

# 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.

