



NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



NJ HUMAN SERVICES | June 3, 2022

Human Services Awards \$1.5 Million in Additional Grants to Create Inclusive Healthy Communities



Human Services has awarded an additional 12 grants to help communities across the state implement inclusive initiatives that support individuals with disabilities in the communities in which they live, work, learn and play.

“These awards bolster ongoing efforts to ensure individuals with disabilities thrive in the places in which they live,” Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. “Creating spaces that are accessible for all is key to creating a stronger, fairer and more inclusive New Jersey. The Department looks forward to continuing to create sustainable change that will impact generations to come.”

“From collaborating to address the health care needs of residents with disabilities to strengthening ongoing efforts to improve the sexual and reproductive health of women with IDD, well-rounded change will be embedded into New Jersey’s policies, systems and environment through these projects. We look forward to seeing the long-lasting impact this will have in our communities,” Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said.

“Creating spaces that are accessible for all should be the standard for communities across the U.S, and these additional awards will help establish this in our great state,” Division of Disability Services Executive Director Peri L. Nearon said. “Creating accessible environments ensures that individuals with disabilities achieve better health outcomes and experience equal opportunity in leading a healthy and fulfilling life.”

[Read more](#)

Governor Murphy & Human Services Commissioner Adelman Announce \$10 Million in New Grants to Support Summer Youth Camps



As part of the Murphy Administration's ongoing efforts to bolster [services](#) for families with children, Governor Phil Murphy and Commissioner Adelman recently announced that \$10 million in grants will be available for summer youth camps to help cover operational expenses and provide financial assistance to eligible families.

"This funding represents my administration's continued commitment to supporting New Jersey families by strengthening the services they rely upon," Governor Murphy said. "Summer youth camps serve as an essential child care option for working parents by providing a safe and enriching environment for children while school is out of session. Supporting these providers and making these services more affordable will benefit many families in the coming months."

"Summer camp is not just a tradition but a necessity for many working families," Commissioner Adelman said. "We are glad we can make these grants available again for the second Summer season to help these providers with operational expenses, and assist more families in affording this care over the summer months."

Summer Camp grants range from \$7,500 to \$25,000, depending on camp enrollment and the length of the camp operating season. Half of the grant must be used to provide financial assistance to families not eligible for child care assistance and the other half must be used to pay for operational expenses such as staff wages, rent, utilities, facilities maintenance, equipment and supplies.

Providers can apply through the [New Jersey Child Care Information System](#).

Since January, the Department has also approved \$210 million in American Rescue Plan-funded stabilization grants to help child care providers pay for operational expenses, and has so far delivered \$33 million in \$1,000 hiring and retention bonus payments to 33,000 child care workers.

The Murphy Administration launched the hiring and retention bonus grant program in an effort to recruit new child care workers and retain staff. The bonuses are partly funded from the Child Care Revitalization Fund approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Murphy last year. A new round of bonuses will be available later this year.

The Department has also shifted to paying child care providers based on enrollment rather than attendance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The enrollment-based payment policy was set to end on June 30; however, the Department has identified additional discretionary funds to extend it through August 2022.

"We know the pandemic created financial challenges for child care providers that they continue to recover from. We're glad these providers can benefit from these funds, and that the new grants will continue this trajectory of assistance for parents and providers, as we approach the summer camp season," Deputy Commissioner Neira said.

The ARP stabilization grants range from \$30,000 to \$120,000 for licensed child care centers, depending on license capacity, provider type and monthly expenses. Registered family child care providers are eligible for \$4,000 in grants. The application period for the stabilization grants closed at the end of April, but will reopen again this summer for anyone who missed the deadline or is a new provider.

“By supporting these providers, we are supporting parents who rely on their services,” said Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who directs the [Division of Family Development](#). “We encourage summer camp programs to apply for these grants, and also urge residents interested in learning more about the state’s child care assistance program to visit [childcare.nj.gov](#).”

