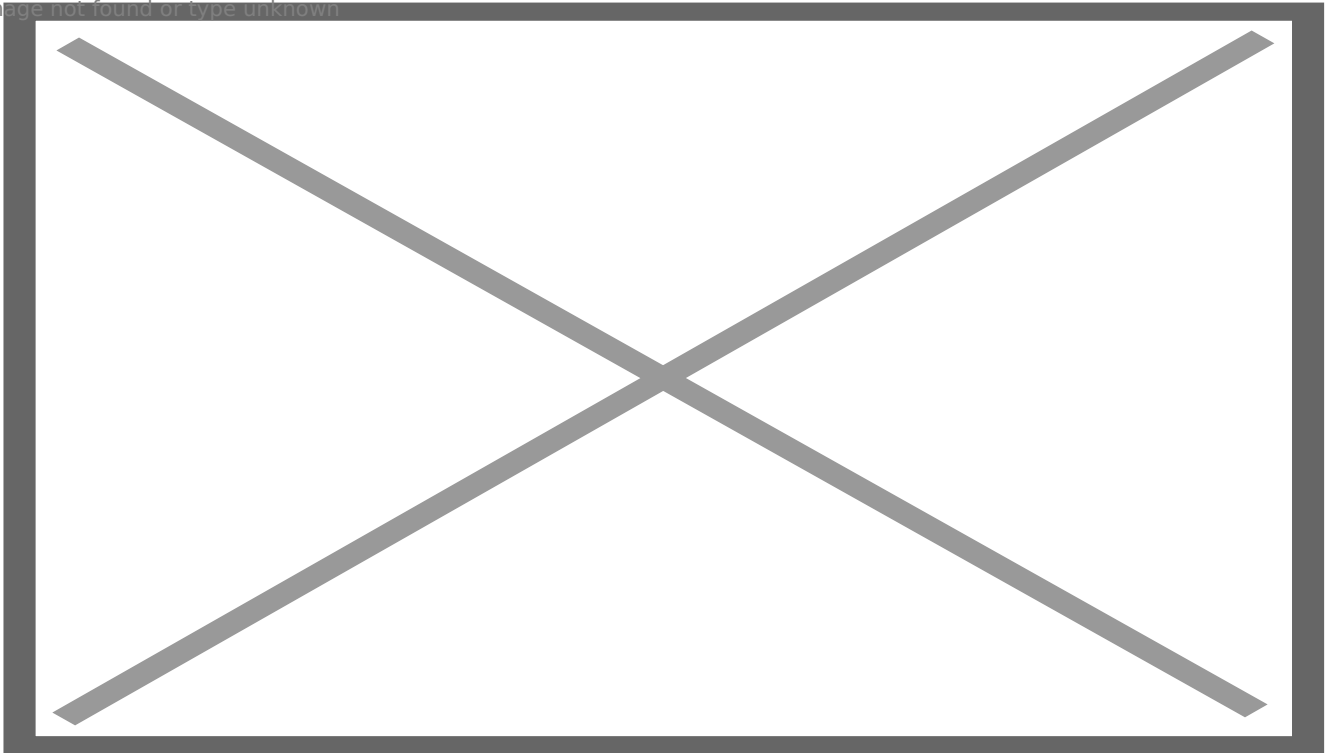


Event aims to help folks in need of benefits and support services

PRESTONSBURG, Ky. (WYMT)-- For months, former clients of Eric C. Conn have fought to keep their disability benefits.

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Hundreds have lost their cases and now attorneys say many are suffering.

On Monday, AppalReD and the Big Sandy Area Community Action Program hosted an informational event for those who are now in need of benefits and support.

Attorney Ned Pillersdorf has spent many hours dealing with the fallout of the Eric C. Conn case.

Conn and two others are charged with taking part in a massive conspiracy to submit fraudulent claims for federal disability benefits for clients.

“There have been 1,500 hearings conducted,” said Pillersdorf. “800 local families have lost their benefits. Tonight’s meeting is to explain to these people how to access food, shelter and necessities.”

Several social service agencies were at the Mountain Arts Center on Monday, to help those who need assistance.

“They have services that a lot of the public might not be aware of,” said Mike Howell, the Executive Director of the Big Sandy Area Community Action Program. “These folks might not be aware of everything that can be available to them that they might need now and in the upcoming months.”

While former clients of Conn were encouraged to come, organizers said anyone was welcome.

“There’s a lot of people in our area who are hurting, who need help,” said AppalReD Executive Director, Robert Johns. “We wanted to make sure those people know what services and help is out there.”

Pillersdorf is hopeful the hardships for some are only temporary.

“I think we will eventually win this battle,” said Pillersdorf. “But what’s going to happen to these people between the six to eight months between then? How are they going to survive? They’ve not only lost their 800 dollars a month, they’ve lost their health insurance.”

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance but were unable to attend the meeting, you can call AppalReD at 606-886-3876 or Mike Howell at 606-789-3641.

[Click here to watch video coverage of the event.](#)

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