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NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2025



New Jersey To Apply For Critical Rural Health Funding, Seeks Stakeholder Input by October 7

New Jersey will soon apply for new federal funding to support rural health care, and the state is asking residents, health care facilities, community-based organizations, and other health sector partners to help inform the proposal.

New Jersey Human Services and the Departments of Health are inviting stakeholders to share their input on the state's application for the new [Rural](#)

[Health Transformation Program](#) (RHT Program), a one-time \$50 billion fund to invest in rural health nationwide over five years.

“As New Jersey faces unprecedented disruptions to healthcare coverage and funding, it is critical we act to protect access to affordable, high quality health care in our communities,” **Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman** said. “The Rural Health Transformation Program offers New Jersey an opportunity to strengthen our healthcare ecosystem, facilitate collaborative partnerships, and invest in technological advances that support the health of New Jersey’s residents.”

“It’s critical that New Jersey put forward its best application so we can adapt to federal changes and drive investment in innovative care models for rural health,” **Acting Health Commissioner Jeff Brown** said. “To do that, we need to hear from stakeholders across the State so we’re ready to use any funds awarded through the RHT Program to maximum effect. That’s how we strengthen health care access for rural New Jerseyans.”

New Jersey Human Services and the Department of Health, which are co-leading the submission of New Jersey’s application, are asking community stakeholders to provide input into New Jersey’s RHT Program application. The feedback provided will be used to help identify priorities, gaps, potential collaborators, and opportunities for improvement. The request for a submission of input is not a funding application and does not guarantee funding.

Read more [HERE](#).



**Nearly \$142 Million in Opioid Settlement Funds
Will Expand Harm Reduction, Support Families and
Boost Efforts to Combat Opioid Crisis**

Demonstrating New Jersey's continued commitment to stemming the opioid epidemic and supporting communities across the state, Governor Phil Murphy in September announced nearly \$142 million in opioid settlement funds will be invested to dramatically expand harm reduction services, launch a new wave of community-based support initiatives for families, and support ongoing efforts to address the opioid crisis, including recovery and overdose prevention services that meet people where they are and promote long-term recovery.

The new allocations builds on New Jersey's comprehensive strategy to save lives and promote recovery for those affected by addiction. Funding will support:

- \$118.7 million over five and a half years for the continuation and expansion of Harm Reduction Centers, and
- \$12 million over three years in direct grants to family and community support organizations.
- \$4.3 million to provide access to community-based substance use treatment.
- \$3.5 million over 2.5 years to continue the Recovery Management Checkup program.
- \$2 million to continue deploying peer recovery specialists in residential treatment agencies.
- \$1.05 million to extend the Maternal Wraparound Program, which provides intensive case management and recovery support services to pregnant women with substance use disorders during pregnancy and for up to one year postpartum.

“We are infusing critical, life-saving resources into our communities most affected by the opioid crisis,” **Governor Murphy said**. “This funding strengthens our ability to meet New Jerseyans where they are, at every stage of their recovery journey. Over the course of my Administration, we have pursued a whole-of-government approach to reducing the devastating impacts of the opioid crisis, with a focus on empowering community-based resources to save lives, support sustained recovery, and uplift those struggling with substance addictions.”

“These programs are vital for helping people build stability and sustain long-term recovery,” said **Commissioner Sarah Adelman, who chairs the [New Jersey Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council](#)**. “This funding represents hope and healing, and I am grateful that we can assist people in need to build a stronger path towards recovery.”

Noting the harm reduction and family support services, **Commissioner Adelman added**, “Often, the loved ones of individuals struggling with addiction are left to cope in silence, navigating uncertainty and stigma with little support.

This funding sustains investments in evidence-based harm reduction and recognizes the vital role families play not only in healing but in prevention and recovery. We are making a deliberate investment in the organizations that provide a lifeline: support groups, counseling, peer networks, and grief services. These community-rooted efforts are the backbone of long-term recovery and the heart of our response to this epidemic.”

