

Human Services Continues Food Assistance Efforts Amid Pandemic and Tropical Storm Ida

NJ Human Services Delivering \$140M for Summer Food Assistance Benefits for Eligible Children



P-EBT Food Assistance for Children

Human Services is delivering summer [Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer \(P-EBT\)](#) food assistance benefits to school-age children and children under 6 years of age.

P-EBT benefits were extended for the summer months following last school year during which there was a COVID-19 public health emergency.

For children in households already enrolled in the state's Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program ([SNAP](#)), benefits are being loaded directly into their Families First EBT card. For children not enrolled in SNAP and who received P-EBT benefits during the school year, benefits are being loaded to the P-EBT card they received earlier this summer.

For newly eligible children for the free and reduced price school lunch program, cards are being mailed this week. These families should keep their new cards for possible future benefits.

The \$375 per eligible child summer P-EBT benefit will be added to accounts of SNAP households with children under the age of six.

The Department has also continued to deliver P-EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year. Families already enrolled in SNAP and families who are not enrolled in SNAP are receiving benefits in their existing Families First EBT card or P-EBT cards.

Recipients can check their Families First account balance by visiting www.NJFamiliesFirst.com or by calling the phone number on the back of their card.

"Food insecurity has been a concern for many during the pandemic, especially for families that rely on the nutritional support provided by the school lunch program. We're glad we can provide additional food benefits to eligible families to ensure children have access to healthy foods as they start the new school year," Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman said.

"This latest round of food assistance benefits continues the Department's efforts to provide for eligible families that missed out on the free and reduced meals program due to the pandemic. We remain committed to bridging these gaps and providing the support that families need to ensure they have access to nutritious foods," Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said.

[Read more.](#)

Human Services Announces Hot Food and Replacement Benefits for SNAP Recipients in 12 Counties Impacted by Ida

Important Update for **SNAP** Recipients in **BERGEN, ESSEX, GLOUCESTER, HUDSON, HUNTERDON, MERCER, MIDDLESEX, MORRIS, PASSAIC, SOMERSET, UNION & WARREN COUNTIES**

Through **Sept. 30** **SNAP** recipients in these counties included in Ida Major Disaster Declarations can:

- Use their benefits cards to purchase hot and prepared food at participating **NJ SNAP** retailers.
- Request replacement benefits for food lost due to the storm by contacting their county Board of Social Services.



Following FEMA's approval of major disaster declarations after Tropical Storm Ida, Human Services sought and received additional federal approval to provide New Jerseyans enrolled in SNAP in 12 counties with extra food assistance.

SNAP recipients are able to use their EBT benefits cards to purchase hot food at participating SNAP retailers until Sept. 30.

The hot food waiver only applies to items purchased from SNAP-approved retailers located in the designated counties. For a list of participating SNAP retailers, visit [here](#).

In addition, SNAP recipients in these counties will have until Sept. 30 to request replacement benefits for food lost due to the impact of the storm. SNAP recipients must contact their local Board of Social Services. For a list of the County Boards of Social Services, visit [here](#).

The counties involved are Bergen, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Warren and Union counties.

"Now that these counties have received federal disaster designations, we can extend this additional food support to more SNAP families impacted by the storm. We know these families need support, and we will continue to ask for federal assistance if additional counties receive this designation," Acting Commissioner Adelman said.

"Making it easier to access hot and prepared meals will hopefully help make the recovery process less stressful for these families," Deputy Commissioner Neira said.

[Read more.](#)



Acting Commissioner Adelman joined Governor Murphy, U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez and other key officials on Sept. 24 for a Tropical Storm Ida Recovery Resource Town Hall via Zoom. During the session, Acting Commissioner Adelman discussed the Ida-related food assistance and how Human Services has been providing mental health care support.

