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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

NEWSLETTER | May 2023

Mental Health Awareness Month

Human Services marked Mental Health Awareness Month in May by highlighting help lines, hosting mental health webinars through its [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#), and through a [message](#) from Commissioner Sarah Adelman, who also highlighted state mental health care efforts during a forum in Middlesex County with Governor Phil Murphy and Attorney General Matt Platkin.



Governor Phil Murphy ✓
@GovMurphy



Today I attended the Middlesex County Mental Health Forum along with [@NewJerseyOAG](#) and [@sarahmadelman](#).

Reading statistics and reports is one thing, but being on the ground is a totally different ball game. Thanks to all our frontline workers for your dedication and hard work.





988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

There is hope.

CALL | TEXT | CHAT
24/7/365





NJ Mental Health Cares

If you're concerned about your mental health or the mental health of someone you love, **NJ Mental Health Cares** can help. The **free helpline** offers telephone counseling, emotional support, information and assistance.

866-202-HELP (4357)

8 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays

New  Jersey
MentalHealthCares
New Jersey's Behavioral Health and Referral Service



Free Emotional Support Helpline for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals During COVID-19

Sign language users can communicate with
ACCESS of St. Joseph's Health in Paterson

Call

973-870-0677 VP

Monday to Friday 9 am - 5 pm



**New Jersey Division
of the Deaf and Hard
of Hearing**

**New Jersey Division of
Mental Health and
Addiction Services**



[More from the Middlesex County Mental Health Forum](#)





As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, Commissioner Sarah Adelman spoke at the Middlesex County Behavioral Health Roundtable and Workshop, highlighting investments in programs such as [988](#), [ARRIVE Together](#), mental health screening and support for individuals on [pretrial release](#), and state budget plan investments, including:

- \$3.5 million to create 150 community placements or housing subsidies for individuals with mental illness; and
 - Continued funding for the psychiatric residency program, with additional investments to support child and adolescent psychiatry fellows.
-



Older Americans Month

The [Division of Aging Services](#) marked [Older Americans Month](#) with a celebration and resource fair at the [Neptune Township Senior Center](#), along with a series of videos from Assistant Commissioner Louise Rush spotlighting [services](#) for older adults.



Commissioner Sarah Adelman, Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and Assistant Commissioner Louise Rush, who directs the [Division of Aging Services](#) were joined in Neptune by [Senator Vin Gopal](#) to help highlight [health coverage](#), [food assistance](#), [vision care](#) and [GetSetUp](#).







We administer programs that can help older adults on fixed incomes

May is Older Americans Month, so [Division of Aging Services](#) Assistant Commissioner, Louise Rush highlighted programs and services that make it easier for older adults to live in the community with independence, dignity and choice.



Staying Connected

while staying connected to friends, loved ones and the community.

As part of Older Americans Month, Assistant Commissioner Rush also highlighted ways to get help at home.

Medicare Savings Program



*the program pays your
monthly Part B premium.*

And for Medicare Savings Programs,
if eligible, the program pays your

Assistant Commissioner Rush also highlighted NJSave, an online application to help older adults and individuals with disabilities save money on Medicare premiums, prescription costs, and other living expenses. Apply today [here](#).

