



NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2023

Human Services Highlights 6th Consecutive Year of Wage Increases for Direct Support Professionals

Our House in Bridgewater



Commissioner Sarah Adelman marked Direct Support Professional Recognition Week by visiting a program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to recognize the importance of the professionals who help them live successfully in communities across New Jersey.

The Commissioner also highlighted the sixth consecutive year of wage increases for this critical workforce.

Commissioner Adelman was joined by Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried at [Our House](#), which provides innovative programs for adults with disabilities.

During the visit, officials highlighted how the Murphy Administration has now invested in wage increases for DSPs over the last six state budgets. The budget signed by Governor Murphy earlier this year provided \$83.4 million for DSP wage increases, including \$41.7 million in state funds and an equal amount in federal matching funds.

“Direct support professionals are a lifeline to individuals with disabilities and their families, as evidenced here at Our House,” Commissioner Adelman said. “The dedication of DSPs improves the quality of life for so many New Jerseyans.”

“Direct support professionals go above and beyond assisting in daily activities,” Deputy Commissioner McGuire said. “Under this Administration, we’ve made clear that we value their commitment.”

“Direct support professionals provide a broad range of support while developing trusting relationships with individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities,” Assistant Commissioner Seifried said. “They make a tremendous difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

[Read more](#)



The Arc of Essex County







Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried were among those who visited [The Arc of Essex County](#) to [honor](#) direct support professionals and present Governor Murphy's proclamation honoring their service.

["DSPs are the backbone of our developmental disability system, fostering independence for individuals with disabilities,"](#) Deputy Commissioner McGuire said.

Governor Murphy's Proclamation



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, every day in New Jersey, more than 30,000 people work as Direct Support Professionals, providing exemplary and critical support and services to hundreds of thousands of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals include persons employed by provider agencies or as Self-Directed Employees by individuals choosing Self-Direction; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals have and continue to be essential to supporting the emotional and physical health and wellbeing of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, courageously provide quality care, and remain steadfast in their commitment to the individuals and families who depend on them; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals have dedicated their professional lives to supporting, serving and empowering individuals with developmental disabilities, enabling them to live fulfilling lives in the community; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals provide a broad range of support, including help with personal care, participating in school, work, home, religious and recreational activities, learning important life skills and general day-to-day activities to foster full citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals develop strong, trusting relationships with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that are personally enriching for both the individual and professional; and

WHEREAS, Direct Support Professionals are invaluable and contribute to an improved quality of life for individuals throughout New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the week of September 11-17, 2023 has been designated as National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week, to honor and recognize the significant contributions that Direct Support Professionals make to our communities; and

WHEREAS, every day, New Jersey's Direct Support Professionals make a tremendous difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, strengthening our communities and supporting our most vulnerable citizens, for which they deserve our respect and deepest admiration.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

SEPTEMBER 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

AS

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK

in New Jersey and applaud the tens of thousands of Direct Support Professionals for their dedication and commitment to New Jersey's citizens with developmental disabilities.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-first day of August in the year tow thousand twenty-three, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

Philip D. Murphy
GOVERNOR

Division of Disability Services Art Sale



The [Division of Disability Services](#) hosted an art sale featuring artists from the [Green Brook Regional Center](#) and [Hunterdon Developmental Center](#). Sale items included everything from paintings, drawings, mosaics, ceramics, calendars, t-shirts, mugs, plants, flowers, hanging baskets and succulents.







Honoring Dr. Spatalnik



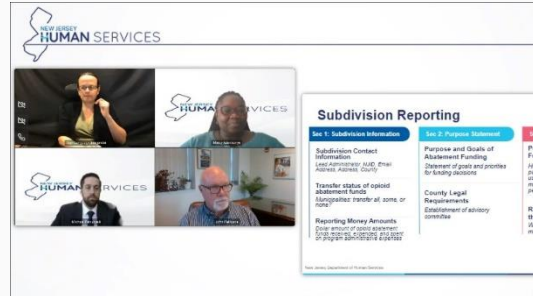
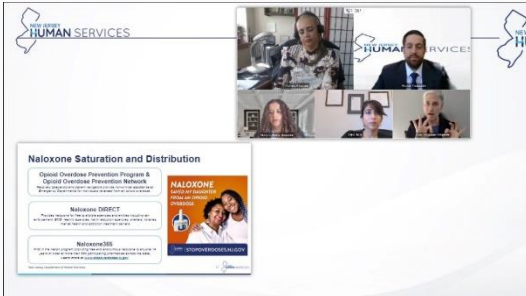
Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire honored Deborah M. Spitalnik, PhD, executive director of [The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities](#), with the [New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities'](#) Lifetime Achievement Award.

