# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

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News Release

November 12, 2026
For Immediate Release


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## Oneida County Announces Car Seat Safety Events

The Oneida County Health Department announced car seat safety events that will be co-hosted with the Sheriff's Office.

The events will take place at the following locations and times:

- **Deerfield Volunteer Fire Company,** 5476 Trenton Road, Utica on November 17 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Griffiss International Airport** (Airport Operations Building), 706 Hangar Road, Rome on December 10 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Free car seats will be available to eligible parents/legal guardians who are in need of a car seat. Appointments are required. For those already in possession of a car seat, a certified technician can be available to check that it is installed properly, also by appointment only. There are no eligibility requirements for car seat checks.

"The safety of our children is a top priority," said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. "Our car seat safety program not only provides car seats to families in need but also provides valuable information on how to properly secure children in vehicles."

Motor vehicle accidents are a leading cause of death among children in the United States. Having children properly secured in a car seat greatly reduces the chances of serious injury or death when in a vehicle accident. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports indicate in 2022, while riding in passenger cars, child safety seats have shown to decrease fatalities for babies (under 1 year old) by as much as 71% and as much as 54 % for toddlers (ages 1 to 4). Child safety seats reduce the risk of death of children (4 and under) by up to 59% when used in trucks.

"Finding the right seat for your child depends on a few things." said Daniel W. Gilmore, Ph.D., MPH, Oneida County Director of Health. "The correct seat depends on your child's age, height, weight and development, but also the vehicle in which it's installed and the laws in place. Common misuses with car seats include not securing the seat properly, using seats that have been in an accident or are expired, having a seat that does not fit the child or not using a car seat at all."

"Using the proper car seat is not only essential for your child's safety—it's the law in New York State. Car seats save lives, and we're committed to educating families on proper installation, so every child is as protected as possible." said Sheriff Robert Maciol.

In New York State, it is required that all children be placed in a rear-facing position until they reach the age of 2, with the recommendation that they continue to do so for as long as possible. All children under the age of 8 are required to be secured in a child restraint system when traveling in a motor vehicle. Typically, children who are 4 years old or older may be eligible to ride in booster seats, depending on the height and weight specifications of the seat. Children should remain in a booster seat until the lap and shoulder belts of the car seat appropriately fit the child. Booster seat use reduces the risk for serious injury by 45% for children ages 4 to 8 according to the Governors Highway Safety Association. Additionally, children under the age of 13 should ride in the backseat.

Infant, convertible, and booster seats are available to those who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) of child
- Income eligible – must provide proof of assistance
- Child in need of a seat must be present at the event
- If pregnant, must be due within 3 months
- Must reside in Oneida County

For eligibility and registration for these events, please call 315-798-5461 or send an email to carseatsafety@oneidacountyny.gov.

For more information about how to find the right car seat for your child, you can visit https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats.

*These car seat safety events are made possible through a grant offered by New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.*