



HEAT TOOL KIT FOR

Individuals with Disabilities

Extreme heat is a period of unusually high heat and humidity that can be dangerous to health. In New Jersey, extreme heat events are expected to become more frequent and last longer. This guide will help you learn about how heat impacts individuals with disabilities, along with tips and resources to stay safe during hot weather.

Individuals with disabilities may be disproportionately impacted by extreme heat. The following factors may increase the risk of harmful health impacts in an extreme heat emergency:



Mobility challenges:

Leaving the home to find cooling centers can be difficult for those with certain disabilities



Overheating:

Disabilities such as spinal cord injuries may make temperature regulation difficult. Overheating is also a concern for those who rely on services and supports which may be disrupted during extreme weather events.

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



DDHH
DIVISION OF THE DEAF
AND HARD OF HEARING

For individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, DDHH Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists can share additional information about heat-related resources in sign language. Calls may be directed to the DDHH videophone at (609) 503-4862, Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM.



Health impacts:

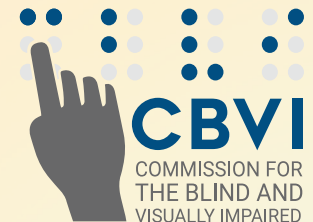
Heat can worsen certain conditions, including visual impairment, cerebral respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.



Accessible and timely information:

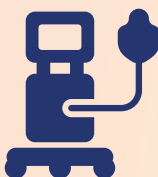
Public messaging around extreme weather may be harder to access and/or act on for those with low vision, hearing loss, cognitive disabilities, or mobility issues.

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



CBVI
COMMISSION FOR
THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Caseworkers and staff from the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) can help provide heat emergency related information and resources. This can be done verbally or in formats such as electronic, large print and Braille. They can also connect individuals to local agencies to provide assistance. Call the CBVI toll free hotline at (877) 685-8878 or email AskCBVI@dhs.nj.gov for more information



Medical Equipment:

Electrically powered medical equipment may be compromised in the event of a power outage

***NOTE: ALWAYS CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER FOR ADVICE SPECIFIC TO YOUR SITUATION.**



NJ Register Ready is New Jersey's special needs registry for disasters. This resource can help you be better served in a weather emergency. More information can be found in the Tools and Resources section of this guide.

Resource List

2-1-1

New Jersey

NJ 211

NJ 211 connects New Jerseyans with necessary health and human services. Services include housing, utilities, income, food, health, legal services, substance disorders, and children and family services. NJ 211 can be contacted via phone, email, chat and text. The hotline is available at all hours of the day.

To call: dial 2-1-1

To contact via text: text your zip code to 898-211

To contact via email: info@nj211.org

To chat: visit nj211.org

Chill Out NJ

Cooling Centers

During extreme heat, you can visit a cooling center to get relief from hot weather. For an updated list of cooling centers near you, call or text **NJ 2-1-1**, or visit **Chill Out NJ** to look up other places in NJ to get stay cool. You can also visit public places like libraries, community centers, and museums to get relief from heat.



Home Energy Assistance Hotline

The Home Energy Assistance Hotline helps low-income families across New Jersey with heating and cooling related bills. The hotline is available Monday-Friday from 8AM to 8PM.

Hotline number: 1-800-510-3102 or dial 2-1-1

To learn more about your eligibility for Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) benefits visit:

<https://nj211.org/initiative/home-energy-assistance-hotline>

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

If you or a loved one is suffering from a mental health or substance use related crisis, call or text **9-8-8**. Trained counselors are available for free, confidential support.



New Jersey Office of Emergency Management

For more information on weather-related emergencies visit the NJ Office of Emergency Management website: www.ready.nj.gov



NJ Register Ready

Register Ready is New Jersey's special needs registry. This resource allows residents with disabilities to share information with emergency response agencies to be better served during emergencies. Registered participants can be notified when evacuations have been ordered.

Register online at: www.registerready.nj.gov

For assistance in registration dial 2-1-1



NJ Shares

NJ Shares is a nonprofit organization that provides assistance in paying for energy, telephone, internet and water bills for income-eligible individuals.

For more information on whether you are eligible visit: www.njshares.org or call 866-657-4273



Heat Hub NJ

Heat Hub NJ is the NJDEP's digital resource for extreme heat which includes detailed information on extreme heat, health, and resources.

For more information visit: <https://heat-hub-new-jersey-njdep.hub.arcgis.com>



Heat Risk Tracking Tool

The CDC's Heat Risk Tracking Tool is an online resource which forecasts heat risk and air quality for the week ahead in your area.

To use this tool visit: <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/HeatRisk/>

See the Prevent Heat-Related Illness flyer on page 3 for more information on how to protect yourself and others.

Prevent Heat-Related Illness (HRI) Protect yourself and others

HRI can affect everyone, especially vulnerable populations.
Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are dangerous and can be life-threatening.

Recognition and Treatment

Heat Exhaustion Signs

- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Dizziness

What to do

- Move to a cool place.
- Loosen clothing.
- Put cool, wet cloths on body or take a cool bath.
- Drink cool water.
- Get medical help for any of the following:
 - Throwing up or cannot drink
 - Symptoms get worse
 - Symptoms last longer than one hour

Heat Stroke Signs

- Very high body temperature
- Red, hot, dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion, loss of consciousness

What to do

- Seek immediate medical attention.
Call 9-1 1 right away.
- Move to a cool place.
- Lower temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath.

Who is most at risk for heat-related illness?

- People older than 65
- Outdoor workers
- Infants and children
- People who live alone
- People without air conditioning
- People with chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease)
- People on certain medications (e.g., diuretics, some antipsychotic medications, some antidepressants, some antihypertensive agents)

Learn more about heat-related illness and how to protect yourself and your loved one. Visit bit.ly/4lpGWrY.

Prevention

Actions you can take to prevent HRI

For yourself

- **Stay hydrated.** Drink more water than usual and drink before you get thirsty. When working or being active in the heat, drink about one quart of water per hour.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids that have high amounts of sugar and/or caffeine.
- If you need to be outside:
 - Wear lightweight, loose, light-colored clothing.
 - Take frequent, air-conditioned breaks.
 - Avoid direct sunlight.



Check weather reports and reschedule or postpone outdoor activities to another time or day when temperatures are cooler.

For people without air conditioning or vulnerable populations, call NJ 2-1-1 for information regarding Cooling Centers, visit nj211.org/nj-cooling-centers.

For others

Use a Buddy System

- Check on friends, neighbors, older adults, those who have health conditions and/or are on certain medications that can make them more vulnerable to extreme heat. Help others find a cooling center or access to indoor environments with air conditioning.

Beware of hot cars

- It only takes two minutes for a car to reach unsafe temperatures.
- Never leave infants, children, people with disabilities, elderly persons, or pets in a parked car.
- Always check to make sure all children and pets are out of the car before locking it and walking away.
- Teach children that cars are not safe places to play. Store your keys out of reach of children.

For pets

Pets feel the heat just as much as humans do, and they can also suffer from heat-related illnesses.

Follow these guidelines to protect your pet when it's hot:

- Never leave your pet in a parked car. Cracked windows won't protect your pet from suffering from heat stroke, or worse, during hot summer days.
- Provide fresh, cool water every day in a tip-proof bowl.
- Exercise pets in the early morning or evening hours.
- Avoid exposure to asphalt and concrete, which can get very hot and cause severe burns on the pads of your pet's feet.
- Always provide your pet with shade and shelter to protect it from extreme temperatures.

