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NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2024



**Human Services Opens \$5 Million Grant Opportunity to
Help Make Communities Age-Friendly**

Human Services announced that local government and nonprofit entities can apply for [Age-Friendly grants](#) to develop local age-friendly initiatives and implement recommendations from the [New Jersey Age-Friendly Blueprint](#) that support the health and wellbeing of older New Jerseyans.

“Age-friendly” describes a global movement to make communities more welcoming and livable for people of all ages. [Released by the Department in May](#), the NJ Age-Friendly Blueprint outlines age-friendly strategies and best practices to improve New Jersey’s communities for older adults and enable people to remain in their homes and communities as they age.

“This is a great opportunity for communities to implement policies and make improvements to better serve the needs of residents as they age. We know that remaining at home and engaged in our communities leads to better health outcomes for older adults. Making New Jersey more age-friendly benefits all of us, so I encourage all municipalities, counties, and nonprofits interested in supporting these efforts to apply,” **Commissioner Sarah Adelman said.**

“Everyone benefits from making communities more livable for people of all ages. We are providing financial and technical support to assist communities that want to become age-friendly because we know it makes a difference and will have a lasting impact on future generations. I hope organizations will take advantage of this funding opportunity and apply,” **Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire said.**

“We have grants available for communities who have not yet started on the path towards becoming age-friendly, and those who have and are ready to put their plans into action. Wherever you are in the age-friendly process, these grants can help communities reach their age-friendly goals,” [Division of Aging](#)

[Services](#) Assistant Commissioner Louise Rush said.

Read more [HERE](#).

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



**Division of
Developmental
Disabilities**

**NJ Human Services Moves to Enhance Direct Support
Professional Services to Serve Individuals with
Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and Co-Occurring
Mental Health Needs**

New Jersey Human Services is moving to enhance direct support professional services that serve individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and co-occurring mental health needs.

The Department has issued a [request for proposals](#) for provider agencies interested in having their direct support professionals (DSPs) obtain the

National Association of the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) Competency-Based
IDD/MI Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Professional Certification.

DSPs work with individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to help those individuals achieve their personal goals. The [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) (DDD) oversees the coordination and delivery of publicly funded home and community-based services in New Jersey for about 26,500 adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Per 2023 DDD statistics, at least 3,500 of these individuals have a co-occurring psychiatric diagnosis.

“Direct Support Professionals provide vitally important support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities so they may live full and healthy lives in their communities,” **Commissioner Sarah Adelman said.** “Governor Murphy’s Administration has invested significantly in this workforce by continually increasing wages to reflect the value and importance of their work, in turn improving recruitment and retention in the field. This opportunity is another important investment in this workforce and an important step to ensure DSPs are trained, equipped and qualified at the highest level to support individuals with IDD and co-occurring mental health needs. Becoming NADD Certified will be a source of pride for DSPs and a source of comfort and confidence for provider agencies and families.”

“This certification will help validate and provide assurance to individuals, families, and employers that a DSP has met the standards for delivering services to individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities and co-occurring mental health needs,” **Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire said.** “It adds another level of professionalization to the DSP career path, while enhancing the quality, efficacy, and consistency of service delivery for individuals. This is all about investing in DSPs and the quality of care for the individuals they serve.”

For a more in-depth understanding of the NADD DSP Certification, view a video [here](#) entitled “Introduction to NADD Direct Support Professional Certification.”

“Direct support professionals make a tremendous difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” **DDD Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried said.** “With this certification, we are helping ensure individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and co-occurring mental health needs are getting the best quality care to meet their needs.”

More [HERE](#).

NJ Department of Human Services'
Opioid Summit 2024

BUILDING HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

Virtual All-Day Conference | Workshops | Panels
Keynote Speakers | CME and CEU Credits Available



NJ Human Services' annual virtual Opioid Summit is September 18th. This year's theme is: 'Building Hope for the Future.' The all-day conference will feature panels, workshops and a keynote. CME and CEU credits available.

Register [HERE](#).

Governor Phil Murphy has proclaimed August 31st to be Overdose Awareness Day in New Jersey. We remember those lost to overdose and aim to raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding addiction and drug-related deaths. New Jersey is offering FREE NALOXONE at participating pharmacies! No prescription or name needed.

For more information, visit [HERE](#) or call 844-ReachNJ.





In honor of Overdose Awareness Day, please watch this personal message from Commissioner Sarah Adelman.

And see below our series of interviews with individuals who witnessed a loved one battle substance use disorder and then turn grief into action as they work to become part of the recovery solution.



Tonia from the [National Center for Advocacy and Recovery \(NCAAR\)](#).

Click [HERE](#) to see all of the interviews on our DHS Overdose Awareness YouTube Playlist.



Bre from [Black Lives Matter - Paterson](#).

Click [HERE](#) to see all of the interviews on our DHS Overdose Awareness
YouTube Playlist.



Lisa and Marcella of [Colin's Wish](#).

