

Today's Quote: *"Something made greater by ourselves and in turn that makes us greater."*

Maya Angelou, 1928 -, African-American Poet, Writer, Performer

Governor Orders \$400 Million Cut to Current State Budget

Governor Jon S. Corzine issued the following direction to his cabinet regarding New Jersey's FY 2009 budget, on November 5, 2009.

GOVERNOR CORZINE DIRECTS CABINET TO CUT ADDITIONAL \$400 MILLION TO MAINTAIN A BALANCED FY2010 BUDGET

Calls For No New Spending in Lame Duck

TRENTON – Governor Jon S. Corzine today outlined several measures needed to maintain balance in the FY 2010 budget and fulfill his commitment to maintain a balanced budget through his remaining two months in office.

"My administration will continue to live up to our responsibility to maintain a fiscally balanced budget during the next two months," Governor Corzine said. "These cuts will be tough but necessary choices that need to be addressed now. Ignoring these issues over the next two months will not make them go away and will only hurt the people of New Jersey. I will not allow politics to stand in the way of doing what is right."

Governor Corzine has directed his cabinet to provide \$400 million in savings options to the Treasurer by December 1st in recognition that October revenue collections are coming in below targets and may continue to erode in the months ahead as the national economic recession places pressure on spending for critical safety net programs like Medicaid.

The Governor also directed his cabinet to maintain a hiring freeze and strict restrictions on travel. He also ordered the continuation of the review of all purchases and contracts by the State Treasurer to limit spending to only those transactions that are absolutely necessary.

In addition, the Governor directed the State Treasurer to look at spending in areas that cuts across departments for added savings.

Finally, the Governor is also calling for fiscal constraint during the lame duck session and asking that the legislature not pass any legislation that would result in added spending.

Today's actions build upon actions already taken that resulted in a budget that was \$4 billion less than the previous year and mirror the types of steps taken during FY 2009 that resulted in over \$2 billion in mid-year reductions.

New information available for parents of students in transition

A new Fact Sheet, called “**Myths and Facts about Students and the Division of Developmental Disabilities**,” is now available on the DDD website. This information, developed by DDD in collaboration with the Office of Special Education Programs at the Department of Education and the Family Support Center of New Jersey, is intended to address common misunderstandings parents of young people in transition often hold about the adult system that will serve their child after their educational entitlement ends.

The Office of Special Education Programs shared the Fact Sheet with all the school districts throughout the state, with instructions to continue sharing this information with Child Study Team members, teachers and family members. DDD and the Family Support Center also make copies of the Fact Sheet available to parents throughout the school year at transition planning workshops.



How many people have recently moved to the community from developmental centers?

Year One: July 2007 - June 2008 = 121

Year Two: July 2008 - June 2009 = 112

Year Three: June 2009 - October 7, 2009 = 36

Guardianship Proposals aim to align New Jersey with most states in the United States

Under proposals now starting to circulate, New Jersey’s guardianship laws would more closely resemble those in other states in the way they affect individuals with developmental disabilities. The changes would mean that individuals aged 18 or older with developmental disabilities would be presumed able to make decisions for themselves, just like people aged 18 and older who do not have developmental disabilities.

This would differ from current guardianship practices in New Jersey. Since 1985, the Department of Human Services has been legally required to assess all DDD-eligible individuals for their need for guardianship once they turn 18. The department also is required to process guardianship applications for DDD-eligible individuals through the court system.

“It is important to understand that guardianship is a legal determination of capacity that removes an individual’s fundamental civil right of self-determination,” said Kim Friend, Chief of the Bureau of Guardianship Services (BGS), which is mandated to process guardianship applications and provide guardianship services for DDD-eligible individuals.

“Therefore, it should only be a solution of last resort. In most states, that is the prevailing philosophy. In New Jersey, however, it has traditionally been the reverse – our laws require us to assume that an individual is likely to need a guardian unless an assessment shows otherwise.

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Guardianship for people with developmental disabilities is so embedded in the culture of New Jersey that it is difficult for families, professionals and others to think of other options. We need to begin discussing those other options.”

This proposal and others, including one to create a “New Jersey Health Care Surrogate Act,” would require sponsors in the state Assembly and Senate, before being introduced as bills for consideration by the state legislature.

