

1. Getting Started

Your Doorway to Information & Assistance

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Aging and Community Services, with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Administration on Aging (AoA), is proud to provide you with this publication, the **ADRC, A Guide to Community Based Long Term Care in New Jersey**.

If you or a loved one is facing a healthcare crisis, recovering from a sudden illness or injury, or planning for future care needs, getting information and services can be difficult. This handbook provides important information on both public and privately funded long-term supportive services to help you understand your options.

Please keep in mind that while we were able to put a lot of information into this handbook, we couldn't fit everything. That is why at the bottom of every page you will find a toll-free number – **1-877-222-3737** – that connects you to your local Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) and/or Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Calling this number is the fastest way to information and referral, options counseling, in-depth care needs assessment, and services.

This handbook and additional information on services for seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers can also be found on-line at **www.adrcnj.gov**.

This handbook provides website addresses (URLs) for reliable and up-to-date sites. URLs can, and often do, change. If you find that a URL does not work, type the name of the organization into a search engine (Google, Yahoo!, etc.) to find the new URL.

How Senior Services are Organized

In New Jersey, the Division of Aging and Community Services (the State Unit on Aging) distributes federal and state funds to Area Agencies on Aging (also known as AAAs, County Offices on Aging, Senior Services, Intergenerational Services and/or Veteran and Disability Services). AAAs also receives local funding to provide services for both seniors and their caregivers. Contact your AAA to access most services.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are located in each county to develop comprehensive coordinated systems of community-based services for persons aged 60 and older and their caregivers. AAAs can also serve as Aging and Disability Resource Connections (ADRCs). More information on ADRCs can be found on the next page.

Programs and services available through the AAA are intended to help seniors maintain their health and independence in the community for as long as possible. AAAs coordinate services in three major areas:

- ❑ **Information and Assistance/Referral (I&A/R):** AAAs provide free information about a wide range of eldercare services and resources through trained I&A/R specialists who will connect you to services.
- ❑ **Services for the Elderly:** AAAs coordinate services for seniors who want to remain in their own home, but need assistance with daily routines. Core services include in-home assessments, development of a care plan, and assistance arranging home care services delivered by subcontracted provider agencies. AAAs also provide meals, transportation, and referrals to employment services, senior centers, and adult day care programs.
- ❑ **Support for Caregivers:** The AAA develops local programs as part of the National Family Caregiver Support Program, including information and referral, counseling, training, support groups, and access to respite care. Caregivers are eligible for this program if they are caring for an individual 60 years or older, regardless of the senior's income.

AAAs distribute county-specific service directories, newsletters, calendars of events and/or other materials. They also maintain websites. For additional information, please contact your local **Ageing and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)** or **Area Agency on Aging (AAA)** toll-free at **1-877-222-3737**.

Ageing and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)

The Ageing and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is a program to connect seniors age 60 and older and people with physical disabilities 18 years of age and older with the services they need to continue living independently in the community for as long as possible.

The ADRC serves as your doorway to information and assistance on the full range of public and private home and community-based long-term care services available in New Jersey. The ADRC strongly supports consumer-directed care in which the consumer is in control of making personal care decisions based on assessed need, informed choice and community service availability.

Through your ADRC, consumers and their caregivers, regardless of income and resources, can:

- ❑ Receive information on public and private long-term care services
- ❑ Receive a care needs assessment if appropriate
- ❑ Obtain options counseling on available service options
- ❑ Obtain appropriate referrals to services based on care needs
- ❑ Receive care management services for eligible participants

The ADRC initiative is being established statewide on a county-by-county basis. Please contact your local **Ageing and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)** or **Area Agency on Aging (AAA)**, or visit our website at www.adrcnj.gov.

Municipal Senior Services

Many boroughs, towns and cities in New Jersey have an office of senior services and/or operate a senior center for their residents. These agencies are part of local government and range in size from small, volunteer-run programs to large, multi-site eldercare service providers.

Most municipal offices of senior services offer a wide range of services including, but not limited to information and referral, transportation, outreach, meals, health screening, fitness and recreation programs.

How Disability Services are Organized

In New Jersey, the State Department of Human Services administers a number of programs to help individuals with disabilities. Most counties also maintain an Office of Disability Services and/or have a Center for Independent Living (CIL) that helps individuals remain active and independent in the community.

The Division of Disability Services (DDS)

The Division of Disability Services focuses on serving people who have become disabled as adults, whether through illness or injury. Such conditions are also referred to as adult-onset disabilities. However, the division serves as a single point of entry for all people with disabilities needing information and/or services within the human services system, regardless of age. The division also serves as the lead state agency for brain injury services. Additional services offered include:

- Information and Assistance Services
- DDS Medicaid Waivers:
 - AIDS Community Care Alternatives Program (ACCAP) Waiver
 - Community Resources for People with Disabilities (CRPD) Waiver
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver
- Medicaid Personal Care Assistance (PCA)
- Personal Preference Program: New Jersey's Cash & Counseling
- Personal Assistance Services Program
- NJ Workability Program
- Traumatic Brain Injury Fund
- Special Projects & Initiatives
 - Disability Health and Wellness Initiative
 - NJ Housing Resource Center
 - Rewarding Work
 - NJ FindARide

- Benefits to Work Calculator
- NJ Nurse Delegation Project
- NJ TBI Needs and Resource Assessment

To learn about disability services and/or to request a comprehensive disability specific resource directory, you can call the **Division of Disability Services'** toll-free number at **1-888-285-3036/TDD 609-292-1210** or visit their website at **www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/home/index.html**.