[Read more](#)

Human Services Announces New Help Line for Caregivers of Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



Support for caregivers of adult individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Callers receive support from a parent of an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities – someone whose understanding comes from similar experiences.

Call 1-833-NJ-ADULT (1-833-652-3858)
8:30am-8pm | Daily

Just before Mother’s Day, Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced a new help line is available to support caregivers of adult individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In partnership with [Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care](#), help and support is available to caregivers of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities at 1-833-NJ-ADULT (1-833-652-3858) daily from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. A messaging system monitors for caregiver crisis-level calls that may need an after-hours return call.

“Caring for a loved one with an intellectual or developmental disability is an incredible responsibility, and sometimes it presents challenges that can leave a caregiver feeling uncertain, frustrated or alone,” Commissioner Adelman said. “When an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities is transitioning to adulthood, navigating those changes can sometimes feel like starting over. Caregivers of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities should know they are not alone. We are excited to offer a place for parents to call to speak with other parents who have navigated the transition to adulthood with their own children and have shared similar worries and pressures.”

“Callers will receive support from a parent of an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities – someone whose understanding and knowledge comes from having gone through similar experiences,” said Human Services Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried, who leads the [Division of Developmental Disabilities \(DDD\)](#). “Please don’t hesitate to call. Help is available.”

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services Awards Additional Contracts to Help Providers Treat Individuals with Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder



The Department has awarded additional contracts to help mental health and substance use disorder programs provide medication that can support addiction recovery.

“Expanding access to medication-assisted treatment is key in Human Services’ commitment to end the opioid crisis in New Jersey and ultimately save lives,” Commissioner Adelman said. “Helping mental health and substance use disorder programs build capacity will mean more of our most vulnerable residents will have access to medication proven to be effective in helping overcome co-occurring substance use disorder. This ensures New Jerseyans can lead self-directed lives and experience recovery.”

The \$150,000 program will be supported through federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s State Opioid Response grant funding. Funds will be used to ensure providers develop the ability to prescribe and dispense substance use disorder medications buprenorphine, naloxone and naltrexone, methadone and acamprosate. This includes recruiting additional medical staff and purchasing medical equipment.

“Increasing access to treatment and reducing unmet treatment needs are pivotal in reducing opioid overdose related deaths and creating a New Jersey where all can have access to life-saving treatment. Recovery is always possible, and we are here to help those in need start this journey,” said Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who directs the [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) that will oversee the initiative.

The contracts were awarded to New Hope Integrated Behavioral Healthcare and Maryville Addiction Treatment Center. Each provider received a \$75,000 award. The contracts build on previous efforts to provide similar services. In March, Human Services awarded \$300,000 in contracts to Center for Family Services in Atlantic County and Oaks Integrated Care in Burlington, Camden and Mercer counties to develop the ability to prescribe buprenorphine, naloxone and naltrexone.

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services to Create Incentive Program to Help Individuals with Stimulant Use Disorder



The Department has awarded contracts to develop a new incentive program to help individuals with stimulant use disorder in treatment programs who struggle with substances such as cocaine, crack cocaine and methamphetamines.

The program is based on the principles of contingency management, which is a behavioral approach that has shown to be effective for substance use disorders that do not respond to other therapies or medication.

Under the \$2 million pilot program, five treatment providers were awarded the contracts to develop contingency management programs for stimulant use disorder. The programs will feature gift cards as an incentive for individuals who successfully engage in recovery-oriented, goal-based activities during 16 weeks of treatment. The program will be funded with SAMHSA grant money.

Goals are designed to be recovery oriented, and may include being able to provide stimulant-free urine samples and attending treatment sessions.