Click [HERE](#) to see all of the interviews on our DHS Overdose Awareness
YouTube Playlist.



Pamela from [Hope Sheds Light](#).

Click [HERE](#) to see all of the interviews on our DHS Overdose Awareness YouTube Playlist.

Commissioner Sarah Adelman and Assistant Commissioner Renee Burawski joined staff from the [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) at the [Trenton Thunder](#) Addiction Awareness Night where they were able to hand out 318 two-dose naloxone kits.

Free naloxone is available at participating pharmacies.

No prescription or name needed. Find a pharmacy near you [HERE](#).





NJ Disability Information Hub

www.nj.gov/disabilities

The hub can be accessed at NJ.Gov/Disabilities.

The image is a video thumbnail for the NJ Disability Information Hub. It features a black background with a large red play button in the center, surrounded by a glowing blue circle. To the left of the play button is a small inset video showing a woman in a dark shirt using sign language. The text "NJ Disability Information Hub" is at the top, and the website "www.nj.gov/disabilities" is at the bottom. A small "HUMAN SERVICES" logo is in the top right corner.

New Jersey is committed to being a safe, accessible, and affordable place for all, including those living with disabilities. Check out our video to learn

more about the Disability Information Hub and by visiting the website [HERE](#).

The [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) held their second annual [PUMP](#) program at the [Joseph Kohn Training Center](#). PUMP is a summer learning experience that prepares middle school students transitioning into high school.

To learn more about programs and services available through CBVI, visit [HERE](#).





Speaking Out for the Blind Episode 248- Mentoring Program

August 20, 2024

[Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) Assistant Division Director Dr. Charles Pat McKenna joined the [Speaking Out for the Blind Podcast](#) to discuss DHS' annual mentorship program that strengthens connections between older and younger New Jerseyans with vision loss.

To listen to this episode, visit [HERE](#).



Officers from the [Human Services Police](#) were happy to participate in National Night Out in Delran Township and Morris Plains.



Officers from the [Human Services Police](#) took part in the Margate City Police Department Law Day.



National Health Center Week 2024

Commissioner Sarah Adelman joined [New Jersey Department of Health](#) Commissioner, Dr. Kaitlan Baston, and CEOs from several Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) at a kickoff event hosted by [Newark Community Health Center](#).



The [Division of Family Development](#) (DFD) was honored with the American Association of SNAP Directors Impact Award for Excellence in Human Services at the 2024 Economic Mobility and Well-Being Conference in Portland, OR. Deputy Division Director Larry Braasch accepted the award on behalf of DFD. DFD also received a national Telly Award and a New Jersey Ad Club award for their [SNAP Ed](#) campaign, which is focused on getting residents to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption by one cup.

DFD initiatives in recent years have helped expand access to food assistance programs.

In need of food assistance?

Visit njsnap.gov to check your eligibility & apply for [SNAP](#) benefits

To learn more about other DFD programs, visit [HERE](#).



NJ Human Services' [Office of Emergency Management](#) team held a sheltering exercise at [Stockton University](#). Working in coordination with university leadership and public safety teams, the exercise allowed trained volunteers to participate and learn about shelter operations.

Over 100 participants took part in this exercise over the 2-day event.



Staff from NJ Human Services' [Office of Emergency Management](#) in coordination with the [American Red Cross](#), held their annual NJ Mass Care Coordination

Meeting. Over 50 representatives from different state agencies and non-governmental organizations were on hand to discuss Mass Care operations and activities.



NJ Human Services' [Office of Emergency Management and the Disaster and Terrorism Branch](#) held a [Pathways to Preparedness](#) Train the Trainer at Ocean County College for 25 attendees from around the state. These participants will be able to deliver the Pathways to Preparedness training to their various jurisdiction to promote disaster preparedness for the disabilities, access and functional needs community.



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services
Kaylee McGuire, Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried and policy advisor

Jack Teters toured [Inspira Health's Autism Diagnostic Center](#) and spoke with two behavioral health therapists specializing in autism.

They were joined by [New Jersey Department of Health](#) Deputy Commissioner for Public Health Services Kelly Anderson-Thomas and Inspira Health leadership, including President and CEO Amy Mansue, Executive Vice President and COO Warren E. Moore, Senior Vice President of External Affairs and Chief Philanthropy Officer Robin Walton, and Senior Vice President of Operations Strategy & Transformation April Venable.

The center provides diagnostic services for children ages 4 and up, as well as adolescents and adults. These services include autism testing, social assessments and social skill development.

For more information visit [HERE](#).



WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY 2024



Sarah Adelman
Commissioner



Valerie Mielke
Deputy Commissioner
of Health Services



Kaylee McGuire
Deputy Commissioner
for Aging and
Disability Services



Johanna Calle
Director
Office of
New Americans



Dr. Bernice Davis
Executive Director
Commission for the Blind
and Visually Impaired



Elizabeth Hill
Executive Director
Division of the Deaf
and
Hard of Hearing



Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner
Division of
Family Development



Renee Burawski
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Mental Health
and Addiction Services



Denise Meckel
Assistant Commissioner
Human Resources



Peri Nearon
Executive Director
Division of
Disability Services



Deborah Robinson
Director
Office of Program Integrity
and Accountability



Louise Rush
Assistant Commissioner
Division of
Aging Services

On Women's Equality Day on August 26 we honored and celebrated NJ Human Services women leaders working to ensure women have health and child care, child support, food assistance and more. Visit:

njfamilycare.org

childcarenj.gov

njchildsupport.org

njhelps.org

nj.gov/connectingnj

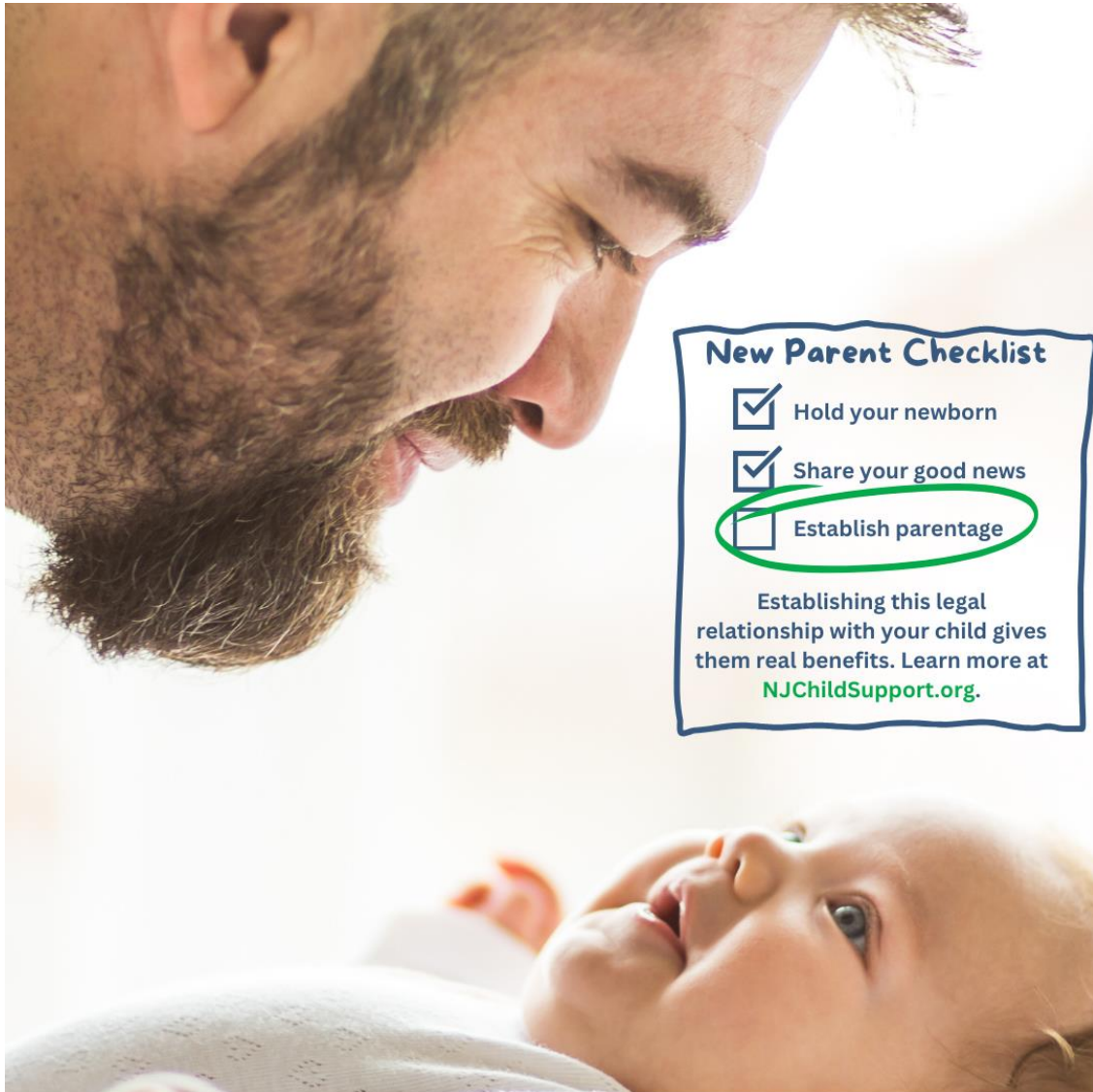


Senior Citizens Day was August 21st.

NJSave is an online application to help older adults and individuals with disabilities save money on Medicare premiums,

prescription costs, and other living expenses.

To apply today, visit [HERE](#).



August is Child Support Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about critical income support that helps millions of children and families. This support

helps families thrive and sets children up to succeed.
Visit NJChildSupport.org to learn more about NJ's program.

[NJ SNAP](#) | [NJ FAMILYCARE](#) | [NJHELPS](#)

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