

The New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Developmental Disabilities

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

January 7, 2021



Agenda

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- COVID-19
- January Webinars
- FY21 DSP Wage Increase
- Residential Enhancement (20%)
- Temporary \$3 Per Hour Increase for Group Homes
- Day Service Payments
- Day Program Re-Opening
- COVID-19 Vaccine Information
- Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)
- Resources

New Jersey COVID-19 Current Statistics*

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State of New Jersey	
Positive	499,636
Deaths	17,361

**This update is as of Wednesday, January 6, 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	1,247	312	618	2,177
Deaths	78	38	45	161

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 December Webinar Schedule

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- Next January update webinar:
 - Thursday, January 21, 2021 – 10:30 am
- Use link below to register:
 - [Register for January 21 Update Webinar](#)

FY21 DSP Wage Increase

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- FY21 DSP Wage Increase was implemented January 1, 2021 via fee-for-service (FFS) rate increases to DSP-delivered services:
 - ✦ Career Planning, Community Based Supports, Community Inclusion Services, Day Habilitation, Individual Supports, Prevocational Training, Respite, Supported Employment.
- To accommodate rate increases, iRecord budgets increased.
- For dates of service on or after January 1, 2021, providers will claim at the increased rates. No recycling of claims will be needed.
- Please see the updated FAQs: FY2021 DSP and Supervisor Rate Increases

Residential (IS-Daily Rate) Enhancement

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- **20% Enhancement to Individual Supports Daily Rate:**
 - Will extend through at least January 31, 2021.
 - This amount received an upward adjustment to account for the January 1 DSP wage increase.
 - As this payment is eligible for federal match, it will realize the full targeted increase of \$1.25 per hour for DSPs and their supervisors.

Temporary \$3 Increase to IS-Daily Rate DSPs

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- The temporary \$3-per-hour wage increase for DSPs working in settings claiming Individual Supports Daily Rate (group homes) has been extended for another three-month period, from January 1 through March 31, 2021.

Day Service Payment

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- **State Supplemental Payments**

- ✦ State Supplemental payments will receive an increase. However, as these funds are not eligible for federal match they are funded at 50% of the targeted increase.
- ✦ This is .62 per hour as opposed to \$1.25.
- ✦ This amount, at a minimum, must be passed through to DSPs and their supervisors.
- ✦ Agencies that are claiming for in-person and virtual services (eligible for federal match) should do their best to forecast that revenue and further add to the wage increase for DSPs and their supervisors.
- ✦ Once the public health emergency ends and regular claiming resumes, the remainder of the increase shall occur.

Day Program Re-Opening

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- At this time, due to the current surge in New Jersey of COVID-19 cases, DDD-funded congregate day service settings **will not re-open on January 19, 2021.**
 - A re-opening date is not available at this time.
 - The Division will provide at least two weeks' notice once a re-opening date is identified.
 - At such time that a re-opening date is identified and two weeks' notice is provided, the previously-released [Congregate Day Program Re-Opening Requirements](#) will be in effect.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- On December 29, 2020 the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) released detail on the initial (Phase 1A) COVID-19 vaccinations. See [New Jersey's Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination: Phase 1A](#).
- NJDOH encourages all citizens to stay up to date on vaccination information and to share factual and reliable information.
 - Follow @NJDeptofHealth, @NJGov and @GovMurphy on social media.
 - Visit covid19.nj.gov for information on the State's COVID-19 response.
 - View a COVID-19 Vaccination Essentials webinar co-hosted by the New Jersey Department of Health, Rutgers, and the Nicholson Foundation: https://rwjms.rutgers.edu/community_health/other/project-echo/covid-19.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- Phase 1A definition of “healthcare personnel” are paid or unpaid people who work in a healthcare setting, who may have direct or indirect contact with infectious persons or materials.
- This includes the following DDD Direct Support Professionals (DSPs):
 - DSPs in State’s Developmental Centers;
 - DSPs in IDD group homes;
 - DSPs in IDD day programs; and
 - Self-Directed Employees (SDEs) in private homes.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- Can an agency require their staff to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?
 - The available COVID-19 vaccines have received Emergency Use Authorization from the Food and Drug Administration.
 - Federal and State government are not mandating vaccination at this time.
 - If someone is reluctant to receive the vaccine efforts to educate them should occur.
 - If an employer determines they want to mandate vaccination of their employees they should consult their legal counsel on how to approach.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- Can an agency require the individuals they serve to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?
 - The available COVID-19 vaccines have received Emergency Use Authorization from the Food and Drug Administration.
 - Federal and State government are not mandating vaccination at this time.
 - If someone is reluctant to receive the vaccine efforts to educate them should occur.
 - An agency cannot compel an individual served to be vaccinated.
 - Informed consent from the individual or legal guardian(s) is required for COVID-19 vaccination.
 - Agencies should start talking with individuals and guardians about their willingness to take the vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- NJDOH does not require documentation/”proof” of healthcare worker status to register for/receive the vaccine. Please see [NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccine](#) webpage.
- Those that feel they meet the definition of a Phase 1A healthcare personnel may:
 - Pre-register to receive the vaccine on the newly-launched [New Jersey Vaccine Scheduling System \(NJVSS\)](#).
 - Receive the vaccine at one of the locations listed at [Health Care Workers COVID-19 Vaccine Locations](#)