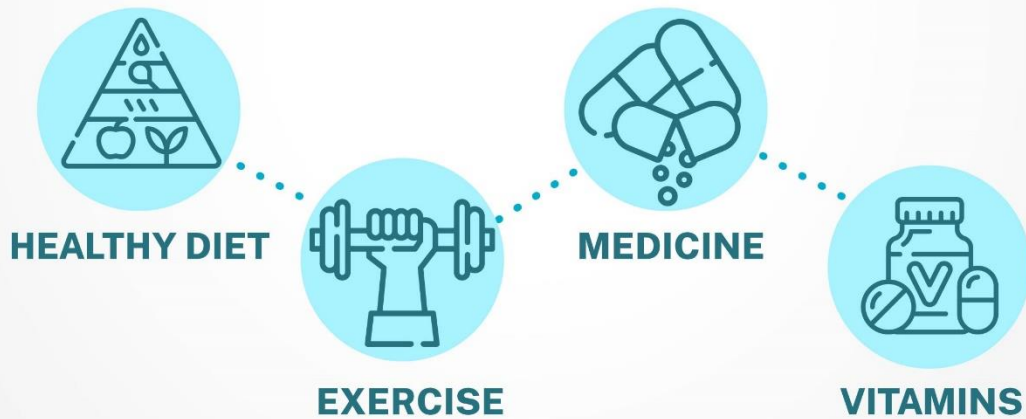


NEW JERSEY DIVISION
OF AGING SERVICES
Program Guide



MAY IS OSTEOPOROSIS AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

Help treat and prevent osteoporosis with



Supporting Health Care Investments



Amid the ongoing dispute about the debt ceiling, Commissioner Sarah Adelman [joined](#) Congressman [Frank Pallone](#) and others to support investing in health care.

“Last Congress, I fought for incredibly important improvements to Medicaid that will make meaningful differences in the lives of Americans. Unfortunately, House Republicans are manufacturing a crisis to justify cruel cuts that will raise costs for American families and kick millions of people off their health insurance,” Pallone said. “The Default on America Act Republicans passed last week cuts \$109 billion from Medicaid and creates a dangerous and unnecessary ultimatum, which will have devastating consequences for Americans. The contrast between Republicans and Democrats could not be clearer, and I’m going to continue to fight these cuts and Republicans’ harmful legislation. This cruel game Republicans are playing with our economy and the health care so many rely on must end.”

“With leadership and support from Congressman Pallone, Democrats secured many important health care and consumer protection measures in the omnibus bill signed by President Biden. From extending telehealth to continuous eligibility for children under Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program to major investments in mental health care and substance abuse disorder treatments, these are meaningful policies that will improve lives,” Commissioner Adelman said. “These provisions will help countless New Jerseyans. That’s where our focus must be – investing in and protecting health care and on creative new approaches as we’re doing here in New Jersey under Governor Murphy. We should not be putting critical services at risk for New Jersey residents.”

[Read more](#)

Combating the Opioid Epidemic

Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council Listening Sessions

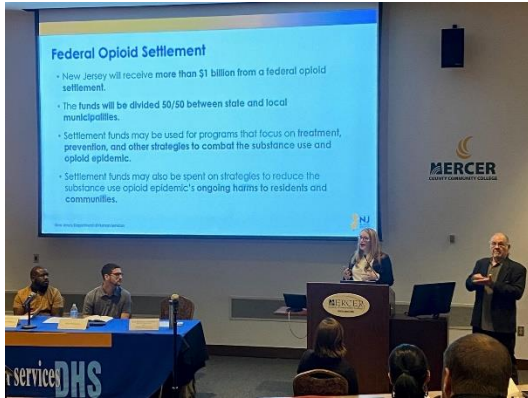


The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. In the top right corner, there is a video thumbnail of Commissioner Sarah Adelman. The main content is a slide titled "Opioid Advisory Council Responsibilities" from the New Jersey Department of Human Services. The slide lists several responsibilities:

- Review proposals, data, and analysis and **engage with stakeholders and community members** to develop and provide recommendations;
- Gather and evaluate data on substance use disorder prevalence, recovery programs and services to prevent overdose, and expand harm reduction efforts; identify **areas of, gaps in, and barriers to** recovery programs and services, and to expand harm reduction efforts;
- Solicit feedback** from stakeholders, including advocates, those with lived experience with opioid use, and other experts regarding services and programs needed;
- Review & evaluate recommendations **submitted by the public via the online portal**; and
- Evaluate approaches taken by New Jersey** and other states in administering proceeds from national opioid litigation resolutions.

The slide also includes the text "New Jersey Department of Human Services" and the Zoom logo. A large red play button is centered over the slide content.

Watch the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council's May 4 virtual listening session.



The Council also held an in-person session on May 22 at Mercer County Community College.

NEW JERSEY OPIOID RECOVERY AND REMEDATION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

Listening Sessions

In addition to the input already received through the online portal, **The New Jersey Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council is holding listening sessions** to gather public input on distributing opioid settlement funds. New Jersey will receive at least \$641 million over 18 years as part of a federal opioid settlement. The state will receive half of the funding, and the other half will be provided to participating county and local governments.



THURSDAY, MAY 19 (7 P.M.)

Virtual: Link will be sent after registering

THURSDAY, JULY 20 (11 A.M. – 1 P.M.)

