

The New Jersey Department of Human Services **Division of Developmental Disabilities**

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

November 13, 2020



THANK YOU!

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DHS and DDD wish to thank all the members of our community that have worked to keep those we value safe during the pandemic!



Today's Webinar Will Provide Information on...

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- State and DDD-Specific COVID-19 Statistics
- November Webinars
- Fight the Flu!
- FFS Transition/Agency with Choice Update
- SDE Pre-Employment Screenings
- Holiday Season 2020
- Day Services Update
- Office of Program Integrity and Accountability
- January 1, 2021 DSP Wage Increase
- EVV Information
- Resources



New Jersey COVID-19 Current Statistics*

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State of New Jersey	
Positive	263,495
Deaths	14,676

**This update is as of Wednesday, November 12, 2020.*

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

DDD Specific COVID-19 Statistics*

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	Community		Developmental Centers	Total
	Licensed	Own Home		
Positive	783	175	475	1,433
Deaths	59	32	40	131

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](#).

DDD November Webinar Schedule

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- November update webinars:
 - Wednesday, November 25, 2020 – 10:30 am
- Register once for November webinars:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8936350433937692939>

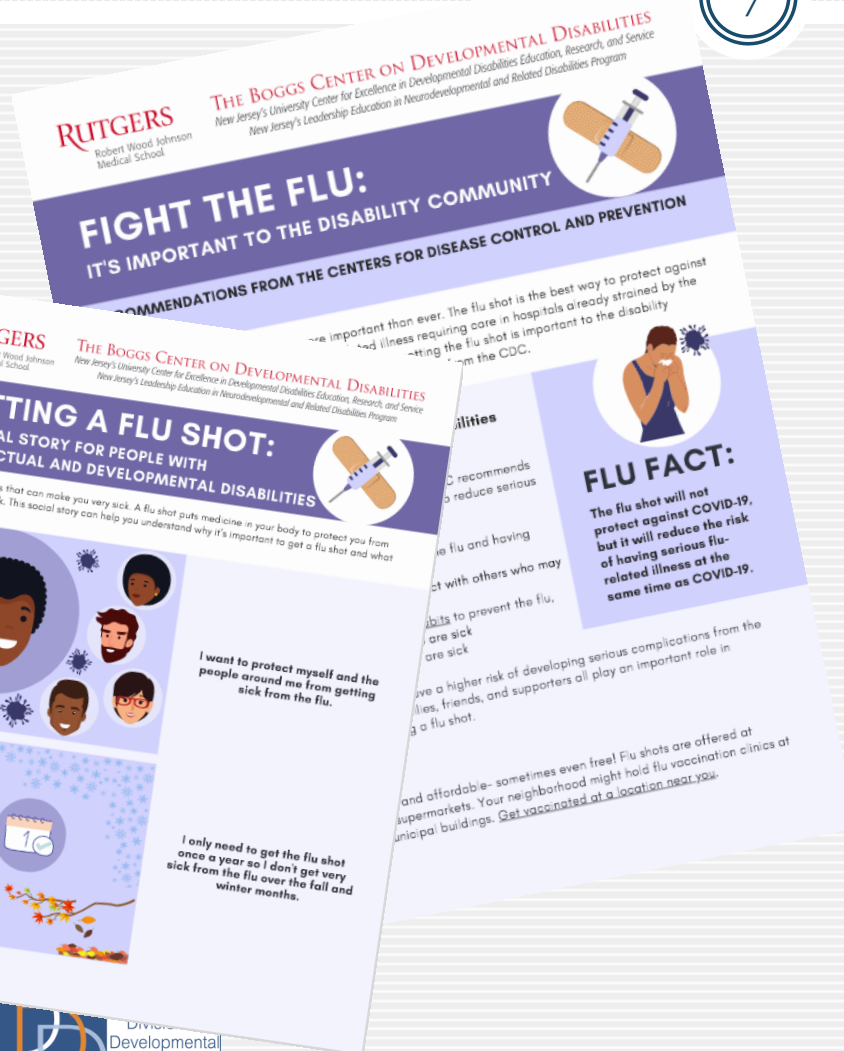


Fight the Flu

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Fight the Flu Fact Sheet & Social Story

Available on
The Boggs Center's [Fight
the Flu](#) website.



FFS Transition/Agency with Choice Update

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- Fee-for-Service transition to the Agency with Choice (AWC) model managed by Easterseals continues.
 - Division currently working on Cohort 6 of individuals triaged to transition.
 - Easterseals launched its Agency with Choice website, which includes enrollment information, paperwork, FAQs, and contact information.
 - Easterseals will host another AWC webinar for support coordinators in November – details will be distributed soon to SC Agencies.

SDE Pre-Employment Screenings

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- At the onset of the pandemic, timeframes were extended for some mandated pre-employment screenings for self-directed employees (SDEs). Those extensions are still in place; however, all SDEs are required to complete all pre-employment screenings within the extended timeframe.
- Mandatory pre-employment screenings with temporarily extended timeframes are fingerprinting, drug testing, and CARI check application.

