



NJ HUMAN SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

Acting Commissioner Adelman Lauds Biden-Harris Administration Move to Repeal 2019 Public Charge Rule



Human Services Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman released the following statement on the Biden-Harris Administration taking steps to repeal the Trump Administration's 2019 Public Charge Rule:

"I applaud President Biden's Administration for righting the wrong and taking steps to repeal the unfair and damaging 2019 Trump Public Charge Rule.

"For years our immigrant communities have been fearful and concerned about accessing critical services such as health care and food and housing assistance, worried it would impact their ability adjust their immigration status. This rule heightened that fear and had a chilling effect on efforts to provide New Jersey residents with the assistance they need. This was especially worrisome during the COVID-19 public health emergency that has significantly impacted people's livelihoods and economic security, and it's notable that many of our frontline essential workers are immigrants.

"We commend the efforts led by advocates, local and state governments and communities that have fought to protect the health and well-being of our immigrant neighbors. No one should be fearful to access food, health care and housing assistance.

"Human Services' Office of New Americans will closely monitor developments related to this announcement and will provide more information to advocates and residents as it becomes available. We are a big step closer to a stronger and fairer New Jersey for all."

En español:

"Aplaudo a la administración del presidente Biden por corregir el mal y tomar los pasos para revocar la regla de carga pública injusta y dañina de Trump del 2019"

"Por años, nuestras comunidades inmigrantes han tenido miedo y han estado preocupados sobre cómo acceder a servicios críticos como lo son el cuidado de la salud, asistencia de alimentos y de vivienda, preocupados de que podría impactar la capacidad de ajustar su estatus migratorio. Esta regla intensificó el miedo y tuvo un efecto negativo en los esfuerzos para proveer asistencia a los residentes de New Jersey que la necesiten. Esto fue especialmente preocupante durante la emergencia de salud pública de COVID-19, que ha afectado significativamente al sustento y la seguridad económica de las personas, y es notable que muchos de los trabajadores esenciales de primera línea sean inmigrantes."

"Elogiamos a los esfuerzos de los activistas, gobiernos locales, estatales y comunidades que lucharon para proteger la salud y el bienestar de nuestros vecinos inmigrantes. Nadie debería tener miedo de acceder a la asistencia de alimentos, de vivienda y al cuidado de la salud."

"La oficina de nuevos americanos del Departamento de servicios humanos, monitoreará de cerca los desarrollos relacionados con este anuncio, y proveerá más información cuando esté disponible a los activistas y residentes. Estamos a un paso más cerca de un New Jersey más fuerte y justo para todos."

Division of Developmental Disabilities Updates





DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities helps New Jersey adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities live more independently.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities on Monday released updated group home and supervised apartment visitation [guidance](#) effective March 19.

It also released new day program reopening [guidance](#) that states eligible providers may reopen beginning March 29 up to 50 percent of capacity, tied to their region's COVID-19 Activity Level Index score.

During the past year, New Jersey has seen the resiliency of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and friends, direct support professionals, providers, support coordinators, and so many others. The Department and Division are grateful for their dedication and support, and are pleased to release these updates

Governor Declares March Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



Governor Murphy officially [declared](#) March to be Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in New Jersey. The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all areas of community life. Acting Commissioner Adelman joined The Arc of New Jersey for a virtual ceremony marking recognition of the month.

Brain Injury Awareness Month



Governor Murphy declared March to be Brain Injury Awareness Month in New Jersey. As part of the recognition, Human Services raised awareness of the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fund by introducing Jason, who received TBI support for his recovery from a major brain injury 2 ½ years ago. Watch the video below, and for more information on the TBI fund please visit [here](#).

Division of Disability Services Executive Director Peri L. Nearon also promoted the Traumatic Brain Injury Fund in a letter-to-the-editor posted [here](#).

It's Social Work Month



We celebrate social workers and thank them for their dedication to enhancing the well-being of others, and their commitment throughout the past year's public health emergency has been amazing" to " We celebrate social workers and thank them for their dedication to enhancing the well-being of others. Their commitment throughout the past year's public health emergency has been amazing.

[See more.](#)

Governor Murphy Highlights Key Investments for Older Adults in State Budget Proposal



Governor Murphy's Budget will raise the income limits for the **PAAD and Senior Gold programs by \$10,000 each**



DHS' Division of Aging Services will launch the **Age Friendly New Jersey initiative**, in partnership with AARP, to help support communities become accessible and inclusive places to live at any age



The Governor's Budget maintains **the 10 percent rate increase for Medicaid nursing facilities** with an investment of \$87 million in state dollars for a total of \$174 million after federal matching

Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Commissioner Adelman joined New Jersey's Age-Friendly Statewide Leadership Summit on March 2 to highlight key investments benefitting older adults in the Governor's budget proposal.

