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NEWSLETTER | JUNE 2025



**New Jersey Opioid Recovery and Remediation  
Advisory Council Releases Statewide Strategic Plan to Inform  
Opioid Settlement Investments Through 2030**

The New Jersey Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council released its inaugural Strategic Plan — a comprehensive, five-year roadmap to guide the equitable and data-driven investment of opioid settlement funds by the state.

The plan focuses on saving lives, reducing harm, and improving long-term outcomes for individuals and communities impacted by the opioid crisis.

Convened in 2023, the Advisory Council is tasked with making recommendations for how New Jersey should allocate its share of the national opioid settlement funds. The newly released Strategic Plan outlines clear goals to promote and expand housing, harm reduction, treatment, and wraparound services, all grounded in extensive public input and a statewide needs assessment.

“Our administration has made historic investments into lifesaving programs to support New Jersey families impacted by the opioid crisis. While I am immensely proud of our progress, much work remains,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “The Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council’s Strategic Plan represents a crucial step forward in our continued fight to prevent overdose deaths in New Jersey and better support those struggling with substance use disorders. By relying on the input of those most affected by the opioid crisis, this plan will help ensure that settlement funds are invested in improving treatment and wraparound services while tracking long-term success, giving communities across New Jersey the resources necessary to support sustained recovery.”

“While no amount of settlement payments can undo the harm and human toll of the opioid crisis, we can and must ensure New Jersey uses the funding wisely to help our residents and communities recover,” **said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman**, who chairs the [Advisory Council](#). “Over the past year and a half, our Advisory Council has heard and learned from

hundreds of people with lived experience and expertise who have helped shape a strong plan that prioritizes evidence-based harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services. This Strategic Plan serves as a guide for current and future state-level spending, and may be an important resource for local governments as they make their own settlement spending plans.”

Read more [HERE](#).



### **New Jersey Human Services Awards Contracts to Develop Temporary Housing and Case Management Services for Individuals with Substance Use Disorder**

Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced the award of over \$3.67 million in contracts — [funded by New Jersey’s opioid settlement funds](#) — to develop temporary housing and case management services in a supportive

environment for adults recently discharged from inpatient settings and unhoused with a substance use disorder (SUD).

“Individuals’ basic needs are interconnected - health is compromised without stable housing and this is particularly true for those with substance use disorder in underserved areas,” **said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman**, who chairs the State’s [Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council](#). “These funds, which are opioid settlement dollars in action, will promote access to safe, supportive, and stable environments that help individuals build the foundation for sustained recovery. This is about promoting recovery through a whole-person approach.”

“This is about saving lives. We are committed to offering services and supports that serve as a bridge to permanent housing for adults in recovery,” **said Deputy Commissioner for Health Services Valerie Mielke**. “Recognizing housing as a key social determinant of health is essential to effective treatment and service planning, and these contracts help ensure a strong continuum of care through the establishment of a home.”

“Research shows that improving access to safe, stable housing, transportation, healthy food, education, and economic opportunities significantly improves recovery outcomes,” **said Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services Assistant Commissioner Renee Burawski**. “These contracts support that goal by creating pathways from temporary to permanent housing, especially in historically underserved communities. We’re proud to be part of this progress for those in need.”

Read more [HERE](#).

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*While no amount of money can erase the devastation and heartbreak caused by the opioid epidemic, this settlement will help allow us to continue making critical investments in treatment, prevention, and recovery. We are committed to making sure these funds go where they're needed most - to the individuals, families, and communities torn apart by this crisis.*

**Commissioner Sarah Adelman**

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New Jersey is among the 55 states and U.S. territories that agreed to sign on to a \$7.4 billion settlement with Purdue Pharma and its owners, the Sackler family, which would resolve litigation against Purdue and the Sacklers for their role in creating and worsening the opioid crisis across the country.

New Jersey and its local governments will collectively receive up to an estimated \$124.5 million from this settlement over the next 15 years.

Read more [HERE](#).