The announcements came on the heels of International Overdose Awareness Day, which is observed on August 31 to honor those lost and amplify efforts to end overdose, with September also annually observed as National Recovery Month, and the [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#)’ annual Opioid Summit, which was held on Sept. 17.

Read more [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

988

SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

Progress and Promise: Suicide Prevention's Next Chapter

Richard McKeon Ph.D.
Senior Advisor, SAMHSA 988 and Behavioral Health Crisis Office

Dr. Richard McKeon

ASL Interpreter- Kimberly



From Silence to Skill:
A Decade of Suicide Prevention
Lived Experience Leadership

September 10, 2025 – Dr. Ursula Whiteside
New Jersey State Suicide Prevention Conference

General Grief Process After Suicide:

- Traumatic loss: initial shock/numbness
- Hopelessness
- Depression
- Despair, suicidal ideation (normative, but assess!)
- Guilt, regardless of whether justified, anger, shame
- Existential questions (assumptions shattered)
- PTSD symptoms: intrusive thoughts, hypervigilance, dissociative responses, avoidance of triggers

Nicole ASL Inter...

Suicidal Behavior in the US

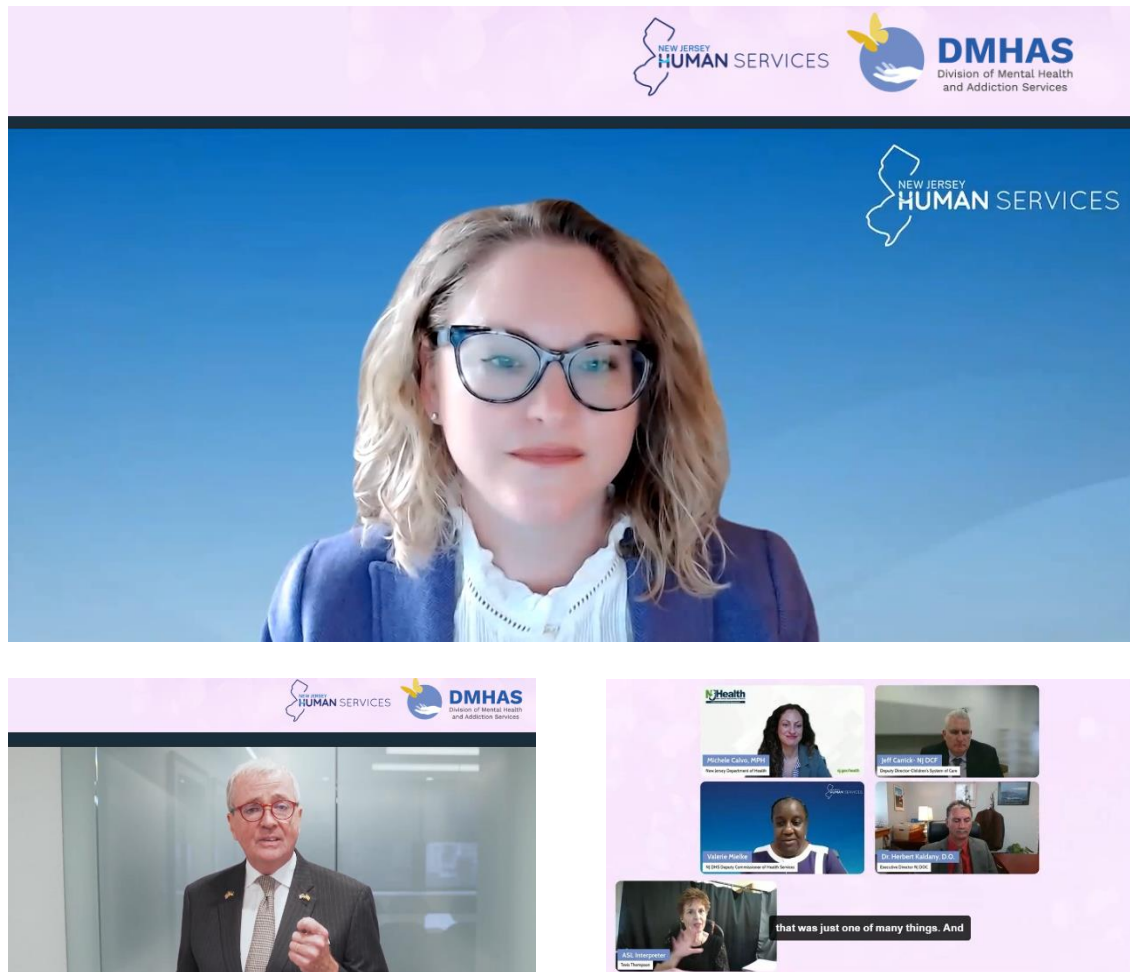
- In 2022, 1 person died by suicide every 10.7 minutes.
- In 2022, an estimated 13.7 million American adults seriously thought about suicide, 3.8 million made plans for suicide, and 1.6 million attempted suicide.
- For each death by suicide, it is estimated that 125 are exposed to those the person has harmed.
- For many people, the ability to understand the factors that led to suicide is weak. There are 100 others who are already suicidal, but do not make it through.

