



NJMIHIA BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

10:00 AM

Virtual

Join via Microsoft Teams:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/52b8fb53-5cf6-40b6-872c-ae391f75ff58@5076c3d1-3802-4b9f-b36a-e0a41bd642a7>

- I. Call to Order
- II. Open Public Meetings Act Statement
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Update from Chair
- V. CEO's Report to Board
- VI. Matters Requiring Board Action
 - a. Approval of NJMIHIA Annual Board Meeting Minutes
 - b. Approval of Resolution Authorizing an MOU with NJDCF to Support the NJMIHIA Summit 2026
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Meeting Adjournment



MEMORANDUM

To: Board Members of NJMIHIA
From: Lisa Asare, President and CEO NJMIHIA
Re: Monthly Update
Date: July 17, 2026

Chief Executive Office Updates

As NJMIHIA continues to advance its strategic planning efforts, the Authority remains focused on strengthening external partnerships and building internal capacity to support long-term impact. The team is finalizing the strategic plan for the Board's review and approval in the fall. Refinement of the strategic priority areas, associated goals, initiatives, and key measures that will guide implementation and evaluate progress is ongoing. The updates below reflect NJMIHIA's strategic direction and the roadmap for continued growth, collaboration, and excellence in advancing maternal and infant health across New Jersey.

We are also pleased to extend a warm welcome to Bianka Vargas as the newest member of the MIHIA Board. Ms. Vargas currently serves as Clerk for the Union County Utilities Authority, where she supports the Authority's governance through the coordination of Board meetings, agendas, and public records. She also serves as Acting Executive Assistant at Kean University, supporting senior leadership and managing executive operations. Her background spans public administration, finance, and banking, bringing valuable experience in operations, fiscal management, and organizational effectiveness. In addition, she is bilingual in English and Spanish and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in Accounting at Kean University. We are pleased to welcome her to the NJMIHIA Board and look forward to the perspective and expertise she will bring to our work to improve maternal and infant health outcomes across New Jersey.

Lastly, NJMIHIA is pleased to recognize Black Maternal Mental Health Week this month. This observance highlights the importance of addressing the unique mental health challenges and inequities experienced by Black mothers while promoting awareness, support, and equitable access to care. NJMIHIA remains committed to advancing birth equity through collaboration, community engagement, and partnerships that improve maternal and infant health outcomes across New Jersey.



G.L.O.W. Program

NJMIHIA launched the G.L.O.W. Program (Grants for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health) and the MIHIA Academy as a combined \$1 million investment to strengthen small community-based organizations and early-stage enterprises working in maternal and infant health, addressing a long-standing gap in flexible, equity-focused funding for groups closest to the communities they serve. The program includes \$750,000 in grants and \$250,000 for technical assistance and capacity building through the Academy. The application portal closed on June 15. NJMIHIA received a total of 42 application inquiries and 27 complete applications.

After an internal review process, 15 organizations are being approved for funding. A list of final grantees can be found below. Together, G.L.O.W. and the MIHIA Academy are building the infrastructure for sustained, community-rooted innovation to improve maternal and infant health outcomes across New Jersey. See Table A-1 in Appendix A for the list of approved grantee organizations, project descriptions, and counties. For your convenience, we have attached the **Creation of the NJMIHIA Grants for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health (G.L.O.W.) Program and NJMIHIA G.L.O.W. Academy** document to the Board materials for your reference.

Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Fund

The Memorandum of Understanding between NJMIHIA and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc. (RPA) has been fully executed, establishing the framework for collaboration on fundraising, grantmaking, innovation initiatives, and strategic program development in support of maternal and infant health outcomes.

NJMIHIA is collaborating with the Interim Fund Director to identify and refine potential funding concepts and project opportunities aligned with the Authority's mission and strategic priorities. Regular planning meetings are being established to advance these concepts and prepare proposals for presentation to the Advisory Council for review and recommendations. RPA, as the Fund's fiscal sponsor and administrator, retains sole and final discretion over all funding decisions.

Doula Initiatives

Since the launch of the Community-Based Doula Program in fall 2025, NJMIHIA has trained 34 community-based doulas and 22 facilitators who will help lead future training cohorts across 11 counties, with a focus on expanding access in rural communities. This expansion has been made possible through partnership and support from the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOLE).



These doulas and facilitators will be recognized at the inaugural Doula Graduation Ceremony on July 23 at the War Memorial in Trenton.

Training Expansion Through State Partnership

NJMIHIA has executed an MOU with NJDOL to expand and sustain the NJ FamilyCare-reimbursable doula workforce. The program will recruit 25 Doula Trainers through community networks, maternal-health organizations, and state and local partners to deploy to high need areas. After recruitment, Doula Trainers will be strategically deployed across 11 rural counties—Atlantic, Burlington, Cumberland, Hunterdon, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean, Cape May, Salem, Sussex, and Warren—identified by the NJ State Office of Rural Health as lacking adequate maternal and infant health services. These trainers will build a durable, community-rooted training pipeline, preparing new doulas statewide and strengthening the long-term sustainability of maternal-health capacity in underserved rural regions. Additionally, NJMIHIA presented to the Department of Children & Families' (DCF) Family Success Centers (FSC) on the Doula Expansion initiative and is actively working with FSCs to identify locations for training.

Increase NJ FamilyCare Eligible Doulas in NJ

NJMIHIA, as the coordinating body for the state's doula work, worked with New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJDHS) and New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) to develop a comprehensive assessment process to expand the number of doulas eligible to provide NJ FamilyCare doula services. This process standardizes the minimum requirements and process to be an Approved Training for enrollment as a NJ FamilyCare Community Doula. The NJMIHIA doula team reviewed 29 training application packets and conducted technical assistance calls with applicants. Completed application packets have been submitted to NJDOH and NJDHS for final review and are currently pending approval to be finalized by July 30.

NJ Doula Assistant Tool

NJMIHIA continues to explore ways to further improve the NJ Doula Assistant Tool. Developed in partnership with NJ Innovation Authority, NJDHS, and NJDOH, the tool simplifies and accelerates the NJ FamilyCare Fee-for-Service (FFS) enrollment process, helping users complete their applications quickly and with confidence. Since its launch in December, there have been over 550 active users and 38 application downloads. We anticipate that uptake of the tool will increase once the list of doula trainings approved by NJ FamilyCare expands later this year as more doulas will be eligible for enrollment.

Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center



Outside Real Estate Counsel – Innovation Center

NJMIHIA continues to advance leasing activities for the Innovation Center. Draft Letters of Intent (LOIs) have been shared with the prospective anchor tenants.

NJMIHIA continues to meet with the tenants to discuss on-going progress on the Center and strategize preparation for occupancy of the Center.

MIHIA Committees

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

NJMIHIA has launched the Community Advisory Committee. Staff met with CAC Chair Andrea Martinez-Mejia and CAC Vice-Chair Shakira Abdul Ali to align on vision and priorities.

NJMIHIA is coordinating an orientation program to familiarize members with the Authority's mission, operations, governance structure, ethics requirements, and communications protocols. Following orientation and training, NJMIHIA will work with the Chair and Vice Chair to establish a meeting schedule and framework that supports the Committee's advisory role.

The CAC will provide a forum for community input and help ensure that NJMIHIA's work is informed by the perspectives and lived experiences of birthing people, parents, caregivers, community-based organizations, and maternal health providers, particularly those serving communities experiencing the highest inequities in maternal and infant outcomes.

Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (MCQC)

Since the May 29, 2026, MCQC meeting, invitations have been sent for five workgroups focused on Clinical Best Practices, Emerging Issues, Innovation, Perinatal Workforce, and Health-Related Social Needs, with meetings scheduled for late July and early August.

MCQC NJ State Maternal Health Innovation Program (NJSMHIP) Grant-Focused Subcommittee

The New Jersey State Maternal Health Innovation Program (NJSMHIP), funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is in year two of its five-year grant cycle, with all initiatives now active, including Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) patient safety bundles, Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO) training, and Perinatal Risk Assessment (PRA) integration. Previously housed within the NJDOH, the New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative serves as the state's Maternal Health Task Force and advises the State Maternal Health Innovation Strategic Plan.



