



Late May 2011

FY'12 Proposed Budget

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and the Assembly Human Services Committee held a legislative hearing May 17 on the closing of [Vineland Developmental Center](#). The Commissioner's [testimony](#) is online.

Commissioner Velez and acting-Commissioner Mary O'Dowd (DHSS) discussed the [Medicaid Comprehensive Waiver Concept Paper](#) that was recently submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) before the Assembly Budget Committee May 24 at 11:30 AM. Click here for [archived audio](#) of the proceedings or [here](#) for the Commissioner's testimony.

Hot Topics

Special Needs Housing Initiative

The NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA) issued a [Request for Qualifications \(RFQ\)](#) due July 1, 2011 for a special needs housing initiative; a joint effort with DHS that will create 600 affordable, supportive housing opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. This project will serve individuals on the Community Care Waiver waiting list, individuals in developmental centers and emergency placements. See the [press release](#) online.

Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities

The NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) is raising public awareness in preparation for the hurricane season, which runs June 1 to November 30. If you or someone you know requires assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, register (or have them register) online at www.registerready.nj.gov.

For comments and suggestions or to be removed from this distribution list, please email Robin.Bead@dhs.state.nj.us.
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Also in DHS News...

CBVI – Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Provides Training for NJ Transit Execs

Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's (CBVI) Independent Living unit will be providing blindness awareness training to a group of approximately 20-25 New Jersey Transit executives to assist them in enhancing transport services to blind and visually impaired customers. The training is scheduled for June 3, 2011 in Newark from 9am to 12pm at NJ Transit headquarters.

DDHH – Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

[Monthly Communicator](#), the Division's informational publication is available online. This month's feature story commemorates the life of DDHH employee, Alan Champion. Another article details helpful hints on how to apply for disability benefits.

DDS – Division of Disability Services – New Director

After an extensive search, Joseph Amoroso has been named Director of DDS. Joe served as acting director since August 1, 2010, following the retirement of Bill Ditto. He joined the division in August of 1999 after working for Montclair University as Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

Ambassadors Award issued by the Governor's Council on Mental Health Stigma

Council Director, Celina Gray presented awards to 22 advocates, professionals, organizations and agencies for their commitment to eradicating stigma. Click here for [press release](#) and list of awardees, or [here](#) to read the Times of Trenton news article.

Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign

Take the pledge to stop using the "R" word (retarded); replacing it with "Respect." The Spread the Word to End the Word campaign has released a new hard-hitting public service announcement (PSA) called "Not Acceptable." Watch the powerful PSA [online](#).