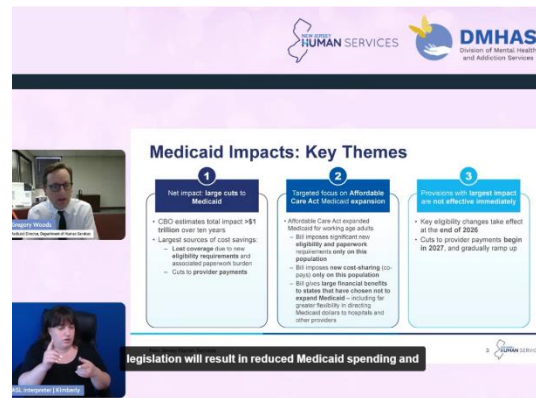
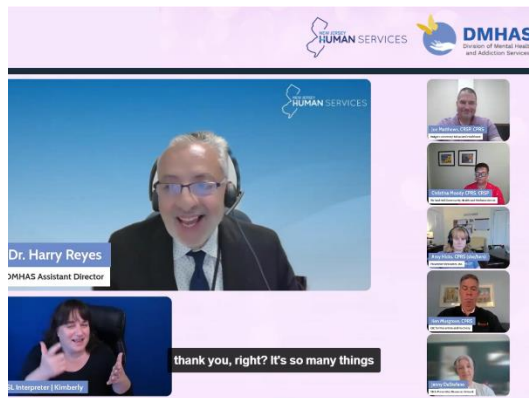
Dr. Richard McKeon

ASL Interpreter- Kimberly

New Jersey Human Services, the [New Jersey Department of Health](#) and the [New Jersey Department of Children and Families](#) held the **10th Annual Virtual Suicide Prevention Conference**. This year's topic was "Building on 10 Years of Progress and Hope." The conference, featured speakers from multiple state departments and mental health organizations, breakout

sessions and panel discussions that promote access of mental health treatment services and suicide prevention.





Governor Murphy joined Commissioner Sarah Adelman, Deputy Commissioner Valerie Mielke and Medicaid Assistant Commissioner Gregory Woods for [NJ Human Services' Annual Virtual Opioid Summit](#). This year's theme: **'NJ's Resilience: Improving Lives and Making Strides'**. The summit was an all-day conference featuring panels, workshops and keynote speakers.



Commissioner Sarah Adelman shared the progress made by NJ Human Services under her leadership during the opening plenary session of the [National Academy for State Health Policy annual conference](#). Hundreds of state and national public health and health policy professionals heard about New Jersey's commitment to enhancing care for individuals with complex needs, efforts to reduce suicide rates, and initiatives expanding access to care.

