

PUBLIC NOTICE

HEALTH

THE COMMISSIONER

Notice of Certificate of Need Call for Intensive and Intermediate Neonatal

Bassinets and Designation as a Community Perinatal Center – Intensive

Take notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq., Dr. Raynard Washington, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Health (Department) is inviting, on a limited scope, certificate of need (CN) applications on a full review basis for the following:

1. The establishment of additional licensed intensive and/or intermediate neonatal bassinets; and
2. Designation as a Community Perinatal Center – Intensive.

This CN Call is limited to these services and does not include applications for other perinatal designations, changes in Maternal and Child Health Consortium membership, or other neonatal services.

The Department is issuing this call pursuant to the edict at P.L. 2025, c. 320. This statute amended N.J.S.A. 26:2H-7.a to require the Department to issue a Certificate of Need Call on or before July 19, 2026, for an acute care hospital to receive a designation as a Community Perinatal Center – Intensive and for the addition of intensive neonatal bassinets in a manner that reflects the current needs of the State. Consistent with that statutory directive, the Department conducted a Statewide analysis of current neonatal intensive and intermediate bassinet utilization to determine whether additional capacity is warranted.

N.J.A.C. 8:33C-2.8 sets forth a methodology for determining need for intermediate and intensive neonatal bassinets. Since adoption of that rule, however, certain data elements used in the regulatory methodology are no longer collected in a manner that permits the application of the formula. Accordingly, for purposes of this CN Call, the Department evaluated current need using available Statewide utilization data that most closely reflects the methodology, intent, and policy objectives underlying N.J.A.C. 8:33C-2.8 and satisfies the statutory requirement to evaluate the current needs of the State.

The Department reviewed data from the New Jersey Electronic Birth Certificate System for calendar years 2023 and 2024, together with Quarterly Inpatient Utilization (B-2) reports for calendar years 2024 and 2025. As currently available data does not permit the reliable separation of intensive and intermediate neonatal utilization for Statewide planning purposes, the Department analyzed the combined utilization of intensive and intermediate neonatal bassinets. This approach reflects the complementary nature of these services and provides the most accurate measure of current Statewide demand.

The Department's analysis demonstrated that Statewide utilization remains below the Department's historical planning target of 85 percent occupancy. Similar analyses performed at the regional and county levels likewise did not demonstrate a need for additional regional capacity. However, the Department's analysis did identify individual hospitals that consistently operated above the 85 percent utilization target. Accordingly, this Certificate of Need Call is limited to hospitals demonstrating sustained utilization above that level.

Successful applications for additional neonatal bassinets will be those from acute care hospitals that demonstrate, using calendar years 2024 and 2025 utilization data, that their combined intensive and intermediate neonatal bassinet utilization exceeded 85 percent. Applicants shall demonstrate that:

- The proposed project responds to documented patient need;
- The requested capacity is supported by utilization data;
- The project will not adversely affect access to neonatal services within the applicable planning region;
- The project can be implemented within five years following CN approval; and
- The project complies with applicable provisions of N.J.A.C. 8:33, 8:33C, and 8:43G, and N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq., except as modified by this notice.

Applicants are encouraged to obtain the support of the applicable Maternal and Child Health Consortium.

Pursuant to P.L. 2025, c. 320, the Department is also accepting CN applications from hospitals currently designated as Community Perinatal Center – Intermediate seeking designation as a Community Perinatal Center – Intensive. Applicants shall submit the information required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:33C-3.4(b). As the methodology referenced at N.J.A.C. 8:33C-2.8 cannot presently be applied, applicants may submit an alternative demonstration of need supported by current utilization data. In lieu of submission of a regional perinatal and pediatric plan otherwise required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:33C-3.4(b), applicants may submit documentation demonstrating support from the applicable Maternal and Child Health Consortium.

Geographic Area: Statewide.

Applications: Applicants seeking approval for additional neonatal bassinets shall submit an Application for Certificate of Need for Hospital Related Projects – Full Review (CN-3). Applicants seeking designation as a Community Perinatal Center – Intensive shall submit an Application for Certificate of Need for Designation as a Perinatal Facility (CN-4). Applications may be obtained from the Department's website.

Completed applications and supporting documentation shall be submitted electronically to: cnl-surveys@doh.nj.gov; subject line: **Bassinet CN Call** A hard copy shall also be mailed to:

New Jersey Department of Health

Bassinet CN Call

PO Box 358

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0358

Review

Applications accepted for processing will be reviewed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:33, 8:33C, and 8:43G, applicable statutory requirements, and the review criteria set forth in this notice.

The Department will evaluate each application based upon the demonstrated need for additional capacity, impact upon regional access to care, financial feasibility, and consistency with the purposes of the Health Care Facilities Planning Act.

Date applications are due: October 20, 2026.

Date completeness reviews are anticipated: January 20, 2027.

Date of State Health Planning Board review: April 20, 2027.