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A Message from Acting Commissioner Adelman

Greetings,

In 2021, NJ Human Services programs served one in three New Jersey children and nearly one in four New Jersey adults.

Our programs have supported New Jersey's older residents; individuals and families with low and moderate incomes; people with developmental disabilities and late-onset disabilities; people who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind; immigrants and refugees; families seeking healthcare, child support, and assistance affording child care; those at risk of homelessness; individuals with substance use and mental health conditions; and families facing catastrophic medical expenses for their children.

It's work we could not accomplish without the support of the many advocates, providers and community organizations across our state. Thank you. We deeply appreciate your partnership and the extraordinary perseverance of those providing care and services in the community and on the frontline as the pandemic has persisted.

I look forward with hope to an even brighter 2022. Together, once again, we will move New Jersey forward as a stronger, fairer and more inclusive place to live, work, study, and raise a family.

My warmest wishes to you and your families this holiday season,

Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman

2021 Human Services Budget Listening Session



Governor Murphy, Human Services & Military and Veterans Affairs Announce Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and Their Families



Get help now.

NJ Hopeline is a statewide suicide prevention hotline, staffed around the clock by live, trained, NJ-based counselors. All calls are confidential.

You're not alone. We are here to help.

CALL 24/7 | **1-855-NJ-HOPELINE**
1-855-654-6735



Governor Phil Murphy, Acting Commissioner Adelman and Brigadier General Dr. Lisa Hou, the Adjutant General of New Jersey and Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, on Veterans Day announced the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families.

The initiative will bring together state and federal agencies to combat suicide among members of the military and their families. This work will build on existing suicide prevention efforts across the state and assist with further implementation of best policies and practices using a comprehensive public health approach.

"New Jersey's veterans and service members are a source of immense pride for our state," Governor Murphy said. "This initiative recognizes the struggles that many of our bravest men and women face and will engage all aspects of government in meeting the challenge of preventing and reducing suicides."

"Together with 34 other states, New Jersey is engaging at the local, county, and state level to implement best, and evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce suicide among Garden State heroes and their families," Adjutant General and Commissioner Brigadier General Hou said. "Purposefully, our effort will advance the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide by enhancing and aligning local and statewide suicide prevention efforts."

"Suicide is a significant public health concern among veterans and service members. Through these partnerships, and by enacting suicide prevention policies and best practices, we can help save the lives of men and women who have given so much to protect ours," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "I urge anyone needing help to call our 24/7 suicide prevention [help line](tel:1-855-654-6735) at 1-855-654-6735. No matter what you're going through or feeling, you are not alone. We are here to listen."

This initiative establishes a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Department of Human Services, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Substance

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration with the goal of preventing suicide among New Jersey's veterans.

The objectives of the Challenge include:

- Convening a state interagency military and civilian team of leaders to develop an implementation plan to prevent suicide among veterans.
- Implementing promising, best, and evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce suicide.
- Engaging with city, county, and state stakeholders to enhance and align local and state-wide suicide prevention efforts.
- Increasing knowledge about the challenges and lessons learned in implementing best policies and practices by using state-to-state and community-to-community sharing.
- Defining and measuring success, including defining assignments, deadlines, and measurable outcomes to be reported.

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services Announces Expanded Opioid Addiction Treatment Hours Coming for Ocean & Union Counties



**LEARN ABOUT
MEDICATION THAT CAN
SUPPORT YOUR
ADDICTION RECOVERY.**

CALL 844-REACHNJ



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

The Department has awarded contracts to expand opioid treatment service hours in Ocean and Union counties, meaning six counties will now have expanded addiction treatment hours.

“Traditional service hours can be a barrier to treatment for individuals with opioid use disorder,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “That’s why we’re pleased to award contracts to further expand services to provide medication that can support recovery and to help individuals get ongoing care. The opioid crisis has tragically taken far too many lives, and this is yet another step in our continuous effort to make it easier for individuals to access care.”

The \$1.6 million program will be paid for through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) State Opioid Response grant funding. The program will be implemented in Ocean County by Ocean Monmouth Care and in Union County by Organization for Recovery, with services expected to start in February.

Human Services is focusing the expanded service hours on high-need areas, and earlier this year awarded contracts to establish similar programs in Atlantic, Gloucester, Hudson, and Mercer counties. Expanded services in those counties began in July.

The intention is to extend hours into the evening and admit new individuals into services during these times.

“These services create increased access to care by removing traditional barriers to engagement and ongoing treatment,” said Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who directs the [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) that will oversee the programs. “Our goal is always to make it easier to access to treatment. This bolsters that effort.”

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services Initiates Treatment and Case Management for Individuals with Dual Gambling and Substance Use Disorders

The Department has awarded contracts to begin providing treatment and case management for individuals with a dual disorder of gambling and substance use.

“The tragic impact of the opioid epidemic and other forms of substance use are too apparent, sadly,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “The World Health Organization added gaming disorders as an identifiable health disorder, and too often gambling and substance use go together. We want to help

rebuild – and save - lives by improving gambling counseling skills across New Jersey while also promoting the therapeutic approaches that can bring about positive outcomes.”

