



NJMIHIA

New Jersey Maternal
and Infant Health
Innovation Authority

Turning Innovation into Impact for New Jersey's Mothers and Babies

Annual Report
March 2026



NJMIHIA

**New Jersey Maternal
and Infant Health
Innovation Authority**

Table of Contents

Leadership	3
NJMIHIA Overview	5
About NJMIHIA	8
Statewide Strategy	11
Initiatives and Programs	14
Collaboration	18
Financial Stewardship	23
Looking Ahead	24
Contact Us	28



A letter from Governor Mikie Sherrill

As a mother of four, I know personally how critical access to quality maternal and infant health care is for families. I am proud to support the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority and its mission to ensure that every mother and baby has the care, resources, and support that they need to thrive.

NJMIHIA has a vision to become the gold standard of maternal health care in the nation.

Translating that vision into a reality requires experienced leadership that can move priorities across the finish line, which is why I am thrilled to have Lisa Asare remain as President and CEO of the Authority. In the past year, NJMIHIA has made incredible progress—breaking ground on the new Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center, launching the NJMIHIA Community-Based Doula Training Initiative along with a new Train-the-Trainer program to grow our perinatal workforce, and creating the G.L.O.W. Program and NJMIHIA Academy to support small community-based maternal and infant health organizations throughout New Jersey. This is just a glimpse of important work the Authority is doing to support mothers and babies across our state.

Together, we share a commitment to addressing longstanding disparities and improving the health and well-being of New Jersey’s women, babies, and families. Under President Asare’s leadership, NJMIHIA has been instrumental in uniting state government, health care providers, and community partners to create equitable, innovative solutions that make high-quality maternal and infant care accessible to all New Jerseyans.

With NJMIHIA at the helm, we will continue investing in programs that expand our perinatal workforce, leverage technology and innovation to expand care, and provide comprehensive support during pregnancy, postpartum, and into the early years. The Authority’s efforts are essential to closing disparities in maternal and infant outcomes and creating a stronger,



healthier future for all New Jersey families. I am committed to building on the progress of this Authority, ensuring that every mother and child receives the care and support they deserve. I look forward to partnering with the Authority team, health care sector, and community leaders to continue advancing this important mission.

Mikie Sherrill
Governor, State of New Jersey

A letter from our President & CEO Lisa A. Asare



“Every mother and infant in New Jersey deserves access to the care, support, and resources they need to thrive.”

As I reflect on the second full year of the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA), I am filled with gratitude, pride, and hope. In just two years, we have grown from a bold vision into a thriving state authority making real, tangible differences for mothers, babies, and families across our state.

We’ve launched numerous programs to build the perinatal workforce and address social determinants of health, doubled the size of our team with intentional focus on expanding our community-based work by engaging six doulas to lead our doula initiatives, and built the systems and partnerships that will sustain this work for years to come.

This work is deeply personal to me. As a mother of three and a Black woman, I understand firsthand the joys and challenges of motherhood, as well as the systemic barriers that disproportionately impact families of color.



It is this perspective that drives me every day to ensure that every mother and infant in New Jersey has access to the care, support, and resources they need to thrive.

We begin the third year of NJMIHIA with a commitment from Governor Mikie Sherrill’s administration in support of our efforts to make New Jersey the gold standard for maternal and infant health, and

it is my honor to continue to lead NJMIHIA. I am inspired by the dedication, creativity, and collaboration of our NJMIHIA team and our partners across government, healthcare, and community organizations. Together, we are not just launching programs, but building a movement to advance equity, improve health outcomes, and strengthen the very fabric of our communities.

As we look ahead, the opportunities before us are immeasurable. Together, we will continue to innovate, expand our impact, and ensure that every New Jersey family experiences healthier beginnings.

Thank you for believing in this mission and for walking alongside us on this journey.

Lisa A. Asare
President & CEO, NJMIHIA



Overview

Executive Impact Summary

In its second full year of operation, the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) advanced a coordinated statewide strategy to improve maternal and infant health outcomes. Established through landmark legislation in 2023, the Authority continues to drive cross-sector collaboration to reduce maternal and infant mortality, close persistent racial disparities, and expand equitable access to high-quality perinatal care across New Jersey.

Throughout this reporting period, NJMIHIA focused on building the partnerships, programs, and operational infrastructure required to support families before, during, and after pregnancy. The Authority strengthened engagement with healthcare providers, community organizations, and state agencies while expanding its internal capacity to implement innovative programs designed to address both clinical and social drivers of maternal and infant health.