Smart Home Tour



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried toured a [Bancroft](#) smart home for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Willingboro.

2023 Opioid Summit: Revitalizing Communities: Healing Together from the Opioid Crisis



The [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) held its annual summit on the opioid crisis on Sept. 20. This year's theme was "Revitalizing Communities: Healing Together from the Opioid Crisis."

The virtual event featured welcoming remarks from Commissioner Sarah Adelman, a keynote address by former National Football League player [Randy Grimes](#) and his wife Lydia, panel discussions and breakout workshops.

"There are too many families and communities in New Jersey and around the country bearing the searing pain of opioid addiction and overdose," Commissioner Adelman said when opening the summit. "We are here today to discuss how we all, as partners, can continue to uplift the people and places hurting from the destructive effects of opioids."

September is Recovery Month



CALL US TODAY **844-REACHNJ**

Recovery Month is a national observance held every September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the nation's strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and communities who make recovery in all its forms possible.

Call [844-ReachNJ](https://www.reachnj.com) for 24/7 addiction treatment assistance.

Addiction Professionals Day



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, National Addiction Professionals Day is part of National Recovery Month, established in 1992 by the NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, to commemorate the vital work that they do on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, National Addiction Professionals Day aims to increase awareness and understanding of the powerful work of addiction professionals to assist individuals with substance use disorders to achieve and sustain recovery; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs' Board of Marriage and Family Therapy Examiners' Alcohol and Drug Counselor Committee reports that there are over 5,500 active addiction professionals working tirelessly to improve lives and make New Jersey's communities safer and substance-free; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals are committed to providing compassionate and quality care and instill hope for long-term recovery in countless youth, adults, and families; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals effectively individualize treatment and recovery supports as a means of assisting each person to follow a path toward successful recovery; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals combat stigma and discrimination associated with substance use disorders by raising awareness, using scientifically-sound counseling methods, and treating individuals with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS, substance use disorder professionals maintain the highest degree of competence and ethical practice to inspire and promote an individual's health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, post Covid-19 pandemic, addiction professionals have expanded access to telehealth services and ensured ongoing access to medication for alcohol and opioid use disorders; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals are dedicated to enhancing the lives of New Jersey citizens through prevention, treatment, and recovery;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

AS

ADDICTION PROFESSIONALS DAY

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-second day of August in the year two thousand twenty-three, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

Phil Murphy
GOVERNOR

As part of Recovery Month, Governor Phil Murphy declared Sept. 20 as Addiction Professionals Day to honor the hard work of all addiction professionals in New Jersey who make a significant difference in the lives of people with substance use disorder.

**World Suicide Prevention Day & Suicide
Prevention Week**



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

There is hope.

CALL | TEXT | CHAT
24/7/365



Human Services marked Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day on Sept. 10 by highlighting the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#). The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources, and best practices for professionals.



Expanded Behavioral Health Services for Central Jersey



Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke joined [Hackensack Meridian Health](#) for the grand opening of the \$24 million expanded Carrier Behavioral Health at [Raritan Bay Medical Center](#).

This specialized inpatient center for excellence will enhance access to inpatient behavioral health services in Central Jersey. Human Services provided \$6 million to help with the project.

“New Jersey Human Services has long supported the goal of compassionate care close to home, recognizing how important it is for people experiencing a crisis to connect with support quickly and safely,” Commissioner Adelman said. “The state budget investment in this project is an example of the Murphy Administration’s commitment to increasing access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and this expansion will help so many more residents of Perth Amboy and Middlesex County get excellent care in their own backyard.”