The initiative involves two aspects:

- A program to provide robust training and consultation services with the goal of full implementation of gambling counseling practices within agencies across New Jersey that offer substance use disorder services. The services will include needs assessment, training, ongoing consultation, workshops, supervised practice, learning communities, coaching and feedback.
- A gambling disorder clinician program to provide treatment and case management for individuals with a dual disorder of gambling and substance use. The program will also be open to individuals with a co-occurring mental health disorder. It will be provided by Rutgers University.

“Cognitive behavioral therapy and motivational interviewing are proven effective in treating gambling disorders and substance use disorders, and these will be very comprehensive programs,” Assistant Commissioner Mielke said. “The providers will also work with individuals to help with issues that can often occur with gambling disorders, such as financial difficulties, broken relationships, legal issues and the need for social services.”

[Read more](#)

Human Services Works with AG's Office on Initiative to Pair Mental Health Professionals with Law Enforcement Officers

NJ Mental Health Cares

If you're concerned about your mental health or the mental health of someone you love, **NJ Mental Health Cares** can help. The **free helpline** offers telephone counseling, emotional support, information and assistance.

866-202-HELP (4357) • TEXT NJHOPE TO 51684
7 days per week, 8am - 8pm



A pilot program will pair a New Jersey State Police law enforcement Trooper with a certified mental health screener to respond together to 9-1-1 calls for behavioral health crises.

The initiative, known as ARRIVE Together (“Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence & Escalation”), will be operated out of State Police’s Cumberland County stations based in Bridgeton and Port Norris.

Across New Jersey, two out of every three uses of force by law enforcement involve a civilian identified as either suffering from mental illness or who is under the influence. Over half of all fatal police encounters occur in similar circumstances. The ARRIVE Together Initiative is a recognition that these numbers are unacceptable, and a step towards improving those outcomes.

“This is about saving lives, and rebuilding them,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “Improved outcomes between law enforcement and those dealing with a mental health crisis is a shared goal. By using a certified mental health screener to help assess situations, we can get an improved understanding of how to better avoid tragedies, enabling us to connect people with treatment. I thank the Attorney General’s Office for taking this step, and look forward to seeing the results of this pilot program.”

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services Continues Food Assistance Efforts



Human Services [sought and received federal approval](#) to provide Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits earlier this month to residents without [SNAP](#) in more than 50 municipalities affected by Tropical Storm Ida.

Under the program, which ran from Nov. 15 to 19, individuals and families who lived in municipalities eligible for disaster food assistance who were not enrolled in [SNAP](#) were able to apply for special disaster food benefits.

Eligible households received a one-month food assistance benefit on an [Electronic Benefits Transfer \(EBT\)](#) card to purchase grocery food items. Eligible individuals applied at their local Board of Social Services.

"Disaster-related expenses can be devastating for families already struggling financially," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "We were glad our request for additional federal assistance was approved, and we could make this supplemental food benefit available to individuals and families who do not receive SNAP benefits to ensure they could afford to buy healthy foods during this challenging time."

"This help relieved some of the financial pressure on individuals and families in hard-hit communities who are still recovering from the storm," Deputy Commissioner Neira said. "We encouraged residents who live in these communities to check their eligibility and take advantage of this special assistance."

This was the latest effort by Human Services to assist low-income residents living in areas impacted by Tropical Storm Ida. In September, the Department sought and received federal approval to provide D-SNAP benefits to [SNAP](#) recipients in counties with disaster designations to ensure they would have access to hot meals.

Human Services also delivered \$80 million in emergency allotments in November to 452,000 households and \$81 million in December to 457,000 households. Human Services has been providing [SNAP](#) households with these maximum benefits since the pandemic began in March 2020 and has now

distributed about \$1.26 billion in supplemental monthly [SNAP](#) payments.

Acting Commissioner Adelman Talks to the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute



Acting Commissioner Adelman talked to the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute for its Take Five newsletter, discussing a range of topics.

"At Human Services, we've been focused on building a strong and person-centered home and community-based care system for a long time and well before the pandemic," Acting Commissioner Adelman said.

Read the interview [here](#).

Appreciation for Family Caregivers



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the season of Thanksgiving offers many opportunities for New Jerseyans to express their respect and appreciation to family members who have cared for and supported them throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the dedicated work of family caregivers – individuals who have provided support to loved ones who have disabilities, are chronically ill or elderly and have received no compensation for their efforts; and

WHEREAS, there are roughly 53 million family and informal caregivers in the United States according to a survey by the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, with over 1.75 million in New Jersey alone; and

WHEREAS, family caregivers assist in preventing and delaying costly institutional care for people with disabilities, the aging, chronically ill and mentally ill in our State and have increased the quality of life for these residents; and

WHEREAS, caring for a person with a disability, someone who is chronically ill or an older family member at home can be an enormously strenuous and stressful undertaking for both the caregiver and the family member receiving the care; and

WHEREAS, our communities must be made aware of the commitment of New Jersey's caregivers, so that they receive the tools and services they need to continue providing exemplary care to our most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Caregiver Task Force will soon complete its one-year mission to evaluate and provide recommendations on caregiver support services.