A central focus has been strengthening the perinatal workforce. NJMIHIA launched the Community-Based Doula Training Initiative and a statewide Train-the-Trainer program, expanding the pipeline of culturally responsive doulas prepared to support families throughout pregnancy, birth, and postpartum recovery. The Doula Learning Collaborative and statewide town halls further advanced professional development and knowledge sharing across the maternal health ecosystem.

The Authority also introduced initiatives that strengthen community organizations and reduce barriers to care. The G.L.O.W. Program and NJMIHIA Academy provide training, technical assistance, and capacity-building resources to grassroots maternal and infant health organizations. At the same time, tools such as the NJ Doula Assistant reduce administrative burdens and allow doulas to dedicate more time to patient care.

Addressing social determinants of health

remains central to NJMIHIA's strategy. Through partnerships such as NJMIHIA Rides powered by GOTrenton!, families gain reliable transportation to medical appointments and essential services. The Trenton Health Team Perinatal Pilot demonstrates the impact of integrating community health workers within clinical settings to connect families with critical resources during pregnancy and postpartum recovery.

Early results show meaningful progress. The pilot program generated 119 referrals for essential services, with 69 percent resulting in successful connections to community supports, including food assistance, healthcare services, and infant supplies. Transportation initiatives have already provided 208 rides to 276 individuals, helping families access medical care and essential services while reducing barriers that contribute to poor health outcomes.



Impact at a Glance

Strengthening Maternal and Infant Health Across New Jersey

Looking ahead, NJMIHIA continues to build the foundation for long-term systemic change. The development of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center) in Trenton will serve as a statewide hub for research, innovation, workforce development, and community-centered maternal care. Through this center, NJMIHIA will accelerate collaboration among healthcare providers, academic institutions, technology innovators, and community leaders to incubate solutions that improve outcomes for mothers and babies.

Guided by its emerging 2026–2029 strategic roadmap, NJMIHIA will expand workforce development initiatives, strengthen community-based partnerships, scale innovative pilot programs, and deepen data-driven approaches to maternal and infant health improvement.

Together with Governor Mikie Sherrill’s administration, healthcare leaders, community organizations, and families across the state, NJMIHIA continues to advance a bold vision: a future where every mother and baby thrives and New Jersey stands as the national model for equitable maternal and infant health.



Impact at a Glance

119 Referrals connecting families to essential services

69% Service connection rate through the Trenton Health Team pilot

208 Rides delivered through NJMIHIA Rides powered by GOTrenton!

276 Individuals served through transportation assistance



Expanded doula workforce training and professional development



New investments in community-based organizational capacity and maternal health innovation

How the Authority Advances Maternal and Infant Health

Improving maternal and infant health outcomes requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, community organizations, and state leadership. The New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) was established to align partners, accelerate innovation, and strengthen programs that improve care for mothers and babies across the state.

NJMIHIA advances this work through a coordinated strategy that focuses on workforce development, community investment, expanded access to care, and cross-sector collaboration. Together, these efforts address both the clinical and social drivers that influence maternal and infant health outcomes.

Strengthening the Perinatal Workforce



NJMIHIA supports the development of a diverse and culturally responsive maternal health workforce. Initiatives such as the Community-Based Doula Training Initiative, the Doula Learning Collaborative, and Train-the-Trainer programs expand the capacity of doulas and other perinatal professionals to support families throughout pregnancy and postpartum recovery.



Investing in Community-Based Solutions

Community organizations play a vital role in addressing disparities in maternal health. Through initiatives such as the G.L.O.W. Program and NJMIHIA Academy, the Authority supports grassroots organizations that provide trusted services, education, and support within communities most affected by maternal and infant health challenges.



Expanding Access to Care

NJMIHIA works to remove barriers that prevent families from accessing care and essential services. Programs such as NJMIHIA Rides powered by GOTrenton! and the Trenton Health Team Perinatal Pilot connect families with transportation, care coordination, and community resources during pregnancy and postpartum recovery.



Driving Innovation and System Changes

NJMIHIA advances innovative solutions that strengthen maternal health systems statewide. Digital tools, pilot programs, and partnerships with healthcare providers and community organizations help test and scale new approaches that improve care delivery and coordination, all of which will be realized within the Center, coming in 2027.



About NJMIHIA

Background on the Authority

The New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority was established in July 2023 through the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center Act (NJ Rev Stat § 26:18-17 et seq.).

This landmark legislation positioned New Jersey as the first state in the nation to create a dedicated public authority focused exclusively on improving maternal and infant health outcomes and eliminating racial and ethnic disparities.

The Authority is charged with coordinating cross-sector efforts, overseeing the development of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center) in Trenton, and advancing evidence-based strategies across care delivery, workforce development, and community engagement.