Virtual: Link will be sent after registering



MONDAY, MAY 22 (1 – 3 P.M.)

Central Jersey
Mercer County Community College
Roma Bank Auditorium
Conference Center
1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor

MONDAY, JUNE 12 (10 A.M. – NOON)

South Jersey
Camden County College (Blackwood)
CIM Auditorium
200 College Road, Blackwood

THURSDAY, JUNE 22 (11 A.M. – 1 P.M.)

North Jersey
Essex County College
Clara E. Dasher Student Center
303 University Avenue, Newark

Register [here](#) for an upcoming listening session.

100% Participation by New Jersey Counties and Municipalities in Opioid Settlements with Pharmacy Chains & Drug Makers



All 21 counties and all 241 municipalities in New Jersey eligible for direct distributions have joined the state in signing onto the nationwide settlement agreements with CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart, and drug makers Teva Pharmaceuticals and Allergan. The settlement resolves claims involving their alleged roles in fomenting the country's opioid crisis.

New Jersey and its eligible counties and municipalities are on track to receive the maximum amount available to the state under the settlements: approximately \$508.1 million.

If the proposed settlements are approved, the Murphy Administration will have secured over \$1 billion through investigation and litigation for New Jersey and its communities to spend in combatting the opioid epidemic.

"I'm pleased to see complete sign-on from our counties and municipalities, allowing New Jersey to take advantage of the maximum funding available under this settlement," Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. "I look forward to this funding being available to connect people to treatment, enhance our prevention efforts and to save and restore lives

impacted by the opioid crisis.”

[Read more](#)

Mobile Community Care Expands to Essex County



Commissioner Sarah Adelman and Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke joined [Integrity House](#) to mark the start of its new mobile community care program, which expands access to substance use disorder treatment and supportive services in Essex County. The program is funded by a [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services grant](#).

New State Laws

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Allowing Mental Health Care Providers to Play a Crucial Role within Homeless Shelters

As part of ongoing efforts to address the mental health needs of New Jersey residents, Governor Phil Murphy signed a bill to permit mental and behavioral health care providers to operate within emergency shelters that serve people experiencing homelessness.

“The stress individuals often face when experiencing homelessness can unfortunately lead to or exacerbate existing mental health challenges,” Governor Murphy said. “This law reflects my Administration’s belief that every New Jerseyan deserves access to the mental health care they need and builds upon our work to expand these services throughout our state. Allowing mental and behavioral health care providers to offer critical services within shelters will provide much-needed care directly to more New Jerseyans.”

“Mental illness and housing insecurity can often go hand-in-hand,” Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. “I thank the Governor for signing this legislation and commend the bill sponsors. Making behavioral health care accessible for unhoused individuals will make a meaningful difference in their lives and in our communities - and will help build better futures.”

[Read more](#)

Governor Signs Bill Allowing Residents to Indicate Autism Spectrum or Communication Disorder Diagnosis on State IDs

To help facilitate successful interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or communication disorder, Governor Phil Murphy signed a bill to allow residents to request an official indication of their diagnosis on their state driver’s license or non-driver identification.

“The ability to opt into this new notation on a State ID will allow more of our residents to rest easy that they or their loved one can expect greater understanding and accommodations for their unique communication needs during encounters with law enforcement,” Governor Murphy said. “Making it easier for officers to identify situations where a different approach may be necessary and training them on how to adjust their communication tactics accordingly will benefit both law enforcement professionals and the individuals they serve by promoting safer, more productive interactions going forward.”