New Jersey was well represented at the event by Commissioner Adelman, Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire, former Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira, former Deputy Commissioner and current [Maternal & Infant Health Innovation Authority](#) CEO Lisa Asare, and Deputy Director of Medicaid Policy Shin-Yi Lin, among other attendees.



Commissioner Adelman moderated an all-star conversation on the importance of investing in women's health at the [HINJ HERHealth](#) Conference. Topics ranged from research and AI to access to coverage. Panelists included [Assembly Health Chair Carol Murphy](#), Dr. Rafael Chaves from [Organon](#), Dr. Deidre Washington from [AdvaMed](#), and Dr. Leighann Forbes from [Johnson & Johnson](#).



Commissioner Sarah Adelman shared her thoughts with the [New Jersey Primary Care Association](#) on how New Jersey Human Services and federally qualified health centers have grown their strong partnership to serve New Jerseyans. She was joined by [NJ Department of Health](#) Acting Commissioner Jeff Brown at the Association's annual conference.



Assistant Commissioner [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#)
Jonathan Seifried and Assistant Division Director Wendy Yosco
attended a **Direct Support Professional Recognition Week**
event at the [Arc of Hunterdon](#).

Session Two: Right to Adequate Food Panel

 Dr. Chanelle Adams-Griffin (Moderator) Administrator, Hudson County Office of Food and Health Equity Services	 Assemblywoman Shama A. Haider Deputy Majority Leader/Deputy Conference Leader; Deputy Commissioner	 Michael Wilson NJ Department of Human Services
 Angela Brown Executive Director, Loving Our Cities	 Jasmine Moreano Director of Community Engagement, Loving Our Cities	 Karyn Moskowitz Founder & Executive Director, New Roots

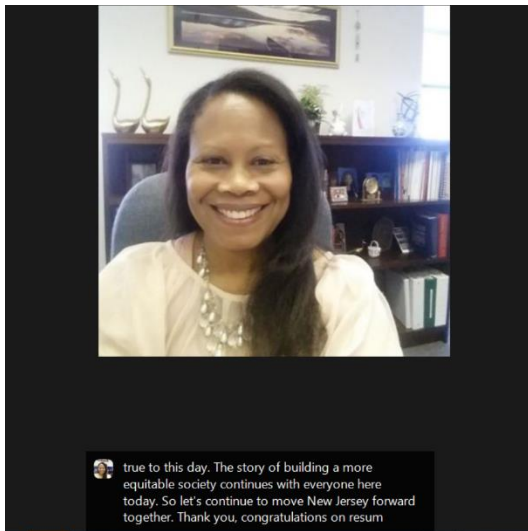
Garden State Conference on Food Security



Deputy Commissioner for Social Services Michael J Wilson participated in the [2nd Annual Garden State Conference on Food Security](#): **Setting a Table for All, for Always**, presented by the [New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate](#) (OFSA). He joined the discussion on the Right to Adequate Food Panel.



legislature to become the first. State in the nation. To use state dollars. For a, what is traditionally a fully federally funded program. To continue providing a monthly minimum benefit of



New Jersey Human Services Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire, [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) Executive Director Dr. Bernice Davis and Assistant Commissioner Director Dr. Charles Pat McKenna were honored to join the [New Jersey Council of the Blind](#) this weekend as they brought back their state convention after more than 15 years.

Human Services' Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired's programs and services are designed to enable consumers to achieve full inclusion and integration in society through success in employment, independent living, and social self-sufficiency. Learn more [HERE](#).



Congratulations to [NJ Human Services Police](#) Captain Justin Kurczeski who successfully completed the nationally accredited Certified Public Manager program.



The [Division of Disability Services](#) hosted an art sale featuring artwork created and sold by individuals who receive supports from the [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#).

Art for sale included paintings, t-shirts, ceramic bowls and more.

