waiting. And... waiting. Annnnn and waiting.

It seemed to us, as more time went by, that just maybe that ship had sailed.

But, surprise!

As it turned out Ghalib, indeed, landed a job with the Trump administration, as a consultant to AmeriCorps. This comes at a time, however, when the approval of the Trump administration on the president's handling of just about everything is at an all-time low.

For the past few years, city officials lamented the loss of revenue from the Wayne County jail located in Hamtramck, which amounted to \$1.4 million a year for the city.

That's no chump change.

Over the last several months, we heard potential good news, from sources, that the county is ready to reopen the jail and renew the revenue flow to the city.

As it turned out, the county will resume payments to the city for use of the jail site.

The only problem? It's likely going to be about half the income every year, versus what used to be received.

Continued on page 2

What's in store for 2026? Let's take a look



Former mayor announces new job

By Charles Sercombe

Former mayor Amer Ghalib is moving on to a new job.

As he has predicted for the past few months, Ghalib is now working for President Trump's administration, for the federal agency AmeriCorps, where he will hold the title of Senior Consultant for Strategic Partnerships.

Ghalib was initially nominated by Trump to be ambassador to Kuwait, but that nomination hit a roadblock at a confirmation hearing with the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee last October.

That original nomination appeared to be a reward for Ghalib's endorsement of Trump in the 2024 presidential election. Ghalib was credited with influencing other Arab and Muslim voters in the Detroit area to switch from supporting Democrats to Republicans.

But, during his confirmation, both Republican and Democratic senators took issue with Ghalib's past comments and social media activity that they considered to be antisemitic.

Ultimately, the Senate Committee never even took up a vote on Ghalib, which prevented him from getting the ambassador job.

Here's what Ghalib has to say about his new role on his Facebook page in an apparent rough translation from Arabic to English:

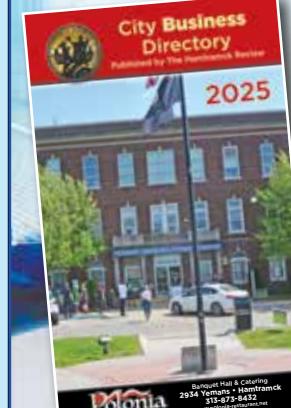
"It is official, I took the constitutional oath today, and discharged my duties in office.

"On this occasion, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to President Donald Trump for trusting me, and entrusting me with this position within his administration and leadership, through which I can work with integrity to serve the interests of American citizens first, without any opposition to the interests of other countries."

"This role also allows me to develop partnerships with local communities and civic organizations across the country, through my work at AmeriCorps, to serve citizens in multiple areas including health, education, housing and public safety, and foster a culture of engagement in various fields of public service."

"I had asked the Pre-

Continued on page 5



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City of Hamtramck

2026 Property Auction Begins On:

03

10

26

Auction End Date: 04/01/26



Full list of available properties, bidding requirements, & application will be posted in late February @ <https://hamtramckcity.gov/community/property-for-sale/>

This week at the Library . . .

January 30, 2026

Phil Hale Jazz Concert: This popular jazz group will play a concert at the library on Friday, February 27, 2026. Everyone is invited, free to the public.

Income Taxes: On February 3, 1913 the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified granting Congress the authority to collect income taxes.

Story Time: These programs conducted by the library staff are scheduled for Wednesdays afternoon at 4:00 pm. All children are invited.

Heroism: On February 3, 1943 an extraordinary act of heroism occurred in the icy waters off Greenland after the U.S. Army transport ship "Dorchester" was hit by a German torpedo and began to sink rapidly. When it became apparent there were not enough life jackets, four U.S. Army Chaplains on board removed theirs, handed them to frightened young soldiers, and chose to go down with the ship while praying.

Exercise at the Library: The RIM Foundation was begun exercise classes again this fall. On Tuesdays, it's back to Yoga at 2:30 pm. and on Fridays, it is Tai Chi at 10:00 am. To register for the program, stop by the library circulation desk.