Deaf Awareness Month





[Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) Executive Director Elizabeth Hill and Jaclyne Pallies, the supervisor of deaf and hard of hearing specialists, were among those who joined Jersey City's celebration of Deaf Awareness Month, including a flag raising at City Hall.

International Day of Sign Language



Held on Sept. 23, the International Day of Sign Languages is an opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf individuals.

The [Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)'s Language Instruction Program provides language acquisition and development services for deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind children, along with supports and resources to their families.

Learn more [here](#).

National Preparedness Month

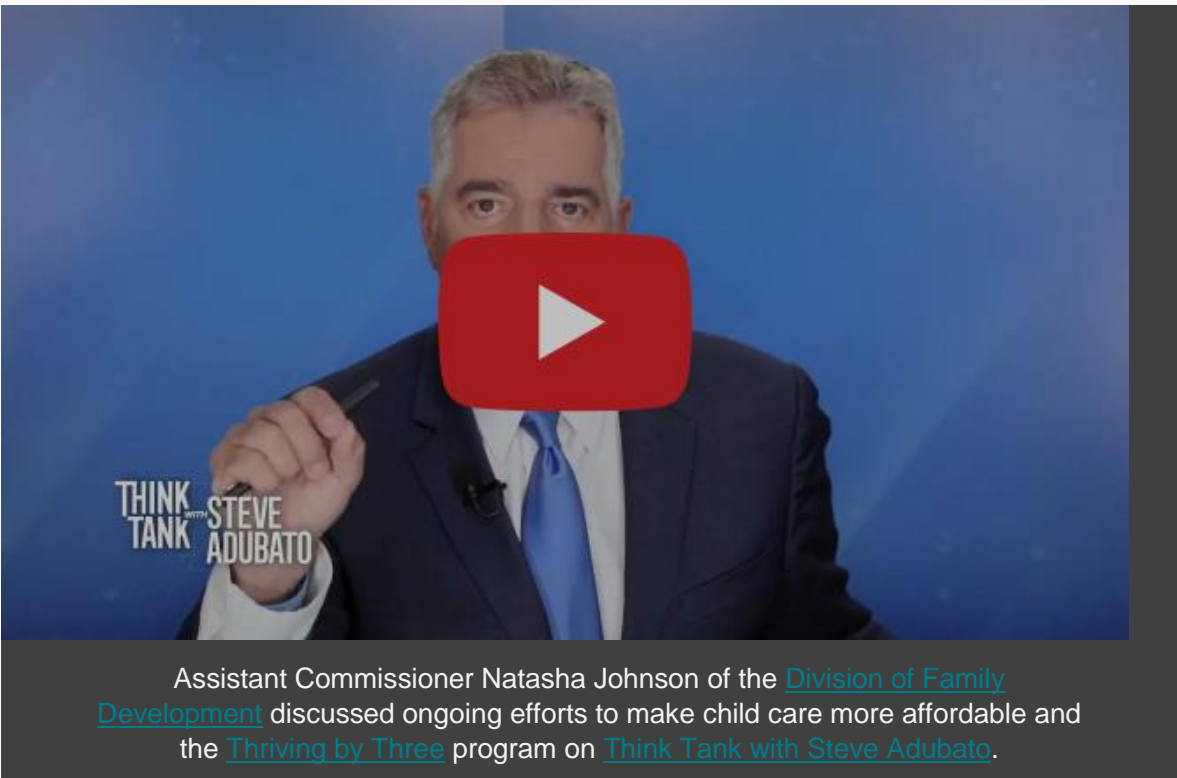


September is National Preparedness Month.

[Register Ready](http://www.registerready.nj.gov) is New Jersey's voluntary special needs registry for disasters that allows residents with disabilities or access and functional needs - along with their families, friends, caregivers and associates - an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency.



Making Child Care More Affordable



Disability Voting Rights Week



Disability Voting Rights Week - held from Sept. 11-15 - emphasizes the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate fully in our democracy.

Visit [here](#) to learn more about voter rights and accessibility in New Jersey.

To mark the week, Division of Disability Services Executive Director Peri Nearon joined a rally held by [REV UP NJ and the Alliance Center for Independence](#) at the State House Annex in Trenton to stress the importance of voter registration for individuals with disabilities.

