

NEW JERSEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL

Minutes

March 11, 2026, 10:00 am

This meeting was conducted exclusively through MS Teams video teleconference & conference call

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Dial-in Number: +1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#

Notices of the meeting were sent to the Asbury Park Press, The Times (of Trenton), and the Bergen Record.

Participants:

Donna Migliorino (DMHAS)	Jennifer Rutberg (DoA), Chair Pro-Tem	
Angela Calzone	Darlema Bey	Morgan Thompson
Francis Walker (YJC)	Jessica Groelly (DoC)	Chris Morrison (DoH)
Joe Gutstein	Tatyana Brown (DoL)	Jada Abdullah (NJAMHAA)
Julia Barugel	Donna Spencer (HMFA)	Angela Calzone
Elisabeth Marchese	Winifred Chain	Jennifer Gietka (DFD)
Zoe Carch (NJ SHA)	Susanne Smith	

DMHAS, CSOC, DDD, DMAHS, DoAS & DoH Staff:

Clarence Pearson	Susannah Combs	Mark Kruszczyński
Nancy Edouard (DoA)	Helen Staton	Shenal Pugh
Ben Magnuson (CSOC)	Sophie Wilkinson (DDD)	

Guests:

Becky DiLisciiiandro	Filomena DiNuzzio (YJC)	Nina Smuklawsky
Mya Caba	Jonathan Tkacz	Matt Camarda
Alejandra Batista	Anna Guida	Roquina Santini
Rachel Morgan		

I. Administrative Issues/Correspondence (Heather Simms)

- A. Attendance, 19/34, 55.8% attendance, quorum *exceeded*.
- B. Motion to select a Chair Pro Tem to run today's meeting due to the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
 - 1. Jennifer Rutberg selected as Chair, Pro Tem, unanimously. She will run the meeting today in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council
- C. Minutes of February 11, 2026 meeting, approved with minor edits

III. Presentations at Future Meetings by Council Members

- A. Recovery High School (Morgan Thompson)
- B. Recovery Residences/Housing (Mike Santillo)
- C. START (Systemic Therapeutic Assessment Resources & Treatment (Jonathan Sabin)
- D. Inroads can present on Mental Health supports for IDD population (Angela Calzone)
- E. In home and group counselling for older adults (Jennifer Ruthberg)
- F. State Hospital Outdoors Opportunities (Chris M. will check)
- G. Suggestion: Request for presenters bring along a consumer that participate in the program that the presenter is speaking about.

II. System Partner Updates (Jennifer Rutberg)

Going forward all system partners are requested to provide the Council with brief, written updates by the Friday prior to the next BHPC meeting. Those updates will be provided to the Council prior to the meeting; this will give Council members an opportunity to pose questions to the system partners in a timely manner.

A. Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Donna Migliorino).

1. Mental health
 - a. Crisis Receiving Stabilization Centers (CRSC)
 - i. Five CRSCs were awarded.
 - ii. The first CRSC will open in April or May depending on the receipt and approval of all materials included in the CRSC Certification Packet. This would also include the Certificate of Occupancy.
 - iii. The second CRSC will open in May or June. We anticipate all CRSCs to be open in CY 2026.
 - iv. All CRSCs are required to have a dedicated space for emergency responder drop off, including law enforcement and fire responders. DMHAS has programmed its data systems to capture program outcomes in accordance with SAMHSA's Crisis toolkit.

B. Children's Systems of Care, Ben Magnusson, DCF CSOC).

1. No updates at this time.

C. Division of Developmental Disabilities (Jonathan Sabin)

1. In late 2024, following a competitive bidding process, YAI was awarded funding to collaborate with the National Center for START Services to develop a START model program to serve the southern region of New Jersey. START (Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources, and Treatment) is an evidence-based, community crisis prevention and intervention service model for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and mental health needs (IDD-MH). Designed to develop community capacity while achieving wellbeing for those served, it provides 24-7 crisis response and stabilization services, often in conjunction with first responders.
2. March 28 is National Choking Awareness Day. 2026 will be the third consecutive year that the DDD Resource team will dedicate the month of March to offering workshops and roundtable discussions to provide information about the prevention of choking for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

D. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) (Tatyana Brown)

1. We are currently seeking licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) specialists to join our growing provider network.
2. Additionally, we are especially interested in professionals who are proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) to better serve our deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers. Together, we can expand access to care and improve outcomes for the communities we serve.