Preservation of Jazz: Continuing into the autumn and winter season, the Jazz Masterclass program will take place on Thursday evenings from 5 to 7 pm. Participants will cultivate a deeper understanding of this elegant

artform through guided discussions, curated listening experiences, documentary screenings, and more. For more information about the program, call Sky Covington (248) 383-3385..

ESL Classes: These classes are held Monday to Thursday at 9 am and 12 noon. To participate, you must register with the Horizon School.

OverDrive: What more can your library card get you? How about OverDrive's enormous collection of digital materials. Whether searching overdrive.com or using their Libby App, you will have quite the selection of ebooks, online periodicals and audio books to pick from. Plus, Kanopy, with its smorgasbord of foreign and classic films, documentaries, and educational series, is now under the OverDrive umbrella. Find links to both of these media repositories on our website www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us.

Kanopy: Have you watched absolutely everything on your streaming services and are still in need of thoughtful entertainment? Give Kanopy a try. Dive into the humongous collection of critically acclaimed films both foreign and domestic, as well as documentaries and educational series that Kanopy has on offer. Stream titles anywhere on your personal smart device for free after signing up with your library card info. Find a link to this awesome resource on our website www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us by checking under the eResources tab.

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Attachments for printing, faxing or scanning send to

hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com

What's in store for 2026? Let's take a look

Continued from front page

What's curious, though, is the timing of the announcement. Hamtramck has brand new political leadership, just a few weeks old. Why is there an announcement now? Is it that this change in leadership was the key?

We have a sneaking suspicion the change of heart is no coincidence.

Speaking of leadership, is there growing pressure to bring in a Yemeni-American as city manager?

So far, placing Yemeni-Americans in the roles of deputy city manager and police chief hasn't panned out. Is the third time the charm?

There might be an announcement coming in the next few weeks.

Last year, we also noted that many in Hamtramck's conservative

Muslim population had defected from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party.

Now, with Trump's travel ban in effect for over a dozen Muslim-majority countries – including Yemen and Bangladesh, where many in the city immigrated from – will those same voters do a U-turn and go back to the Dems in the midterm elections this coming November?

We think that's a possibility – especially considering that ICE is rounding up people solely because they look foreign. ICE agents are already prowling Detroit and the suburbs.

Our guess is, Hamtramck will be getting our own unwanted visits.

Just remember, a couple thousand of the city's immigrants voted for this.

Another easy prediction: this year, Veterans Park will realize further rebirth, this time in the form of new restrooms being installed. The roads and parking lot around the stadium have already been repaved.

Politically-speaking, Hamtramck often holds many secrets.

And, just as often, they end up being mere rumors that amount to nothing.

Having said that, recently, City Councilmember Mohammed Hassan posted something pretty intriguing on his Facebook page, in which he threatened to post a video – or whatever you call it these days – of a person (or persons) sitting at a dining table with a bunch of absentee ballots back in 2021.

Hmmm ... Who could this person or persons be?

We are taking this with the proverbial (giant) grain of salt, considering the blustery nature of Councilman Hassan. But, if such a video does, in fact, get released, it could damage the reputations of one or two current or former elected officials.

And, speaking of Councilmember Hassan (who is now the mayor pro tem of the city), he is, himself, facing felony

election fraud charges. His court date is set for April in Wayne County Circuit Court.

We've been told that the evidence against him hinges on a sole witness. Will this witness show up? Will they testify truthfully?

To quote the character "The Dude" in the movie "The Big Lebowski": "Expect lots of ins, outs, and what-have-yous."

Moving on, it's a good bet that the Joe Lewis Greenway project will get completed this year – at least, the Hamtramck portion. And those who hate sharing the road with bicyclists are not going to be happy.

Uh-oh, our crystal ball is fading. Time to put it back in storage and wait to see what really unfolds in Hamtramck for this coming year.

And one thing is almost a certainty: There's always a few twists and turns that you don't see coming. You know: Ins, outs, what-have-yous.

Remember, the Dude abides.

Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

nity partnerships, the office works year-round to help residents stay in their homes.

More information about the remaining proceeds claims process – as well as property tax assistance programs to assist owners with avoiding foreclosure in the first place – is available at WayneCountyMI.gov/Treasurer.