Since its inaugural board meeting in March 2024, NJMIHIA has focused on building foundational infrastructure, forging strategic partnerships, and laying the groundwork for the Center, in close collaboration with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) and the Office of the Governor.



Vision
A world where all mothers and babies flourish.

Mission
Empower the village that supports the health and well-being of all mothers and babies through transformative partnerships and community-rooted innovation.

Legislative Mandate

Under its enabling legislation, NJMIHIA is charged with:

- Establishing and overseeing the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center), a central hub for clinical care, workforce training, social services, and innovation.
- Coordinating among national, state, local agencies, and private organizations to deliver perinatal and infant care services.
- Promoting equitable access to maternal and infant health services.
- Implementing strategies across healthcare delivery, social services, workforce development, community engagement, data collection, and research.
- Serving as an incubator for enterprises and technologies that improve health outcomes and reduce mortality and morbidity.
- Overseeing the New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (NJMCQC), which develops and recommends strategies to reduce maternal mortality and racial disparities.



About NJMIHIA



Meet the NJMIHIA Team

NJMIHIA's team brings together professionals with diverse backgrounds in maternal health, community engagement, workforce development, and public policy. Together, they support the Authority's mission to advance maternal and infant health outcomes across New Jersey.

Lisa Asare
President & CEO

Sofia Bonsignore
Public Policy Specialist

Eric Carlsson
Chief Financial Officer

Cindy Cortez
Administrative Assistant

Maria Del Cid-Kosso
Director of External Affairs & Policy

Danelly DeLeon
Doula Program Compliance Specialist

Mahako Etta
Chief of Innovation

Tonique Griffin
Doula Program Compliance Specialist

Lauren Lalicon
Senior Program & Policy Director

Gabrielle Louis
Doula Program Manager

Myrna Rivera
Agency Management Analyst

Shellecia Smith
Doula Program Compliance Specialist

Pamela Taylor
MCQC Program Manager

Catherine Terrero
Senior Executive Assistant

Laura Wilton
Chief of Corporate Governance



About NJMIHIA

Meet our Board Members

NJMIHIA is governed by a Board comprised of both public members and representatives from State agencies. This structure brings together community expertise and government leadership to guide the Authority's work and ensure alignment with statewide priorities.

Public Members

Barbara George Johnson, Chair

Vice President of External Affairs and Urban Policy and Research, Kean University

Shakira Abdul-Ali, MSOD

Principal Managing Consultant and Owner
Alchemy Consulting LLC
Former Director, Trenton Department of Health & Human Services

Dr. Philip Bonaparte

President and CEO
New Hope Health Center
Former Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, Horizon NJ Health, a subsidiary of Horizon BCBSNJ

Rosalee Boyer

First Lady of the Greater Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church
Co-founder of Salvation and Social Justice

Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji

Associate Professor
Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Health, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School Physician in Obstetrics and Gynecology

Andrea Martinez-Mejia

Executive Director
Greater Newark Health Care Coalition

Maritza Raimundi-Petroski

Chief Operating Officer
Prevention Links

Ex-Officio Representatives

Angela Bethea

Assistant Secretary and Chief Financial Officer
New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

Dr. Stephen Cha

Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Human Services

Andrea Jackson

Deputy Director
Division of Family and Community Partnerships
New Jersey Department of Children and Families

Holly Low

Director
Office of Strategic Outreach and Policy
New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Trish Wallace

Senior Operations Director
New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance

Dr. Raynard Washington, Vice Chair

Acting Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Health

Evan Weiss

Chief Executive Officer
New Jersey Economic Development Authority



Statewide Strategy

NJMIHIA Strategic Plan (2026-2029)

The Center for Health Care Strategies facilitated for NJMIHIA a comprehensive strategic planning process in which interviews, focus groups, and a statewide survey informed the efforts of an 18-member planning workgroup. The process culminated in a three-year strategic plan with four strategic priorities that were operationalized into a set of goals, objectives, and measures to ensure accountability and transparency in managing the implementation of the plan.

The plan will guide NJMIHIA's work through 2026–2029, ensuring strategic alignment and sustainability of innovative solutions. It will inform funding priorities, policy development, and program implementation, reinforcing NJMIHIA's role as a catalyst for maternal and infant health transformation in New Jersey.

Planning Process

The development process included an organizational assessment, eight in-person workgroup sessions, and engagement with more than 150 stakeholders, including community doulas, families, providers, and policy experts. Input was gathered via interviews, focus groups, and a statewide survey to ensure alignment with community needs.

Strategic Priorities



Community Mobilization

Engage, amplify, and embed community voice through targeted efforts.



State Engagement

Leverage the expertise of state agency partners to improve maternal and infant health outcomes.



Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center)

Accelerate innovations to create a community-driven maternal care ecosystem.