“The use of motivational incentives is a powerful intervention shown to improve engagement, increase abstinence and enhance overall recovery in substance abuse treatment,” Commissioner Adelman said. “It provides immediate positive reinforcement, and studies have shown it can lead to improved patient retention and outcomes. Stimulant use is rising, and illicit stimulants have evolved to be cheaper and more potent. Illicit stimulant use results in damage to the cardiovascular system and causes lung and brain disease, stroke, and death. We need to be innovative in how we approach this public health concern – and save lives.”

“Individuals with substance use disorder may mix use of stimulants, such as methamphetamine and cocaine, with opioids that are laced with fentanyl, which places them at high risk of overdoses,” Assistant Commissioner Mielke said. “However, many who only take stimulants may not know that these drugs can also contain fentanyl, and that their use can result in fatal overdoses. Treating addiction to stimulants is critical but also challenging. Unlike opioids, there is no FDA-approved medication available for stimulant use disorders, so we face clinical challenges. However, there are behavioral strategies that work when it comes to helping individuals reduce or discontinue stimulant use. As noted in the ONDCP report, this includes contingency management, as we’re trying here with this pilot program.”

[Read more](#)

NJ Human Services Expands Mental Health Early Intervention Programs to 10 More Counties

NJ Hopeline Suicide Prevention
1-855-654-6735

NJMentalHealthCares Helpline
1-866-202-HELP

ACCESS American Sign Language and Videophone Helpline
973-870-0677

HEAL NJ Healthcare Workers COVID Hope & Healing Helpline
1-833-416-8773

RISE NJ First Responders COVID Hope & Healing Helpline
1-833-237-4325

Assistance and Referrals to Addiction Treatment
1-844-ReachNJ

The Department recently awarded \$10 million in contracts to create early intervention mental health support services in Burlington, Cape May, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Passaic, Salem, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties. Human Services previously initiated early intervention support services (EISS) in the state’s other 11 counties, so expanding to these additional counties means all 21 counties will now be covered by this service.

“Now, more than ever, it’s critical for individuals to have access to timely mental health care in their communities,” Commissioner Adelman said. “Assessing and treating mental health needs early on allows for better outcomes and can reduce the use of more intensive interventions, just as we see for physical health conditions. Expanding EISS into a statewide resource will help make mental health care more accessible, responsive and equitable for all residents.”

“Too many people in our communities who struggle with mental illness feel they have nowhere to turn,” said Senator Vin Gopal (D-Monmouth). “These include our military veterans, and, more and more, our young people. Research has shown that early intervention support services, when made available, can be a life-saver for those who find themselves in crisis. I commend Commissioner Adelman and her department for seeing the mental health crisis for the scourge that it is, and for being proactive in extending this program and needed resources to more parts of the state.”

“The goal is for individuals participating in these programs to be less inclined to default to emergency room based services during future crisis episodes,” Assistant Commissioner Mielke said. “These programs will also help educate the local community regarding this treatment option and its availability. We all benefit when individuals with acute psychiatric symptoms get the early intervention supports they need.”

[Read more](#)

Budget Committee Testimony



Commissioner Adelman, Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira and Chief Financial Officer Brian Francz recently testified before the Assembly Budget Committee and the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee on Governor Murphy’s budget proposal for the fiscal year that starts July 1. See [here](#) for a rundown of the Governor’s proposals for Human Services.

Commissioner Adelman Highlights Importance of the Care Economy



Commissioner Adelman recently [spoke](#) to the NJ Business & Industry Association about the importance of the care economy, and [highlighted it](#) during testimony before the Assembly and Senate budget committees.

The Governor's budget includes about \$211.2 million in new state and federal funding to raise wages for child care workers, direct support professionals, home health aides and personal care assistants, private duty nurses, mental health and addiction professionals, certified nurse aides and other nursing home employees. Combined, this workforce represents more than 250,000 of New Jersey's hardest working individuals.

"We are so grateful for these workers," Commissioner Adelman said. "They are the backbone of our state's care economy and for five consecutive budgets we have funded wage increases that help workers get ahead and ensure our provider agencies can attract and retain a high quality workforce with competitive pay."