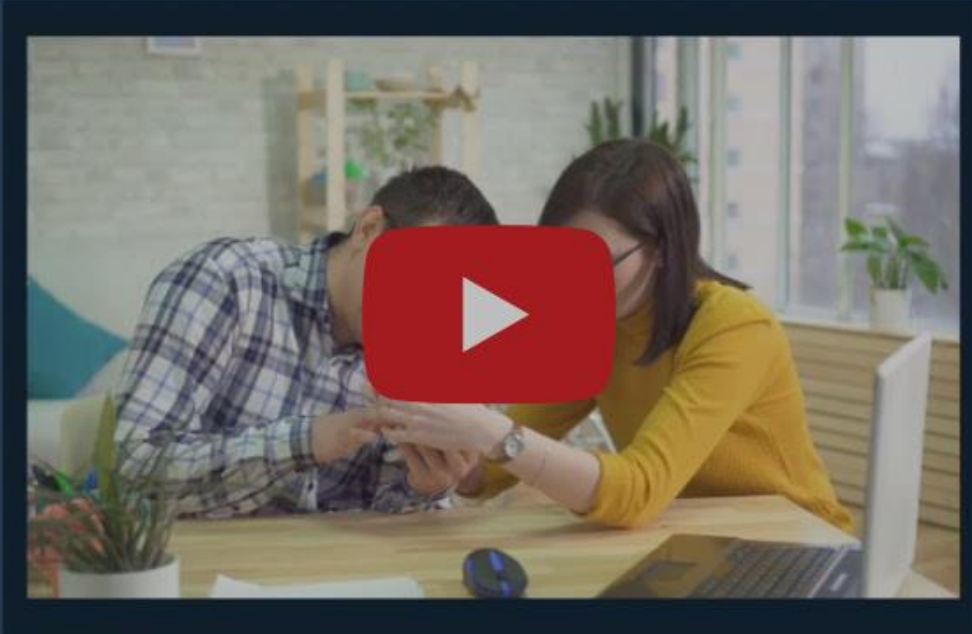

“I commend Governor Murphy and the sponsors for advancing this new law,” Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. “Our goal, always, is to empower individuals with autism spectrum disorder and other unique needs, and that includes providing a new mechanism for autistic individuals to disclose their disability if they choose. And by working

with the Attorney General to provide education and support to law enforcement, we are making progress towards creating a more inclusive state.”

[Read more](#)

Support for Caregivers of Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Mom2Mom Adult Helpline
1-833-NJ ADULT 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m. daily



One example of this is a mother who called Mom 2 Mom Adult Hotline in need of support to find

On Mother's Day, [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried reminded everyone of the Mom2Mom Adult help line, which supports caregivers of adults with special needs. Call 833- NJ- ADULT (833- 652- 3858) daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to reach peer support specialists.

New Division of Disability Services Web Site



Announcing our New Website!

The [Division of Disability Services](#) has launched an updated website featuring a new streamlined design. Learn about programs and services, find answers to frequently asked questions, contact the Division directly, and review resources and publications [here](#).

2023 Abilities Expo





Human Services' [Division of Disability Services](#) and [Office of Emergency Management](#) were out in force during the 2023 Abilities Expo at the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in Edison, highlighting the [New Jersey Resources](#) guide and [NJ Register Ready](#), among many other resources and programs.

Brain Injury Awareness Week



Traumatic Brain Injury Fund

Provides services and supports that enable individuals with brain injuries to live in the community and maximize their independence.



Human Services marked Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Week from May 11-17 by highlighting [Traumatic Brain Injury Fund](#) services offered by the [Division of Disability Services](#).

The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fund provides residents of any age who have survived a traumatic brain injury, the opportunity to access the brain injury related services and supports they need to live in the community.

The Fund purchases supports and services to foster independence and maximize quality of life when insurance, personal resources, and/or public programs are unavailable to meet those needs. A portion of the Fund also is used to support public education, outreach, and prevention activities related to TBI.

Adult Onset Disability Awareness Month



Information & Referral Services

Provides information and resources to individuals with disabilities and their families, as well as helps them navigate and connect to other available services.



May is designated as Adult Onset Disability Awareness Month in New Jersey to raise awareness that disabilities can emerge during adulthood, to acknowledge the diversity among people with adult onset disabilities, and to recognize the many contributions of individuals with adult onset disabilities.

The [Division of Disability Services Information and Referral](#) Services Team connects callers to live, professionally certified, community resource specialists specifically trained in disability services, who:

- inform and educate on services available statewide;
- screen for appropriate services and supports;
- assist in navigating and connecting to programs and services based on individualized needs;
- attend disability-related community events and speaking engagements throughout the state; and
- work in partnership with some benefit programs such as NJ WorkAbility and Managed Long Term Services and Supports (MLTSS).

Call 1-888-285-3036 for assistance 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Healthy Vision Month



May is Healthy Vision Month. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Project BEST works to save sight and restore vision whenever medically possible.

