



## NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

NJ HUMAN SERVICES | October 2022

# Human Services Launches Redesigned Portal and Online Application for Food & Cash Assistance



The Department has launched a modernized benefits portal and online application for residents to apply for the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ([SNAP](#)) and Work First New Jersey ([WFNJ](#)) program and has expanded SNAP Navigators across the state.

Individuals can check their eligibility for food assistance, cash assistance and health care by visiting [NJHelps.gov](https://njhelps.gov). Those who choose to apply for SNAP and/or WFNJ will be redirected to the new application.

"No one should go hungry or without health care," Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. "At Human Services we want to make it as easy as possible to navigate our programs and access the services and benefits available for you and your family. This new modernized application is streamlined, easier to complete and is designed to work better for you. We have also expanded the number of SNAP Navigators available to assist individuals who would like help completing their applications. If you would benefit from food assistance, cash assistance or health care, please visit [NJHelps.gov](https://njhelps.gov) to check your eligibility and apply."

The new application is mobile friendly, making it more accessible and reachable. When applying for SNAP/WFNJ, individuals can upload required documents online through the new portal to confirm their eligibility and check the status of their application. A video tutorial in English and Spanish on how to apply can also be found online [here](#).

"We have been working to improve the online tools available for SNAP, and make it easier for applicants and enrollees to apply for and manage their SNAP benefits," Deputy Commissioner for Social Services Elisa Neira said. "This latest upgrade helps make applying simpler; but of course, if an applicant has questions or needs assistance, help is available."

"I encourage anyone in need of food or cash assistance to check their eligibility for SNAP and WFNJ at [NJHelps.gov](https://njhelps.gov). If you have no health coverage, you can also check your eligibility for health insurance," said Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who directs Human Services' [Division of Family Development](#).

[Read more](#)

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## Human Services Awards Contracts to Enhance Recovery Supports for College Students



Human Services has awarded more than \$1.1 million to college campuses to provide supportive, substance-free living environments and services that support students in recovery from substance use disorder and allows prevention from addiction.

"We understand the importance of providing a safe and supportive environment for addiction prevention and recovery, and this holds true for college students in all phases of recovery," Commissioner Adelman said. "These contracts will help ensure more students have the opportunity to complete their college education in an environment that values and supports recovery from addiction."

"Colleges and universities in New Jersey play a critical role in helping students who face substance abuse challenges to feel safe and included in their environments so they can focus on recovery and moving their lives forward," New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Brian K. Bridges said.

The contracts were awarded to the Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford; Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey in Piscataway; and Rutgers University Newark, with maximum awards of \$375,000.

"These contracts will help normalize a substance-free lifestyle in higher education institutions so that students in recovery and students who choose to live in a substance free environment have the tools to thrive in a college setting and reach their academic goals," Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Lisa Asare said.

Each awardee will be required to provide individual and group substance abuse recovery oriented programs and services; implement campus-wide environmental prevention strategies such as providing substance free activities for all dorm residents; provide assessment, academic, and relapse prevention services to students; and other appropriate services.

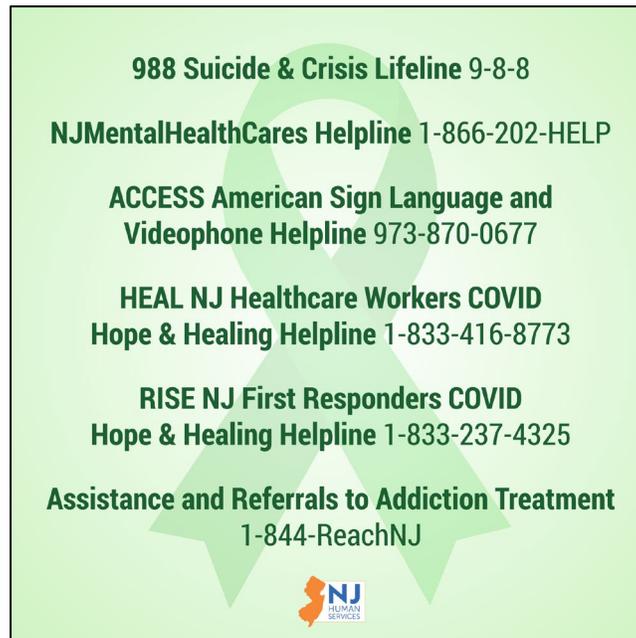
"For a young adult in recovery and their loved ones, it can be scary to enter a college environment where addictive substances can be readily available and potentially face adverse consequences," said Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who directs Human

Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services. "Recovery housing and programs ease these concerns as students complete their college education among a support network of like-minded peers that also value addiction recovery."