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Email your request to: MDHHS-FH-Wayne@michigan.gov. Include:

- Include your name
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Important Information

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- You will receive confirmation once your appointment is scheduled.



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The Hamtramck Historical Museum is now offering free public tours of the museum the last Saturday of EVERY month.
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01|31|2026

1:00pm to 2:00 p.m.



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Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

Will city taxpayers be hit with a hefty bill?

Hamtramck, like a number of other communities, is about to get screwed by Republican state legislators.

That's because they went to court to block roughly \$5 million that had been earmarked about a year ago to fund several projects here in town, including purchasing a new fire truck that is already under construction.

All together, \$645 million is at stake for a number of various projects in communities throughout the state.

The legislators claim the funding is unconstitutional, according to

some obscure rule in controlling state funding.

Fortunately, the state has already funneled some of this money to Hamtramck, but a question lingers whether communities will be forced to pay back money already spent.

That will be financially devastating to Hamtramck, which, like other communities, was selected because we are a community where many people are surviving on poverty wages.

We are also a city with aging infrastructure, and limited financial resources.

We understand that legislators want to be fiscally responsible, but subjecting communities to footing the bills for millions in improvements that were already promised is anything but responsible.

And, if Hamtramck is socked with a bill to pay back the funding, you can bet it will be property owners – homeowners – who will be forced to pay for it, through a court-ordered tax.

Legislators need to know that they are playing with their fellow citizens' financial security.

Mayor moves quick to begin city rebranding effort

By Charles Sercombe

In a move that surprised a number of residents, newly-elected mayor Adam Alharbi introduced new city logo designs.

And this was done in the first few weeks since Alharbi became mayor.

The immediate reaction on social media, however, was a big thumbs-down.

"There is nothing wrong with the current logo. More distractions and wasting taxpayer money," said Diane Elizabeth.

The initial designs offered by Alharbi featured an eagle motif that, for some, conjured up similar designs used by a certain 1930s German fascist party.

"Looks awfully WWII with Nazi undertones to

me," said Lynn Blasey.

The most frequent criticism was that the designs looked computer generated.

"Both of these are AI generated slop and it's frankly disappointing and disrespectful to the artist community of Hamtramck which the city is known for having an amazing and vibrant artist community. There's a right way and wrong way to do things and this definitely falls into the wrong way," said Gracie Olivero.

Well, you get the drift – and so did Alharbi, who agreed to go back to the drawing board.

"You spoke, and we listened!" he said on Facebook. "We've taken your feedback from the pre-

vious round to refine our city logo. Hamtramck is a different city than it was 100 years ago, and we want a brand that reflects 'The World in Two Square Miles' as we know it today."

So, Alharbi handed off the project to the Hamtramck Arts & Culture Commission.

In the meantime, Alharbi unveiled a new round of designs.

And once again, the critics weren't impressed.

"As a professional graphic designer with years of experience, I believe the previous Hamtramck city logo was far stronger," said Bodrul Ahmen. "The new design appears rushed and lacks

Continued on page 5

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Odds & Ends

Winter brings unwanted ICE ...

By now, we've all seen, heard or read about the bullying and even deadly tactics employed by agents – many of them newly hired and, apparently, poorly trained – from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, as well as Border Patrol and the National Guard.

Immigration legal experts advise the following if you are confronted by ICE agents:

- You do not have to open the door. If you do, stay calm – you have rights.

- Ask what or who they are there for (and ask for an interpreter if you need one).

- If they ask to enter, ask if they have a warrant signed by a judge and, if so, ask to see it (through a window, or slipped under the door).

- If they do not have a warrant signed by a judge, you may refuse to let them in. Ask them to leave any information at your door.

- If they force their way into your home, do not resist. Tell everyone in the residence to remain silent.

- If you are arrested, you have the right to remain silent. Do not sign anything until you speak with a lawyer.

While these tips may not fully protect you, you can also try filming the incident with your phone. Again, remain calm. Keep insisting on communicating with a legal representative until you are granted such. Go over details; you may need to testify in court, and coming to a clear agreement about what exactly happened can be very important if it comes to that point.

I spy on you? ... Folks are sounding the alarm that households with Ring Doorbell cameras may find out the information they collect could be used against you.

