

# THE COMMUNICATOR

March  
2017

Chris Christie, *Governor*   Kim Guadagno, *Lt. Governor*   Elizabeth Connolly, *Acting Commissioner*   David Alexander, *Director*



## Governor Chris Christie's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Address As Prepared for Delivery - Trenton, New Jersey February 28, 2017 - Budget -

### DDHH Interpreter/CART List Updated

**The New Jersey Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** The division updated its lists that are available to the public on the link below. They contain contact information for sign language interpreters, CART, and C-print.  
<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/>.

### DDHH Helps Seek Grant

The NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing works in partnership with the NJ Department of Human Services' Office of Emergency Management (DHS OEM). In an effort to support this program the division sent a letter of recommendation to the DHS OEM as they apply for a grant from the Federal government. One of the initiatives will be to expand training to the deaf and hard of hearing community.

### Did You Know...

- The division advocates on behalf of people who have hearing loss for a variety of issues. Recently, a consumer was charged for a sign language interpreter for a medical appointment she had to postpone. While it may be unfortunate that a doctor's office may need to abide by their agreement with the interpreter, it may not be appropriate for the cost to be shifted to the consumer.
- DDHH worked with DHS to remove pejorative language from state statutes. It mostly changes existing laws to make the language gender-neutral/person-first and delete references to archaic language that is used in the state statutes when referring to persons with developmental, cognitive, psychiatric disabilities, alcohol or substance use disorders.

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- The community may contact the DDHH at this [link](#) to seek information about services and information on hearing loss.
  - Free refurbished hearing aids for eligible low-income seniors are available through an initiative by the New Jersey Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH), Montclair State University, and Sertoma/Hearing Charities of America. Eligibility is limited to those individuals who are at least 65 years of age, are New Jersey residents, and have an income not exceeding 250% of the federal poverty level - \$26,655 if single or less than \$32,680 if married. The project involves collecting used hearing aids, reconditioning the devices and dispensing to eligible New Jersey residents. Applications are on line [here](#) or you may call DDHH at 609-588-2648.

## The FCC Just Approved a Landmark New Way For Deaf People to Communicate

In a move that's being hailed by accessibility advocates and leaders in the deaf and hard of hearing community as a historic step forward, the five-member FCC unanimously adopted rules to facilitate the transition from outdated, analog teletype (TTY) devices to a new, internet-based, real-time text messaging standard (RTT) compatible with the latest smartphones. Read the entire [article](#) here.

## NJ Court Adopts Language Access Plan

The New Jersey Supreme Court has directed the adoption of a statewide Language Access Plan to ensure full access to the courts for participants who have limited English proficiency or who are deaf or hard of hearing, Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, announced recently. See link for [press release](#).

## NJ 2-1-1 can help

211 can find solutions to personal needs by informing you of resources in your community like day care facilities, shelters, affordable housing units, social services, employment training programs, senior services, medical insurance, and more. Click here for [additional information](#) click here. <https://www.nj211.org/about-211> or [info@NJ211.org](mailto:info@NJ211.org). The DDHH is also listed here.

## Helpful Tips for Using Your CapTel Phone Knowing When the Line is in Use

Do you have multiple phones in your home/office, all connected to your same phone number? The Line in Use feature on your CapTel phone alerts you when someone else is already talking on a different phone. It saves you from accidentally picking up and dialing a new call when another call is already in progress. For additional tips go to [this site](#).

## The following bills were signed by Governor Christie in February

- **A2228 / S2489** Includes all disabled veterans in NJT discount program for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.  
*Signed by the Governor P.L.2017, c.20*

Under previous law, the New Jersey Transit Corporation provided reduced fares for senior citizens over the age of 62 and persons with disabilities. A disabled veteran is only eligible for the program, however, if the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that he or she has a disabled rating of 70 percent or greater. The new law provides that all disabled veterans are eligible for the reduced fare program.

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- A2619 / S2409** Requires that certain inmates with detainers be provided access to drug treatment programs.  
*Signed by the Governor P.L.2017, c.23*  
 In order to participate in a drug treatment program available as part of the residential community release program, the mutual assistance program or the therapeutic community substance abuse disorder treatment program, an inmate is required to meet certain eligibility criteria - one of the criteria is that an inmate must be classified at "full minimum custody status," which requires having no detainers or open charges. The new law prohibits state correctional facilities from denying an incarcerated individual access to participation in a drug treatment program solely because the individual has a detainer or open charge issued against him or her.
- A3267 / S2519** Provides for voluntary contributions by taxpayers on gross income tax returns to support autism programs.  
*Signed by the Governor P.L.2017, c.24*  
 The new law establishes an "autism programs fund" in the Department of the Treasury, into which taxpayers may voluntarily deposit a portion of their tax refunds as donations. It requires the Legislature to appropriate all the funds to the Department of Health for distribution to autism programs throughout the state.
- A3333 / S1509** (Singleton/Turner) Establishes microenterprise training program and assistance for microentrepreneurs; gives priority status to projects involving microenterprises under Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program.  
*Signed by the Governor P.L.2017, c.25*  
 The new law provides assistance for certain individuals who own or are starting a microenterprise business – a microenterprise is a commercial enterprise that has five or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the enterprise. The law amends the counseling requirements to be offered at One Stop Career Centers to include an evaluation of an individual's ability to engage in self-employment training, information about self-employment training opportunities. The law also specifies that federal job training funds could be used for microenterprise self-employment training.

**DDHH Advisory Council**

**Friday, April 28, 2017**

**9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Speaker/Topic: TBD**

**East Brunswick Public Library**

**2 Jean Walling Civic Center**

**East Brunswick, NJ 08816**

**Next Online Issue - June**

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**DDHH Office Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

**Office Closed: Friday, April 14 – Good Friday**

**Monday, May 29 - Memorial Day**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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