County Offices of Disability Services

New Jersey has 19 County Offices of Disability Services that provide a wide range of services to advance independent living. These offices provide advocacy as well as information and referral on a variety of topics, including:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Accessibility □ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) □ Assistive Technology □ Education □ Financial Assistance □ Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Legal Assistance □ Personal Assistance Services □ Recreation □ Rehabilitation Act (Sec. 504) □ Transportation □ Vocational Assistance |
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(See **Appendix M** for a list of County Offices of Disability Services.)

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

The Division of Developmental Disabilities provides funding for services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. Most of these services are offered in the community by more than 250 agencies through contracts with the division. DDD also administers the state's seven residential developmental centers.

DDD determines who is eligible* to receive the services it funds through an application process. In general, to receive these services, individuals must show that they have a severe, chronic physical and/or mental impairment that:

- manifests in the developmental years, before age 22;
- is life-long; and
- substantially limits them in at least three of these life activities: self-care, learning, mobility, communication, self-direction, economic self sufficiency and the ability to live independently.

*The complete legal definition can be found at NJSA 30:6D-25(b) and NJAC 10:46.

Some conditions that might be considered a developmental disability include mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, autism or a neurological impairment.

For more information or to apply for services, contact the DDD Regional Community Services Office serving your county (see **Appendix H**), call toll-free **1-800-832-9173** or visit www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/index.html.

Locating Resources

County Welfare Agency (CWA)

New Jersey's County Welfare Agencies (CWA), also referred to as the Boards of Social Services (BOSS) or Divisions of Social Services, are agencies of county government that provide a variety of programs to individuals and families.

Services Offered

The following is a partial list of services that may be available through your local CWA/BOSS:

- **Adult Protective Services (APS)** – provides services to vulnerable adults living in the community who are being subjected to abuse, neglect, or exploitation and cannot fully protect or care for themselves. Referrals to APS can be made anonymously. (See the **Legal Services** section for further explanation.)
- **Adult Social Services** – provides services to the elderly, blind or disabled adults in the community, including but not limited to housing, counseling and various support services.
- **Emergency Assistance** – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance (GA), or Social Security Income (SSI) recipients may be eligible for Emergency Assistance such as short-term housing, food, utilities, clothing or furnishings. Special funding is also available to assist income eligible individuals or families, with a one-time emergency issue that is due to circumstances beyond their control. Persons must meet federal qualification guidelines.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called Food Stamps)** – provides coupons to purchase food. This program is available to low-income households, including families, couples without children, individuals, seniors, disabled persons, legal immigrants and victims of family violence. For more information call the Food Stamp Information Hotline toll-free at **1-800-687-9512**.
- **Home Energy Assistance** – The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded program that helps families and individuals with their energy bills. Assistance is provided for heating assistance, medically necessary cooling assistance, and emergency crisis assistance.
- **Homeless Sheltering**

- **Medical Transportation** – may be provided to individuals who are eligible for Medicaid. Non-emergency transportation is provided to doctors, labs and hospitals for necessary medical services.
- **Medicaid** – provides access to health care services, including but not limited to hospital, doctor, prescriptions, nursing home and other healthcare needs.
- **Work First NJ** – designed to help families move to self-sufficiency by offering them a full array of supports, from child care, health insurance and transportation, to substance abuse treatment and emergency funds. Recipients face a five-year lifetime limit on cash assistance, and must become employed or take part in work activities.

Eligibility Requirements

Please contact your local CWA (**Appendix G**) for an explanation of eligibility requirements as each program may have differing criteria, or to request an application. A list of necessary documents that may be required to submit a financial application is included in **Appendix AA**.

Federal Poverty Level

Many programs base eligibility on the Federal Poverty Level set annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For your reference the Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2009 can be found in **Appendix CC**.

The Eldercare Locator

The Eldercare Locator is a national information and referral service to assist individuals in finding eldercare services and caregiver support in any U.S. community. It is a free national service of the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

For information and referral to community-based services, visit their website at **www.eldercare.gov**, or call toll-free **1-800-677-1116**. For **TDD/TTY dial 711** and ask the operator to connect you to **1-800-677-1116**.

Other Useful Resource Locators

The overall aging and disability services system is a complex mix of nonprofit and for-profit agencies and organizations. Other resources to contact include:

- ❑ Community agencies that serve a particular ethnic group or faith tradition, but are usually open to others, and provide a range of services such as transportation assistance, home care, transportation, and meals;
- ❑ Outpatient centers linked to HMOs and community health clinics;
- ❑ Rehabilitation facilities with their own inpatient services and community-based follow-up programs;
- ❑ Hospitals with their own geriatric medicine departments and geriatric community outreach programs; and

- Housing authorities and housing facilities, such as continuing care retirement communities, assisted living residences, and nursing homes.

NJ211

211 is an easy-to-remember telephone number that connects callers to the human services they need, including health and social services, government assistance, and local community resources. 211 is a service of the United Way of New Jersey.

All calls are free and confidential. Just pick up the phone and dial 211, or try their web-based resource directory at www.nj211.org.

NJ Helps

NJ Helps is a website created by the New Jersey Department of Human Services. It is a free and easy way for you to learn about and “pre-screen” for 28 different assistance programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called Food Stamps), WIC, New Jersey Family Care, PAAD, Senior Gold and more.

To see if you may qualify for any of these programs, please visit: www.njhelps.org.

Benefits Checkup

The National Council on Aging has a free confidential screening tool you can use to determine eligibility for nearly 1,000 unique state and federal programs on its website at www.ncoa.org. This site also has detailed instruction on how to apply for these programs.

NJ Relay

NJ Relay is a statewide service that allows two individuals to communicate when only one has a TTY or TDD machine. To access the system, dial 711 or 1-800-852-7899. You will be connected to a communications assistant with a TTY and that person will act as interpreter, reading off the TTY and typing in responses. This system ensures individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, and/or speech-disabled can access information and services in their community.