If you're concerned about your mental health or the mental health of someone you love, NJMentalHealthCares can help. Call 866-2020-HELP (4357) or text NJHOPE to 51684 daily between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Stop & Shop & Food Bazaar Join Growing List of Stores Offering SNAP Online Grocery Shopping

NJ SNAP recipients can use their EBT card for online grocery shopping

Use your Families First EBT card to use NJSNAP to order groceries online from participating retailers. For a list of participating retailers, visit www.nj.gov/humanservices/njsnap/benefits/.



Stop & Shop and Food Bazaar are the latest retailers to offer [online grocery shopping](#) to New Jerseyans enrolled in SNAP.

“Online grocery shopping is convenient and in some cases necessary. We are glad that families enrolled in SNAP can take advantage of this at more grocery stores throughout the state,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said.

“SNAP families now have more options to grocery shop online. This is not only about convenience but facilitating greater access to healthy foods,” Deputy Commissioner Neira said.

“It’s great to see more grocery stores making online grocery shopping available to families enrolled in SNAP. We welcome these additions and the benefit they provide to the families we serve,” said Human Services Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who directs the Division of Family Development which has responsibility for NJ SNAP.

In addition to Stop & Shop and Food Bazaar, NJ SNAP benefits can be used online at the following retailers: Amazon, participating Walmarts, ShopRites, The Fresh Grocers, ALDIs and Super Foodtown stores in Port Monmouth, Red Bank, Ocean, Atlantic Highlands and Sea Girt.

[Read more.](#)

Human Services Delivers Extra September Food Assistance Benefits to 443,000 Households

GET HELP BUYING GROCERIES

See what SNAP can
do for you!*

**SNAP is New Jersey's food
assistance program that can help
families buy groceries.*

Visit njsnap.gov



The 443,000 New Jersey households who receive food assistance through SNAP received \$79 million in total extra benefits in September. Human Services has been providing NJ SNAP households with maximum benefits since March 2020 when the pandemic began.

Under a change implemented in April by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), New Jersey households that had already been receiving the maximum available SNAP benefit are now also eligible for the temporary extra assistance. A 15 percent increase in SNAP benefits also remains in effect through September.

Human Services has now distributed \$1 billion in supplemental monthly SNAP payments to households since March 2020. The assistance will also continue in October.

[Learn more about NJSNAP](#)

2021 Opioid Summit - Medication for Opioid Use Disorder: Increasing Access and Saving Lives

**LEARN ABOUT
MEDICATION THAT CAN
SUPPORT YOUR
ADDICTION RECOVERY.**
CALL 844-REACHNJ



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

The Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services on Sept. 21 and 22 hosted a virtual summit on combating the opioid epidemic, featuring a keynote address by Academy Award-winning actress and deaf activist Marlee Matlin on her journey to recovery.

The summit's theme was "Medication for Opioid Use Disorder: Increasing Access and Saving Lives," and it featured panel discussions and workshop presentations by state officials, professional counselors, social workers, criminal justice professionals, physicians and nurses.

"The Summit's focus was on research and promising practices as we continue working to increase access to medication for opioid use disorder," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "The only way we end this epidemic is by working together with a single goal – saving lives."

"It's important to hear thoughts and ideas from as many people as possible as we continue our efforts to end this epidemic that has gone on for too long and caused so much loss and pain," said Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke, who directs the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services. "This was a valuable two-day session that will surely help bolster our efforts to increase access to medication that helps with opioid use disorder and save lives."

Acting Commissioner Adelman noted the Murphy Administration has remained focused on supporting individuals in their recovery with a comprehensive, wide-ranging strategy built around increasing access to treatment and prevention programs throughout New Jersey.

"We're committed to saving lives by reaching those in need, removing barriers to treatment, expanding access to vital medication-assisted treatment and distributing life-saving naloxone across our state," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "I also, as always, continue to urge anyone needing help to call 1-844-ReachNJ. Treatment works. Recovery is attainable."