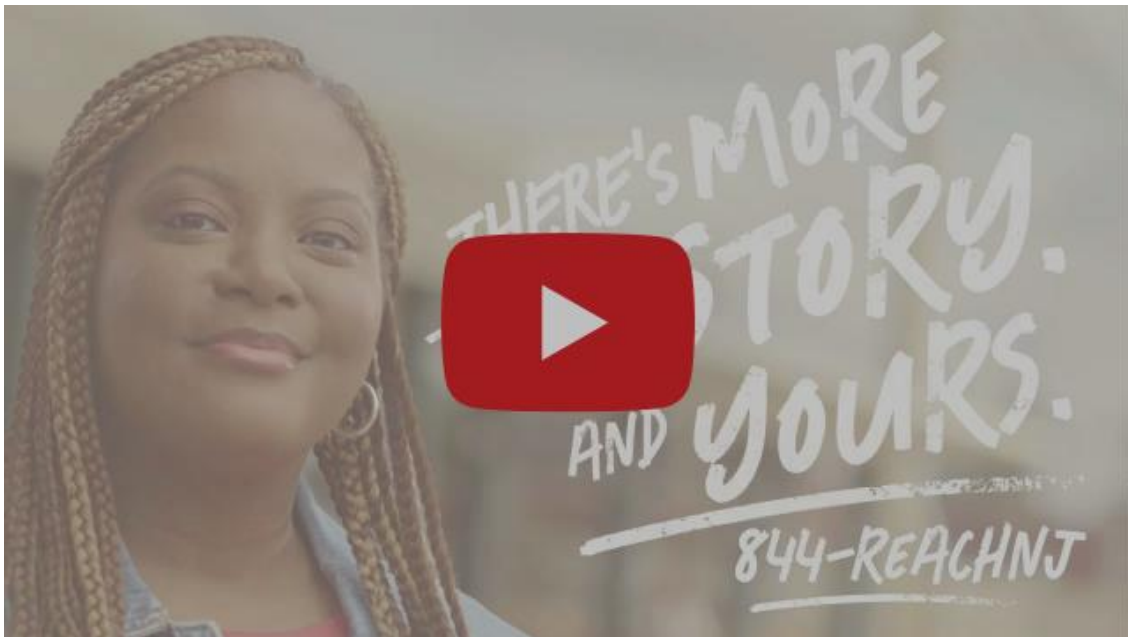


The [Division of Aging Services](#) staffed a resource table at the [Cherry Hill Senior Festival](#). Visit [HERE](#) to learn about New Jersey's services for older adults.



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire helped kickoff the [Getting Older in New Jersey \(GO-NJ\) Project ECHO series](#), facilitated by [Rutgers Health](#) in partnership with our Division of Aging Services. Providers from

health care, social services, residential care, and other sectors will connect over 10 sessions to better understand [Adult Protective Services](#), mandatory reporting requirements, and providing dignified and inclusive care in complex situations.



**Call 844-ReachNJ. 24/7 judgment-free addiction helpline.
Here's to new beginnings.**



Their life is in your hands. Visit StopOverdoses.NJ.gov.



Governor's Proclamations

Suicide Prevention Week

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week

National Recovery Month



National Addiction Professional Day

Falls Prevention Awareness Week



September highlights both
988 Day and **World Suicide
Prevention Day.**

A time to show up, speak up
and support those who may be
struggling.

Know the three numbers: 988.
Compassionate help. Anytime.
Anywhere.

For more information, visit [HERE](#).



September was
National Recovery Month.

A time to educate people about
substance use disorders and
celebrate the gains made by those in
recovery. If you or someone you
know is struggling with addiction,
help is available!

Call ☎ 844-ReachNJ

Log on ➡ ReachNJ.gov

September was **National Preparedness Month**. NJ residents with disabilities or special needs should sign on to Register Ready to make sure responders can serve them in an emergency.

For more info, visit [HERE](#).



