

The New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Developmental Disabilities

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
(COVID-19)
UPDATE FOR FAMILIES AND
PROVIDERS

May 27, 2021



Agenda

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- COVID-19 Statistics
- June Webinars
- Update to COVID-19 Response Plan for Developmental Centers
- Day and Residential Guidance
- Moratorium on Utility Shut-Offs Ending
- NJ Utility Assistance Resources
- Resources

New Jersey COVID-19 Current Statistics*

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State of New Jersey	
Positive	886,585
Deaths	23,489

**This update is as of Wednesday, May 26, 2021.*

For regular updates: <https://covid19.nj.gov/>

Consider downloading COVID Alert NJ on your Apple or Android smartphone:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/app>



DDD Specific COVID-19 Statistics*

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	Community		Developmental Centers	Total
	Licensed	Own Home		
Positive	1,869	634	663	3,166
Deaths	113	59	41	213

DDD-specific statistics are updated weekly. Community data includes individuals **actively under DDD services in settings such as group homes, supervised apartments, out of state, and own-home settings.*

Full detail, including data for individuals not under services for whom reporting is voluntary and provided for informational purposes only, can be found at [NJ Department of Human Services COVID-19 Information](#).

COVID-19 Update Webinar Schedule

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- June Update webinars:
 - Thursday June 10, 2021 – 10:30 am
 - Thursday June 24, 2021 – 10:30 am
- Use link below to register:
 - [Register Now for June 10 Webinar](#)
 - [Register Now for June 24 Webinar](#)

COVID-19 Response Plan (DCs Only)

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- Policy has been updated to allow more flexibility for off-site visits for DC residents with family and friends.
- Isolation upon return only required if resident or person returning them reports close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Day and Residential Guidance

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- The Division is in the process of updating existing the Day and Residential guidance due to the recent lifting of certain restrictions.
- Updated guidance will be released as soon as possible.

Moratorium on Utility Shut-Offs Ending

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- The temporary moratorium on utility shut-offs in New Jersey is ending **June 30, 2021**.
- May compound the challenges that some individuals already face when paying for utilities.
- NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) developed a flyer highlighting energy assistance programs. (Also available in Spanish)

Energy Assistance Programs

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- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - ✦ Provides grants for heating costs, forgiveness of overdue balances, certain medically-necessary cooling expenses, and heating costs included in rent.
 - ✦ Apply online using [NJ's DCAid Eligibility Tool](#) or call 800-510-3102 to have an application mailed. Find your local application agency at [NJ Energy Assistance](#) www.energyassistance.nj.gov.
 - ✦ Application deadline is June 30, 2021.

Energy Assistance Programs

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- Universal Service Fund (USF)
 - ✦ Provides monthly credits on natural gas and electric bills for those who spend more than 3% of annual income on electric and/or gas; or more than 6% on electric heating costs.
 - ✦ You can apply for USF with the LIHEAP application or call 800-510-3102.

Energy Assistance Programs

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○ Fresh Start

- ✦ Allows eligible households participating in USF for the first time to earn unlimited forgiveness on overdue balances by making full, on-time payments for 12 months.
- ✦ You cannot apply for Fresh Start, but if you are eligible you will be enrolled by your utility company and receive information about the program in the mail.

Energy Assistance Programs

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- PAGE (Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric)
 - ✦ Provides credits on natural gas and electric bills for low to moderate-income households (income from \$0 up to \$123,430 for a family of four). You must apply for USF and LIHEAP first if income-eligible for those programs.
 - ✦ Information available at [NJ Power On](#) or call 732-982-8710.

Energy Assistance Programs

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- Lifeline Utility Assistance Program
 - ✦ Designed to help eligible low-income senior citizens and the disabled with their electric and natural gas utility costs.
 - ✦ Apply for Lifeline with the NJSave application at [NJ Division of Aging Services](#) or by calling 800-792-9745.
- Deferred Payment Agreements (DPAs)
 - ✦ Call your utility company before June 30 to request a payment arrangement for any overdue balances you cannot pay in full.
 - ✦ If you find yourself in danger of shut-off, please call NJ BPU at 800-624-0241 or visit [NJ Board of Public Utilities](#).



Important Resources

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- Disability Rights New Jersey
 - 1-800-922-7233 (toll-free in New Jersey only)
- Ombudsman for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their Families
 - 1-609-984-7764
- New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities
 - 1-800-792-8858

Important Resources

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- For assistance during this time:
 - For issues, call the Division Community Services office for your county or 1 (800) 832-9173.
 - When calling, you will be connected with the Division's answering service who will take information about the circumstance and have a Division staff person reach out.
 - For routine questions: DDD.FeeForService@dhs.nj.gov
 - For COVID-related questions: DDD.COVID-19@dhs.nj.gov
 - To report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation: call 1 (800) 832-9173, then press 1.

Highlighted Resources

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- For individuals, families and caregivers
 - [Boggs Center COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)
- For individuals:
 - NJ Self-Advocacy Project's [Stay Healthy at Home Webinar Series](#)
- For Direct Support Professionals
 - [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals \(NADSP\) COVID-19 Toolkit for DSPs](#)
 - [CDC Guidance for Direct Service Providers](#)