During her speech, Matlin chronicled her recovery from addiction, while the Summit also heard from Dr. Wilson Compton, deputy director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Watch Dr. Compton's speech [here](#).

And watch Acting Commissioner Adelman [here](#) host a panel discussion with experts on approaches to medications for opioid use disorder and harm reduction strategies.

Overdose Awareness Day 2021



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, addiction is a disease and the discrimination associated with addiction must be addressed so that no one feels shame or disgrace because of a drug overdose; and

WHEREAS, prescription and illegal drug overdoses are now the number one cause of accidental death in the Nation, surpassing car accidents; and

WHEREAS, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the national drug overdose deaths rose nearly 30 percent in 2020 to a record 93,000; another 2.5 million are treated in emergency departments for the misuse or abuse of drugs every year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to the NJ Office of the State Medical Examiner 3,006 people died from drug overdoses in 2018, and these numbers have increased in more recent years (largely from heroin or fentanyl overdoses); and

WHEREAS, the overdose crisis in New Jersey and across the country is not only driven by drug supply, but also fueled by social and economic determinants, rooted in psychological trauma, structural inequities, stigma, and feelings of despair and isolation; and

WHEREAS, by acknowledging residents who have been affected by overdose, the general public is better able to understand its effects on New Jersey's communities; and

WHEREAS, practitioners, persons at high risk, family members and others can save lives by learning about the signs of an overdose and how to administer the opioid overdose antidote naloxone (or Narcan,) and then call 911; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse remains committed to raising awareness in order to combat stigma and to educate New Jersey's communities about overdose prevention; and

WHEREAS, August 31st is recognized in communities around the world as a day to remember individuals who were lost to drug overdose and to support their families and loved ones;

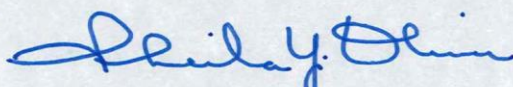
NOW, THEREFORE, I Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

AUGUST 31, 2021
AS
OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this tenth day of August in the year two thousand twenty-one, the two hundred forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States.


Lt. GOVERNOR


GOVERNOR



As part of Governor Murphy declaring International Overdose Awareness Day in New Jersey, Acting Commissioner Adelman attended Burlington County's Night of Tribute and Support to remember those lost and provide hope to those struggling with addiction.

Governor Murphy also announced two standing orders to drastically expand access to naloxone, the lifesaving medication used to reverse an opioid overdose. The orders will more easily enable all licensed pharmacists to dispense any form of an opioid antidote to any individual or entity without an individual prescription and allow for the distribution of naloxone by other entities such as Emergency Medical Technicians after they leave the scene of an overdose.

"Naloxone saves lives, and the path to recovery is attainable," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "As always, I urge residents seeking addiction assistance to call [1-844-ReachNJ](https://www.reachnj.org/), a 24-hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week addictions help line where people facing addiction or their friends and family can get immediate assistance and support from live, New Jersey-based, trained addiction counselors. ReachNJ assists callers regardless of their insurance status. Treatment works, so please don't hesitate to call."

[Read more](#)

Human Services Awards Contract for New Community-Based Program for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Co-Occurring Behavioral Needs



Human Services has awarded a contract for the development of three four-bedroom behavioral health stabilization homes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The \$4 million contract has been awarded to [YAI, Inc.](#) to develop homes to serve individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) who are experiencing behavioral challenges that make it temporarily unsafe to live at home.

“These three homes – one each in northern, central and southern New Jersey – will offer a safe, nurturing environment where individuals can receive the care they need so they can get home safely and successfully,” Acting Commissioner Adelman said. “This is another step forward in our work to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live and thrive in the community. With this additional support, our goal is to help individuals remain in the community and prevent hospitalization or the need for longer-term institutional care.”

The homes will be short-term placements in home-like environments staffed with professionals trained in supporting individuals with I/DD who are experiencing significant behaviors or behavior crises.