"It's estimated that more than 1 million New Jerseyans have at least one disability," Executive Director Nearon [said](#). "Now, take a moment to imagine the power of such a large community coming together to vote."

"Let's celebrate the incredible power of inclusion and representation!" Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire [stated](#). "Every voice matters, including those of individuals with disabilities. Exercise your right to vote and make your voice heard! Together, we can create an equitable, accessible, and inclusive world."



Aging Services Community Outreach



[Division of Aging Services](#) staff joined the Cherry Hill Senior Festival, above, and the Bergen County Annual Senior Festival, below, to help spread the word about Human Services' many programs and services for older adults. Learn more [here](#).



World Alzheimer's Day



— WORLD —
ALZHEIMER'S
— DAY —

September 21



Human Service's Alzheimer's Adult Day Services Program helps with adult day care services for persons with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. Visit [here](#) for more information.

Falls Prevention Awareness Week

FALLS ARE PREVENTABLE!

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling:



EXERCISE

Engage in regular physical activity, especially balance and strength-building activities.



MEDICATION

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if medications you take, or alcohol consumption, increase your risk of falling.



HOME SAFETY

Most falls happen in the home! Identify and correct falling, slipping, or tripping hazards.



VISION/HEARING

Have regular vision and hearing checks.



Learn more about falls prevention [here](#) from the [Division of Aging Services](#).

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month



Personal Assistance Service Program

Provides personal care assistance to self-directing adults, ages 18 and older, who have a permanent physical disability and who are working, in school, in vocational training, or volunteering in the community.



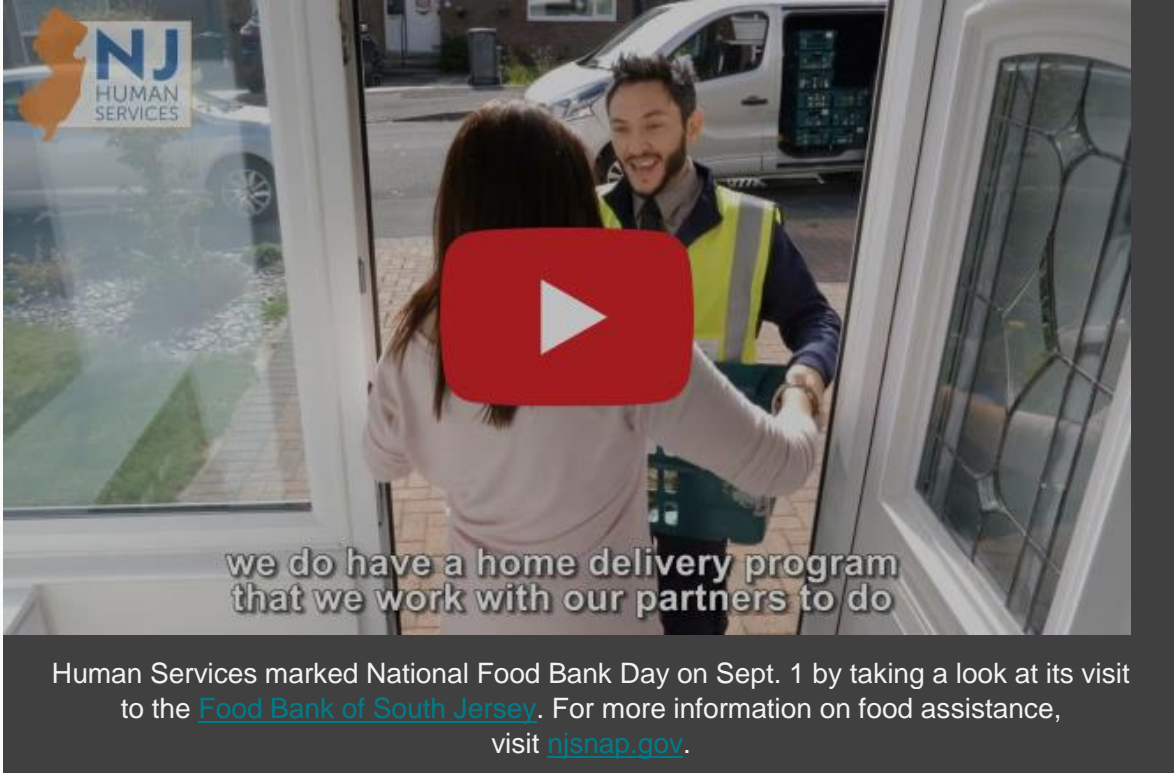
September is Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month. The Division of Disability Services' [Personal Assistance Program](#) provides up to 40 hours per week of routine, non-medical personal care assistance to adults with permanent physical disabilities who are 18 years of age or older, who are employed, preparing for employment, attending school or involved in community volunteer work and who are able to self-direct their own services.