Public-Private Partnerships and Resource Diversification

Collaborate with public, private, and community partners to maximize NJMIHIA's impact on maternal and infant health outcomes.





Statewide Strategy



Nurture NJ

In December 2025, NJMIHIA co-hosted the 8th Annual Nurture NJ Leadership Summit in partnership with the Office of the First Lady and the Department of Children and Families.

The event brought together leaders from across sectors to develop innovative policy ideas under the theme “United for Change. Centered in Community.”

Breakout sessions and panels focused on community-centered care, trust-building, and collaboration across health systems, government, and community organizations. Discussions emphasized the importance of lived experience, transparency, and shared decision-making in shaping effective solutions.

The event also highlighted emerging partnerships between clinical and community organizations, including opportunities for aligned funding, shared infrastructure, and long-term collaboration.

Leaders in attendance included then First Lady Tammy Murphy, then Governor Phil Murphy, and then Governor-elect Mikie Sherrill, who announced her commitment to supporting NJMIHIA and strengthening the maternal and infant health ecosystem.

To close out the work of Nurture NJ and support the continuation of this work, then First Lady Tammy Murphy released the Nurture NJ: New Jersey Blueprint for Maternal and Infant Health and Path for the Next Decade, a living roadmap to support the next five to ten years of statewide action.



Statewide Strategy

New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (NJMCQC)



The New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (NJMCQC) is a strategic advisory body formally integrated into NJMIHIA under the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center Act.

The NJMCQC was initially launched by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and transitioned to the oversight of NJMIHIA in 2023. Comprising 39 subject matter experts, the NJMCQC serves as a key mechanism for stakeholder engagement, data-to-action strategy development, and equity-driven innovation in maternal and infant health.



Purpose and Mandate

The NJMCQC is tasked with:

- **Coordinating** statewide efforts to reduce maternal mortality, morbidity, and racial and ethnic disparities
- **Collaborating** with organizations implementing maternal health strategies
- **Communicating** goals and progress to stakeholders and submitting evidence-based recommendations to the NJMIHIA Board

Key Recommendations



Clinical Best Practices

Expand access to the Perinatal Mental Health First Aid program for clinical and non-clinical professionals.



Innovation

Provide capacity-building training for community-based organizations on partnerships and grant readiness.



Perinatal Workforce

Broaden Medicaid's approved doula training list to include more programs.



Emerging Issues

Develop technology-based patient education tools to support informed decision-making.



Health-Related Social Needs

Create a community engagement toolkit with guidance on representation, contribution, and compensation.



Rapid Response

In September 2025, the NJMCQC's Clinical Best Practices Workgroup convened urgently to address public confusion around vaccinations and medications during pregnancy and postpartum.

Their swift review led to the release of science-based guidance through a joint press release from NJMIHIA and NJDOH, to remind pregnant patients in New Jersey about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 and hepatitis B vaccinations as well as prenatal acetaminophen use.

This rapid response reaffirms New Jersey's unified and coordinated commitment to maternal safety.



Initiatives and Programs

NJMIHIA Community-Based Doula Training Program

About

In October 2024, NJMIHIA launched a New Jersey-specific doula training program to build a culturally responsive, professional, and scalable workforce.

NJMIHIA, in partnership with Rutgers Institute for Families, established a steering team of twelve expert doulas to assist in the development of a New Jersey-specific doula curriculum that will serve as a standardized model for culturally-responsive doula training.

Designed by “doulas for doulas,” the program prepares professionals with deep community roots, culturally aligned care approaches, and the skills to support birthing families across New Jersey.

Expansion

To grow this workforce, NJMIHIA launched a “Train-the-Trainer” pilot in January 2026.

The Train-the-Trainer pilot trained doulas from maternal and infant health organizations across the state to facilitate NJMIHIA’s community-based doula training.

This cohort aims to continue growing the community doula workforce serving NJ FamilyCare members and to build a sustainable, statewide pipeline of support professionals.

This initiative advances NJMIHIA’s strategy to expand access to high-quality, culturally competent doula care for NJ FamilyCare members. By investing in community-based training and mentorship, NJMIHIA is building a workforce that reflects New Jersey’s diverse maternal health needs.

Program Launch and Structure

The initial cohort of the NJMIHIA Community-Based Doula Training pilot began training in September 2025 and concluded in December 2025.

Training included:

- 70 seat hours of NJMIHIA’s Community-Based Doula Curriculum
- CPR and HIPAA certification
- NJDOH Cultural Competency training
- Three hands-on birth experience sessions

Trainees received ongoing mentorship from experienced NJMIHIA doulas.