[Read more](#)

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## Human Services Launches Initiative to Train & Mentor Behavioral Health Practitioners in Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy



In an effort to strengthen mental health care and improve patient outcomes, Commissioner Adelman recently announced training and ongoing mentoring in recovery-oriented cognitive therapy (CT-R) will be available to behavioral health practitioners who serve people with serious mental illness and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders.

The Department has awarded \$500,000 to the Foundation for Cognitive Therapy and Research of Bala Cynwyd, Pa. to provide training and ongoing consultation and mentoring on the CT-R approach to New Jersey's behavioral health workforce.

CT-R is an evidence-based treatment approach that engages, builds trust, motivates and empowers individuals. The CT-R method is especially useful when working with individuals who have been non-responsive to traditional mental health and/or co-occurring treatment services.

"This initiative will help bolster the clinical skills of those professionals who work with individuals with serious mental illness who have complex behavioral health needs, who are not receiving treatment or who need additional supports to move towards their recovery," Commissioner Adelman said.

"CT-R can help foster hope and strengthen the relationship between a client and their practitioner, thus empowering individuals to pursue their personal goals," Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare said.

"Everyone deserves help, and CR-T has proven effective in helping people engaged in mental health treatment," Assistant Commissioner Mielke said.

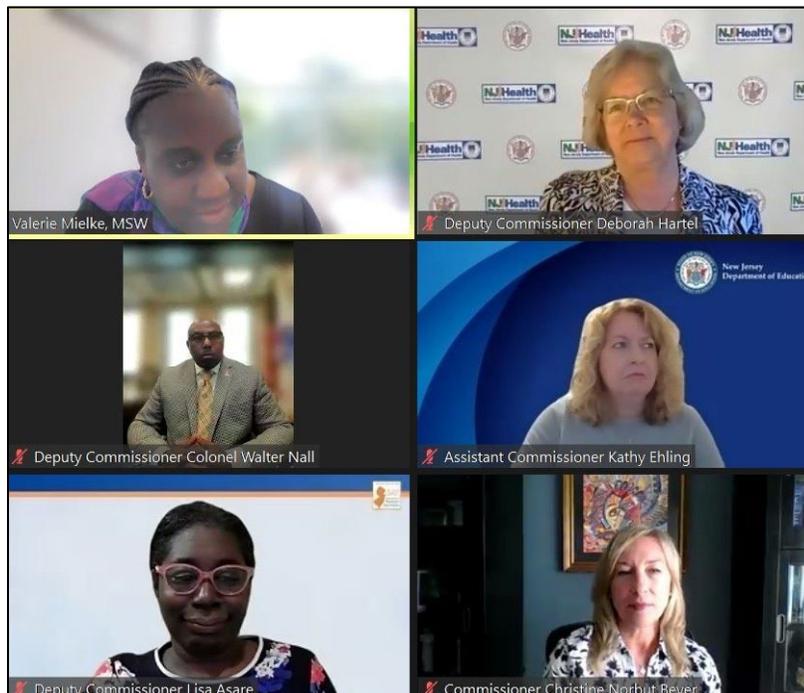
[Read more](#)

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# Suicide Prevention Conference: Connecting Communities to Save Lives



*Amy Kennedy and Commissioner Adelman*



*Assistant Commissioner Mielke leads a panel discussion featuring Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare and other key state officials.*

More than 1,000 people attended the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Service’s annual Suicide Prevention Conference. This year’s theme was “Connecting Communities to Save Lives.”