## **Human Services Now Accepting Proposals for Age-Friendly Communities Grants**

Human Services announced that local governments can apply for Age-Friendly Communities grants to develop local age-friendly initiatives that support the health and well-being of older New Jerseyans. A total of \$2.7 million in grant funding will be awarded to eligible municipalities, counties, and nonprofit organizations partnering with local government.

The Age-Friendly Communities grants will be used to build community partnerships, execute a community needs assessment, create an action plan to become an Age-Friendly Community, and enroll in the [AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.](#)

“We encourage local governments that want to make their communities more accommodating to residents as they age to review the [RFP](#) and apply. Creating

more inclusive communities that take into account the needs of older adults is a worthwhile endeavor that will have a meaningful and lasting impact,” **said**

**Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman.**

“The idea behind ‘age-friendly’ is simple: it means to make communities more welcoming and livable for people of all ages. This is an opportunity for local governments to tap into a network of resources that can help them achieve their age-friendly goals to better serve their aging populations,” **said Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire.**

“Everyone can play a role in making their communities age-friendly. People interested in learning how they can make a difference should visit the [Age-Friendly Resources page](#) at the Division’s [website](#).” **said Division of Aging Services Assistant Commissioner Louise Rush.**

Read more [HERE](#).

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**Inclusive Healthy  
Communities**  
NJ Division of Disability Services



**New Jersey Human Services Awards \$3.5 Million in  
Additional Grants to Grow Inclusive Healthy Communities**

Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced that Human Services has awarded an additional 14 grants to help organizations across the state implement inclusive initiatives that support individuals with disabilities in the communities in which they live, work, learn, and play.

["The Inclusive Healthy Communities \(IHC\) Grant Program](#) is helping bring innovative and evidence-based ideas to life - projects that are making a real difference in individuals' daily lives," **said Commissioner Sarah Adelman**. "By supporting these efforts, we're continuing to build a New Jersey where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. This work is more important than ever, and we're proud to partner with the Bloustein School at Rutgers University as we support the 2025 grantees in creating meaningful, lasting change across our communities."

First [launched](#) in January 2021, the IHC Grant Program is an initiative spearheaded by Human Services' [Division of Disability Services](#) (DDS) to support communities and ensure the voices and needs of individuals with disabilities are included in healthy community planning. The grant program is available to non-profits as well as local county and municipal government agencies.

"With this fourth round of IHC grant funding, we're further cementing New Jersey as a national leader in true, universal inclusion," **said Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire**. "These grants demonstrate our shared commitment to inclusive healthy community planning that's driven by the voices and needs of individuals with disabilities. We're honored to work alongside local organizations taking on this important work. Through collaboration, we can keep building a New Jersey where all communities are inclusive and everyone thrives."

"We congratulate the 2025 IHC grantees as they join a vast cohort of organizations actively fostering safe, healthy, and accessible communities for



everyone. Through their work, we are seeing powerful ideas take shape — ideas that promote health, equity, and meaningful inclusion for people with disabilities,” **said DDS Interim Executive Director Jacqueline Moskowitz.** “We look forward to seeing the impact of this work become part of the fabric of our state.”

Read more [HERE](#).



# Protect Your SNAP and WFNJ Benefits from Theft

including your Summer EBT benefits!

It's easy as 1, 2, 3 with our new lock/unlock feature!

- 1** Log in to your account on **NJFamiliesFirst.com** or the **ConnectEBT** app.
- 2** On the web, click "**Lock/Unlock Card**" in the top right corner. In the app, tap "**Lock/Unlock Card**."
- 3** Select "**Lock My Card Everywhere**."  
On the website, click "**Submit**." In the app, tap "**OK**."

Visit **NJFamiliesFirst.com** and click "Program Materials" for further instructions.



## New Jersey Distributes Summer EBT Benefits To More Than 693,000 Eligible Children

More than 693,000 eligible children across the state are receiving Summer EBT benefits. New Jersey is participating in this permanent, nationwide USDA program, now in its second year of operation, to provide food dollars to low-income families with school-aged children over the summer months when school is not in session.