The budget reaffirms Governor Murphy's commitment to New Jersey's older adults and ensuring access to health care by expanding the [Pharmaceutical Assistance for the Aged and Disabled \(PAAD\)](#) program to make prescription drugs more affordable. Additionally, after expanding the [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) from 35 to 40 percent of the federal credit, the Governor's FY2022 budget proposes making senior citizens without dependents eligible for the EITC this year, effectively cutting taxes for seniors.

Governor Murphy also signed Executive Order No. 227 creating the Age-Friendly State Advisory Council, which will work to identify opportunities for creating livable communities for people of all ages in New Jersey, recommend best practices for age-friendly work, and promote community inclusion across the state.

"Governor Murphy's budget plan highlights his commitment to New Jerseyans at every stage of life, including several key investments in programs that help older adults confront some of the most pressing challenges they face," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "From allowing more seniors to save money on prescriptions and premiums to allowing older adults who are working to take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit to making our communities more aging-friendly, accessible and inclusive, the Department of Human Services is committed to advancing the Governor's exciting budget plans to improve the quality of life for older New Jerseyans."

[Read more.](#)

Human Services Distributes Naloxone to County Mobile Outreach Units

"I want to be me again."

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

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



Human Services on Thursday distributed 6,384 two-dose naloxone kits for free to counties that operate Hope One mobile access units or similar services.

The distribution builds on Human Services' effort during the Murphy Administration to make naloxone accessible, including giving 64,000 free doses to residents at pharmacies and delivering 70,000 free doses to police, EMS, homeless shelters, libraries and reentry organizations.

"Naloxone saves lives," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "With this distribution, we're continuing our effort to get this life-saving antidote into as many hands as possible and to connect individuals to treatment."

"Among our many strategies as we combat the opioid overdose epidemic is to ensure that the opioid overdose reversal medication naloxone is readily available to as many people as possible," said Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who directs Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services. "The mobile access units will have trained staffers giving out the naloxone and are required to provide materials about addiction treatment and recovery support services. This will be another tool in our work to save lives."

[Read more](#)

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET BOOSTS HEARING AID REIMBURSEMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS & DISABLED INDIVIDUALS

GOVERNOR MURPHY'S BUDGET INCREASES REIMBURSEMENT FOR HEARING AID PURCHASES



Human Services' Hearing Assistance Program currently provides a \$100 reimbursement per calendar year to offset the purchase of a hearing aid.



Under the proposed budget, individuals can be **reimbursed up to \$1,000 for hearing aid costs, \$500 per hearing aid, per calendar year.**