Held virtually this year, the Oct. 12 event featured a discussion between Commissioner Adelman and Amy Kennedy of [The Kennedy Forum](#) on the role of screening in suicide prevention, insurance coverage for suicide prevention measures, and best practices for community suicide prevention.

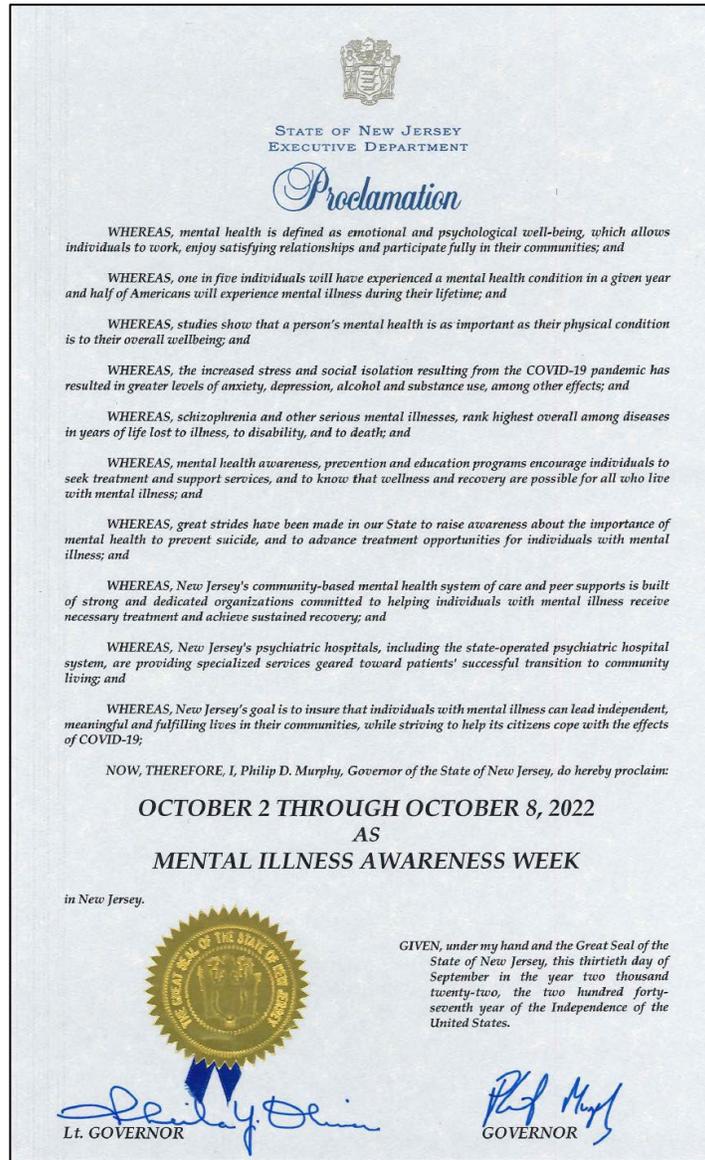
Assistant Commissioner Mielke also led a panel discussion of state department leaders on innovative ways to work together to address suicide prevention. The discussion featured Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare, Deputy Health Commissioner Deborah Hartel, Children and Families Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer, Assistant Education Commissioner Kathleen Ehling and Acting Veterans Affairs Commissioner Col. Water Nall.

The conference also featured a keynote address by Kevin Hines, who detailed his evidence-based story of a suicide attempt survived. Breakout sessions were also held on [988](#), [veterans suicide prevention](#), [gun violence](#), youth mental health, geriatric mental health and the impact of racial trauma on mental health.

Watch sessions [here](#).

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# Mental Illness Awareness Week & World Mental Health Day



Governor Murphy declared Oct. 2 through Oct. 8 as Mental Illness Awareness Week in New Jersey, and Oct. 10 was World Mental Health Day. Human Services offers several help lines for those seeking assistance.