The New Jersey Department of Health is convening a grant-focused subcommittee during September 2026 to support implementation of the New Jersey State Maternal Health Innovation Program (NJSMHIP), provide input on strategic priorities, and review the updated State Maternal Health Innovation Strategic Plan.

Communications

Strategic Communications Plan

NJMIHIA began working with Impact Consulting in November 2025 to develop a comprehensive strategic communications plan. Since that time, staff has participated in multiple planning meetings with the vendor and coordinated stakeholder engagement sessions to help inform development of the plan and ensure alignment with organizational priorities. The final strategic communications plan was issued to NJMIHIA in June 2026.

NJ Temporary Disability and Paid Family Leave Insurance Campaign

NJMIHIA is partnering with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) and a contracted vendor to develop a coordinated, multilingual awareness campaign focused on Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) and Family Leave Insurance (FLI). Launched in early May, the campaign aims to increase awareness and understanding of these benefits among expectant and new parents, particularly in communities experiencing disproportionately poor maternal and infant health outcomes and among individuals with limited English proficiency. Supporting the Administration's maternal and infant health priorities, the campaign promotes awareness of available financial support during pregnancy, postpartum recovery, parent-child bonding, and caregiving. Since the last update, video scripts, character designs, and storyboards have been finalized following feedback from doulas, community members, NJMIHIA, NJDOL, and agency partners, and Positive Solutions has begun animation and voiceover production, with completed videos anticipated in late August.

Press Releases

- On June 23, 2026, NJMIHIA released its [first press announcement](#) highlighting the program's impact and expansion, which generated significant media visibility and coverage across multiple outlets – including [ROI-NJ](#), [Insider NJ](#), [NJ Monitor](#), and on the [GO Trenton!](#) partner site – amplifying awareness of NJMIHIA Rides and its role in improving maternal health access.
- On July 10, 2026, NJMIHIA issued a [press release](#) to commemorate the third Doula Town Hall: The Village Moves Forward. More than 100 attendees participated in networking, facilitated discussions, and resource-sharing focused on expanding access to



high-quality, culturally responsive care throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.

National Breastfeeding Month Calendar

August is National Breastfeeding Month. NJMIHIA is partnering with NJ Supports Breastfeeding and NJ Breastfeeding Coalition to develop a community calendar to commemorate the month. The calendar will include events hosted during the entire month of August. The final calendar will be shared on the NJMIHIA website and social media.

Events

7/9 Doula Town Hall

On July 9, NJMIHIA hosted its third Doula Town Hall: The Village Moves Forward, at the Department of Children and Families' Professional Center in New Brunswick. The event brought together doulas and birth workers from across the state to strengthen connections, share experiences, and discuss opportunities to further advance birth equity and community-based maternal health supports. More than 100 attendees participated in networking, facilitated discussions, and resource-sharing focused on expanding access to high-quality, culturally responsive care throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.

7/23 Doula Graduation

On July 23, NJMIHIA will celebrate the graduation of 30 community-based doulas and 22 facilitators through its Community-Based Doula Training Program marking an important milestone in the Authority's efforts to strengthen New Jersey's perinatal workforce and improve maternal and infant health outcomes statewide.

The graduates completed NJMIHIA's Community-Based Doula Training Program, a statewide workforce development initiative designed to prepare culturally responsive full-spectrum doulas to support families throughout pregnancy, birth, and postpartum recovery.

2026 NJMIHIA Summit

NJMIHIA is preparing to host its first annual Summit later this year, building upon the annual Nurture NJ Summit hosted by former First Lady Tammy Murphy. Planning efforts are underway to shape the event's program, partnerships, and overall vision. With Board approval, NJMIHIA will execute an MOU with the NJ Department of Children and Families to host the 2026 NJMIHIA Summit.



Fiscal Year 2027 Update

Governor Sherrill's First Budget Approval: On June 30, Governor Sherrill signed the FY2027 State Budget into law, approving a fiscal plan that provides record property tax relief, increases the Child Tax Credit, and includes no new taxes on individual New Jerseyans. The enacted budget also authorizes continued funding for essential state operations and programs for the upcoming fiscal year, ensuring continuity of government services without interruption. As part of the FY2027 budget, NJMIHIA received a \$5.2 million line-item appropriation and \$100,000 to implement the doula and midwifery awareness campaign law, signed in 2025. Refer to page 265 of [5327_J1.PDF](#).

The FY2027 budget also reinforces the Administration's commitment to improving maternal and infant health and strengthening support for New Jersey families through investments that align with NJMIHIA's mission, including:

- Continued investments in NJ FamilyCare, providing comprehensive health coverage to more than 1.8 million New Jerseyans, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income adults, and nearly half of the State's children. This budget provides billions in State funding for New Jersey's Medicaid program.
- Increased State support for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) with over \$39 million in State funding to help ensure primary care access across the State, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.
- NJ invests tens of millions to maintain a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$95.
- Continued funding to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, including initiatives to strengthen the perinatal workforce, leverage data to improve care, and promote innovation in maternal health services.
- Expansion of Family Connects NJ, providing voluntary nurse home visits to families with newborns during the critical postpartum period.
- Significant investments supporting families through the Child Tax Credit and \$582 Million in funds for child care assistance, helping improve economic stability and access to affordable care.

These investments complement NJMIHIA's strategic priorities and reinforce the State's continued commitment to advancing equitable maternal and infant health outcomes across New Jersey.

Additional Projects

Community Health Worker (CHW) Pilot



The Community Health Worker (CHW) Pilot, led by Trenton Health Team in partnership with Capital Health, was recently awarded a NJDOH Rural Health Transformation grant. NJMIHIA provided a letter of support to continue the CHW Pilot program.

The pilot embeds CHWs in an OB/GYN practice to link clinical care with community-based support. CHWs are helping families address social needs and coordinate services from early pregnancy. To date, the pilot has enrolled 71 families and connected them to 357 unique services from July 2025 to May 2026, with the average client connected to more than four services. The top areas included general supplies, food, benefits navigation, and access to specialty healthcare. Capacity is also expanding with the addition of a Spanish-speaking CHW and a Haitian Creole-speaking CHW forthcoming. These results are informing the design and operational planning of the Innovation Center, allowing NJMIHIA to refine workflows and systems ahead of launch.

NJMIHIA Rides Powered by GoTrenton! and Isles

NJMIHIA Rides, powered by GoTrenton! and Isles, continues to expand as a vital transportation support for pregnant and perinatal workforce members, with free rides extended through December 31, 2026. Launched in December 2025 to improve access to medical appointments, workforce services, government offices, and other essential destinations. To meet increasing demand, GoTrenton! expanded service on May 15, 2026, by adding vehicles, drivers, and new service zones in West Hamilton and Southern Ewing, further strengthening access across Mercer County.

June 2026 data continue to reflect this growth, with nearly 1,020 rides serving almost 1,450 passengers under NJMIHIA codes during the month alone, demonstrating sustained increases in utilization as awareness and reach of the program continue to expand. DOL has recently worked to expand the rides program to include additional service areas, allowing riders to access additional resources and service needs. See Table A-2 in Appendix A for the list of additional service areas.

Sheila Y. Oliver Foundation Legacy Brunch (July 25, 2026)

President and CEO Lisa Asare has been selected as a Legacy Brunch honoree in recognition of her leadership and service. Inspired by the late Lieutenant Governor, Sheila Y. Oliver's legacy of leadership, compassion, and service, this event will honor women across New Jersey who are driving meaningful change and lifting others as they rise.



Appendix

Appendix A.