How's that? According to various reports, it's been said that there are cases of Ring devices being hooked up with the surveillance company Flock, which police departments, including Hamtramck, use for license plate reading to

catch wanted criminals.

The concern is that information gathered by these two devices will be funneled to ICE for their efforts to catch suspected illegal aliens.

Hamtramck is long known for being a town populated mostly by immigrants – many newly or recently arrived.

If that sounds straight out of Big Brother science fiction, well, it may not be fiction anymore.

However, Ring is owned by Amazon, and that company's Jeff Bezo denies that there is any data sharing.

Hmmmm.
That sounds reassuring, right?

Watch this space for future updates.

Hot cars ... According to a new and thorough-looking survey by a website called Compare the Market, data on car thefts puts Michigan at number 16 per capita in the U.S. – and that's nothing to burn rubber over.

And while Michigan's rate of 265 thefts per 100,000 residents pales in comparison with Colorado's abysmal 777-per-100K figure, it's still nowhere near New Hampshire's pristine 67-per-100K number either.

Michigan is also a bit quirky in that it is only state in the union where the preferred target vehicle is the Jeep Grand Cherokee.

In 37 other states, it is either the unspecified "Chevrolet Pickup" (19) or "Ford Pickup" (18). Also in the mix: the Honda Accord (7), Hyundai Elantra (4), Toyota Camry (1) and Honda CR-V (1).

If you're either astute at math, OCD, or bored, and added that all up and realized it came out to 51 states, that's because the District of Columbia was entered separately as its own entry.

The survey also noted the second- and third-most targeted makes/models, and for Michigan, they were the Dodge Charger and the Chrysler 300 Series vehicles.

Interestingly, neither the Chevy nor the Ford Pickups, so prevalent across much of the nation to be earmarked

for swiping, didn't even crack the state's top three.

Only 10 other states were also able to say that as well, all of them either Midwest/Northern (Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin) or Eastern Seaboard (D.C., Maryland, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts).

More on car thefts
...We've talked about what's getting swiped, but there's also another in-depth analysis from Compare the Market just out called "The Five Riskiest Places to Park in Michigan."

A five-year-long analysis examining 116,677 Michigan car thefts, the study found that about 2 out of every 5 thefts occur at home, while more than three in five happen when away.

In regard to this ratio, Michigan is similar to much of the rest of the nation.

Two types of areas account for more than four-fifths of the "away" thefts: A vehicle getting taken from a public street, alley, freeway etc., 45 percent, and the car getting taken from a parking garage or drop off / ride share lot, 36 percent.

How to help prevent this?

Good old common sense: park where there are a lot of people, and it's well-lit and, preferably, monitored by a security person; lock your doors and windows and leave nothing of value visible; consider anti-theft devices, such as steering wheel locks or alarm systems.

Many modern vehicles come with the latter as standard equipment, but it could be argued that people are so used to car alarms going off that they don't react much anymore.

And, in this cold weather, be especially careful starting your vehicle remotely, even if you are watching it closely; most car thieves are opportunistic, and look to strike quickly for the easy pickings.

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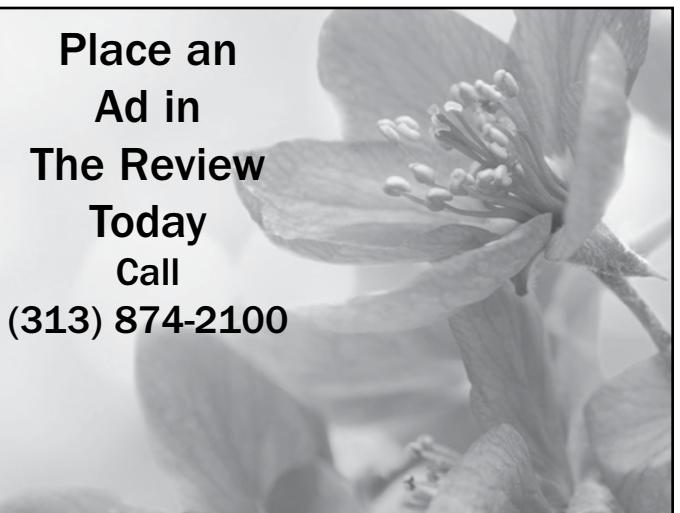
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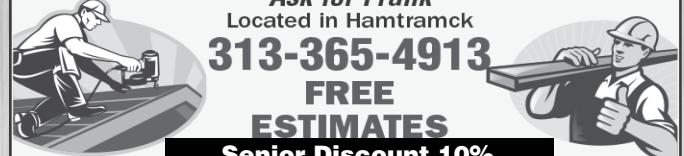
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By Charles Sercombe