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# Blindness Awareness Month



The [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) marked October's Blindness Awareness Month with an outreach fair at Cheesequake State Park. CBVI Executive Director Dr. Bernice Davis read a proclamation from Governor Murphy, information was provided by numerous providers on programs and services, and food trucks contributed to the festivities.



## Disability Employment Awareness Month



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire marked National Disability Employment Awareness Month by joining the [Paterson Council on the Disabled](#) at Riverside Veterans Community & Recreation Center to celebrate the many contributions of individuals with disabilities to workplaces and the economy.

Deputy Commissioner McGuire, middle, was joined by, left to right, Andrea Rosario-Mackie of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Paterson resident Cori Noble, Paterson Council on the Disabled President Mae Bradley and Janet Mills of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

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## Hurricane Fiona Recovery



Emergency Planner Colleen Ekey of Human Services' [Office of Emergency Management](#) deployed to Puerto Rico to help with Hurricane Fiona response as part of a FEMA team. Ekey worked on shelter, food assistance, infrastructure and disaster recovery center operations - work critical to the mission of helping the people of Puerto Rico recover.

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## Hurricane Preparedness in American Sign Language



Jaclyn Pallies of the [Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) provided a hurricane preparedness video in American Sign Language.

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## Congratulations to Assistant Commissioners Langer Jacobs & Seifried



It was a great night as [Disability Rights New Jersey](#) honored Assistant Commissioners Jonathan Seifried, second from left, and Jennifer Langer Jacobs, second from right, for their exceptional work serving and supporting individuals with disabilities throughout the pandemic.

They were joined by Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services McGuire (left), Commissioner Adelman (middle) and Mercedes Witowsky, executive director at the [New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities](#).

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## Inclusive Healthy Communities



[Division of Disability Services](#) Assistant Director Jacqui Moskowitz leads the ribbon cutting for City Green's [Inclusive Healthy Communities](#) grant project.

[City Green](#), an urban farming organization headquartered at the City Green Farm Eco-Center in Clifton, operates a variety of programs and projects, from farming and farm stands, to community and school gardens, all with the purpose of connecting people to nature and healthy food. It's working to make all programming - including field trips, the farm stand, community gardening, cooking and educational workshops, volunteer opportunities, free public events, and horticultural therapy programming - accessible to everyone.

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## Rutgers Disability Adaptive Sports, Health and Wellness Day



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services McGuire [attended](#) the Rutgers University Disability Adaptive Sports, Health and Wellness Day, where attendees were able to participate in and observe adaptive sports for individuals with disabilities and take part in workshops on sports, health, wellness and advocacy.

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## Breast Cancer Awareness











Staff from throughout Human Services participated in a department-wide Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on Oct. 19. All divisions and offices took lunch breaks to gather, take photos in walk in support and in memory of those who battled this disease. As Commissioner Adelman [noted](#), about 1 in 8 women in the United States will develop breast cancer – so remember to go for a mammogram. Visit [here](#) for a full photo album.

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## Highlighting NJ's Maternal & Infant Health Efforts



Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare joined a March of Dimes discussion to highlight New Jersey's work to improve maternal & infant health. The panel featured dialogue among representatives from the state, private philanthropy and community on how collaborative funding and support can enhance grassroots and community-based organizations' work in birth justice/equity. Deputy Commissioner Asare was joined by representatives from The Burke Foundation, CHAP and a postpartum doula.

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## Updating Business Leaders on Medicaid



[Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services](#) Assistant Commissioner Langer Jacobs spoke to the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey's Health Issues Committee about division priorities.

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## COVID-19 Boosters



Deputy Commissioner of Operations Andrea Katz (left) at Green Brook Regional Center and Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services McGuire (right) at New Lisbon Developmental Center got their COVID-19 bivalent boosters as part of Department efforts to provide access to vaccines for staff and center residents. Vaccines are safe, effective, and free, and it's recommended everyone stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines. Learn more [here](#).

## Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

**National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week**

Oct. 23-29, 2022

Get the Facts

Get Your Child Tested

Get Your Home Tested

Lead In Free KIDS for a Healthy Future

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

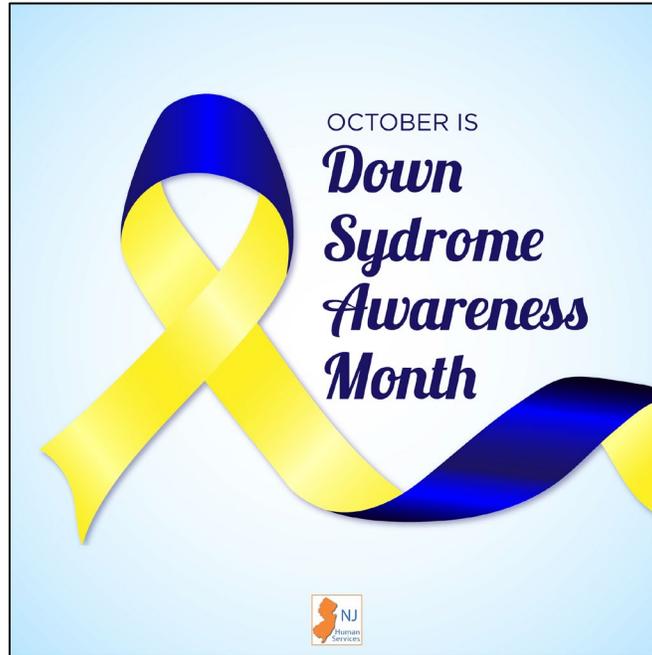
LEAD IN FREE HOMES AND HEALTHY HOMES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CDC

Keep our children safe from lead. Learn more [here](#).

## Down Syndrome Awareness Month



October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month, a time to raise public awareness about the condition and advocate for acceptance and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome.

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## Budget Listening Session: November 3

A flyer for a Human Services Virtual Budget Listening Session. The flyer has a white background with a faint cityscape image. At the top, there is an orange and white header with the "NJ Human Services" logo. The main text is in blue and black. It reads: "Human Services Virtual Budget Listening Session Thursday, November 3, 2022 1 PM". Below this, it says: "New Jerseyans can offer verbal or written testimony to inform the Department of Human Services budget for 2023-24. To accommodate as many speakers as possible, verbal testimony can be no more than 3 minutes." At the bottom, it provides an email address: "Email [humanservices@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:humanservices@dhs.nj.gov) for a time slot reservation. Include your full name, phone number and organization, if applicable. Sign language and captioning will be provided. Please note any other accommodations needed to participate in your email."

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# Welcome to New Jersey – Information for Newcomers



The Office of New Americans has published a welcome booklet with a set of resources intended to support newcomers to New Jersey and their families. It includes information about resources and services including legal services, food and income assistance, health care and mental health services, school enrollment, getting a state identification card, and transportation.

All the topics have links that direct to the indicated websites. There are also flyers and contact information regarding the different services and resources available to New Jersey residents. Download it below:

[English](#)  
[Spanish](#)

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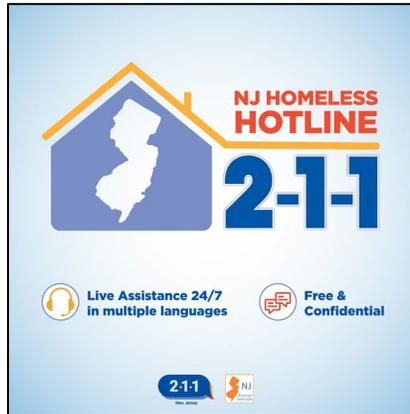
## Updated DDD Participant Rights and Responsibilities Form



The [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) has updated the *Participant Rights and Responsibilities* Form. The updated form is to be used in place of the older version at all future Annual Individualized Service Plan Meetings. Please be sure to overwrite/replace any older versions of the form.

- [Participant Rights and Responsibilities – English](#)
- [Participant Rights and Responsibilities – Spanish](#)

## SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS



NJ SNAP - [ENGLISH](#) / [SPANISH](#)

NJ FAMILYCARE - [ENGLISH](#) / [SPANISH](#)

NJHELPS - [ENGLISH](#) / [SPANISH](#)

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