The program will not replace in-patient hospitalization when medically indicated, but will help prevent hospitalization for some individuals and will help provide a hospital discharge option to a safe and professional environment for others.

During the short-term stay, trained professionals will assess individuals and implement new behavior management techniques.

“This program will provide much-needed and highly individualized behavioral health stabilization services to the individuals served by the state and their families,” said Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried, who directs the [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#). “YAI has a solid track record of providing quality services to people with I/DD across multiple states, and DDD looks forward to partnering with them to move this project forward.”

[Read more](#)

Human Services Highlights Initiatives to Create More Inclusive and Healthy Communities



Human Services recently lauded the progress made by first-time recipients of the department's [Inclusive Healthy Communities Grant Program \(IHC\)](#).

Eighteen organizations across the state were awarded \$2.7 million earlier this year to help build more equitable communities and ensure that the voice and needs of individuals with disabilities are included in healthy community planning.

The IHC Grant Program is an initiative spearheaded by the Human Services' [Division of Disability Services](#) and is the first of its kind in the state. The program launched this past January and the first cycle of funding runs through June 30, 2022. This allows grantees nearly 18 months to implement proposed work plans.

"We are proud to further advance inclusion and accessibility for New Jerseyans with disabilities and support communities across New Jersey to bring creative and innovative projects into reality," Acting Commissioner Adelman said. "These funds are helping New Jersey grow into a stronger, fairer and inclusive place where everyone can thrive. I look forward to the lasting impact this program will have as the initiatives reach completion."

"These 18 communities have proposed and are working on a range of solutions to improve access to resources, services, and community spaces that support the health and well-being of all including individuals with disabilities. We know this work will result in improved health outcomes for New Jerseyans with disabilities and hope these initiatives can continue to expand across the state in the future," Deputy Commissioner Neira said.

"We are excited about the work that is underway, and believe that over time, we will see communities engaging their residents with disabilities in all facets of community planning, resulting in an improved quality of life and better health outcomes," DDS Executive Director Peri L. Nearon said.

[Read more](#)

Human Services Recognizes Direct Support Professionals



Acting Commissioner Adelman on Sept. 15th marked Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week by amplifying how the recent state budget signed by Governor Murphy includes \$42 million for wage increases for those who work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to help them live successfully in communities across New Jersey.

This increase will go into effect January 1, 2022.

This is the fourth consecutive year reimbursement rates to community providers of developmental disability services have been increased to raise wages for direct support professionals. The wage increases were included in the state budget signed by Governor Murphy and approved by the Legislature in June. The size of the wage increase per employee is based on factors such as agency pay scales and services provided.

“More so than ever, direct support professionals play a critical role in helping individuals with disabilities live successfully in communities across New Jersey,” Acting Commissioner Adelman. “Their commitment to the individuals they serve has improved the quality of life for so many New Jerseyans, and we are proud to continue investing in increased wages for this workforce. While the pandemic created a challenging situation, the dedication of direct support professionals and their resiliency during this difficult time has been remarkable. I thank them for all that they do each and every day.”

“Direct Support Professionals provide a broad range of support, while developing strong, trusting relationships with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” Assistant Commissioner Seifried said. “They make a tremendous difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

[Read more](#)

National Addiction Professionals Day



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, *National Addiction Professionals Day* is part of *National Recovery Month* established in 1992 by the NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, to commemorate the vital work that addiction professionals do on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, *National Addiction Professionals Day* aims to increase awareness and understanding of *Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders*, acknowledge the powerful work of addiction professionals, and celebrate people in recovery; and