SDE Pre-Employment Screenings

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- Beginning **January 1, 2021**, SDEs who have not completed fingerprinting, drug testing and CARI check application **within the 120-day grace period from their date of hire** will have their employment status and payments suspended.
 - Once all screenings have been completed, payments will be authorized to resume **as of the date of screening completion**.
 - **Back pay will not be issued** to SDEs for the period of time in which employment status was suspended.

Holiday Season 2020

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- The policy allowing indoor and outdoor visits as outlined in [Guidance for Residential Providers on Visits with Family and Friends](#) remains in effect.
- Given the current surge in COVID-19 in New Jersey, the State is discouraging large gatherings for the holidays.
- Individuals/families who wish to engage in visits should consult with their provider about re-admission criteria for those who engage in visits not supervised by the provider.

Day Services Update

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- To date, 220 day programs have re-opened at reduced capacity.
- 17 day programs have reported positivity in at least one staff or participant, with multiple sites having voluntarily closed.
- Day providers are required to notify staff and participants of any COVID positivity.

Day Services Update

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- Provider Performance and Monitoring Unit (PPMU) staff have resumed field work to complete quick drop ins at day programs to ensure COVID-19 compliance.
- All PPMU staff have undergone COVID-19 testing and been issued PPE to ensure safety of day program staff and participants.
- PPMU staff will adhere to all screening protocols required at a day program before entering.

Office of Program Integrity and Accountability

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- Office of Licensing Q&A for Residential Providers has been updated.
 - Includes updated information on Licensing Inspections and training.
- COVID-19 Incident Reporting
 - Adjustment to incident reporting will be released shortly that requires reporting of only positive COVID-19 test results.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- On January 1, 2021, pursuant to New Jersey's Minimum Wage Law, the statewide minimum wage in New Jersey will increase from \$11 to \$12 per hour
- Currently, direct support professionals (DSPs) working for DDD-funded provider agencies earn, on average, \$12 per hour.
- Recognizing that DSPs should be paid above minimum wage, work was done to secure a DSP wage increase that will compensate DSPs above the statewide minimum wage for the critical work they do, beginning January 1, 2021.
- For the first time, supervisor compression is also addressed in the January DSP wage increase.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- As in previous years, the following services will receive rate increases to support additional wages for DSPs and Supervisors.

Career Planning	Individual Supports
Community Based Supports	Prevocational Training
Community Inclusion Services	Respite
Day Habilitation	Supported Employment

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- The Division has released a [Quick Guide to FFS Rate Increases Effective January 1, 2021](#) that provides the amount of each rate increase.
- For additional information, please see the [FY2021 DSP Wage Increase FAQs](#).
- The above documents can also be found at
 - <https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/news/news/index.html>
- All providers receiving this increase must pass it through to DSPs and supervisors and demonstrate pass-through upon request.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- DDD expects to have all systems updated with the new rates in time for the January 1, 2021 effective date.
- Provider agencies will bill at the new rate for services rendered on and after the effective date.
- Providers should not have to re-submit claims to receive the increase. Should this change, DDD will alert agencies.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- **Direct Support Professional Increase:**
 - Increased rates will provide an additional \$1.25 in DSP reimbursement for each billable hour.
 - Depending on staffing ratios and payroll tax deductions, the actual amount realized by a DSP may be more or less than \$1.25 per hour.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- Supervisor Increase:
 - Provider agencies should analyze the portion of the increased rates identified for supervisor compression when determining the wage increase for supervisors.
 - The enhanced funding is intended to provide an additional \$1.25 per hour based on supervisors who manage staff in a 3:1 ratio.
 - Depending on staffing ratios and payroll tax deductions, the actual amount realized by a supervisor may be more or less than \$1.25 per hour.

January 1, 2021 Wage Increase

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- Individuals Under Services
 - All individuals enrolled in a fee-for-service program (Supports Program and Community Care Program under Fee-for-Service) will receive an increase in their individual budget to accommodate the rate increases.
 - Self-directed employees (SDE) will not receive an automatic increase because SDE wages are privately negotiated. An individual/family wishing to increase an SDE's hourly wage should reach out to their support coordinator to discuss.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What is EVV?**

- Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) is a web-based system that verifies when visits occur and documents the precise time services begin and end. It ensures that people receive their authorized services.
- EVV provides a way to confirm that services were actually delivered using a variety of electronic methods like a phone call or a smart phone application.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Why do we need to use EVV?**
 - Section 12006(a) of the federal 21st Century Cures Act mandates that states implement electronic visit verification (EVV) for all Medicaid personal care services and home health services that require an in-home visit by a provider.
 - The 21st Century Cures Act requires compliance by States by January 1, 2021.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What services are required to use EVV?**
 - The 21st Century Cures Act requires EVV for all personal care services with an “in-home” visit. In New Jersey, this includes:
 - ✦ Personal Care Assistance services delivered by an agency;
 - ✦ Individual Supports, Community Based Supports, and In-home Respite delivered through DDD programs; and
 - ✦ Respite and Home-Based Supportive Care delivered through MLTSS.
 - Self-Directed personal care services (Personal Preference Program and self-directed services coordinated through the DDD) will also require EVV.



Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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What DDD services will this impact?

Service	Procedure Code	Unit	Additional Descriptor
Community Based Supports	H2021HI	15 minutes	Base
Community Based Supports	H2021HI22	15 minutes	Acuity
Community Based Supports	H2021HI52	15 minutes	Self-Directed Employee
Individual Supports	H2016HI	15 minutes	Base
Individual Supports	H2016HI22	15 minutes	Base with Acuity
Individual Supports	H2016HIU8	15 minutes	Self-Directed Employee
In-Home Respite	T1005HI	15 minutes	Base
In-Home Respite	T1005HIU8	15 minutes	Self-Directed Employee

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Will EVV be required for congregate residential services such as group homes or DDD Supported Living Services where PCA is provided as a 24-hour service?**
 - CMS interprets the reference in the statute to an “in-home visit” to exclude PCA provided in congregate residential settings where 24-hour service is available. CMS finds that services provided in a congregate residential setting are distinct from an “in-home visit” subject to EVV requirements under the statute.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What if my caregiver lives with me?**
 - New Jersey is not requiring EVV where the person providing care is living with the person receiving care. CMS allowed states this flexibility for live-in, self-directed caregivers in their June 2019 Frequently Asked Questions document where they state:
 - ✦ *EVV requirements do not apply when the caregiver providing the service and the beneficiary live together. PCS or HHCS rendered by an individual living in the residence does not constitute an “in-home visit”*

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Does EVV apply if the worker is a family member?**
 - Yes. EVV makes no distinction between a family member versus a non-family member providing services. Please note that live in caregivers are exempt, regardless of relation.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Which providers will this impact?**
 - The EVV mandate applies to all providers of Personal Care Assistance services, Individual Supports (DDD), Community Based Supports (DDD), In-Home Respite (DDD and MLTSS) and Home Based Supportive Care (MLTSS). All services requiring an in-home visit are subject to the EVV mandate, including self-directed services (except for live-in caregivers).

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What type of information will be collected through EVV?**
 - The 21st Century Cures Act requires that states use EVV to collect six data points:
 - ✦ Type of Service;
 - ✦ Person Served;
 - ✦ Dates of Service;
 - ✦ Location of Service;
 - ✦ Name of Caregiver; and
 - ✦ Times of Service.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What vendor will New Jersey be working with to implement EVV?**
 - HHAeXchange is the State of New Jersey's EVV vendor. HHAeXchange will aggregate incoming EVV data from providers and Managed Care Organizations.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **How will EVV work for provider agencies?**

- The options described below are available for agencies providing services through DDD waiver programs (Supports Program, Supports Plus PDN and/or Community Care Program).
 - ✦ **Option 1:** Use existing EVV system or a system you intend to implement by January 1, 2021, to collect and report EVV data.
 - ✦ **Option 2:** Use the Free EVV tools provided by DMAHS (HHAeXchange) to collect and report visit data for all members enrolled in managed care or for all beneficiaries eligible to receive services under the NJFC Medicaid FFS program.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **What kind of technology do I need to manage EVV?**
 - Technology needs can be met through the use of a landline telephone of the member or free smart phone application on the provider's cell phone.
- **What happens if a worker forgets to clock in or their phone dies?**
 - The worker will need to coordinate with their employer to resolve clock-in and clock-out issues. The EVV system will allow for manual entry of clock in and/or clock out.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Will employers still be responsible for approving an employee's time?**
 - It remains the responsibility of the employer to ensure accuracy and approval of employee timesheets.
- **How will I be trained on EVV?**
 - The MCO and HHAEExchange will conduct a series of trainings tailored to provider agencies. Training for DDD providers and SDEs will also be provided.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **My agency's electronic management system has an EVV component, can I use that instead of the vendor?**
 - Yes. The existing system must meet the requirements of the 21st Century Cures Act and be able to securely transmit data to HHAeXchange.
 - NJ requires HHAeXchange be able to interface with all existing EVV systems which meet the requirements of the 21st Century Cures Act. This will be coordinated through HHAeXchange and/or the MCO.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- **Where can I get more information of EVV?**
 - Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services Website:
 - ✦ <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmahs/info/evv.html>
 - The above website contains an FAQ, Newsletter, Presentations and other helpful materials.

Important Resources

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- NJ Department of Health
24-Hour Hotline: 1 (800) 222-1222
- NJ Department of Human Services COVID-19 Information
- Contact information for Local Health Departments in NJ
- Contact information for County OEM Coordinators in NJ

Important Resources

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- Disability Rights New Jersey
 - <https://www.drnj.org/>
 - 1 (800) 922-7233 (toll-free in New Jersey only)
- Ombudsman for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their Families
 - <https://www.disabilityombudsman.nj.gov/>
 - 1 (609) 984-7764
- New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities
 - <http://njcdd.org/>
 - 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](#)