- **Table A-1.** Snapshot of GLOW Grant Organization, Project Description, County
- **Table A-2:** Appendix A Update – Expanded Service Area and Eligible Transportation Destinations

Table A-1. Snapshot of GLOW Grant Organization, Project Description, County

Organization	Project Description	County	Region
A Work of Heart Counseling	A Work of Heart Counseling will enhance perinatal mental health services through provider training and expanded direct support for pregnant and postpartum individuals. The project includes workforce development, support groups, psychoeducational workshops, and access to evidence-based mental health care.	Bergen County	North
Abounding Love Doula	The Abounding Love Workforce & Wellness Expansion Initiative strengthens New Jersey's doula workforce through advanced training, mentorship, and agency infrastructure development. The project also provides community wellness workshops to increase awareness of maternal mental health resources and doula services.	Camden County	South
Across the Spectrum Doula	The Glow Grant Perinatal Professional Development Project provides culturally responsive training, mentorship, and continuing education for doulas and perinatal professionals in South Jersey. The program focuses on workforce development, leadership growth, and reducing disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes.	Gloucester County	South

Aim Habonim	Yad Rachel will expand perinatal mental health education, outreach, and support services in Ocean County. The initiative focuses on increasing awareness of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, strengthening referral pathways, and connecting families to culturally responsive care and resources.	Ocean County	South
Baby, Please Birth Services Agency LLC	The New Jersey Doula Workforce Expansion Initiative will recruit, train, certify, and mentor 35 new doulas serving Essex, Union, and Hudson counties. By providing scholarships and workforce support, the project increases access to culturally competent birth support in underserved communities.	Essex County	North
Bloom Baby LLC	The Bloom Baby Sustain & Serve Toolkit supports early- and mid-career doulas through mentorship, digital learning, reflective supervision, and hands-on skill development. The project aims to strengthen workforce retention and expand access to high-quality perinatal care for Medicaid-enrolled families across Northern New Jersey.	Passaic County	North
Healthy People Worldwide Inc	Bump Journey is a technology-enabled maternal navigation program that supports Medicaid-eligible pregnant and postpartum women through digital screening, risk assessment, and community health worker navigation. The initiative strengthens continuity of care and improves access to maternal health resources and referrals.	Union County	North
Hey Black Dad	This initiative promotes maternal and infant health by strengthening paternal engagement during the perinatal period. Through father-focused research, provider education workshops, and breastfeeding support resources, the project aims to improve family outcomes and increase father involvement in maternal care.	Mercer County	Central
Hey Mama Lactation and Perinatal	LATCHED is a culturally responsive doula workforce development program that trains doulas to provide evidence-based support to Black families. The initiative integrates lactation support, perinatal mental health, advocacy, and health equity training while offering mentorship and hands-on learning opportunities.	Camden County	South

Medifvu	Medifvu will enhance its AI-powered maternal mental health platform, Melissa, by adding voice capabilities and a mobile application. The project will also conduct a clinical trial to evaluate the platform's effectiveness in supporting maternal mental health and connecting patients to appropriate care.	Somerset County	Central
Reimagine Mind	The Perinatal Collaborative Impact Certification project will develop and pilot an interdisciplinary training program that improves collaboration among perinatal care professionals. Through standardized tools, shared-care protocols, and trauma-informed training, the initiative aims to reduce care fragmentation and improve maternal safety.	Essex County	North
SmartBody LLC DBA CrossCare Tech	CrossCare Concierge is an AI-powered maternal health companion app that provides personalized, culturally responsive support based on social determinants of health. The platform combines symptom tracking, educational resources, and care coordination tools to improve maternal health outcomes and support informed decision-making.	Bergen County	North
Stateam LLC	The NJ Lactation Support Digital Toolkit is a technology-based platform that combines lactation tracking, tele-lactation services, peer support, and care coordination tools. The project seeks to improve breastfeeding outcomes and reduce maternal health disparities through enhanced postpartum support and data-driven care.	Mercer County	Central
Take Care of You	Take Care of You will deliver self-paced maternal health education modules covering conditions such as preeclampsia, diabetes, anemia, pelvic floor health, and dehydration. The program is designed to improve early recognition of maternal health risks and strengthen culturally responsive support and referral practices.	Union County	North
The Wow Center	The Maternal & Infant Occupational Therapy Continuum Initiative expands prenatal and postpartum occupational therapy services through education, maternal recovery support, infant development guidance, and mental health screening. The project aims to improve maternal well-being and infant	Camden County	South



	outcomes through coordinated care and referral pathways.		
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Table A-2: Appendix A Update – Expanded Service Area and Eligible Transportation Destinations

Eligible Transportation Destinations	Provide free rides in Mercer County to transport pregnant persons and the perinatal workforce to but not limited to: • Doctor's appointments • Educational classes • Grocery shopping • Pharmacy visits • Welfare • SNAP • Workforce Board • Place of Employment to perinatal sites • Daycare centers • Workforce development training facilities • Farms and farmers markets • Financial institutions • Fitness centers and recreational facilities • Public Parks • Place of residency
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Attachment: Memorandum to the Board re: Creation of the NJMIHIA Grants for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health (G.L.O.W.) Program and NJMIHIA G.L.O.W. Academy



NJMIHIA
New Jersey Maternal
and Infant Health
Innovation Authority

Press Releases



NJMIHIA Rides Expands Services in Greater Trenton Area for Families and the Perinatal Workforce

More Than 1,600 Free Rides to Healthcare and other Social Services Completed in First Six Months

Trenton, NJ – June 23, 2026 – The New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) today announced the early impacts and expansion of NJMIHIA Rides, powered by [GOTrenton!](#). This community-centered transportation initiative in and around Trenton is designed to help remove accessibility barriers for pregnant and postpartum individuals and the perinatal workforce.

Launched on December 1, 2025, NJMIHIA Rides is a partnership between NJMIHIA, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE), the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), GOTrenton!, and Isles, a Trenton-based community development organization. The program provides free, zero-emission rides, helping improve access to healthcare, employment, social services, and other essential community resources. Under the current partnership, free rides for pregnant and postpartum individuals and members of the perinatal workforce will continue through December 31, 2026.

Transportation is a critical social driver of health and a well-documented barrier to accessing care. NJMIHIA Rides was developed as a special program within GOTrenton! to help ensure pregnant persons and the perinatal workforce can more easily reach medical appointments, workforce services, government offices, and other destinations that support health and wellbeing throughout pregnancy and the postpartum period.

In May, GOTrenton! expanded its service capacity and coverage area by increasing the number of vehicles and drivers and adding new service zones, including West Hamilton and Southern Ewing. The expansion increases access to healthcare facilities, employment centers, and other critical community resources in Mercer County.

“Every family deserves the opportunity to access the care, services, and support they need to thrive. Programs like NJMIHIA Rides help remove practical barriers that too often stand between families and vital resources,” **said Governor Mikie Sherrill**. “By expanding access to healthcare, employment, and community services, we are strengthening support systems for mothers, babies, and families while advancing our commitment to healthier and more equitable outcomes across New Jersey.”



Since its launch in December 2025, NJMIHIA Rides has provided over 1,600 rides for over 2,100 passengers throughout Trenton. Awareness and utilization of the program have grown significantly in recent months, with over 900 rides servicing over 1,200 passengers occurring during April and May 2026 alone.

“Transportation should never be the reason someone misses a prenatal appointment, cannot access essential services, or faces barriers to providing care,” **said NJMIHIA President and CEO Lisa Asare.** “NJMIHIA Rides demonstrates how practical, community-centered solutions can help strengthen access to care, support family wellbeing, and improve health outcomes.”

Participants reported exceptionally high satisfaction rates, with average satisfaction scores of 4.93 out of 5 among pregnant and postpartum riders and 5 out of 5 among perinatal workforce participants.

Capital Health Regional Medical Center was among the top destinations used throughout the program. Riders’ use of the service to access healthcare resources reflects the initiative’s role in helping residents stay connected to essential services and opportunities throughout the community.

"When we have healthy mothers, we have a healthy workforce," **said NJDOL Acting Commissioner Kevin D. Jarvis.** "No one should miss a maternity appointment because they can't afford transportation. NJMIHIA Rides removes this barrier with free, reliable rides for mothers, babies, and the workers who care for our families. We're proud to be part of this partnership that improves access to critical healthcare and helps birth workers provide essential care and build sustainable careers."

“Ensuring our transportation system is addressing service deserts and increasing connections to healthcare, employment, education and community resources for traditionally underserved communities is especially important,” **NJDOT Commissioner Priya Jain said.** “The NJDOT is proud to be a partner for the NJMIHIA Rides Program and its demonstration of how transportation investments can make a real difference in our communities.”