WHEREAS, the *New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, Board of Marriage and Family Therapy Examiners, Alcohol and Drug Counselor Committee*, reports that there are over 5,000 active addiction professionals working tirelessly to improve lives and make New Jersey's communities safer and drug-free; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals provide compassion, commit to provide quality care, and instill hope to countless individuals and families for long-term recovery; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals effectively individualize treatment as a means of assisting each person in gaining intrinsic motivation in order to effectively follow a path toward successful recovery; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals combat stigma and discrimination associated with addiction by raising awareness, using scientifically-sound counseling methods, and treating individuals with dignity and respect; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals maintain the highest degree of competence and ethical practice to inspire and promote an individual's health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, during the *Covid-19* pandemic, addiction professionals have expanded access to telehealth services and ensured access to medication for *Alcohol and Opioid Use Disorders*; and

WHEREAS, addiction professionals are dedicated to enhancing the lives' of New Jersey citizens through *Prevention, Treatment and Recovery*;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

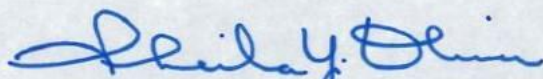
AS

ADDICTION PROFESSIONALS DAY

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this sixteenth day of September in the year two thousand twenty-one, the two hundred forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States.


Lt. GOVERNOR


GOVERNOR

As part of National Recovery Month, Governor Murphy proclaimed September 20th to be National Addiction Professionals Day in New Jersey.

Acting Commissioner Adelman and NJ Human Services celebrates the hard work of all addiction professionals who make a significant difference in the lives of people with substance use disorder.

Women's Equality Day 2021



WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY 2021

 <p>Sarah Adelman <i>Acting Commissioner</i></p>	 <p>Elisa Neira <i>Deputy Commissioner</i></p>	 <p>Andrea Katz <i>Chief of Staff</i></p>	 <p>Johanna Calle <i>Director</i> Office of New Americans</p>	 <p>Dr. Bernice Davis <i>Executive Director</i> Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired</p>	 <p>Elizabeth Hill <i>Executive Director</i> Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing</p>
 <p>Jennifer Langer Jacobs <i>Assistant Commissioner</i> Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services</p>	 <p>Natasha Johnson <i>Assistant Commissioner</i> Division of Family Development</p>	 <p>Valerie Mielke <i>Assistant Commissioner</i> Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services</p>	 <p>Peri Nearon <i>Executive Director</i> Division of Disability Services</p>	 <p>Louise Rush <i>Director</i> Division of Aging Services</p>	 <p>Lauri Woodward <i>Director</i> Office of Program Integrity and Accountability</p>

On Women's Equality Day on August 26, NJ Human Services honored and celebrated its women leaders working to ensure women have health and child care, child support, food assistance and so much more.

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS



Hero.
Nurturer.
Boo-boo Fixer.
Dad.

Parents have so many roles.

Whether you live with your children or not, support them in every way possible.
Remember, child support is more than just money.

njchildsupport.org
1.877.NJKids1

Child support is more than just money. If you would like more information, call the New Jersey Child Support Information Line, **1-877-NJKIDS1** or visit www.njchildsupport.org.



**Doula coverage is
now part of
NJ FAMILY CARE**

Doula care is associated
with better birth outcomes.

For more information, visit
www.njfamilycare.org

Doula care became a maternity benefit available to [NJ FamilyCare](http://www.njfamilycare.org) members as of January 1, 2021.

A doula supports the pregnant individual through pregnancy and the postpartum period with education and emotional and physical support. They may visit their clients in the home/community, accompany them to clinical appointments, and provide continuous labor support at the hospital. Community doulas are best equipped to meet the particular needs of our diverse [NJ FamilyCare](http://www.njfamilycare.org) members as they receive additional training in delivering culturally competent care and accessing NJ's community-based resources.

Receiving doula care can [improve birth-related outcomes](#) and result in a more positive birth experience. Access to doula care is a key part of a package of maternal health reforms aligned with [NurtureNJ](#), a campaign led by First Lady Tammy Murphy to reduce racial disparities in maternal and infant health.

NJ SNAP - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

NJ FAMILYCARE - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

NJHELPS - [ENGLISH / SPANISH](#)

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