[Read more](#)

Remembering Joseph Ruffalo Jr.

We are deeply saddened by the news of the passing of Joseph Ruffalo, Jr. Joe was a fierce leader and advocate in the blind community who worked tirelessly to ensure full access and equity for people with disabilities. Joe was the former president of the National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey for 27 years, where he worked to promote positive attitudes about blindness and the abilities of blind people. Joe was a friend and mentor to many in the Department, having served as chairman of the board of trustees of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI). Joe also led separate programs sponsored by CBVI that taught older residents with vision loss the skills needed to remain active in the community and independent in their homes; and provided mentoring activities for blind teenagers and their families. His dedication, charisma and contagious energy earned him many accolades, as well as the admiration of all who had the privilege to interact and work with him. His legacy, passion, and commitment to ensure that all blind individuals have the opportunity to reach their full potential will continue to live on in our work. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, his friends and all those who knew and loved him. Joe, you will be sorely missed.



Joseph Ruffalo, Jr

- Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman



Mental Health Awareness Month



Last month we highlighted how Governor Murphy declared May to be Mental Health Awareness Month in New Jersey, but the issue and the work remains important every month. Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services oversees many programs and services that help people get the assistance they need. Visit [here](#) to learn more.

Emergency Preparedness



Human Services' Office of Emergency Management team joined the New Jersey Emergency Preparedness Association Conference at in Atlantic City. They provided valuable training & breakout sessions on topics relative to mass care & emergency assistance sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies and family reunification.

Annual Law and Disability Conference



The [Division of Disability Services](#), [Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) and the [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) were on hand for this year's Annual Law and Disability Conference hosted by the New Jersey State Bar Association and the [Community Health Law Project](#).

Abilities Expo 2022



Human Services was out in force at the 2022 Abilities Expo at the New Jersey Exposition and Convention Center in Edison. Included in the items distributed by Human Services was the most updated versions of New Jersey Resources: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Accepting the 2022 Solidarity Award



Commissioner Adelman accepted the 2022 Solidarity Award from [New Jersey Communities United](#) and its executive director, Trina Scordo, on behalf of Governor Murphy, who was honored for his commitment to child care for working class families and to the child care workforce. As the Commissioner [noted](#), Human

Services under the Murphy Administration has added more than \$1 billion to in new funding for child care to lower family costs and increase worker wages.

“And the work continues,” the Commissioner added.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for Licensed Providers of Services to Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



In accordance with P.L. 2021, [Chapter 292](#), Human Services has published an [Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for Licensed Providers of Services to Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(EPRP\)](#) on its [website](#).

This document is available to each unique Licensed Service Provider (LSP) to assist them in developing an [EPRP](#) that will address the specific needs, geographic area and population they serve. An LSP is any entity licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by DHS to provide services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

A webinar for impacted LSPs was held on June 2. The EPRP, webinar recording, and webinar slide deck can be found [here](#).

A Thank You to Our County Partners

Thank you!

As we continue to transition out of the public health emergency, the Department of Human Services thanks our dedicated and innovative partners in county boards of social services and local departments of human services who have continuously tackled new challenges while delivering essential services. You've met difficult times head on with perseverance and adaptability.

Through our shared commitment to serve others, we delivered services vital to the quality of life of New Jersey's residents.

Thank you.

SPOTLIGHTS ON PROGRAMS

Personal Assistance Service Program

Provides personal care assistance to self-directing adults, ages 18-70, who have a permanent physical disability and who are working, in school, in vocational training, or volunteering in the community.



FALLS ARE PREVENTABLE!

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling:



EXERCISE

Engage in regular physical activity, especially balance and strength-building activities.



HOME SAFETY

Most falls happen in the home! Identify and correct falling, slipping, or tripping hazards.



MEDICATION

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if medications you take, or alcohol consumption, increase your risk of falling.



VISION/HEARING

Have regular vision and hearing checks.



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