



FEBRUARY 2021

NJ Human Services Extends COVID-19 Child Care Assistance Programs Through End of School Year

A promotional graphic with a background image of a young child smiling. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box. In the top left corner of the graphic is a small NJ Human Services logo. The text reads: "NEED HELP WITH CHILD CARE?" followed by "New Jersey's child care assistance program helps eligible families pay for child care costs, find available child care options and more." and "Visit www.childcarenj.gov to learn more." There are horizontal lines above and below the main text block.

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.

New Jersey Human Services is extending several COVID-19-related child care assistance programs through the end of June as part of the Murphy Administration's continued effort to support families and child care providers impacted by the pandemic.

The extensions include programs that have helped families pay for child care during remote schooling and support the sustainability of child care providers.

"This has been a difficult time for everyone, but parents can now know that these critical child care programs will continue helping through the remainder of the school year," Human Services Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman said. "We have worked hard to use all resources and means to help working families and the child care sector, and remain very concerned about the data that shows women have faced difficult choices to leave their jobs during this pandemic. With these extensions, we hope to provide families and the child care industry

some peace of mind for the rest of the school year.”

“We are very pleased to be able to extend these programs through the end of the school year,” Human Services Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said. “We know that child care is crucial to a strong economy, and we know that quality child care is crucial to strong childhood development. With these extensions, we are giving families and child care providers vital support during the ongoing pandemic.”

Read more [here](#).

First Lady Tammy Murphy and Human Services Announce New Medicaid Initiatives to Help Improve Maternal & Infant Health



As part of the Murphy Administration’s continued effort to improve maternal and infant health, First Lady Tammy Murphy and Human Services Acting Commissioner Adelman announced the state Medicaid program now covers doula care, while also no longer paying for non-medical early elective deliveries. Also, the Medicaid program will require obstetrical providers, nurse midwives, or other licensed health care professionals to complete a perinatal risk assessment form during a beneficiary’s first prenatal visit to help identify trends in risk factors. These initiatives are outlined in the First Lady’s Nurture NJ Maternal and Infant Health Strategic Plan, which aims to the combat New Jersey’s maternal and infant health mortality crisis by

eliminating racial disparities in maternal and infant care.

“With these critical steps forward, we continue making strides toward improving maternal and infant health in New Jersey,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “This is about positive outcomes for mothers and babies – and a healthier New Jersey for everyone. Doula support healthy pregnancies, and by not paying for non-medical early elective deliveries, Medicaid is promoting healthier deliveries. This is more progress in our fight to improve care for women and children throughout our state.”

Read more [here](#)

Human Services to Expand Availability of Medication that Supports Recovery from Addiction

“I want to be me again.”

***Ask About Medication
That Can Support Recovery***

Call 844-ReachNJ
Addiction Help. Always Here. Always Live.



Medicines proven to help people recover from opioid dependency will soon be available during longer, non-traditional hours under a \$4 million grant program announced by Acting Commissioner Adelman.

As part of the Murphy Administration’s continued commitment to increasing access to medication-assisted treatment in the state’s efforts to reduce overdoses and fight the opioid epidemic, Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) has notified treatment providers that it will award five-regional contracts not to exceed \$800,000 each to expand availability of the life-saving medicines throughout the state.

“Addiction isn’t 9-to-5,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “Cravings don’t limit their grip to the work day, and many people work varying hours and rely on Medication Assisted Treatment to keep them on the path of recovery. We need to do everything we can to make sure the medication is available where and when it is needed.”

“For many people, the availability of medications at earlier and later-than normal program hours and a dedicated program offering medications and case management will improve access to care,” said Human Services Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who oversees DMHAS. “Data from pilot programs in other states indicates that people seek treatment more readily when services are available at times that accommodate their work, school and family obligations.”

Read more [here](#).

NJ Human Services to Help Advance Health Care Affordability Efforts

NJ Human Services will be part of an Interagency Health Care Affordability Workgroup created by Governor Murphy to identify opportunities administration wide and across the public and private sectors to advance shared goals of improved health care affordability, accessibility, and transparency.

"Medicaid is New Jersey's largest health insurance program, providing affordable health care coverage to one in five New Jerseyans. Our goal is to ensure that Medicaid members have accessible, equitable, high-value, and high-quality care as we also work to balance the rising health care and prescription drug costs that put pressure on our state budget," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "DHS looks forward to working with our partners across state government to continue our Administration's commitment to smart policy solutions that promote affordable health care access."

