



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, mental health is defined as emotional and psychological well-being, which allows individuals to work, enjoy satisfying relationships and engage fully in their communities, and it is an essential part of overall well-being (SAMHSA, 2026); and

WHEREAS, one in five Americans will have experienced a mental health condition in a given year and one in six adults will live with a serious mental illness (SAMHSA, 2026); and

WHEREAS, awareness, prevention, and education programs like Mental Health First Aid reduce stigma and encourage individuals to seek treatment and support services, and to know that wellness and recovery from mental illness are possible; and

WHEREAS, for individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis or need, the NJ 988 suicide and crisis lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support 24/7 through calls, texts, or chat with trained counselors, as well as referral to mobile outreach teams and clinical services; and

WHEREAS, through a coordinated statewide system of care, available 24/7/365 (877-652-7624), the Children's System of Care (CSOC) offers a full continuum of services and supports for youth up to age 21 with behavioral health and substance use needs, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. These resources are tailored to the unique strengths and needs of each child, youth and their family, ensuring the right service at the right time; and

WHEREAS, NJ MentalHealth Cares (866-202-HELP) is available during weekdays to connect callers with specialists who can provide emotional support and provide behavioral health information and referral resources; and

WHEREAS, peers with lived experience and the state's many peer-led programs are a great resource and source of support for individuals living with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, greater efforts must be made to provide integrated behavioral health and primary care services to prevent and manage comorbid medical conditions in individuals with serious mental health conditions who experience many years of life lost to disability and premature death; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's behavioral health service system and peer service community are committed to helping individuals with mental health conditions seamlessly access treatment and achieve sustained recovery to lead independent, meaningful, and fulfilling lives;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mikie Sherrill, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

OCTOBER 4 THROUGH OCTOBER 10, 2026
AS
MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

in the Garden State.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-eighth day of September in the year two thousand twenty-six, the two hundred fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States.


GOVERNOR