- E. Department of Education (Maurice Ingram): Present.
 - 1. See <https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/> for recent updates/broadcasts .
- F. Division of Aging (Jennifer Rutberg, present):
 - 1. DoA had received an Alzheimer’s Initiative Grant, a conference/day of learning, six classes are available, 4/28/26, at RWJ/Barnabas – Hamilton. Subjects include dementia care and families dealing with a family member with dementia.
- G. Youth Justice Commission (YJC) (formerly JJC), Francis Walker, present
 - 1. No updates at this time.
- H. Department of Corrections (Jessica Groelly, Christina Nicodemus, present). No updates
 - 1. No updates at this time
- I. NJ Div. of Medical Assistance and Health Services (NJ Family Care/State Medicaid) (S. Pugh, Present).
 - 1. Integration consumer advocate meeting. Now will be monthly. The public is welcome to advocate for people impacted by BH Integration
- J. Department of Health: (Chris Morrison):
 - 1. No updates at this time.
- K. NJAMHAA (Jada Abdulla, Brian Harris, preset):
 - 1. Upcoming 75th Anniversary and Spring Conference
- L. Division of Family Development (Jennifer Gietka, present): No updates.
- M. Supported Housing Association (Kate Brace),:
- N. NJ County Mental Health Administrators Association (Elisabeth Marchese, present).
 - 1. No updates
- O. NJ Hospital Association (Deena Tampi) not present).
- P. NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJ HMFA), (Donna Spencer, present)).
 - 1. NJHMFA was allocated \$530 million in funds from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) between 2022 and 2025. Our business priority for 2026 is to meet the Federal deadline for expenditure of 12/31/26. We have to disburse funds for approximately 60 projects between now and then.
 - 2. HMFA awarded 15 9% LIHTC projects, creating 815 units of affordable housing across the state with at least 65 supportive housing units.
The deadline for the 2026 9% round is Wednesday, July1, by 12PM

VI. Open Public Comment and Announcements:

- A. Public Comment
- B. Announcements:

1. Resources, listed by NAMI: <https://naminj.org/resources/intensive-family-support-services-ifss/>
2. Sharing that Raritan Bay Area YMCA (Perth Amboy, Middlesex County) now offers outpatient therapy and counseling:
<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:a2c17332-7ea2-40c9-b720-cca2ea652bdb>
3. NJAMHAA's Spring Conference, which will be held on April 14-15. Thank you! Spring Conference 2026: Evolving Behavioral Health: Advancing Together for 75 Years. <https://njamhaa.site-ym.com/mpage/spring-26#Summary>
4. RFP for Burlington County Homeless Shelter, due 3/26/26

V. Adjournment: Time: 11:56: am.

A. Next meeting: 4/8/26 10:00 am –noon.

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

+1 609-300-7196, PIN# 306216820#

B. Future Agenda Items/Additional Items for Meetings in 2026

1. Use of psychedelics / psilocibin for mental health disorders (Connie Greene's suggestion made 12/10/25)
3. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): (Connie Greene)
4. NJ DoE Threat Assessment Protocols
5. Pretrial Services in Camden County
7. JJC Discussion (Filomena DiNuzzo)
6. DVR (Tatyana Brown)
7. Presentation on SUD prevention efforts at County Jails?
8. Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) (Suzanne B.)
9. AIR, Youth Suicide Prevention (kurt@air.ngo)
10. SUD and JJC (Francis Walker, JJC)
11. Experiences of Consumers in SUD Crisis
12. Immigration and Mental Health (suggested by A. Lewis, 01/14/26).
13. Grief Counselling for People with Lived Experienced (D. Bey, suggested 1/14/26)
14. Attorney General Office to Speak About Mental Health Courts (D. Bey, suggested 1/14/26)
15. Having Peer Coalition at the Council (Suggested by Elena Kravitz 1/14/26).
16. Start Services (NJ DDD) consultative service, proactive to mitigate mental health emergencies, short term services (Suggested by Elena Kravitz 1/14/26).
17. Information for consumers with Dual Diagnosis (DDD and MH/SUD) (Suggested by Janet Martinez 1/14/26)
18. Outcomes for individuals.
19. NJ Start (DD), See
<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2025/approved/20251222.shtml#:~:text=START%20Services%20NJ%20is%20a, and%20community-based%20residential%20programs>.

20. Request about advocacy methods (see NAMI NJ)
21. Family AND consumer voice. Especially now with Medicaid changes for 51/49 for outpatient services for state licensed providers. 51% In-person and 49 % telehealth. How that impacting consumers? (RM). See <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2025/approved/20251222.shtml>
22. NJ State Budget Presentation