This week's Crime Log covers Jan. 20-26.

Tuesday, Jan. 20

- A hit-and-run accident was reported in the 9200 block of Jos. Campau.
- Family trouble was reported in the 12000 block of St. Aubin.
- A complaint about an animal was made in the 3300 block of Edwin.

Saturday, Jan. 24

- No incident report was available for this date.

Sunday, Jan. 25

- An armed robbery was reported in the 9800 block of Jos. Campau.
- A break-in was reported in the 12000 block of St. Aubin.
- Property damage was reported in the area of Caniff and Mitchell.
- A business in the 11800 block of Dequindre reported trouble with a customer.
- A hit-and-run accident was reported in the 2900 block of Lehman.
- A break-in was reported in the 9500 block of Mitchell.

Monday, Jan. 26

- A loose dog was reported on Lumpkin.
- A hit-and-run accident was reported on Pulaski.
- A complaint about an animal was made in the area of Lumpkin and Holbrook.
- A domestic assault was reported in the 12000 block of Dequindre. A domestic assault was also reported in the 12000 block of Selfridge.
- An attempted carjacking was reported in the 11600 block of Sobieski.

Friday, Jan. 23

- A complaint was made about an animal in the 3300 block of Edwin.
- A person in the

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS



Pre-school

program

The Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) has expanded its "Pre-K for All" programs.

That means Hamtramck families who are enrolled in the program will see an expansion of services.

In a press release, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said:

"I am proud that we are seeing record enrollment in our free, high-quality Pre-K for All

programs across the state, saving families \$14,000 a year. With today's \$9.7 million investment, we will help open and expand 246 Pre-K classrooms, supporting even more local programs and educators so they can help thousands more children successfully prepare for kindergarten."

Families looking to find a program near them and learn more about eligibility can visit MiPreKforAll.org.

Coming Events

SATURDAY, Feb. 7, 2-4 p.m.

Take-out only Soup Kitchen at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone is welcome! (Please come in person to pick up your meal.) Note that Soup Kitchen is a week earlier this month only.

SATURDAY, Feb. 14, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Drive-thru Take-out Polish at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. \$15 Adult/\$8 Child 12 & under. Menu: Pork Chop, Kielbasa, Pierogi/sour cream, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes/gravy, Paczek for Dessert. Cars will be staged in parking lot for delivery in front of church.

Sudoku

The rules to play Sudoku are quite simple. Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9.

2			7		9			
	6	9						
3	5				7			
1		2			4	3		
	2							
4	2		5					
	7		3					

			5		3	7		
2				8				
	4	9			4			9
7			3		5			
	3	9						4
8		7			9			2
9	1				5	6	2	3

9	3							
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	5							
3	4	5						
1	6	9	2	5				
8		3						9
	1	9						
4	1	2	6	7				3

9	8							
1		8				5		
	3							
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1	8	7	2	9	3	4	1	6
5	2	6	4	8	7	1	3	7
3	4	9	6	5	1	2	8	7

9	7	1	4	3	5	6	2	8
8	5	4	7	2	1	8	9	3
9	2	6	1	3	4	1	9	7
6	9	2	4	5	3	7	8	1
1	8	7	2	9	3	5	4	6
5	2	6	4	8	7	1	3	7
3	4	9	6	5	1	2	8	7
2	3	5	1	4	7	8	6	9
7	9	6	3	5	7	8	6	9