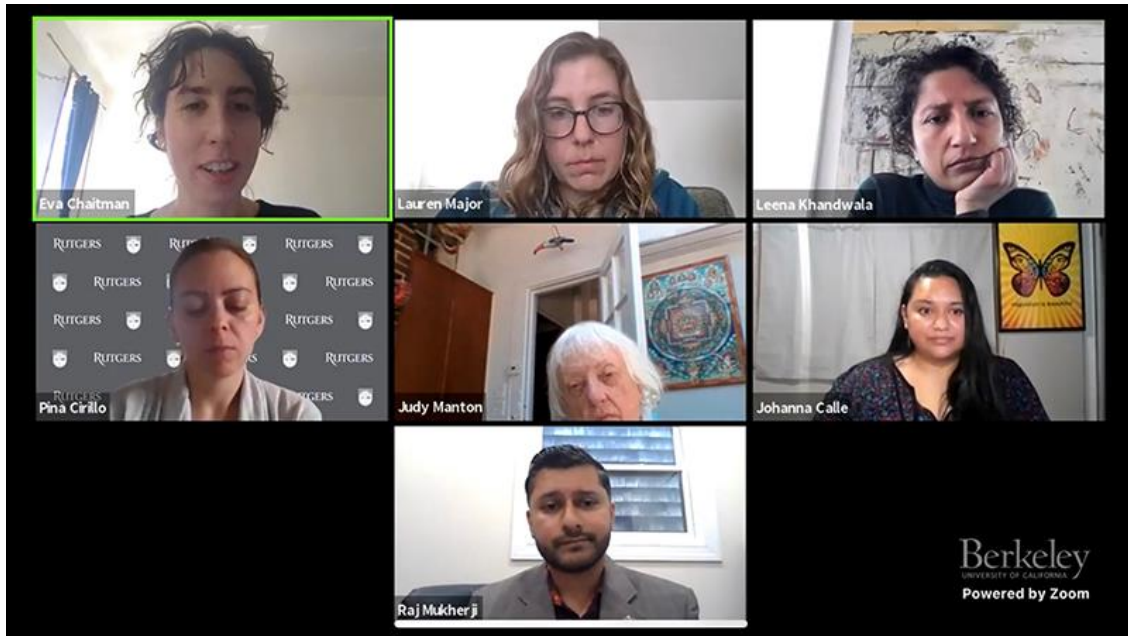


Governor Phil Murphy's budget plan for the fiscal year starting July 1 would significantly increase hearing aid purchase reimbursement available under the state's Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (HAAAD) program. The [HAAAD](#) program provides a \$100 reimbursement to offset the cost of purchasing a hearing aid per calendar year. Beneficiaries must be enrolled in the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) program or the Lifeline Utility Assistance program - or meet the eligibility criteria for those programs - to participate.

Governor's Murphy's budget plan for next fiscal year would increase the reimbursement to \$500 per hearing aid per calendar year.

"This would be significant savings for those eligible for this valuable program," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "The Governor's budget proposal is all about continuing to make New Jersey a stronger and fairer state that works for everybody, and that includes older adults and individuals with disabilities who need hearing assistance. This increase would be big help for some of our most vulnerable residents."

Immigrants and Advocates Hail Governor's Budget Plan



Johanna Calle, senior policy advisor for the Office of New Americans, joined a virtual forum on March 9 to highlight New Jersey's publicly-funded detention and deportation legal defense program and Governor Murphy's budget proposal to increase funding for such individuals to \$8.2 million.

Participants shared stories of family reunification and praised the Governor's commitment to a New Jersey for all.

Among those participating were the New Jersey Coalition for Immigrant Representation, American Friends Service Committee Immigrant Rights Program, American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, Seton Hall Law School Immigrants' Rights/International Human Rights Clinic, Rutgers Law School Immigrant Rights Clinic, Assemblyman Raj Mukherji, Make the Road New Jersey, New Jersey Policy Perspective and Church World Service' Jersey City Immigration and Refugee Office.

NJ SNAP Recipients Continued to Receive Enhanced Food Assistance Benefits in March



New Jerseyans who receive food assistance through the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ([NJ SNAP](#)) continued to receive enhanced food assistance benefits in March to help address needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A 15 percent increase in SNAP benefits that began in January remains in effect through June. Human Services has also been providing SNAP households with the maximum benefits since March 2020, and those supplements were provided this March to about 278,000 households. Human Services has now distributed \$547.4 million in total supplemental monthly SNAP payments since March 2020 to New Jersey residents.

"We're steadfast in our commitment to provide as much additional food security as possible to New Jersey families," Acting Commissioner Adelman said.

"Increased food assistance remains crucial," Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said. "We are dedicated to helping as many families as we can during this challenging period, and are pleased to continue this assistance."

[Read more](#)

Governor Murphy Announces Expansion of Eligibility for New Jersey's COVID-19 Vaccination Program



Governor Murphy announced the expansion of eligibility for more frontline essential workers and high-risk groups in New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccination program. Eligible groups include educators and staff in pre-K through 12th-grade settings, childcare workers, and transportation workers, among others. As of last Monday, the following categories are now eligible for vaccination:

- Educators, including support staff, in pre-K through 12th-grade settings;
- Childcare workers in licensed and registered settings;
- Public and local transportation workers, including bus, taxi, rideshare, and airport employees; NJ TRANSIT workers; and Motor Vehicle Commission staff;
- Public safety workers who are not sworn law enforcement or fire professionals, including probation officers and fire safety inspectors;
- Migrant farm workers;
- Members of tribal communities; and,
- Individuals experiencing homelessness and those living in shelters, including domestic violence shelters.

Additionally, beginning on Monday, March 29, frontline essential workers in the following categories are also eligible for vaccination:

- Food production, agriculture, and food distribution;
- Eldercare and support;
- Warehousing and logistics;
- Social services support staff;
- Elections personnel;
- Hospitality;
- Medical supply chain;
- Postal and shipping services;

- Clergy; and,
- Judicial system.