Mentorship included:

- Connections to families, birthing centers, and hospitals
- Emotional support throughout training

Graduates are eligible and supported to enroll as NJ FamilyCare (Medicaid) providers



Initiatives and Programs

Doula Town Hall Series

NJMIHIA launched a Doula Town Hall Series, a collaborative and welcoming space for doulas, birth workers, and other stakeholders to share resources, strengthen connections, and build a supportive perinatal community.

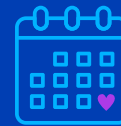
The January 2026 Doula Town Hall focused on spreading awareness of the NJ FamilyCare Training Approval Packet, which seeks to expand the list of Approved Doula Trainings eligible for NJ FamilyCare enrollment.

The town hall was attended by nearly 100 community partners from across the state.

Future Town Halls

Future town halls will focus on topics identified by doulas and maternal health partners as priorities for strengthening collaboration, workforce development, and support for families across the state.

- **Doula Reimbursement & Medicaid Support**
Policy advocacy, research, and technical assistance
- **Hospital Partnerships & Equity Initiatives**
Reducing bias and improving collaboration between hospitals and doulas
- **Business & Career Development**
Grants, mentorship, and billing support for doulas and birth workers
- **Workforce Education & Growth**
Scholarships, training opportunities, and continuing education
- **Data & Impact Measurement**
Tracking outcomes, publishing best practices, and informing policy



2026 Meeting Schedule

The Doula Town Hall Series will continue quarterly in 2026.

January 8, 2026

April 9, 2026

July 9, 2026

October 8, 2026



Initiatives and Programs

NJ Doula Learning Collaborative

NJMIHIA serves as the coordinating body for the New Jersey Doula Learning Collaborative (NJDLC). The NJDLC is the state’s professional home for community doulas, creating a dedicated space for connection, collaboration, and shared learning across the maternal health ecosystem.

Supported by funding through NJDOH, the NJDLC brings together doulas from across New Jersey to strengthen professional development, elevate community-informed practices, and ensure doulas are meaningfully integrated into maternal and infant health initiatives statewide.

The NJDLC is committed to:

- Addressing maternal and child health disparities
- Empowering maternal health advocates
- Consciously including doulas in the conversation
- Working to create systemic change for babies, families, and communities throughout New Jersey.

“

“At NJMIHIA, we know doulas are instrumental in creating environments where positive birth experiences are possible. As the convener of the NJDLC, NJMIHIA serves as the connective tissue that brings together doulas and birth workers across the state.”

Lisa A. Asare
President & CEO



Initiatives and Programs



G.L.O.W. Program and NJMIHIA Academy

In February 2026, NJMIHIA launched the G.L.O.W. (Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women’s Health) Program and the NJMIHIA Academy, a new grant opportunity to empower small community-based organizations and businesses that provide birth support training services throughout New Jersey.

Grantees can receive up to \$50,000 to support projects that advance NJMIHIA’s strategic initiatives. Grantees will also be required to participate in the NJMIHIA Academy, a mentorship program designed to strengthen programmatic efforts and overall operational capacity.

Through this grant program, organizations will be able to expand their capacity and deliver impactful maternal and infant health solutions across New Jersey.

Priority Investment Areas

The G.L.O.W. Program supports projects in four strategic areas:

Community Engagement



Development and dissemination of a standardized community engagement toolkit for maternal and infant health programs

Innovation



Promotion of technology-based solutions that support informed patient decision-making

Mental Health Support



Expanded access to perinatal mental health programming for both clinical and non-clinical professionals

Workforce Engagement



Broadening professional development and training opportunities for midwives, doulas, community health workers, and lactation professionals.



Collaboration

State Engagement

State Engagement is a major pillar of NJMIHIA's Strategic Plan, aiming to leverage the expertise of state agency partners to improve maternal and infant health outcomes. NJMIHIA has engaged with 22 state departments and agencies to identify shared priorities and opportunities for collective action. Each department has a role to play in building a world where all mothers and babies flourish.

In the past year, NJMIHIA has collaborated with several sister agencies on various initiatives, highlighted in this report.

NJ FamilyCare Rubric Approval Packet

New Jersey launched a new process in December 2025 to expand the number of NJ FamilyCare approved doula trainings.

NJMIHIA, NJDHS, and NJDOH have collaborated to develop the NJ FamilyCare Rubric Approval Packet to assess quality doula trainings for listing as a NJ FamilyCare Approved Doula Training. The Approval Packet includes a Rubric Tool that communicates minimum requirements for accepted doula trainings and helps the state efficiently approve trainings.

Approval by NJ FamilyCare allows doulas educated by the accepted trainings to become eligible to apply to become a NJ FamilyCare community doula provider—so that they can care for NJ FamilyCare families and receive Medicaid reimbursement for doula care.