Services include: mobile eye examination, vision screening for preschool and school-age children, monthly or semi-monthly eye screenings at more than 28 fixed sites all over the state, on-site screening at institutions and in communities, special diabetic detection and awareness programs, and other specialized eye screening programs which target historically underserved populations.

Visit [here](#) to learn more.

Better Hearing and Speech Month



DIVISION OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Connecting New Jersey residents with resources about hearing loss.

May is [Better Hearing and Speech Month](#), providing an opportunity to raise awareness about hearing and speech problems, and to encourage people to think about their own hearing and get their hearing checked.

Human Services' [Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) provides education, advocacy and direct services to eliminate barriers and promote increased accessibility to programs, services, and information. Learn more [here](#).

Food Fuels Minds



Deputy Commissioner of Social Services Elisa Neira joined [Hudson County Community College](#) and [Rutgers University](#) for the [Food Fuels Minds](#) event to discuss food insecurity on college campuses and highlight SNAP as a resource for college students facing hunger. Learn more about SNAP [here](#).

Continued Child Care Investments



NEED HELP WITH CHILD CARE?

New Jersey's child care assistance program helps eligible families pay for child care costs, find available child care options and more.


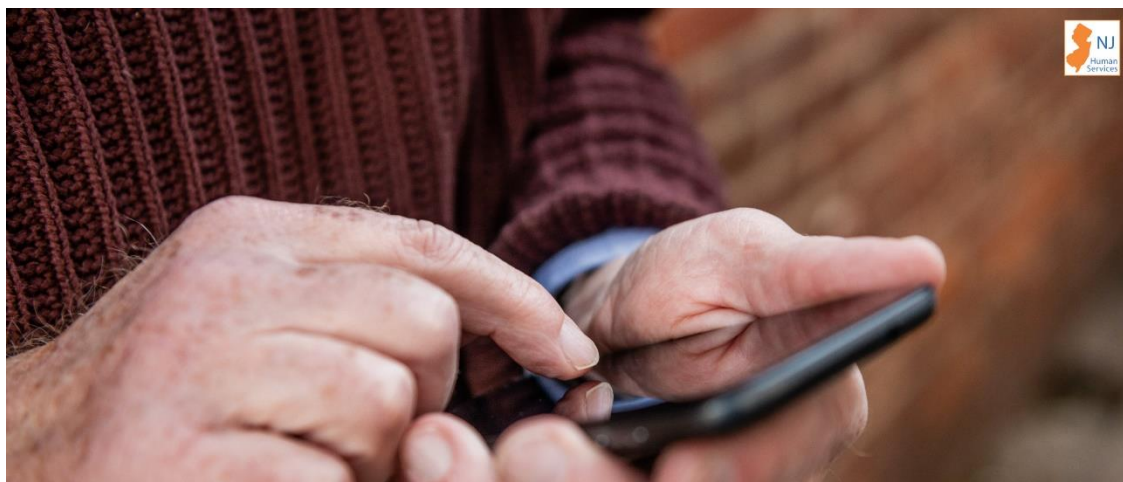
Visit www.childcarenj.gov to learn more.

The [New Jersey Economic Development Authority](#) recently approved allocating an additional \$50 million for grants for its Child Care Facilities Improvement Program, increasing total funding to nearly \$75 million.

“Our administration continues to prioritize investments to strengthen New Jersey’s child care industry,” Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. “We appreciate the work that our partners at the NJEDA are doing to support providers through these capital improvement grants. Child care providers are essential to working families and the economy. These efforts will increase access to high quality child care for working families and provide children with a strong educational foundation.”


[Read more](#)

Special Get Covered New Jersey Enrollment Period



DON'T MISS YOUR
NJ FAMILY CARE
RENEWAL PACKET

Call **1-800-701-0710 (TTY: 711)** to update your:

- 
MAILING ADDRESS
- 
PHONE NUMBER
- 
EMAIL

Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner Marlene Caride recently announced an extended Special Enrollment Period for individuals who are no longer eligible for [NJ FamilyCare](#) and qualify for health insurance through [Get Covered New Jersey](#), the state's Official Health Insurance Marketplace.

Typically, the Get Covered New Jersey Open Enrollment Period is the only time residents without health insurance through an employer, or other program such as Medicaid or Medicare, can enroll in coverage unless they have a qualifying life event or meet certain income level.