For Summer 2025, the [NJ Summer EBT program](#) will provide families with a one-time Summer EBT benefit amount of \$120 per eligible child to buy nutritious food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other authorized retailers during the summer months. New Jersey's total Summer EBT distribution is expected to amount to over \$90 million in federal food security benefits that will be infused into New Jersey's local economy. As the school year comes to an end, more than 693,000 eligible children across 736 participating school food authorities are receiving benefits under the NJ Summer EBT program.

"New Jersey students rely on free school breakfasts and lunches to get the nutrition they need to learn, grow, and thrive," **Governor Phil Murphy said.** "With the Summer EBT program, we are bridging the gap to ensure that our students have access to nutritious foods, even when school is not in session. We are proud to have already distributed benefits to more than 693,000 eligible students."

"Through administering federal school nutrition programs, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture will continue engaging in all viable efforts to reduce food insecurity in this state," **Agriculture Secretary Ed Wengryn said.** "The Summer EBT program is a major component of ensuring that children and families who depend upon school meals will continue to have their nutritional needs met when school is not in session. We are highly aware that these are uncertain times for children whose healthiest and most wholesome foods come through school nutrition programs. That is why we will do everything we can to ensure that all eligible students and their families have access to this vital program."

"We're proud to partner with the [Departments of Agriculture](#) and [Education](#) to deliver more than \$90 million in vital food support to families across our state,

especially at a time when food and grocery prices remain high,” **Commissioner Sarah Adelman said.** “Ensuring New Jersey’s children have access to healthy meals year-round is an investment worth making, and the Summer EBT program plays a critical role in meeting that need.”

Read more [HERE](#).



## **Human Services Celebrates Refugee Resilience & Resettlement Work on World Refugee Day**

In recognition of World Refugee Day on June 20, Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman highlighted the resilience of refugees rebuilding their lives in New Jersey, and recognized the commitment of refugee

resettlement agencies whose vital support enables refugees to start anew, settle into their new communities and become self-reliant.

World Refugee Day honors the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution. The United Nations Refugee Agency's global theme this year is solidarity with refugees, emphasizing the importance of making space for their stories and supporting their right to seek safety. In recognition of the day, Human Services is sharing stories of refugees living in New Jersey, along with the programs offered by partner agencies as part of the resettlement process, on its social media channels.

"I am honored to share these stories of strength and perseverance, and to spotlight the work of the refugee resettlement agencies that are crucial to resettlement efforts in New Jersey. Our country has a long history of welcoming people fleeing conflict and persecution. I extend my sincerest gratitude to our partner agencies for their incredible work and for embodying the values we should all strive to uphold," **said Commissioner Adelman.**

"Once settled, refugees make meaningful contributions to our communities, economy, and workforce, while enriching the diversity that makes New Jersey a culturally vibrant place to live. It is in our collective best interest to support them as they rebuild their lives, and I commend our partner agencies for providing the critical support that helps pave the way to cultural inclusion and self-reliance," **said Deputy Commissioner for Social Services Michael J. Wilson.**

"These agencies play a crucial role in helping refugees build new lives and find belonging. Many refugees who once received help now give back, guiding others through the same journey. This cycle of support strengthens

communities and highlights the resilience at the heart of the refugee experience. Today and every day, we proudly stand with our new neighbors,” said [Office of New Americans](#) Director Johanna Calle.

Read more [HERE](#).

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**WORLD Refugee DAY**

**CLIENT SPOTLIGHT**

**Marie**

Marie's journey is one of resilience, determination, and hope. As a newly arrived refugee, she has accomplished extraordinary milestones in just one year. She earned her SORA license (Security Officer), Certified Home Health Aide (HHA) certification from the NJ Board of Nursing, and a construction license through the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER). On her journey to financial independence, she found employment as an Applied Behavior Analysis therapist and as a Caregiver.

The graphic features a light blue background with a faint world map and silhouettes of a family walking. A small Human Services logo is in the bottom right corner.