Because trainings, experience, and background can differ significantly across the doula workforce, this packet helps NJ FamilyCare clients understand the criteria and shared standards for NJ FamilyCare community doulas regarding their education, practice experience, and certification.

NJMIHIA provides technical assistance, in English and Spanish, to doula organizations that would like help completing the approval packet.

NJ Doula Assistant Tool

The NJ Doula Assistant is a user-friendly online tool developed by the New Jersey Innovation Authority—in collaboration with NJMIHIA, NJDHS and NJDOH. Designed specifically for individual doulas, the tool simplifies and accelerates the NJ FamilyCare Fee-for-Service enrollment process, helping users complete their applications quickly and with confidence.

In December 2025, New Jersey launched the NJ Doula Assistant, a new tool that clearly communicates the requirements of NJ FamilyCare's fee-for-service provider application. Our goal is to help doulas "focus on care, not paperwork" by helping doulas fill out a near-complete application to become a NJ FamilyCare community doula.

This is the first time an online tool of this kind has been developed for any state's Medicaid doula program. The tool features plain language questions and pre-population of data across the application packet, helping doulas complete their application in about 20 minutes. It asks only about 40 questions that populate more than 80 answers across the application.

Doulas look forward to working and serving mothers. To help alleviate time and paperwork, the NJ Doula Assistant application process speeds up the process, so they can work with pregnant moms to be.



Collaboration

NJMIHIA Rides Powered by GoTrenton! and Isles



Launched on December 1, 2025, the NJMIHIA Rides Program is a collaboration between NJMIHIA, GoTrenton!, Isles, the NJ Departments of Labor and Workforce Development and the NJ Department of Transportation.

The pilot provides free, sustainable, zero-emission rideshare transportation for pregnant and postpartum individuals and perinatal workforce members across Trenton, NJ.

Using the GoTrenton! app, users book rides with codes provided by their healthcare provider and social service agencies. The rides support travel to medical appointments, work, grocery or pharmacy trips, and other essential destinations.

Early Impact

During the first two months, the program showed strong engagement and high satisfaction, demonstrating meaningful utilization and growing momentum.

NJMIHIA Rides will expand service to Southern Ewing and West Hamilton zones.



208

Rides completed by pregnant and postpartum participants through the Mom Code program.



276

Passengers served across Trenton through free, zero-emission transportation.



4.8/5.0

Participant satisfaction rating from Mom Code riders.



27

Rides provided to 29 perinatal workforce members.



Collaboration

Trenton Health Team Perinatal Pilot

As part of the early implementation efforts leading up to the launch of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center), NJMIHIA has partnered with its two lead anchor tenants—Trenton Health Team (THT) and Capital Health (CH)—to pilot a Community Health Worker (CHW) integration model within a clinical OB/GYN setting.

The pilot embedded a community health worker within a Capital Health OB/GYN practice to conduct risk assessments, provide resource navigation, support care coordination, and serve as a liaison between patients and providers.

This model sought to strengthen the connection between clinical care and community-based support, address both medical and social needs during the perinatal period, and improve continuity and quality of care for birthing people and their families. It also aimed to build a collaborative foundation between THT and CH ahead of co-location in the Center.

The pilot began in July 2025 and will continue through Q2 2026.



Impact

The pilot is demonstrating meaningful early impact by addressing critical social determinants of health during pregnancy.

As of January 2026, 119 referrals have been made—nearly three per participant—with 69% resulting in successful service connection. The most common supports include food assistance, baby supplies, and healthcare services.

These high-touch and culturally responsive interventions directly address immediate needs that affect maternal and infant health outcomes. Our CHW model is positioned to improve health equity, reduce stressors during pregnancy, and ultimately strengthen birth outcomes for mothers and infants in our community.

As of January 2026,
119 referrals have been
made—nearly **three per**
participant—with **69%**
successfully connected to
services.

Public-Private Partnerships & Resource Diversification

The Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Fund (MIHIF)

The Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Fund (MIHIF) is in development and intended to provide additional capacity and resources to support the critical work of NJMIHIA and The Center.

The initiative aims to:

- **Advance Systems Change**
Support scalable models that improve maternal and infant health outcomes.
- **Fuel Community Innovation**
Invest in early-stage, community-rooted solutions that serve historically underserved populations.
- **Strengthen New Jersey's Leadership**
Build a national model for public-private collaboration, research, and shared learning.

The MIHIF is not only about saving lives – it's about transforming the pregnancy and postpartum experience for mothers, babies, and families. While rooted in New Jersey, insights and best practices will be shared broadly to help advance maternal and infant health.

NJMIHIA looks forward to contributing to these efforts as the project partnership is finalized.