“At GOTrenton!, we know that reliable transportation isn't just about moving people—it is a critical component of health,” **said Kep Short, Director, GOTrenton! EV Rideshare.** “By expanding our zero-emission fleet into parts of Ewing and Hamilton, this partnership ensures that expecting mothers and perinatal workers can seamlessly access critical healthcare, employment, and essential services. Isles and GOTrenton! are proud to continue our collaboration with NJMIHIA to break down transit barriers and drive healthier, more sustainable outcomes for our community.”

"We're proud to partner with Isles and Governor Sherrill's Administration to support innovative programs like GOTrenton!, and to build out an equitable transportation system," **said Mercer**



County Executive Dan Benson. “No pregnant mother should ever miss an appointment due to lack of transportation, and this ongoing partnership with NJMIHIA is just one example of how GoTrenton! can deliver for those in need.”

About NJMIHIA Rides

NJMIHIA Rides, powered by GoTrenton!, provides free, zero-emission transportation for pregnant and postpartum individuals and members of the perinatal workforce in Trenton. The program helps remove barriers and improve access to healthcare, social services, employment, education, and other essential community resources that support maternal and infant health.

The program is supported by New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, New Jersey Department of Transportation, GoTrenton!, and Isles, Inc.

About GoTrenton!

GoTrenton! is a community-driven initiative led by Isles, Inc. that provides affordable, reliable electric vehicle transportation throughout Trenton. The program expands access to jobs, healthcare, food, and essential services while promoting workforce development, sustainability, and cleaner transportation options for residents.

About Isles

Founded in 1981, Isles is a non-profit organization that offers interconnected services with a single goal: creating healthy communities and environments necessary for individuals to grow and thrive. Over more than 45 years, Isles has served tens of thousands of people in Trenton, Mercer County, and beyond. Learn more at isles.org.

About the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

The New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) empowers the village that supports the health and wellbeing of all mothers and babies through transformative partnerships and community-rooted innovation. As the first state authority of its kind in the nation, NJMIHIA works to strengthen the maternal and infant health ecosystem through cross-sector collaboration, workforce development, community engagement, innovation, and strategic investments designed to improve outcomes and advance equity for families across New Jersey.



NJMIHIA Convenes Doulas and Birth Workers from Across New Jersey for The Village Moves Forward Doula Town Hall

Statewide gathering strengthens collaboration, elevates community voice, and advances maternal and infant health across New Jersey

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (July 10, 2026) — The New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) convened doulas, birth workers, community leaders, and maternal health advocates from across the state on July 9 for *The Village Moves Forward*, a statewide Doula Town Hall focused on strengthening collaboration, advancing birth equity, and supporting healthier outcomes for New Jersey families.

Held in New Brunswick, the town hall created a space for participants to connect, share experiences, identify challenges and opportunities, and help shape solutions that strengthen community-based maternal health support systems. More than 100 attendees participated in networking, facilitated discussions, and resource-sharing focused on expanding access to high-quality, culturally responsive care throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.

“Doulas are trusted partners in improving maternal and infant health outcomes and advancing more equitable care for families across New Jersey,” **said Lisa Asare, NJMIHIA President and CEO.** “*The Village Moves Forward* reflects our commitment to listening to the birth workers who support families every day. Their lived experiences, expertise, and leadership help inform stronger policies, programs, and partnership that improve maternal and infant health outcomes statewide.”

The event is part of NJMIHIA’s quarterly Doula Town Hall series, hosted in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJDOH). The series supports NJMIHIA’s broader efforts to strengthen the perinatal workforce, foster community-rooted innovation, and ensure that the voices of doulas and birth workers help shape maternal and infant health initiatives across the state. Since the series launched in January, more than 220 perinatal workers have participated in the town halls, reflecting growing interest in collaboration, shared learning, and community engagement.

Participants explored topics including workforce development, sustainability of doula services, access to care, cross-sector collaboration, community partnerships, and strategies to advance birth equity throughout New Jersey.

“Doulas deliver essential insights and expertise that New Jersey needs to continue improving maternal and infant health outcomes,” **said Dr. Raynard E. Washington, NJDOH Commissioner.**



“They build trust, expand access to care, and provide critical support throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Town halls like this one ensure their perspectives keep shaping our work.”

The town hall also reinforced the importance of collaboration among state agencies, healthcare providers, community-based organizations, and birth workers to ensure families have access to coordinated, culturally-responsive care and support.

“Every family deserves access to the support and resources needed for a healthy start,” **said Dr. Stephen Cha, NJDHS Commissioner.** “Doulas play an essential role in connecting families to care, navigating services, and advocating for their needs during one of life's most important transitions. By supporting and investing in this workforce, we strengthen the continuum of care and help improve outcomes for mothers, babies, and families across New Jersey.”

Feedback gathered during the town hall will help inform future NJMIHIA initiatives and strengthen statewide efforts to improve maternal and infant health through community-driven innovation and cross-sector collaboration.

The next town hall will be on October 8 at 12PM. See [here](#) for more information.



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY
P. O. Box 101
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08608-0101

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

Lisa A. Asare
President & CEO

MEMORANDUM

To: Board Members of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority ("NJMIHIA")

From: Lisa Asare, President and Chief Executive Officer

Date: November 14, 2025

Re: Creation of the NJMIHIA Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health ("GLOW") and NJMIHIA GLOW Academy ("Academy")

Summary

NJMIHIA Board Members are asked to approve:

- The creation of a NJMIHIA non-discretionary first-in-first-out grant program ("Program"), available to for-profit businesses and non-profit community-based organizations ("CBOs") providing birth support training services (e.g. doula, midwife, community health worker, or lactation training) in the State of New Jersey. A maximum of 15 grants will be awarded across New Jersey, with an intentional focus on regional equity. Grants will be distributed geographically as follows: five (5) in Northern New Jersey, which includes the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, and Warren; five (5) in Central New Jersey, covering Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset counties; and five (5) in Southern New Jersey, which includes Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem counties. This distribution is designed to ensure statewide impact and support organizations serving diverse communities across all regions. If there are fewer than 5 applicants in any geographic region NJMIHIA reserves the right to redistribute the remaining funds to any other geographic region. The Program will consist of two components for awardees:
 - a. GLOW Grant (Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health): Provides funding to support projects that advance NJMIHIA's strategic initiatives described below; and
 - b. GLOW Academy: A mentorship program designed to strengthen awardees' programmatic efforts and overall operational capacity.
- Authorization to allocate \$1 million from the New Jersey FY26 State Appropriation Act to NJMIHIA for the creation of the following: NJMIHIA GLOW Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health ("GLOW") - A total of \$750,000 of the \$1 million in program funds shall be distributed as fifteen (15) grants of \$50,000 each, to eligible entities that meet established

program criteria. Funds must be used to implement activities that advance NJMIHIA's strategic initiatives for maternal and infant health, specifically:

- a. Community Engagement – Supporting the development and dissemination of a standardized community engagement toolkit for maternal and infant health programs in New Jersey.
 - b. Innovation – Promoting technology-based solutions that support informed patient decision making;
 - c. Mental Health Support - Expanding access to the Perinatal Mental Health programming for clinical and non-clinical professionals; or
 - d. Workforce Engagement - Expanding access to midwifery, doula, community health workers, and lactation professional development training that support mothers in the perinatal period (Expanding training, building capacity of programming, marketing, technical, licensure).
- NJMIHIA GLOW Academy (“Academy”) Up to 25% (\$250,000) of the \$1 million may be allocated for the development and programming of the GLOW Academy, a mentorship initiative designed to strengthen awardees’ programmatic efforts and overall operational capacity. This allocation will support NJMIHIA’s ability to execute the Academy and collaborate with state and national technical assistance partners.
 - Authorization of the President and Chief Executive Officer to make all approval and decline decisions for non-discretionary reasons in accordance with the terms set forth in the Notice of Funding Availability.
 - Authorization for NJMIHIA’s Chief of Innovation to handle any appeals of grant decisions made the President and Chief Executive Officer.
 - Authorization of the President and Chief Executive Officer to finalize the Notice of Funding Availability and Grant Agreements.
 - Authorization of the President and Chief Executive Officer to sign all grant documents as needed.

I. Background & Overview

In 2019, Nurture NJ was launched as a Statewide initiative lead by First Lady Tammy Murphy, with the goal of reducing the maternal and infant mortality epidemic in New Jersey and ensuring equitable care among women and children of all races and ethnicities.