**WORLD Refugee DAY**

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**Interfaith-RISE - Afghan Peer Support Groups**

The Refugee Health Promotion (RHP) program offers direct services to support the health and well-being of refugees. From this program, an Afghan peer support group formed and has since grown into a trusted network of shared experiences and mutual support. The group created a safe space to share struggles, support one another find work, access resources and build self-sufficiency. They also share their newfound knowledge with newly arriving families, helping them adjust more quickly to their new lives and reinforcing a cycle of strength, understanding, and hope.

The graphic features a light blue background with a faint world map and silhouettes of a family walking. A small Human Services logo is in the bottom right corner.

In honor of **World Refugee Day** on June 20, Human services highlighted the stories of refugees rebuilding their lives in New Jersey, well as the dedicated refugee resettlement agencies that support their journey, on its social media channels. Human Services is grateful to New Jersey's [resettlement agencies](#) for their work and for embodying values we should all strive to uphold.

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## New Jersey Streamlines Birth Record Process with Electronic Data Exchange



New Jersey has successfully launched a pilot project that automates the filing and creation of birth certificates.

The effort is a collaboration between the [Department of Health](#), Human Services, the [New Jersey Innovation Institute](#), and [RWJBarnabas Health](#). It leverages the [New Jersey Health Information Network](#) to electronically transmit birth record data from hospital Electronic Health Record systems directly to the state's Vital Statistics Birth Registry.

"By automating the data exchange systems, we are bringing this process into the 21<sup>st</sup> century - making it faster and more accurate," **First Lady Tammy Murphy said**. "This enhancement will allow us to better track infant and birth health data, providing reliable and timely statistics to improve maternal and infant health."

"This achievement shows how innovation rooted in expertise and collaboration is essential to driving meaningful improvements in our State and its health care systems," **Acting Health Commissioner Jeff Brown said**. "By carefully designing this integration of State systems and hospital health records, we can simultaneously reduce the workloads of hospital staffers, improve the accuracy of our data, and further expedite birth certificate issuance. True government efficiency isn't flashy or destructive: It's the product of taking the time to understand pain points and create meaningful interventions that make systems work better for everyone."

"This pilot is a great example of how interagency collaboration and innovation can result in better, faster service for families," **Commissioner Sarah Adelman said**. "By using secure technology to reduce duplicative work and speed up birth record processing, we're supporting both hospital staff and new parents at

a critical moment in their lives.”

Read more [HERE](#).



Summer is here and temperatures are on the rise in New Jersey.

Did you know that extreme heat can impact behavioral health conditions? Steve Crimando of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services explains [HERE](#).

Also visit [HeatHub.nj.gov](https://HeatHub.nj.gov) for more on how to protect yourself from extreme heat events.

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The [Division of Disability Services](#) held their Inclusive Healthy Communities convening event at [Rutgers University](#). Commissioner Sarah Adelman and DDS Interim Executive Director Jacqueline Moskowitz highlighted the long-lasting impact of supporting individuals with disabilities in the communities in which they live, work, learn, and play. [The IHC Grant Program](#) provides funding opportunities for communities and organizations in the garden state to help build more equitable communities that support individuals with disabilities.

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[Division of Family Development](#) Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson joined Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and [RWJBarnabas](#) in Newark for the launch of [Harvest: An RWJBarnabas Health Farm to Community Center](#), a first-of-its-kind initiative to address food insecurity and promote holistic health and wellness.

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Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and Felicia Hopson, Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services at the [NJ Department of Labor](#), shared how the business community can work with the state to expand opportunities and inclusion for individuals with disabilities at the [Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey](#)'s Empowering Employment event.

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Staff from the [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) were at the [Special Olympics](#). Christina Gonzalez and Alyssa Lacey were on hand at a resource table to meet with participants and discuss the division's programs and services.

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Commissioner Sarah Adelman joined [NJ Human Services' Office of Emergency Management](#), [New Jersey Office of Emergency Management](#), [Human Services Police](#), [The Salvation Army](#), [American Red Cross New Jersey Region](#) and others at [Rowan University](#) for mass care training. More than 70 volunteers learned dorm setup, pet co-sheltering and crisis counseling for major evacuations.