To assist those who are no longer eligible for NJ FamilyCare and qualify for coverage through Get Covered New Jersey, an extended Special Enrollment Period has been established to allow these individuals 120 days to sign up for coverage. The Special Enrollment Period also provides flexibilities for a streamlined transition between the programs and offers consumers the option of having an earlier effective date to avoid coverage gaps.

“We thank our partners at the Department of Banking and Insurance for establishing this special enrollment period,” Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. “This will help individuals whose incomes are too high to remain eligible for NJ FamilyCare to transition to a new health care plan without any gaps in coverage. I urge anyone who needs it to please take advantage of this opportunity.”

Human Services continues to urge NJ FamilyCare members to confirm or update their contact information by calling NJ FamilyCare at 1-800-701-0710 (TTY: 711). NJ FamilyCare will use this information to communicate with members about their healthcare coverage. NJ FamilyCare will mail renewals to all members in the year between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024.

[Read more](#)

Hepatitis Awareness Month



NJ FAMILY CARE

TREATING HEPATITIS C
Covering medications to
treat Hepatitis C without
limitations



May is [Hepatitis Awareness Month](#). NJFamilyCare [covers](#) hepatitis C curative drug treatment once someone is diagnosed with the virus. Find out [here](#) why getting tested at least once is so important.

Assembly Budget Committee Testimony



Clockwise above, Commissioner Sarah Adelman; Deputy Commissioner for Health Services Lisa Asare; Commissioner Adelman and Deputy Commissioner for Social Services Elisa Neira; and Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire testified before the Assembly Budget Committee on April 20.

Visit [here](#) to read the Commissioner's testimony.

"Governor Murphy's proposed budget for NJ Human Services advances major new investments, maintains and expands critical wage enhancements and protects the vital services families depend upon," Commissioner Adelman said. "This budget further signals that New Jersey is focused on affordability, responsibility, and opportunity."

Police Week 2023: Recognizing Human Services Police



Human Services celebrated National Police Week on May 19 by honoring its police officers and recognizing their efforts to serve and protect some of New Jersey's most vulnerable residents.

Commissioner Sarah Adelman highlighted the essential work of the Human Services Police and noted the specialized skills required for service in the role of HSP officer.

“The Human Services Police are community and relationship focused,” Commissioner Adelman said. “They strive to provide empathetic and supportive assistance, while often engaging with individuals with special needs and families in challenging circumstances. Their unique mission and work positively impacts so many lives, and New Jersey is fortunate to have this police force dedicated to serving some of our most vulnerable individuals.”

The following officers took oaths during the recognition ceremony:

Oath of Office:

- Chief Brian M. Lee
- Lieutenant Roberto Negron
- Detective Sergeant Donald Maurone
- Detective Sergeant Alex Rivera
- Sergeant Marcial Martinez

Oath of Office – New Hires:

- Police Officer Derek Enriquez
- Police Officer Liam Klock
- Police Officer Troy Haynes
- Police Officer Brianna Alfieri
- Police Officer Armond Viola
- Police Officer Alex Peltzman
- Police Officer Marc Vitello
- Police Officer Michelle Pistone
- Police Officer Justin Gentile
- Police Officer Liam Christensen