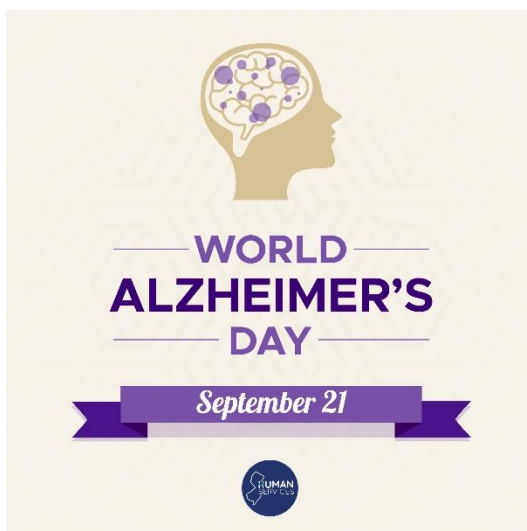
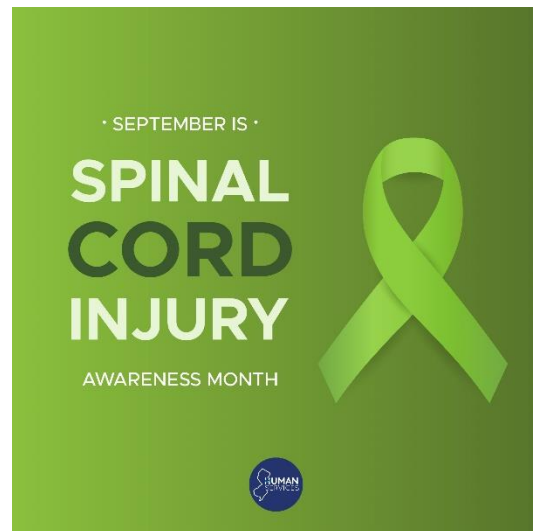
September 8-12th was **National Disability Voter Registration Week**, which aims to increase voter registration among individuals with disabilities to make sure their voices are heard.

To register to vote in New Jersey, please visit [HERE](#).

September was **Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month.**

The Personal Assistance Service Program (PASP) through the [Division of Disability Services](#), supports individuals with physical disabilities so that they can remain active in their community after injury.

Contact a DDS Community Resource Specialist at 1-888-285-3036 for assistance navigating State and County Services available to individuals with disabilities or visit our webpage [HERE](#).



September 21st was **World Alzheimer's Awareness Day.**

NJ Human Services Alzheimer's Adult Day Services Program offers assistance, based on the person's income, toward attending one of the participating day services centers.

For more information and to check eligibility, visit [HERE](#).

September was
Deaf Awareness Month.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and looking for services, DDHH is here to help. Get linked to these services:

**Sign Language Interpreter
Hearing Aid Programs
Emotional Support and more**

Check out more information on resources [HERE](#).

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

Are You Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Need Services?

-  **Mental Health Videophone Helpline:**
Call 973-870-0677
-  **Healthcare Resources:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/education/healthcare/
-  **Information Regarding Sign Language Interpreters or Real-Time Captioning:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/caption/
-  **Equipment Distribution Program:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/edp/
-  **Hearing Aid Programs:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/hearingaid/
-  **Language Instruction Services, Ages 0-5:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/education/dst/
-  **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sensitivity Training:**
Visit nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/education/dst/

For more information about our services, call 609-588-2648, 609-503-4862 vp, or email ddhh.communications2@dhs.nj.gov

 State of New Jersey
Phil Murphy, Governor | Tobiaso L. Way, Lt. Governor

 Department of Human Services
Sarah Addelman, Commissioner

 DDHH



September 23rd was **International
Day of Sign Languages!**

Early access to sign language and services is vital to the growth and development of a deaf individual. DDHH offers language acquisition services through an ASL Deaf Language Associate.

More on this program [HERE](#).

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

FOLLOW US!