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[Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) Assistant Division Director Pat McKenna and Director of Education Services Jessica Cubberley visited 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at the Brunswick Acres Elementary School to congratulate five students awarded for their Obstacle Owl creation. They created a white and red universal style looking cane, made out of PCP pipe with a rubber tip and an AI-generated Owl box that beeps when a blind or visually impaired person is near an object.

Learn more about Obstacle Owl [HERE](#).

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The [Office of New Americans](#) outreach team has been busy. Staff was recently out at the Cumberland County Library, the Westbridge Academy Car Show & Wellness Fair and the Portugal Day Festival distributing resources while connecting with families.

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Human Services Police Officer Cory Galloway successfully completed the Ocean County Police Academy, Class 121. Officer Galloway will be joining our Southern Region Command.





[Human Services Police](#) Officer Michael McQueen successfully completed the Essex County Police Academy. Officer McQueen was also awarded the prestigious Merit Award.

Officer McQueen will be joining our Central Region Command.



The [Office of Emergency Management](#) was in attendance at the 2025 [Home Care & Hospice Association of NJ](#) Conference in Atlantic City. The team promoted disaster preparedness and provided information to attendees, and promoted the free [Pathways to Preparedness Training](#).

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Hurricane Season 2025 is here and it's time to prepare! Individuals with disabilities can voluntarily provide information to emergency response agencies so they can better plan to serve them in a disaster. Get Register Ready [HERE](https://www.registerready.nj.gov).

Also, have a plan and supply kit ready to go. Make sure you take these three steps to safety.

✓Get a Kit, ✓Make a Plan, ✓Stay Informed.

Download the [NJ Office of Emergency Management Survival Guide](#).

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# Governor's June Proclamations



**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**



**World Refugee Day**



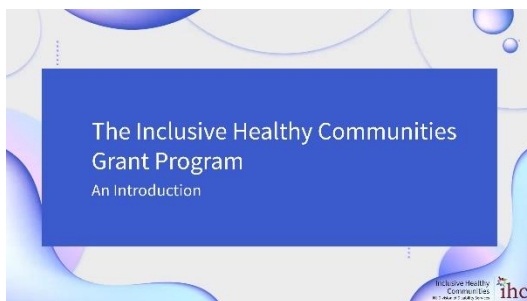
**Helen Keller DeafBlind Awareness Week**



June 8th was **Children's Day!**  
 Human Services offers numerous services and supports for our children throughout the state.

- [Child Care](#)
- [Child Support](#)
- [DDHH Language Instruction](#)
- [CBVI Educational Services](#)
- [Immigration Legal Help](#)
- [Healthcare and Autism Services](#)

June 18 was **Autistic Pride Day!**  
NJ Human Services celebrates autistic identity, community, culture, and pride. It was a day for people with autism and their families to celebrate, and foster a kinder, more inclusive community for people living with autism.



June 10-16 was **Loneliness Awareness Week.**  
Human Services understands that individuals can experience isolation because of barriers to accessing their community. The [IHC Grant Program](#) breaks down barriers so individuals can participate in their community, and the [GetSetUp](#) program provides free online classes to NJ residents over 60 and is a great resource for social connection.  
Visit [IHC Grant Program](#) and [GetSetUp](#) for more information.



NJ Human Services is committed to a more equitable future for all, and commemorated Juneteenth by urging residents to consider:

- Joining Juneteenth celebrations
- Finding ways to support sustainable projects in underserved communities
- Supporting Black-owned businesses
- Committing to personal growth

In honor of **Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month**, Human Services highlighted the [Division of Aging Services'](#) Statewide Respite Care Program.

Respite care provides caregivers a temporary rest from caregiving.

Call 1-877-222-3737  
or visit our website [HERE](#).



[NJ SNAP](#) | [NJ FAMILYCARE](#) | [NJHELPS](#)

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