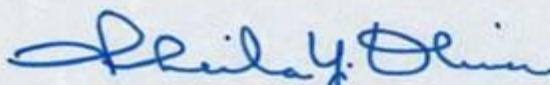
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

NOVEMBER 2021 AS FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under the hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-ninth day of October in the year two thousand twenty-one, the two hundred forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States.

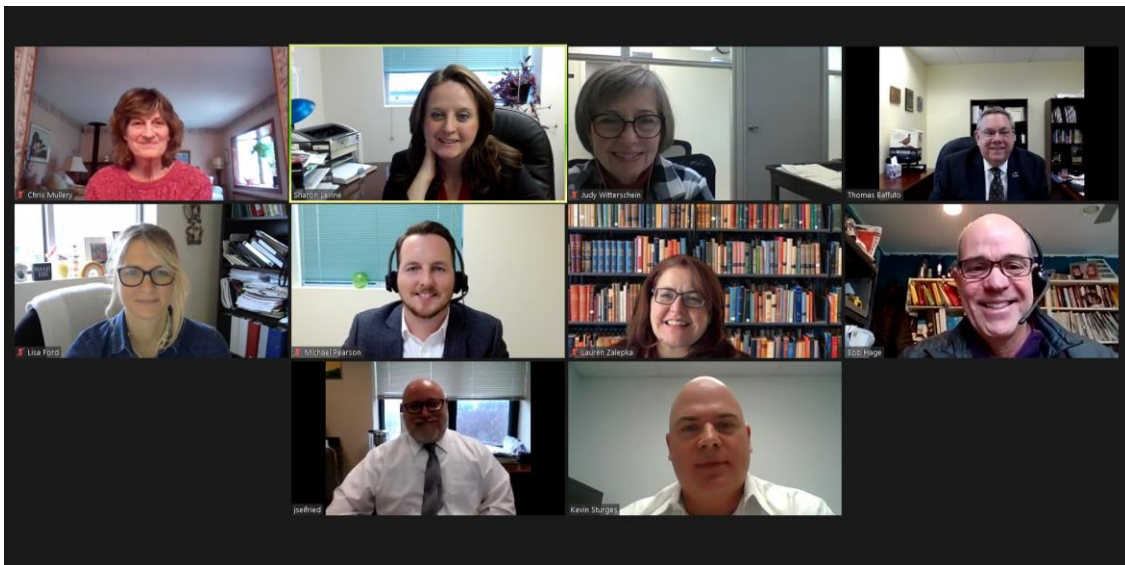

Lt. GOVERNOR


GOVERNOR

Governor Murphy declared November as Family Caregivers Month, a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across New Jersey and draw attention to the many challenges facing family caregivers. Human Services also marked National Caregiver Appreciation Day on Nov. 13.

For helpful caregiver resources, visit the ADRC website [here](#).

Also, the New Jersey Statewide Respite Care Program gives a short-term or periodic break to caregivers from the demands of daily care. Visit [here](#) for more information.



Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried (bottom row left) [joined](#) The Arc of New Jersey to thank caregivers for all their hard work and dedication on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Promoting NJ Human Services Programs to Municipal Officials





Acting Commissioner Adelman and Deputy Commissioner Neira spoke to municipal officials from across New Jersey on Nov. 16 during the New Jersey State League of Municipalities' annual conference in Atlantic City, detailing the Department's critical social services and healthcare supports, including child care, health insurance, addiction and mental health care, food assistance, and more.

2021 Community Partner Award



Congratulations to Assistant Commissioner Seifried (center), who was presented the 2021 Community Partner Award at Arc Mercer's Galathon on November 19, recognizing his hard work on behalf of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

Statewide Respite Care Program

Statewide Respite Care Program

Provides respite care services to relieve caregivers of stress from providing daily care. This respite may be provided for a short time, or once in a while. Services can include adult day care, home care, companion services, campership, or a short stay in a facility.

For more information, call the Aging and Disability Resource Connection at **1-877-222-3737**



The New Jersey Statewide Respite Care Program gives a short-term or periodic break to family or other caregivers from the demands of daily care for functionally impaired persons, including frail older adults.

This respite may be provided for a short time, or once in a while. For example, services could be provided to:

- Allow the caregiver to take a vacation
- Cover care when a caregiver needs surgery or has an emergency
- Give the caregiver time to take care of him/herself, run errands, etc.

Every county has a Statewide Respite Care Program. To reach the Statewide Respite Care program in your county, please call the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) toll free at 1-877-222-3737.

Grow NJ Kids

Quality Child Care Creates Connections

Start your search
at GrowNJKids.gov



Grow NJ Kids seeks to raise the quality of child care and early learning throughout New Jersey.

Grow NJ Kids gives child care and early learning programs resources to assess and improve their programs, while providing parents with information that allows them to evaluate the quality of programs and make the best choices for their child.

Visit [here](#) to learn more.

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