

What Makes a Good Neighbor?



Diversity Makes a Good Neighbor

Planning makes a good neighbor

Oversight makes a good neighbor

Good Neighbors make Good Neighbors

Historically, people with disabilities lived either at home with their families or were sent to institutions and remained there for their entire lives. But as more information has become available and community resources have expanded, the possibility for individuals with disabilities to live in integrated settings among friends, family and people without disabilities has increased significantly. Research shows that the inclusion of people with disabilities benefits and enriches communities.

There are houses, apartments and condominiums in neighborhoods throughout the state that individuals with disabilities call home. With the support of full- or part-time staff, people with disabilities are enjoying the opportunity for work and social interaction with their peers and contemporaries.

During the day, residents go to work, attend job training, educational programs or therapy. Usually, one to three people live in a supervised apartment and four to six people live in a group home.



For more information about community residential programs, please go to www.state.nj.us/goodneighbors or call 609-292-3703.



Planning Makes a Good Neighbor

Before a person moves into a DHS-funded community home, he or she is carefully evaluated by a team of professionals who have experience and expertise with people with disabilities. DHS requires that services, tailored to fit each individual's needs, are in place. These services include, but are not limited to, daily activity programs, job training, transportation and physical therapy.

When choosing a location, DHS requires its community agencies to consider consumer choice and to ensure that the location of the home will positively influence the residents' quality of life. The agencies also consider the location of other residences in the community, to ensure that homes for people with disabilities are available statewide. DHS funds homes for people with disabilities in all 21 counties of the state.



Oversight Makes a Good Neighbor

Programs are extensively monitored to ensure that community homes are well run, well maintained and provide residents with the services they need to live safely and successfully in the community. DHS pays local community-based agencies to operate and staff these homes. They must adhere to strict licensing requirements.

DHS' Office of Program Integrity and Accountability monitors agency-run community homes for people with disabilities. Through its licensing and regulatory process, its Office of Licensing performs inspections annually, through unannounced visits or if complaints or concerns are raised.

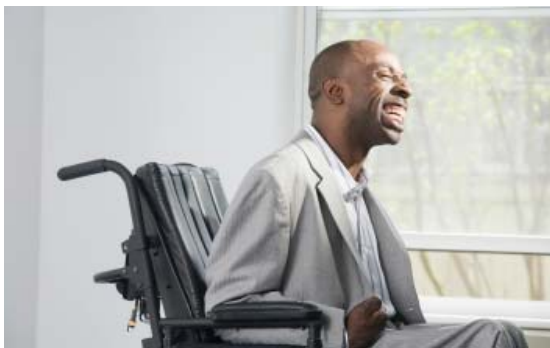
To reach DHS' Office of Licensing, call 609-633-6932.



Good Neighbors Make Good Neighbors

People with disabilities have been living in community programs such as group homes and apartments across New Jersey for more than three decades. They have been working, going to school, socializing, attending church, synagogues or mosques – in short, living their lives – just like all of us. By and large, they are surrounded by supportive neighbors who appreciate the value their presence brings to the community.

People with disabilities are entitled to a home of their own and all of us have an obligation to abide by the federal law that protects their right to live where they choose, without discrimination.



State of New Jersey

Chris Christie, *Governor*

Kim Guadagno, *Lt. Governor*

Department of Human Services

Jennifer Velez, *Commissioner*