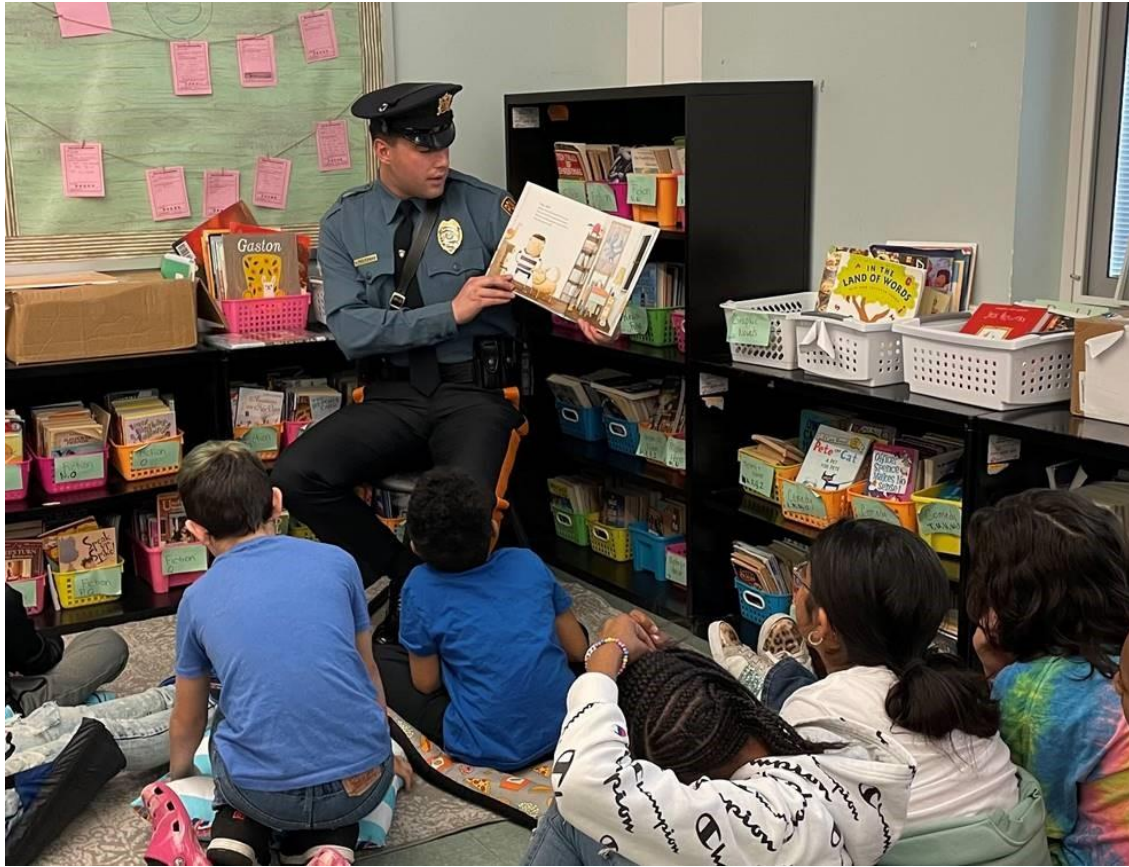
“Celebrating, promoting & swearing in new officers during #PoliceWeek is one of the great honors of my job,” [Commissioner Adelman tweeted](#). “I offer my enduring gratitude to the courageous & compassionate women & men of the Human Services Police for their service to NJ’s communities & vulnerable residents.”

The Commissioner also [added](#); “Congratulations to our newly sworn Police Chief Brian Lee! Chief Lee has my confidence and support. I know he will continue to lead our force with wisdom, mission & integrity.”

[Read more](#)



Who was the 4th-Grade Mystery Reader?



Who was the 4th Grade Mystery Reader at Egg Harbor City Community School on April 28? It was [Human Services Police](#) Officer Alex Peltzman!

Public Service Recognition Week



Commissioner Sarah Adelman thanked Human Services staff during Public Service Recognition Week in early May for all they do each and every day.

"Please know - your contributions are felt in every community across our state, and you do so with remarkable resilience and dedication," Commissioner Adelman told staff. "The work is indispensable, and I consider it a great honor to work alongside you."

Mass Care Emergency Management Exercise in Salem County





The Office of Emergency Management hosted a mass care exercise at [Salem Community College](#) in coordination with the college and the [Salem County Office of Emergency Management](#).

They were joined by Deputy Commissioner of Operations Andrea Katz, the [State Police](#), the [Department of Agriculture](#), the [Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner](#), the [Red Cross](#), and the [Salvation Army](#),

Are You Ready?



May featured [Hurricane Preparedness Week](#) to raise awareness of the hazards posed by hurricanes ahead of the June 1 start of the hurricane season. Learn more [here](#) about how to be prepared.

Meanwhile, Register Ready – New Jersey’s voluntary special needs registry for disasters - gives residents with disabilities or access and functional needs, along with their families, friends, caregivers and associates, an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency. Visit [here](#) for more information.

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

NJ FAMILY CARE | Cover All Kids



NJ Covers All Kids!

All children can apply for NJ FamilyCare,
regardless of their immigration status.



Quality Child Care Creates Connections



Start your search at [GrowNJKids.gov](https://www.grownjkids.gov)

[NJ SNAP](#) | [NJ FAMILYCARE](#) | [NJHELPS](#)

FOLLOW US!