Federal Funding Status

NJMIHIA does not currently receive direct federal funding and therefore has limited exposure to recent or proposed federal budget reductions.

However, the Authority remains mindful of potential downstream impacts on partner agencies that may experience resource constraints as federal funding levels change.

NJMIHIA is also concerned with federal policy changes impacting maternal and infant health resourcing, especially, as the federal government's HR1 impacts NJFamilyCare enrollment, Get Covered New Jersey premiums, and federal financial partnership in

New Jersey's health care system.

NJMIHIA will continue to strategically monitor and pursue federal grant opportunities aligned with its mission and long-term priorities, while striving to maintain a diversified and sustainable funding approach.

Fiscal Sustainability Strategy

To support long-term sustainability and organizational growth, NJMIHIA is pursuing a diversified and strategic approach to funding and partnerships. The Authority is focused on strengthening financial resilience while expanding opportunities that advance its mission and statewide impact. Key strategies include:

- » Diversifying its funding portfolio through expanded public and private partnerships, including collaborations with philanthropic, health care, and community-based organizations
- » Exploring sponsored project and fiscal sponsorship models to support innovation, pilot initiatives, and community-driven programming aligned with NJMIHIA's mission
- » Actively monitoring and pursuing federal funding opportunities that align with NJMIHIA's strategic priorities and programmatic objectives
- » Expanding coordination and partnership with sister state agencies to leverage shared resources, align initiatives, and maximize statewide impact
- » Strengthening cross-sector collaborations to advance sustainable program delivery and shared investment in maternal and infant health outcomes; and
- » Aligning budget priorities with its strategic plan, ensuring that every dollar contributes to measurable impact.



Innovation Infrastructure



Maternal Health Innovation Roundtable

On November 24, 2025, the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) hosted its inaugural Maternal Health Innovation Roundtable, convening 45 leaders from across the maternal health ecosystem—including community-based organizations, government agencies, hospitals, healthcare systems, startups, and academic institutions.

The Roundtable sought to identify innovative opportunities to address maternal health challenges and explore NJMIHIA's role within the broader innovation ecosystem.

Across the discussion, six cross-cutting themes consistently emerged:

- 1 Flexible, Sustainable Funding**
Multi-year, adaptable funding strategies to support workforce development and community-based organizations.
- 2 Organizational Capacity Building**
Strengthening programs through incubators, accelerators, and scalable digital and telehealth solutions.
- 3 Data Sharing & Accountability**
Advancing participatory research, shared data infrastructure, and transparent evaluation.
- 4 Expanding the Perinatal Workforce**
Targeted support for doulas, midwives, and community health workers.
- 5 Addressing Social Health Determinants**
Ensuring equitable access to wraparound services that support maternal and infant health.
- 6 Building Authentic Community**
Strengthening relationships by embedding community voice in program design and evaluation.



Financial Stewardship

Financial Overview

NJMIHIA's financial foundation reflects a blend of state appropriations and philanthropic support designed to ensure both stability and flexibility in program implementation. The Authority's FY2026 operating budget is supported by a \$5.2 million line-item appropriation from the State of New Jersey.



Partnership and Philanthropic Support

NJMIHIA maintains several Memorandum of Agreements with sister state agencies:

- \$295,000 with the Department of Health (NJDOH) to oversee the New Jersey Doula Learning Collaborative
- \$175,600 with the Department of Labor & Workforce Development (NJDOL) to increase the NJ FamilyCare community doula workforce through statewide expansion of the NJMIHIA community-based doula training
- \$200,000 with the Department of Labor & Workforce Development (NJDOL) to support outreach and engagement efforts helping New Jersey parents access Temporary Disability and Family Leave Insurance benefits.

Additionally, grant agreements totaling \$475,000 from philanthropic and community-based organizations have supported the development and expansion of NJMIHIA's doula training program.



Looking Ahead



Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center

Developed in partnership with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA), the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center (The Center), located in Trenton, is a transformative, first-of-its-kind facility serving as an incubator for innovation and an academic and perinatal workforce training center.

The Center will offer a new standard of comprehensive clinical services to serve moms, provide direct social and wraparound supports, host a data collaborative, and so much more.

The Center is designed to serve as a statewide anchor for maternal and infant health innovation, integrating clinical care, education, workforce development, social services, and entrepreneurship under one roof.

Developed in collaboration with Rowan University, NJEDA, and NJMIHIA, the Center will also house the New Baby New Jersey Strategic Innovation Center (SIC).

This Trenton-based SIC will focus on driving breakthrough solutions in maternal care equity, digital health, doula support, perinatal mental health, and public benefits access.