Read more [here](#).

Vaccine information Available for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Visit [here](#) to download copies of communication cards presented by the Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing to assist with vaccine prescreening for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Also, Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Executive Director Elizabeth Hill explained the vaccine process in American Sign Language.



Elizabeth Hill explains the vaccine process in ASL.

NJ Human Services Celebrates the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

This past year, NJ Human Services and its Division of Disability Services celebrated an important milestone – the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This monumental law ensured that individuals with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.



A video looking back at ADA's 30th anniversary.

NJ Human Services Partners with Area Agencies on Aging During COVID-19



Human Services has partnered with Area Agencies on Aging to help older adults during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. All 21 New Jersey counties have an Area Agency on Aging that serves as the primary entity responsible for developing comprehensive, coordinated systems of community-based services for older adults.

A Call for Entries: 2021 New Jersey Teen Media Contest Celebrates Family & Loved Ones During Challenging Times



New Jersey Human Services announced teens across the state can begin submitting entries for the 26th Annual New Jersey Teen Media Contest, which highlights Human Services' mission to support families, especially during these challenging times.

The contest, run by Human Services' Division of Family Development, is open to all New Jersey middle- and high school-age children. This year, the contest will once again accept entries in the hand-painted/hand-drawn and written-word categories.

The 2021 contest challenges teens to illustrate – through art or the written word - how they and their loved ones have supported each other through all of the changes that have happened this year, from remote schooling to finding new ways to stay connected to friends and family.

“These have been challenging times and so much has changed in the world around us,” Deputy Commissioner Neira said. “From spending time with our families and loved ones while socially distanced to doing activities on a computer we usually do in-person, this year affected us all in many ways. With that in mind, we again look forward to the creativity of New Jersey teens and to celebrating their talents.”

Read more [here](#).

Murphy Administration Reminds New Jerseyans of Coverage Benefits for COVID-19 Vaccine



As New Jersey continues to scale up its statewide vaccination program, the Murphy Administration is reminding New Jerseyans that the COVID-19 vaccine will be available without cost-sharing barriers.

Pursuant to the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement, all providers must vaccinate individuals regardless of whether they have health insurance coverage or what type of coverage they have, and are prohibited from balance billing or otherwise charging vaccine recipients.

"NJ FamilyCare recipients can get the COVID vaccine at no cost and at any vaccination site," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "That means zero co-pays for the vaccine and its administration, no matter the provider, so we urge everyone to sign up and get the vaccine when they are eligible. We are all eager to end this pandemic and save lives. For NJ FamilyCare recipients, you can protect yourself at no cost."

Read more [here](#).

NJ Human Services Awards \$1.3M in Grants to Create Inclusive Healthy Communities for Individuals with Disabilities



Human Services recently announced it has awarded 18 grants to help communities across the state develop and/or implement inclusive initiatives that support the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities where they live, work, learn and play.

“We are excited by the creative and innovative solutions proposed by the applicants,” Deputy Commissioner Neira said. “From taking steps to create fully accessible community spaces to developing plans to assess and evaluate current community practices, to expanding critical health services such as oral health, to creating new, inclusive coalitions and cross-sector partnerships, it is important for communities across the U.S. to adopt the inclusive and healthy communities model to improve access for individuals with disabilities.”

“People with disabilities are disproportionately affected with chronic diseases and conditions such as obesity and high blood pressure,” Division of Disability Services Executive Director Peri L. Nearon said. “This program will help these communities improve the local environments and systems that can support individuals with disabilities stay active and access community resources so they can have better health outcomes.”

Read more [here](#).

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

Need help affording groceries?



Go to www.njhelps.org to apply for NJ SNAP.

NJ SNAP - New Jersey's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - provides New Jerseyans with lower incomes help buying groceries. NJ SNAP recipients get money on a benefits card each month that is accepted in most grocery stores, many bodegas, and through online shopping at Aldi, Amazon, Walmart, ShopRite and The Fresh Grocer.

Eligibility is determined by income and households size.

Visit njsnap.gov to learn more about NJ SNAP.

Affordable health insurance



Go to www.njhelps.org to apply for NJ FamilyCare.

NJ FamilyCare is free or low-cost health insurance for individuals and families who need help affording coverage. NJ FamilyCare covers doctor's visits, hospitalizations, prescriptions, mental health services, vaccines and more.

Visit njfamilycare.org to learn more.

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