Additionally, the eligibility list will indicate that all individuals ages 16-64 with certain medical conditions, as [defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), that increase the risk or might increase the risk of severe illness from the virus, are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination.

For more information about eligibility, statewide vaccination site locations, and to preregister for a vaccination, visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/vaccine>

“New Jersey has made great strides in opening vaccination to more and more residents, and we are very pleased to be able to expand availability to vulnerable communities such as individuals experiencing homelessness and critical workers such as those caring for older residents, children and providing social services supports,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “We cannot express enough thanks to frontline essential workers for their commitment throughout this entire public health crisis and look forward to more and more of them getting protection against this virus and to further protecting our most vulnerable residents.”

[Read more](#)

Governor Murphy Signs LGBTQI+ Senior Bill of Rights Legislation



Governor Murphy on March 3 signed legislation (S2545) to establish rights and protections for LGBTQI+ older adults and HIV-positive residents of long-term care facilities. The LGBTQI+ Senior Bill of Rights prohibits long-term care facilities from taking any of the following actions based on a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, or HIV status:

1. Denying admission to, transferring, discharging, or evicting a resident;
2. Opposing a request by residents to share a room;
3. Assigning or reassigning a room based on gender;
4. Forbidding a resident from using a restroom based on gender;
5. Repeatedly failing to use a resident's chosen name or pronouns despite being informed;
6. Denying a resident from wearing clothing, accessories, or cosmetics of their choice;
7. Restricting a resident's right to engage with other residents or with visitors;
8. Denying, restricting, or providing unequal medical or non-medical care; and
9. Declining to provide any service, care, or reasonable accommodation.

"A long-term care facility is a health care setting, but it's also someone's home," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "Every person deserves to feel safe, respected, and comfortable where they receive their medical care, and especially in the place they call home. This law is an important step in New Jersey's continued protection and support of LGBTQI+ individuals throughout their lifespans, including persons with medical conditions and disabilities."

[Read more.](#)

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

Help with Emotional support

NJMentalHealthCares

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

866-202-HELP (4357) • TEXT NJHOPE TO 51684

7 days per week, 8am - 8pm

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

NEW JERSEY
hope and
healing

Division of
DHS
Department of
Human
Services

NJMentalHealthCares offers New Jerseyans a safe place to call to discuss our anxiety, worry and concerns as we experience this unprecedented pandemic. The call line is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Visit [HERE](#) to learn more about NJMentalHealthCares, call 1-866-202-HELP (4357) or text NJHOPE to 51684.

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**



[ACCESS](#) at St. Joseph's Health provides mental health support via videophone in American Sign Language. It is available at 973-870-0677 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Visit [HERE](#) to learn about ASL mental health care support.



HEAL
NJ HEALTHCARE WORKERS
COVID HOPE & HEALING HELPLINE

We understand the toll Coronavirus is taking on NJ Healthcare Workers and we are here to help you.

If you are on the front lines and need support
TALK ABOUT IT - 1-833-416-8773
 8am-8pm | Seven days a week

HEALHealthcareWorkers.com




The HEAL NJ Healthcare Workers COVID Hope & Healing Helpline offers health care workers a safe place to call for crisis counseling support. The call line is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with emergency support available 24/7. Visit [HERE](#) to learn more about the HEAL help line or call 1-833-416-8773.



We understand what First Responders are facing on the front lines of COVID-19 and we are here to face it with you.

Rise
NJ FIRST RESPONDERS
COVID Hope & Healing Helpline

Here, NJ First Responders come first.
1-833-237-4325
 8am-8pm | Seven days a week
RISEFirstResponders.com




The RISE NJ First Responders Covid Hope & Healing Helpline offers police, firefighters, EMS, National Guard, military and veterans, their families and caregivers a safe place to call for crisis counseling support. The call line is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with emergency support available 24/7. Visit [HERE](#) to learn more about the RISE help line of call 1-833-237-4325.



Get help now.

NJ Hopeline is a statewide suicide prevention hotline, staffed around the clock by live, trained, NJ-based counselors. All calls are confidential.

You're not alone. We are here to help.

CALL 24/7 | **1-855-NJ-HOPELINE**
1-855-654-6735



The NJ Hopeline provides support, assessment and, if needed, intervention in the most cooperative and least restrictive manner to New Jersey residents in emotional distress and suicidal crisis. The help line is open 24/7 at 1-855-654-6735. Visit [HERE](#) for more information.

NJ SNAP - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

NJ FAMILYCARE - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

NJHELPS - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

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