In July 2023, Governor Murphy signed the *New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center Act*, establishing the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA). NJMIHIA’s mission is to ensure that all mothers in New Jersey receive the support they need for a healthy pregnancy and birth. The NJMIHIA focuses on eliminating racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality and advancing equitable access to perinatal and infant

care. To achieve this, NJMIHIA supports strengthening local healthcare systems and community-based organizations and businesses to enhance social service delivery, research and innovation, perinatal workforce development, and promote public awareness efforts.

In advancement of its mission, NJMIHIA staff propose the creation of a NJMIHIA non-discretionary Program, available to for-profit businesses and non-profit CBOs providing birth support training services (e.g. doula, midwife, community health worker, or lactation training) in the State of New Jersey. A maximum of fifteen (15) fixed grants of \$50,000 will be awarded across New Jersey, with an intentional focus on regional equity. Grants will be distributed geographically as follows: five (5) in Northern New Jersey, which includes the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, and Warren; five (5) in Central New Jersey, covering Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset counties; and five (5) in Southern New Jersey, which includes Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem counties. This distribution is designed to ensure statewide impact and support organizations serving diverse communities across all regions. If there are fewer than 5 applicants in any geographic region NJMIHIA reserves the right to redistribute the remaining funds to any other geographic region. The Program consists of two key components for awardees:

- a. GLOW Grant (Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women’s Health): Provides funding to support projects that advance NJMIHIA’s strategic initiatives; and
- b. GLOW Academy: A mentorship program designed to strengthen awardees’ programmatic efforts and overall operational capacity.

II. NJMIHIA GLOW Grant and GLOW Academy Funding Source

The NJMIHIA GLOW Grant and the GLOW Academy will be funded using \$1 million from the New Jersey FY26 State Appropriation Act. This amount will be drawn from the additional \$2 million in FY26 funding that was added to the NJMIHIA appropriation and previously earmarked for “Nurture NJ.” This amount will be allocated toward the creation of the following initiatives:

- a. NJMIHIA GLOW Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women’s Health (“GLOW”) Up to 75% (\$750,000) of the \$1 million may be allocated to fund grant awards.
- b. NJMIHIA GLOW Academy (“Academy”) Up to 25% (\$250,000) of the \$1 million may be allocated for the development and programming of the GLOW Academy, a mentorship initiative designed to strengthen awardees’ programmatic efforts and overall operational capacity. This allocation will support NJMIHIA’s ability to execute the Academy and collaborate with state and national technical assistance partners.

III. Eligibility Requirements and Restrictions

1. Applicants must be for profit business entities or non-profit CBOs that provide birth support training services in New Jersey – such as doula, midwife or lactation training.
2. Entities may collaborate with additional entities – public, private or non-profit – as needed to implement the proposed project.
3. At the time of application, entities must be one of the following:
 - a. Non-profit organizations with official 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status recognized by the IRS; or

- b. For-profit business entities (e.g., LLCs, corporations) must be registered and in good standing with the State of New Jersey.
- 4. Entities must have been in operation for a minimum of three (3) years as evidenced by a New Jersey Certificate of Formation or equivalent document.
- 5. Applicants must have either an annual operating budget of \$250,000.00 or less for the most recent fiscal year. (Note: State and federal grant awards not included in this calculation); or not more than 10 full-time equivalent (“FTE”) workers (FTE is calculated on a 35-hour work week) at time of application.
- 6. Applicants must provide one letter of support from a government agency, for-profit entity, non-profit organization, healthcare institution, research partner or philanthropic partner as proof of active engagement in birth support training services or programming in birth support training services.
- 7. Entities with existing contracts with NJMIHIA are not eligible to apply.
- 8. Entities with NJMIHIA Board Members or NJMIHIA employees serving on their Board of Directors are not eligible to apply.
- 9. Only one application per entity is permitted. Multiple applications from the same entity and Employer Identification Number (EIN) will not be accepted. In the event multiple applications are submitted by the same entity or under the same Employer Identification Number (EIN), the applications, NJMIHIA will notify the applicant in writing, and the applicant shall have ten (10) business days from the date of such notice to identify which application shall be retained for consideration and to withdraw all other submissions. Failure to cure within the prescribed timeframe will result in all applications being deemed ineligible for further consideration or the award of a grant.

IV. Application Process and Approval

To qualify for funding, applicants must meet all the criteria listed in the applicants and Restrictions section of this document and submit all of the Application Requirements. Applications will be reviewed in the order received. Grant awards will be made on a first-in, first-out basis, subject to eligibility and completeness of required documentation.

All required documentation must be submitted at the time of application. Incomplete applications or those missing required documentation will be deemed ineligible and will not hold a place in the application queue.

The Program will be available for applications for six months, or until the total funding pool is exhausted (whichever is sooner).

V. Application Requirements

The Program will accept applications through the State’s SAGE portal.

As part of the application, the NJMIHIA will request supporting documentation which may include, but is not limited to:

1. New Jersey Certificate of Formation or equivalent document.
2. One letter of support from a government agency, for-profit entity, non-profit organization, healthcare institution, research partner or philanthropic partner as proof of active engagement in birth support training services or programming in birth support training services.
3. For collaborating partners, either a letter of support or Memorandum of Understanding.
4. Applicant must upload a Board of Directors list and sign a conflict-of-interest attestation, to be provided.
5. NJ Tax Clearance Certificate (dated within the last six months).
6. Annual Audit Report and/or tax return, as applicable.
7. IRS Determination Letter and NJ Charities Registration Letter, as applicable.
8. Most recent NJ WR-30 (W2 employees) or 1099s (contractors)
9. Attestation confirming that only one application is being submitted per EIN.

VI. Application Review Process

- The NJMIHIA will conduct an initial review of all applications for completeness in the order they are received.
- The NJMIHIA will screen for existing contracts with applicants.
- The date of submission will be determined by when a complete application is received through the SAGE portal.
- Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible until all required documentation is provided. Once completed, the application will be placed in the queue based on the date of final submission.

An applicant submitting an incomplete application shall be permitted a 10 business-day cure period from the date NJMIHIA notifies the applicant in writing of the application deficiencies. Incomplete applications that fail to be cured within the permitted time will be rejected as incomplete without being evaluated by the review committee. At the sole discretion of the NJMIHIA, staff may ask for clarification of the information included in the application, including but not limited to narrative responses, supporting documentation, and attachments. Applicants have the ability to withdraw from the application process at any time.

VII. Eligible Expenses

GLOW Grant funding must be used to support projects that advance the following strategic initiatives:

1. Community Engagement – Supporting the development and dissemination of a standardized community engagement toolkit for maternal and infant health programs in New Jersey;
2. Innovation – Promoting technology-based solutions that support informed patient decision making;
3. Mental Health Support -Expanding access to the Perinatal Mental Health programming for clinical and non-clinical professionals; or
4. Workforce Engagement - Expanding access to midwifery, doula, community health workers, and lactation professional development training that support mothers in the perinatal period (Expanding training, building capacity of programming, marketing, technical, licensure).

Eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Program Implementation Costs

Expenses directly tied to delivering training programs or services:

- Trainer/facilitator fees
- Curriculum development or adaptation
- Materials and supplies for training
- Technology platforms or software licenses used to deliver training
- Costs related to Perinatal Mental Health First Aid training

Community Engagement and Outreach

Expenses that support outreach to underserved or priority populations:

- Development and distribution of outreach materials
- Community event expenses (note that this does not include expenses related to fundraising).
- Transportation or childcare services to increase community participation
- Translation or interpretation services for public-facing materials

Technology and Innovation

Expenses to promote technology-based solutions:

- Development or customization of digital tools to support informed maternal health decision-making
- Mobile app or website development to disseminate training or community engagement resources
- Purchases directly related to the grantees' service delivery (e.g., tablets, projectors, video equipment)

Personnel and Staffing

Salaries or stipends for staff directly involved in the execution of the proposed project:

- Project manager, program coordinator, or grant administrator
- Training staff
- Outreach workers or community health workers (CHWs) (*Note: Only costs tied to the grant-supported activities are eligible; general overhead or unrelated administrative salaries are not allowed.*)

Evaluation and Data Collection

To measure the effectiveness and impact of funded activities:

- Pre/post surveys, data analysis, or reporting tools
- Consultant fees for evaluation design or facilitation
- Subscription fees for data collection platforms

Toolkit Development

Costs related to the creation or dissemination of a community engagement toolkit, including:

- Research, writing, or design of toolkit content
- Pilot testing or focus groups
- Printing and distribution costs
- Multimedia content creation

VIII. Ineligible Uses

The following expense categories are ineligible for funding by this grant:

- Lobbying or political activity
- General operating expenses not tied to the funded project
- Debt repayment or loan refinancing
- Capital improvements or major renovations
- Alcohol, entertainment, or fundraising costs
- Salary or stipends for individuals not involved in the project
- Duplicative expenses already covered by other state/federal grants
- Real estate rental expenses
- Construction costs

IV. Delegated Authority

The NJMIHIA GLOW is structured as a non-discretionary, first-in, first-out grant program. In alignment with this structure, all grant applications will be reviewed in the order they are received via the State’s SAGE portal. Funding will be awarded based solely on eligibility and completeness, without any scoring or discretionary evaluation.

To ensure consistency, transparency, and compliance with program guidelines, the following criteria will be used by the NJMIHIA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to approve or deny grant awards:

Approval Criteria

A grant will be approved if the application:

Is Complete

- All required documents are submitted through the SAGE portal, including necessary attestations and signatures.

Meets Eligibility Requirements

- Is a nonprofit CBO or for-profit entity providing birth support training services (e.g., doula, midwife, or lactation training) in New Jersey
- Has been in operation for at least three (3) years
- Has a principal place of business in New Jersey

- Has an annual operating budget of \$250,000 or less (excluding state and federal grant awards) or has between one (1) and ten (10) full-time equivalent (FTE) workers
- Is not under contract with NJMIHIA
- Has no current NJMIHIA Board Member, staff member, on its Board of Directors
- Submits only one application per EIN

Provides Required Documentation, including, but not limited to:

- NJ Business Registration Certificate
- NJ Tax Clearance Certificate (dated within the last six months)
- IRS Determination Letter and NJ Charitable Registration (if nonprofit)
- Evidence of operations (e.g., certificate of formation)
- WR-30 or 1099 forms for FTE verification
- Conflict of interest and single-application attestations
- Letter of support as proof of prior relevant work

Falls Within Available Funding

- Application is received and deemed eligible before allocated funds are fully expended

Denial Criteria

A grant will be denied if:

- The application is incomplete or missing required documentation
- The applicant is ineligible under any of the defined criteria
- There is a conflict of interest, including a prohibited affiliation with NJMIHIA Board, staff
- The applicant has an existing contract with NJMIHIA
- The applicant submits multiple applications under the same EIN, and fails to cure the defect within the prescribed 10-day period.
- Available funds have been exhausted at the time of application review

Review Process and CEO Authority

- Applications will be reviewed and processed in the order received through the SAGE portal.
- The date of submission will be recorded as the date a complete application is received.
- The CEO is authorized to approve or deny awards in accordance with the criteria above and will document all decisions using a standardized review checklist. Appeal decisions will be made by NJMHIA's Chief of Innovation.
- All decisions will be retained in NJMIHIA records and communicated to applicants in writing.

VIII. Awards

Each grant award will total \$50,000.00 disbursed in two payments following the execution of the Grant Agreement and upon meeting of milestones and deliverables, including attendance of the NJMIHIA GLOW Academy. As stated, grants will be awarded on a rolling basis until all available funds are exhausted.

IX. Compliance Term

The compliance term for this grant will be 12 months post the executed grant agreement date. Awardees are not allowed to sell or transfer license of their business for 12 months following the award date.

Recommendation

NJMIHIA Board Members are asked to approve:

- The creation of a NJMIHIA non-discretionary first-in-first-out grant program (“Program”), available to for-profit businesses and non-profit community-based organizations (“CBOs”) providing birth support training services (e.g. doula, midwife, community health worker, or lactation training) in the State of New Jersey. A maximum of 15 grants will be awarded across New Jersey, with an intentional focus on regional equity. Grants will be distributed geographically as follows: five (5) in Northern New Jersey, which includes the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union, and Warren; five (5) in Central New Jersey, covering Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset counties; and five (5) in Southern New Jersey, which includes Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem counties. This distribution is designed to ensure statewide impact and support organizations serving diverse communities across all regions. If there are fewer than 5 applicants in any geographic region NJMIHIA reserves the right to redistribute the remaining funds to any other geographic region. The Program will consist of two components for awardees:
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 - Authorization of the President and Chief Executive Officer to finalize the Notice of Funding Availability and Grant Agreements.
 - Authorization of the President and Chief Executive Officer to sign all grant documents as needed.

Lisa Asare

Lisa Asare, President and CEO
NJ Maternal and Infant Health
Innovation Authority

Attachment: NJMIHIA GLOW Grant Pilot Program Specifications



State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY
P. O. Box 101
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08608-0101

Lisa A. Asare
President & CEO

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL
Lt. Governor

NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting March 25, 2026

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (NJMIHIA) held on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 10:00 AM Daylight Savings Time.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE

Ex-officio Members

Dr. Raynard Washington, Commissioner of Health

Tara Colton, representing CEO of NJEDA

Dr. Stephen Cha, Commissioner of Department of Human Services

Vineeta Kapahi, representing Commissioner of Human Services, for the voting portion of this meeting

Trish Wallace, representing Commissioner of Banking and Insurance

Lenore Scott, representing Commissioner of Children and Families

Angela Bethea, representing Secretary of Higher Education

Holly Low, representing Commissioner of Labor

Public Members

Barbara George-Johnson

Shakira Abdul-Ali ¹

Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji

Andrea Martinez-Mejia

Maritza Raimundi-Petroski

¹ Shakira Abdul-Ali missed the roll call but joined the meeting prior to the consideration of matters requiring action.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES

Lisa Asare, President & CEO, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority
Roza Dabaghyan, Deputy Attorney General, Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Law

Eric Carlsson, Chief Financial Officer, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Laura Wilton, Chief of Corporate Governance, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Mahako Etta, Chief of Innovation, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Catherine Terrero, Executive Assistant, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Cindy Cortez, Administrative Assistant, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Pamela Taylor, MCQC Program Manager, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

Gabrielle Louis, Doula Program Management Officer, NJ Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

NJMIHIA Staff

President & CEO Asare called the meeting to order and announced that the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (MIHIA) was in compliance with the provisions of the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided in the manner prescribed by law.

President & CEO Asare took roll call and welcomed representatives from the Governor's Authorities Unit, and the Office of the Attorney General.

Chair Barbara George Johnson presided over the meeting with Cindy Cortez keeping the minutes.

Chair update

Chair Barbara George Johnson addressed the Board and thanked Governor Sherrill for the opportunity to continue serving as NJMIHIA Board Chair. She also congratulated Dr. Raynard Washington, Commissioner of the Department of Health, on his appointment as Vice Chair and invited him to offer remarks. Vice Chair Dr. Washington expressed enthusiasm for the work ahead and a strong commitment to advancing efforts to close gaps in maternal and infant health.

Chair George Johnson also commended NJMIHIA on the release of its second Annual Report, highlighting the Authority's 2025 milestones, partnerships, and progress. The Board will vote to approve the report, after which it will be submitted to the Legislature and posted on the NJMIHIA website.

President & CEO Statement

President & CEO Asare addressed the Board and reflected on another year of progress, partnerships and commitment to maternal health and community. President & CEO Asare advised that NJMIHIA staff will be highlighting key updates included in the Annual Report.

President & CEO Asare updated the Board on NJMIHIA's strategic planning process, guided by the Center for Health Care Strategies. The Authority has recently identified four strategic priorities: Community Mobilization, State Engagement, the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center, and Public-Private Partnerships and Resource Diversification.

