



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, suicide is a major public health concern, as it was the 11th leading cause of death among Americans in 2023, according to the CDC. While the annual rate of suicide deaths for New Jersey residents is lower than the U.S. average, there are still approximately twice as many deaths from suicide as there are homicides in the state; and

WHEREAS, suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death among youth and young adults (ages 10-24) in New Jersey, and the overall trend has shown an increase over the past decade; and

WHEREAS, risk factors of suicide include mental illness, substance use, serious physical illness, chronic pain, loss and grieving, economic concerns, trauma, and social isolation, as well as access to lethal means; and

WHEREAS, public awareness is needed about the myths that suicide cannot be prevented and that asking about suicide will make someone think about it more. Research shows that suicide is preventable and typically occurs with warning signs, and that asking someone if they are thinking about suicide can save their life; and

WHEREAS, if individuals are experiencing thoughts of suicide, they should contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline via call, text or chat to get free and confidential support from a skilled, compassionate crisis counselor; and

WHEREAS, Veterans or service members can contact the Veterans Crisis Line by calling 988 and pressing "1," texting 838255, or chatting online at www.veteranscrisisline.net; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey also offers several other helplines serving specific groups of individuals at high risk for suicidality, such as:

- Vet2Vet, (1-866-VETS-NJ-4 or 1-866-838-7654) for veterans and their families;
- Cop2Cop, (1-866-COP-2-COP or 1-866-267-2267) for law enforcement officers and their families (via phone or chat online at www.njcop2cop.com);
- 2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline, (1-888-222-2228) for youth (via phone, text, or chat online at www.2ndfloor.org); and

WHEREAS, by law, New Jersey colleges and universities are required to provide 24-hour/7day-a-week assistance to students that might be at risk for suicide; and

WHEREAS, through collaborative funding by the Department of Children and Families' Division of the Children's System of Care, the Traumatic Loss Coalitions for Youth Program has created an expanding statewide network that effectively works to prevent suicide and promote hope, healing, and resiliency in the aftermath of traumatic loss; and

WHEREAS, trainings on the Zero Suicide approach have promoted the utilization of evidence-based clinical practices and driven a culture shift towards shared accountability for suicide prevention in the behavioral health and healthcare services provided to adults and children in the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mikie Sherrill, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

SEPTEMBER 6 THROUGH 12, 2026
AS
SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-fourth day of August in the year two thousand twenty-six, the two hundred fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States.

Dale G. Cohen
Lt. GOVERNOR

Mikie Sherrill
GOVERNOR