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- DHS/DDD are working with the NJ Department of Health to ensure that residents in group homes, which are considered high-risk congregate care settings, receive vaccinations as Phase 1A continues.
- Information will be forthcoming regarding eligibility for individuals with disabilities and chronic medical conditions not residing in high-risk congregate care settings.

COVID-19 Vaccine in New Jersey

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- Six mega sites throughout New Jersey will serve as vaccination hubs for phased priority groups:
 - Atlantic County: Atlantic City Convention Center
 - Bergen County: Racetrack at Meadowlands, East Rutherford
 - Burlington County: Moorestown Mall
 - Gloucester County: Rowan College of South Jersey, Sewell
 - Middlesex County: New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center, Edison
 - Morris County: Rockaway Townsquare
- These six state-coordinated sites are expected to begin opening over the next few weeks and will vaccinate front-line healthcare workers and then continue to Phases 1B & 1C depending on vaccine supply.
- After these phases are complete, the general public will be eligible for vaccination. The timing of the progression among the groups depends on the supply of vaccine to the state.

COVID-19: Point of Dispensing (POD) Fact Sheet



What is a POD?

A POD (Point of Dispensing) is a temporary site in the community where vaccines can be quickly administered to people in large numbers. POD sites will be set up within each county in New Jersey.



Who can come to a POD?

Once a COVID-19 vaccine is approved for use, it will likely be available in limited amounts. Until the vaccine can be produced in large quantities, critical populations will be given priority. See "[COVID-19 Vaccine: Who Will Be Able to Get the Vaccine?](#)" for more information.



What happens in a POD?

The COVID-19 vaccine will require two doses, several weeks apart, to be effective. After receiving your first dose, you will be given instructions on when and where to come back for your second dose.



Where can I find out more?

- Visit the New Jersey Department of Health [COVID-19 Vaccination](#) page for vaccine information.

COVID-19 Vaccine in New Jersey

- In addition to the mega sites, there will be numerous Vaccine Points of Delivery (PODs) in communities across NJ.
- [COVID-19 Vaccine: Who Will Be Able to Get the Vaccine?](#)
- [NJ DOH COVID-19 Vaccination website.](#)

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- NJDOH is providing updates on the COVID-19 vaccine via a weekly newsletter, *Vax Matters*.
 - Current and past issues of the NJDOH *Vax Matters* newsletter, as well as other vaccine resources, are available on the [NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccine](#) webpage.
- DDD will continue to provide updates as we receive them.

COVID-19 Vaccine

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- The Arc of NJ is hosting a free webinar, *COVID-19 Vaccinations for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in New Jersey* with speaker Dr. David Adinaro, NJ Department of Health Deputy Commissioner for Public Health Services, on Monday, January 11, 2020 at 11 AM.
- Attendance is open to everyone and you can [register here for The Arc of New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccine webinar](#).

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

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- For DDD self-directed employee services, Easterseals is part of the January 2021 EVV pilot. Easterseals will be providing information to participants in the coming weeks, including training details.
- At this time, participants in the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agency (VF/EA) model, with PPL as the fiscal intermediary, are not part of the January pilot. Information about EVV for participants in the VF/EA model with PPL will be distributed when it becomes available.

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
 - 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](#)