9	7	1	4	3	5	6	2	8
8	5	4	7	2	1	8	9	3
9	2	6	1	3	4	1	9	7
6	9	2	4	5	3	7	8	1
1	8	7	2	9	3	5	4	6
5	2	6	4	8	7	1	3	7
3	4	9	6	5	1	2	8	7
2	3	5	1	4	7	8	6	9
7	9	6	3	5	7	8	6	9

From the Office of Wayne County Treasurer Eric R. Sabree



PROBATE ASSISTANCE

If you are facing foreclosure and need assistance in starting a Wayne County Probate Court Case because a property is in the name of a deceased family member, please contact one of the following community partners for assistance:

Michigan Legal Services: 313-774-1527 | 313-725-4890

United Community Housing Coalition: 313-405-7726

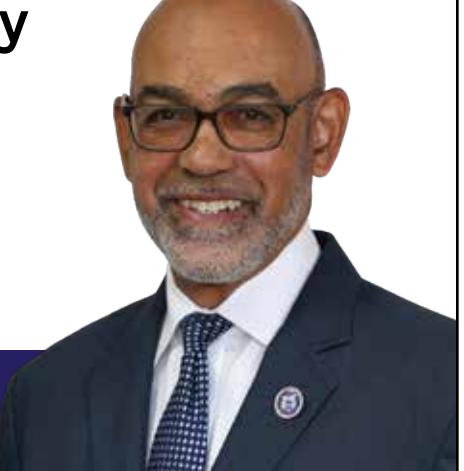
Legal Aid & Defender: 313-967-5800

**Contact the Wayne County
Probate Court by calling:
313-224-5706**

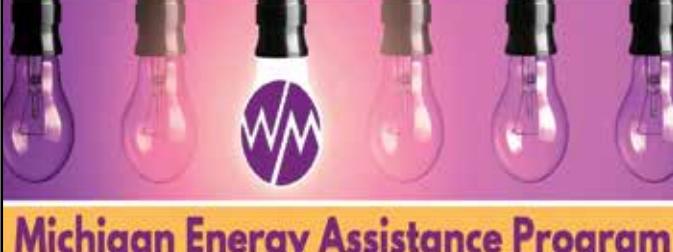
We are here to help!



**www.Treasurer.WayneCounty.com
313-224-5990**



WAYNE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY



Michigan Energy Assistance Program

No shut-off or past-due balance needed!

The Michigan Energy Assistance Program is a preventive program designed to provide energy assistance to low-income households so that they can reach energy self-sufficiency.

A household that qualifies for State Emergency Relief (SER) for heat or non-heat electricity services also qualifies for additional energy services from MEAP through agencies that have received Michigan Department of Health & Human Services grant funding.

PROGRAM BENEFITS	ELIGIBILITY
Maximum Assistance Up to \$2,500	• Income: 60% SMI or less
Enrollment in a home energy supplier affordable payment plan	• SER Approval: Optional — an approved SER provides additional financial support, but funds are limited.
Financial education and budget conversation	WAYNE METRO IS HERE TO HELP.
Energy education and conservation	For assistance with the application or for more information about MEAP:
Energy waste reduction services through home energy supplier programs	Call our Wayne Metro CONNECT Center at 313-388-1799, chat with us on our website: www.WayneMetro.org or email us at wmcconnectcenter@waynemetro.org
Ongoing case management services	

For More Information, Visit WAYNEMETRO.ORG/MEAP

**HOME
HEATING
ASSISTANCE**

Michigan Resources

211 is a **free phone service** that links people with information or agencies that can help with **energy assistance** and other needs. Calls are confidential and answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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Heating Service Call	\$99	10% DISCOUNT Off Labor on Any Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning or Sewer Cleaning Job, Installation or Repair. Not valid with any other offer.
Cleaning & Repairs Extra		Must present coupon at time of estimate. With coupon. Expires 2-28-26.

Furnaces, Boilers, Heating, Sewer & Drain Cleaning	Starting at \$225	Upgrades & Permits Extra. Must present coupon at time of estimate. With coupon. Expires 2-28-26.
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Drain Cleaning Starting at \$1495	40 Gallon Hot Water Tank Starting at \$1495	Upgrades & Permits Extra. Must present coupon at time of estimate. With coupon. Expires 2-28-26.
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