President & CEO Asare also welcomed NJMIHIA Doula Program Management Officer Gabrielle Louis, who provided updates on the Community-Based Doula Training Program. The Authority is actively training participants, convening doulas through quarterly town halls, and elevating the voices of professionals who support mothers and families every day. Key highlights include stakeholder engagement to design the training program, hiring NJMIHIA community-based doulas to support the pilot and mentor trainees, launching the program, and graduating the first cohort. Two essential tools—the NJ Doula Assistant Tool and the NJ FamilyCare Approval Packet—were launched in partnership with NJMIHIA's sister agencies: the New Jersey Innovation Authority, Department of Human Services, and Department of Health.

Ms. Louis also shared that NJMIHIA hosted its first Doula Town Hall in January 2026 and launched its Train-the-Trainer Program in February. She announced that the second Doula Town Hall will be held on April 9, 2026, at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Ms. Louis welcomed NJMIHIA Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (MCQC) Program Manager Pamela Taylor, who provided key updates across the Authority's innovation programs. NJMIHIA recently launched the Grant for Lasting Outcomes in Women's Health (G.L.O.W.) Program and hosted an informational webinar attended by more than 100 participants.

Ms. Taylor also shared updates on the Community Health Worker (CHW) pilot, led by Trenton Health Team in partnership with Capital Health. From July 2025 through February 2026, the pilot enrolled 59 participants and connected them to 217 services, including 61 services delivered in February alone. CHWs have received specialized training in postpartum support, safe sleep, and lactation, equipping them to deliver high-quality, culturally responsive care.

Another key initiative is the NJMIHIA Rides program, which provides free, sustainable, zero-emission rideshare transportation for pregnant and postpartum individuals, as well as members of the perinatal workforce in Trenton. To date, 554 rides have been completed, including 311 in February alone—281 for pregnant and postpartum participants and 17 for perinatal workforce members. Ms. Taylor also announced that GOTrenton plans to expand the service area to include Southern Ewing and West Hamilton, increasing access to healthcare, employment centers, food retailers, and other essential community resources.

Ms. Taylor also announced that the MCQC workgroups continue to meet to discuss pressing maternal and infant health matters, craft recommendations and provide subject matter expertise. The next MCQC meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 29, 2026.

Next, NJMIHIA Director of External Affairs and Policy, Maria Del Cid-Kosso, shared information on the 2026 Black Maternal Health Week (BMWH) calendar, noting this year's theme is "Rooted in Justice and Joy", and highlighting that it features more than 60 community

events statewide. Ms. Del Cid-Kosso also announced that NJMHIA is partnering with the Children's Home Society of NJ to present its second Community Film Screening on April 14 in Trenton.

Lastly, Ms. Del Cid-Kosso presented, "Welcome Home: A Nurse Visit for Every New Baby", a short film produced by BBC StoryWorks for the Burke Foundation. The film highlights Family Connects NJ (FCNJ), New Jersey's universal nurse home visitation program that offers every family with a newborn, a free visit from a specially trained nurse during the critical first weeks after birth. Since launching in 2024, the program has completed over 10,000 visits statewide, with 18% of families receiving a referral for a significant infant or maternal health concern, or caregiver well-being concern. FCNJ is currently operating in 17 of 21 counties and plans to expand statewide by 2027.

Lastly, President & CEO Lisa Asare opened the floor for questions.

Chair George Johnson commended the FCNJ program and their efforts to expand statewide to ensure that every NJ mother and baby have access to critical healthcare.

Chair George Johnson and Public Member Shakira Abdul-Ali also expressed their interest in the evaluation of the programs and their impact on maternal morbidity in the state.

Public member Dr. Campbell-Oparaji inquired about the NJMIHIA Community-Based Doula Training Program, metrics for the NJMIHIA Rides program, and county-level engagement for the FCNJ program. President & CEO Asare reported that the Doula Training Program has graduated its first cohort and is currently mentoring graduates to support their transition into the perinatal workforce.

Regarding the NJMIHIA Rides program, Public Policy Specialist Sofia Bonsignore shared that GOTrenton generates a heat map identifying frequent destinations, disaggregated by ride codes; a formal report with these metrics is forthcoming.

For the FCNJ program, Lenore Scott, representing the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), noted that a formal evaluation has not yet been completed to maintain fidelity to the model. However, DCF continues to collect testimonials and metrics through focus groups and announced that New Jersey will be the first state in the country to operate the program statewide.

Public Member Maritza Raimundi-Petroski inquired about the application process for the GLOW Grant and whether Doula Town Halls will be offered in additional languages. President & CEO Asare emphasized that community input is central to NJMIHIA's operations, noting that community-based doulas play an integral role in the application review process to ensure the community perspective is reflected. She further shared that, in partnership with the Department of Labor, NJMIHIA has conducted a landscape survey to identify community needs and inform the delivery of trainings and town halls in multiple languages.

Public Member Shakira Abdul-Ali inquired about the economics of the doula profession. President & CEO Asare responded that doulas have multiple potential revenue streams and noted that NJMIHIA is working to ensure these streams are sustainable. Program Compliance Specialist Tonique Griffin added that additional employment opportunities may include positions with community-based organizations, local hospitals, or midwifery practices.

Chair George Johnson commended Ms. Griffin for her perspective and added that there is an opportunity for policy improvements to ensure resources, including reimbursement rates, adequately support the doula workforce.

Public Member Dr. Campbell-Oparaji inquired about the status of Medicaid benefits for doula services. Vice Chair Dr. Washington acknowledged that difficult decisions will need to be made broadly but reaffirmed his commitment to sustainably supporting the full perinatal workforce, including lactation consultants, community health workers, and midwives. Dr. Campbell-Oparaji further emphasized that physicians are a critical component of the perinatal workforce and noted ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining physicians in underserved areas due to financial constraints.

Matters Requiring Board Action

a. Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2026.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of February 25, 2026, by Vice Chair Dr. Raynard Washington, and was seconded by Public Member, Andrea Martinez-Mejia. Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji abstained. Remaining members voted in favor. The motion carried.

b. Approval of Regular Board Meeting Dates through March 2027.

A motion was made to approve the Board Meeting schedule by Governor Representative, Angela Bethea, and was seconded by Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

c. Approval of NJMIHIA Annual Report.

A motion was made to approve the Annual Report by Governor Representative, Trish Wallace, and was seconded by Public Member, Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

d. Authorization of the Payment of the Community Advisory Stipend as an Annual Salary.

A motion was made to authorize payment by Governor Representative, Angela Bethea, and was seconded by Governor Representative, Holly Low. Shakira Abdul-Ali and Andrea Martinez-Mejia abstained. Remaining members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Public Comment

Temima Cohen, BScN, Zufall Health Prenatal Program Coordinator, commented that her organization is eager to incorporate NJMIHIA doula trainees into their patient care system. NJMIHIA trainees will be supporting Medicaid patients, as well as uninsured patients. Zufall will also support trainees complete their three live births requirement to successfully graduate from the NJMIHIA Community-Based Training Program. Ms. Cohen also expressed her hope that NJMIHIA doulas will remain engaged with Zufall's patients throughout the prenatal process.

Other Business

There was no Other Business.

Adjournment

Chair Barbara George Johnson requested a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Dr. Washington made the motion to adjourn. Public Member, Andrea Martinez-Mejia, seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

I hereby certify this to be a true and original copy of the March 25, 2026, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority Board meeting minutes.

Lisa Asare

Lisa Asare,
President and CEO

**RESOLUTION OF THE NEW JERSEY
MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY
AUTHORIZING THE APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION
AUTHORITY AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
TO HOST THE NJMIHIA SUMMIT 2026**

ADOPTED
July 22, 2026

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (“NJMIHIA”) was created pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:18-17 *et seq.* (the “Act”) and was established and established in, but not of, the Department of the Treasury and independent of any supervision or control by the principal departments of the Executive Branch of the State Government; and

WHEREAS, NJMIHIA was created to reduce maternal mortality, morbidity and racial and ethnic disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes in the State and to continue the work of the Nurture NJ initiative; and

WHEREAS, NJMIHIA’s mission is to serve as the statewide coordinating entity responsible for ensuring all mothers in New Jersey have the support they need for a healthy pregnancy and birth by addressing racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality rates, ensuring that infant and perinatal care is provided on an equitable basis; and

WHEREAS, to advance its mission, NJMIHIA desires to convene the NJMIHIA Summit. The NJMIHIA Summit will bring together leaders in maternal and infant health from across sectors – from hospital CEOs, to doulas, to midwives, to government leaders, to mothers – to explore opportunities to address New Jersey’s maternal health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is in the best interest of NJMIHIA to provide funding to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families to host the NJMIHIA Summit, as detailed in the Memorandum of Agreement attached hereto. NJMIHIA’s financial contribution will fund facilitation of the NJMIHIA Summit personnel, consultants, materials & supplies, and other expenses such as travel, lodging, venue, and continuing education support.