The Center is more than a building—it is a movement toward equity, innovation, & sustainability in maternal and infant health.

The SIC will further the state's national leadership in maternal and infant health innovation, leveraging startups, academic institutions, public agencies, and community voices to advance maternal health equity and inventive medical technologies.



Looking Ahead

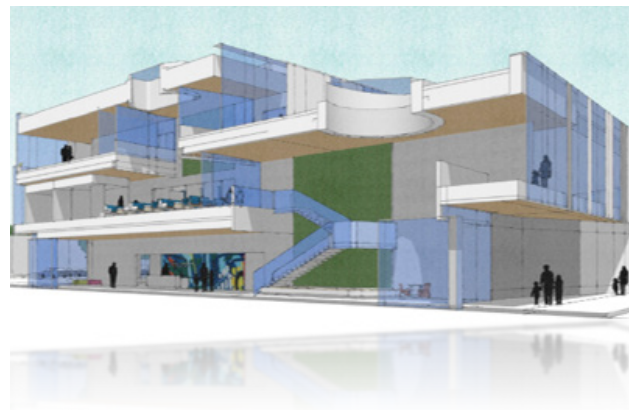
A Hub for Innovation, Care and Collaboration

The Center is more than a building. It is a movement toward equity, innovation, and sustainability in maternal and infant health.

By uniting clinical care, education, research, and entrepreneurship, The Center will:

- Improve outcomes for birthing people and families
- Build a diverse, skilled perinatal workforce
- Scale community-driven solutions
- Serve as a replicable model for other states and regions

The Center will strengthen and transform New Jersey’s leadership in maternal and infant health and position the state as a national model for integrated maternal care innovation. Our gold standard will serve as a global beacon for a world where all moms and babies flourish.



Core Functions & Services

The Center will house five integrated pillars:



Pre- and post-natal clinical services



Perinatal workforce education & training



Social services and wraparound supports



Policy research and data collaboration



Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Incubator

Anchor Tenants & Collaborators

The Center brings together a powerful coalition of public, academic, and private partners:

- **Trenton Health Team** – Lead Multi-Service Organization
- **Capital Health** – Lead Clinical Partner
- **Rutgers School of Nursing** – Higher education anchor, alongside Mercer County Community College, The College of New Jersey, Thomas Edison State University, and Stockton University
- **Rowan University, Cooper Institute, and Plug and Play** – Innovation and entrepreneurship partners

Looking Ahead



Strategic Innovation Center (SIC) Maternal and Medtech Accelerator

The New Baby New Jersey Strategic Innovation Center (SIC) will be located within the MIHIC and is one of 12 SICs across the state.

The SICs support research and development, innovation, and entrepreneurship through mentorship, networking opportunities, hands-on training, business support services, and educational programs.

Through this model, the New Baby New Jersey SIC will help bridge the gap between early-stage ideas and scalable solutions, fostering

collaboration among startups, healthcare providers, researchers, and community organizations to drive meaningful impact in maternal and infant health.

The New Baby New Jersey SIC, which will be managed by Plug and Play, will:

- Focus on medical technologies, digital health, and maternal health equity,
- Serve as a scaling hub for community-driven innovations, and
- Connect startups with academic and industry leaders to drive impact and economic growth.



Looking Ahead

NJMIHIA enters the next phase of its work with a clear focus on translating strategy into sustained progress for mothers, babies, and families across New Jersey. Guided by the NJMIHIA Strategic Plan (2026–2029), the Authority will continue strengthening the maternal health workforce, expanding partnerships with community-based organizations, and scaling programs that improve access to high-quality perinatal care.

In the year ahead, NJMIHIA will deepen collaboration with healthcare providers, state agencies, and community leaders to accelerate solutions that address both the clinical and social factors influencing maternal and infant health outcomes.

Initiatives that support doulas, community health workers, and other perinatal professionals will remain central to this effort, alongside investments in programs that connect families to essential services and resources.

The Authority will also advance development of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center in Trenton. As a statewide hub for research, workforce development, and cross-sector collaboration, the Center will help incubate innovative approaches and scale solutions that strengthen maternal and infant health systems across New Jersey.

To further elevate awareness and engagement around this work, NJMIHIA is finalizing a comprehensive communications strategy designed to promote the Authority's mission, programs, and impact, with implementation scheduled for launch in April 2026.

This strategy will strengthen public understanding of maternal and infant health challenges while deepening partnerships with healthcare providers, community organizations, and stakeholders across the state.

Through these efforts, NJMIHIA continues advancing its vision.






**A world
where all
mothers
and babies
*flourish***

Learn more about NJMIHIA

For more information about NJMIHIA, our work, and ongoing initiatives, please visit our website or contact us using the information below.



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