The proposal to enact a “New Jersey Health Care Surrogate Act” would address concerns about individuals’ ability to make healthcare decisions. Friend said such concerns are the most common reason families seek guardianship for their loved ones.

A “New Jersey Health Care Surrogate Act” would set forth the conditions under which a health-care surrogate may be needed, identified and recognized, and exactly what the surrogate would be able to do.

See <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/services/guardianship/>, for additional information about guardianship. For additional information about this article, send an e-mail to: bobbie.onofri@dhs.state.nj.us. Make sure to put “DDDT-Guardianship” in the subject line of the e-mail.

Workshop:

Navigating the New System -- What Families Need to Know about Major Changes in the Service System for Individuals with Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities

New Jersey’s system of service provision for individuals with developmental disabilities is currently undergoing a major shift. Significant changes to services for individuals with developmental disabilities will mean that individuals and their families will need to develop a new set of skills and understand new terminology.

This workshop, developed in partnership with The Arc of New Jersey and the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), will provide families with valuable information regarding what it means to be on the Community Care Waiver, the changes to the waiting list, the shift to self-directed services with individualized budgets and other significant changes.

Join other families at this workshop, and learn how to navigate the service system for people with developmental disabilities as these changes occur.

Details on the upcoming workshop are below:

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: The Arc of Somerset County - Jill Court Adult Training Center,
3 Jill Court, Building 15, Hillsborough, NJ 08844

RSVP to: *Jamon Watson 908-725-8544 Ext 607 Jamonw@thearcofsomerset.org*

New Jersey Association of Community Providers

presents its 26th Annual Conference, **“The Vision Becomes Reality,”** on November 19 and 20, 2009. The conference is being held at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to explore “best practices and new approaches” at a time when New Jersey moves toward a consumer-driven system for supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and brain injuries.

Conference includes:

- Pre-Conference Symposium featuring Stephen Haines’ presentation on “The Roller Coaster of Change”;
- Monica Oss of Open Minds speaking on “The Business Model Innovation in the Disability Support Field”;
- Two full days of varied and enriching workshops; and
- Keynote address by Danny Murphy, actor and founder of Blue Zone Productions, a theatre company for performers with disabilities, on “Seeing and Thinking Beyond Disabilities”.

To register through a new online registration process, go to: www.njacp.org or click on this link - <http://guest.cvent.com/i.aspx?4W,M3,e5e1d9f8-1e0f-4258-9046-5daca8515d08>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DDD Presents County-Based Forums

DDD invites individuals who are in Real Life Choices, Self-Determination, or at the top of the priority and priority-deferred categories of the Waiting List for Waiver Services (formerly known as the Community Services waiting List (CSWL) or Residential Waiting List) to attend a county-based family forum.

These forums, geared toward the family’s need to plan and prepare for the well-being of their adult child/children with developmental disabilities, are being held in each state county. For information, contact Janice Delorenzo at 609-689-1794 or janice.delorenzo@dhs.state.nj.us.

Monmouth County Forum

Planning Meeting:

- Date: December 18, 2009
- Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 NOON
- Location: Agricultural Building, 4000 Kozloski Road, Freehold, NJ 07728

Family Forum:

- Date: Thursday, January 21, 2010
- Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM
- Location: ARC of Monmouth, 1158 Wayside Road, Tinton Falls, NJ 07712

Upcoming Counties for the Fall/Winter: Burlington and Passaic

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DHS Budget Forums

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/home/budget/RegionalBudgetForumFlyer.pdf>

CENTRAL REGIONAL FORUM

Monday, November 30, 2009

10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon

Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

DDD Central Office

5 Commerce Way – Room 199

Hamilton Township, NJ 08691

NORTHERN REGIONAL FORUM

Thursday, December 3, 2009

10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon

Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital

Main Auditorium

59 Koch Avenue

Morris Plains, NJ 07950

Call 609-292-1449 for more information.

CART, Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs), and
Sign Language Interpreters available for the hearing impaired.

"The Family Support Center of New Jersey is re-establishing The Training Calendar, an online resource for information about training opportunities, lectures, and other activities for caregivers and the individuals they are caring for. Please visit www.thetrainingcalendar.org for more information."