**RESOLUTION OF THE NEW JERSEY
MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY
AUTHORIZING THE APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION
AUTHORITY AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
TO HOST THE NJMIHIA SUMMIT 2026**

ADOPTED
July 22, 2026

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board, that,

1. The Board authorizes the approval of the Memorandum of Agreement.
2. This resolution shall take effect immediately, but no action authorized herein shall have force and effect until 10 days, after a copy of the minutes of the Authority meeting at which this resolution was adopted has been delivered to the Governor for his approval, unless during such 10-day period the Governor shall approve the same, in which case such action shall become effective upon such approval, as provided by the Act.

DATED: July 22, 2026

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY
AND
THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
TO HOST THE NJMIHIA SUMMIT

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (“Agreement”) is between the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (“NJMIHIA”) and New Jersey Department of Children and Families (“NJDCF”) each a “Party” and, collectively, the “Parties,” effective as of the last date signed below, it to memorialize the Parties’ understanding regarding the hosting of the NJMIHIA Summit.

WHEREAS, in 2023, NJMIHIA was established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:18-17 et seq. to reduce maternal mortality, morbidity and racial and ethnic disparities in the State, and is charged with establishing and overseeing the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center. NJMIHIA is responsible for coordinating efforts and strategies to reduce maternal mortality, morbidity, and racial and ethnic disparities that exist within New Jersey.

WHEREAS, to advance its mission, NJMIHIA desires to convene the NJMIHIA Summit.

WHEREAS, through a partnership with NJMIHIA and NJDCF, the NJMIHIA Summit will bring together leaders in maternal and infant health from across sectors – from hospital CEOs, to doulas, to midwives, to government leaders, to mothers – to explore opportunities to address New Jersey’s maternal health crisis.

I. SCOPE OF WORK

NJMIHIA will provide funding in the amount of \$280,000 to NJDCF to host, on a date no later than December 31, 2026, the NJMIHIA Summit. NJMIHIA’s financial contribution will fund the facilitation of the NJMIHIA Leadership Summit personnel, consultants, materials & supplies, and other expenses such as travel, lodging, venue, and continuing education support, and, provide funding to NJDCF for the items and activities identified by the Stockton University Child Welfare Education Institute as budget expenditures for the NJMIHIA Summit.

II. TERM OF AGREEMENT

The Agreement becomes effective upon execution by both the President and CEO of NJMIHIA and the Commissioner of NJDCF and shall remain in full force until June 30, 2027.

III. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Source of Funds

Funding for the Agreement will be supported through funds allocated within NJMIHIA's FY27 state appropriation, subject to the approval of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting now known as the Office of Management and Budget.

- (1) The budget shall not exceed \$280,000 and shall be used as described in the Scope of Work.
- (2) Once this agreement has been fully executed and a payee account number has been identified, NJMIHIA through the Department of Treasury shall process a payment(s) not to exceed \$280,000. Any unused portion of NJMIHIA funds must be returned to NJMIHIA upon the completion or end date of the Agreement, June 30, 2027.
- (3) NJMIHIA has the right to audit records maintained by NJDCF for this program.

IV. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF NJDCF

NJDCF will work collaboratively with NJMIHIA to adhere to managing the development, planning, marketing, and budget of the NJMIHIA Summit incorporated in Exhibit A to bring together leaders in maternal and infant health from across sectors – from hospital CEOs, to doulas, to midwives, to government leaders, to mothers – to explore opportunities to address New Jersey's maternal health crisis.

V. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF NJMIHIA

- A. NJMIHIA shall collaborate with NJDCF and its contractor on the development of the Scope of Work.
- B. NJMIHIA shall provide subject matter expertise as necessary to ensure written materials within the Scope of Work are accurate.
- C. NJMIHIA shall post about the Summit on its website and social media channels and disseminate it to other key stakeholders to raise awareness of the Summit.

VI. MODIFICATIONS

The Agreement may be modified at any time by mutual written amendment signed by the authorized representative of the respective Parties. All modifications to the Agreement will be appended to and become part of the Agreement.

VII. TERMINATION

Each Party shall have the right to terminate the Agreement by mailing the other Party written notice of termination by certified mail, return receipt requested, and email at least thirty (30) days prior to the termination date.

The Parties agree that major changes to the Agreement, both in terms of program content and funding levels, may be required prior to its implementation or during the term of its operations due to new or revised legislation or regulations. The grantee agrees that any such changes deemed necessary by the Commissioner of NJDCF shall be immediately incorporated into the Agreement.

VIII. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In the event a dispute arises between the Parties concerning the Agreement, the Commissioner of NJDCF and the President and CEO of NJMIHIA or their appointed representatives, shall meet to resolve such dispute.

IX. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

The Agreement reflects the entire understanding of the Parties, and it supersedes any prior understandings of the Parties. It may not be amended, modified, or supplemented except by mutual consent of the Parties in writing and signed by the authorized representatives of each Party.

X. CONFIDENTIALITY

The obligations of both Parties under the Agreement are subject to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (“OPRA”), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., the New Jersey common law right to know, and any other lawful document request or subpoena. Notwithstanding any confidentiality obligations, the terms and pricing of the Agreement are subject to disclosure under OPRA, the common law right to know, and any other lawful document request or subpoena. In the event either Party receives a request for the other Party’s Confidential Information pursuant to a court order, subpoena, or other operation of law, and if permitted by law, the receiving Party shall provide the other with as much written notice as reasonably practicable and indicate the intended response. Each Party may then take any action it deems appropriate to protect its information.

XI. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Both Parties agree to carry out their responsibilities under the Agreement in good faith and in accordance with the timelines and deliverables outlined herein. If either Party fails to meet its obligations, the other Party may request corrective action in writing. Continued funding and participation in this initiative are contingent upon satisfactory performance, and any unresolved nonperformance may be addressed through available remedies included in the Agreement, such as potential termination or return of unspent funds.

XII. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS

The principal contacts for all notifications required or otherwise necessary under the Agreement shall be as follows:

NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY

Lisa Asare, President and CEO
Lisa.Asare@njmihia.gov

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., Acting Commissioner
Joseph.Ribsam@dcf.nj.gov

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, all Parties have caused the Agreement to be signed by their authorized representatives.

FOR NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY

_____ Lisa Asare, President and CEO New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority	_____ Date
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FOR NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

_____ Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., Acting Commissioner New Jersey Department Children and Families	_____ Date
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Approved as to Form
Jennifer Davenport, Attorney General
State of New Jersey – Department of Law and Public Safety

_____ Deputy Attorney General For New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority	_____ Date
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Exhibit A - 2026 Nurture New Jersey Budget

Budget Item	Amount
Personnel	
Conference Organizer/Dawn Konrady Fanslau	\$4,000
Conference Organizer/Luz Pestritto	\$3,500
Conference Organizers Fringe	\$574
PERSONNEL TOTAL	\$8,074
Consultants	
Afton Bloom	\$27,000
Speaker fees and travel expenses	\$51,548
Conference Assistants	\$3,200
ASL Interpreting (\$92/hr)	\$1,288
CONSULTANTS TOTAL	\$83,036
Materials & Supplies	
Conference supplies	\$4,654
Printing	\$2,000
Swag/Giveaways	\$3,460
Giftcards	\$21,000
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES TOTAL	\$31,114
Other	
Conference Staff Hotel/Travel	\$1,000
Venue A/V	\$21,854
Venue Catering	\$124,538
Venue WiFi	\$2,460
Venue Parking	\$3,000
Venue Engineering	\$1,661
Venue Security	\$615
OTHER TOTAL	\$155,128
G&A (35.3% of Personnel)	\$2,648
TOTAL	\$280,000

Over Budget

\$0