



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: October 29, 2025
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: District School Business Administrators
From: Thomas McMahon, Director
Office of Fiscal Policy and Planning
Division of Finance and Business Services

Release of 2025-2026 Chapter 44 Software Application

Pursuant to P.L. 2020, c.44, school districts must report information regarding the health care plans offered by the school district. The release of the Chapter 44 Software Application for 2025 actual and 2026 projected costs will be accessible to authorized school district personnel on or about October 29, 2025, through the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) [Homeroom portal](#). The Chapter 44 software in the Homeroom portal is named "Chapter 44." This release will include screens for the 2024-2025 fiscal year actual amounts and the 2025-2026 fiscal year estimated amounts.

Key Steps/Actions

The Chapter 44 data collection is due annually no later than 60 days following each enrollment period. The information must be submitted in the web-based application. If the open enrollment period that covers through June 2026 has passed, then the Chapter 44 data collection is due 60 days after the software release date. If the open enrollment period for the period that covers through June 2026 has not yet ended, then the due date of the Chapter 44 data collection is 60 days after the open enrollment period ends. *Example:* The Open Enrollment period for SEHBP 2026 calendar plan year is October 1 through 31, 2025. The software release date is October 29, 2025. This would make the latest date for submission of the Chapter 44 data 60 days after the end of the open enrollment period or Tuesday, **December 30, 2025**.

Accessing the Chapter 44 Application

Access to the Chapter 44 Software Application is restricted to those school district employees for whom the school district's Homeroom Administrator has created a user account granting access to the Chapter 44 system. First-time users authorized by the school district must work through the school district's Homeroom Administrator to create a unique User Identification and Password. Instructions for establishing a Homeroom Administrator and for establishing authorized users are documented in the "Homeroom Administrator Manual" available through the Homeroom portal. Important message to Homeroom Administrators: In the Homeroom Administration system, the Chapter 44 Software Application is named "Chapter 44."

Guidance Documents

The NJDOE has prepared guidance for completing the Chapter 44 data collection. The manual will be accessible through a link in the Chapter 44 software on or about October 29, 2025.

Authorized users of the Chapter 44 Software Application are encouraged to review the manual prior to preparing the data collection.

New in the 2025-2026 system are the following items:

- 1) A summary report that shows the calculated savings of Actual 2025 costs entered in this collection compared to Actual 2024 costs entered in the Chapter 44 system in the last data collection cycle. Once the district certifies the 2025-2026 Chapter 44 software, the report will be available on the certification screen to review the calculated savings amount. If the district experienced savings in the health care costs, and is over adequacy when the 2026-27 state aid calculations are released, then this savings amount is what will be used to calculate the cap adjustment for the 2026-27 tax levy cap. The information on this report is the same information as will be shown in the first section of the Chapter 44 report generated by the annual budget software for the 2026-27 budget year.
- 2) New warning edits have been added in the system to aid users in reviewing the data entry. These edits will not preclude the user from certifying the submission, they will display as a reminder to review the data entry before finalizing the certification.
 - a. On the Plan Coverage 2025 Actual screen, an edit will check if the number of enrollees in column H is zero, but there are entries in column B for full-time equivalent employees. This is to ensure that the entry of the number of employees is complete, and that the calculation of savings for the district-wide budget will have all the employee data required to calculate properly.
 - b. On the Certification screen, two new edits will check if the entries for 2025 Actual total number of employees in column H of the Plan Coverage Totals tab, and entries for 2025 Actual total net cost in column F of the Plan Coverage Totals tab, are more than a 25 percent difference from the amounts entered in the 2024 Actual screens from the prior year data collection. This is to review the reasonableness of the data entered in the system.

Contact Information

Questions related to the Chapter 44 Software Application should be directed to the Office of Fiscal Policy and Planning at chapter44@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group