Personal assistants help with personal care tasks including, but not limited to: bathing, dressing, eating, grooming, preparing meals, shopping, light house keeping, driving or using public transportation.

The goal of this program is to support individuals with physical disabilities so that they can remain active in their community. The PASP offers participants choice, flexibility, control and the opportunity to manage their own personal care assistance services.

Learn more [here](#).

National Food Bank Day



Congratulations to the Newest Human Services Police Officers



The [Human Services Police](#) added two new officers to its ranks. Police Officer Cassandra Gomez and Police Officer Matthew Zweighart - both in the white gloves above - successfully completed the Camden County Police Academy.

Mark Your Calendars

The Campaign for Language & Literacy Excellence in partnership with the NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing hosts

Fall Family Early Language & Literacy Event

Join Us!

Families of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children ages 0-5 in New Jersey AND people who are language models in each child's life (siblings, grandparents, babysitters, nurses, etc.) are invited!

- FUN activities for young children and the whole family!
- Learn how to read stories to your children in ASL!
- FREE event
- Lunch provided
- Free materials
- Interpreters available

October 7th, 2023

10:00 AM- 1:30 PM

Arrive early (sign in begins at 9:30 AM)

The College of New Jersey -
Education Building
2000 Pennington Road,
Ewing, NJ 08626

Contact us for more information:

CLLE@tcnj.edu

<https://njcsd.tcnj.edu/programs/campaign-for-language-and-literacy-excellence/>



*Space is limited!
Register by 9/22/23



Campaign for Language & Literacy Excellence
"Promoting Holistic Systems Change for Young Deaf Children"

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



DDHH
DIVISION OF THE DEAF
AND HARD OF HEARING

**ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW EXPERIENCING
VISION LOSS THAT AFFECTS THE ABILITY TO:**

*Read prescription bottles? Travel safely? Work?
Maintain your home? Care for yourself and your family?*

**Join Us at Our Blindness Awareness Month 2023
Community Outreach Fair**

**Thursday, October 12, 2023
12 noon to 3 p.m.**

**Cheesequake State Park
Hooks Creek Lake Pavilion
300 Gordon Rd., Matawan, NJ 07747**

A Day Full of Information, Resources, Exhibits, Demonstrations,
Fun Activities, Food Trucks, Music, and MORE!



For Further Information: AskCBVI@dhs.nj.gov



State of New Jersey
Phil Murphy, Governor
Tahesha L. Way, Lt. Governor



Department of Human Services
Sarah Adelman, Commissioner



New Jersey's 8th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference



Embracing Life: 988 and the Path to Hope

October 19, 2023

9:00 AM | Virtual



SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

CHECK MAILING ADDRESS



[NJ FamilyCare](#) Members - Take Action and Stay Covered



Free naloxone at participating pharmacies in New Jersey. Visit stopoverdoses.nj.gov to learn more.

ARE YOU A SENIOR OR INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES STRUGGLING TO AFFORD YOUR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS?

NJ Human Services offers several programs you may be eligible for to aid with prescription drug costs.



The Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD)

A state-funded program that helps eligible seniors and individuals with disabilities save money on their prescription drug costs.



The Senior Gold Prescription Discount Program (Senior Gold)

A state-funded prescription program with a different co-payment structure and income eligibility guidelines than those of PAAD.



[NJ SNAP](#) | [NJ FAMILYCARE](#) | [NJHELPS](#)