NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Autism

A Family Guide to Navigating the NJ Service Systems for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Developmental Disabilities

Fifth Edition

October 2026

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- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
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- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, or if you believe that the NJ DHS has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you may file a grievance at:

Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs
222 South Warren Street, P.O. Box 700
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0700

609-777-2026; Dhs-co.Olra@dhs.nj.gov

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/smartscreen/main.jsf, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue
SW Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

1-800-368-1019, **800-537-7697** (TDD)

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Table of Contents

Background 5
Purpose of Guide 5
What is Autism Spectrum Disorder? 6
Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Jersey 6
Diagnosing ASD in New Jersey 7
Professionals Who Are Working with Individuals with ASD 8
Following an ASD Diagnosis 10
Learning About Available Interventions 12
State Agencies Providing Services to Individuals with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities 14
Life Stages and Autism 17
Adult Services and Supports 24
Funding for Services and Supports 31
Housing 34
Additional Information and Support Resources 37
Registries 39
New Jersey Resources (Government, Non-Profit, Advocacy, Professional Associations) 41
Key Acronyms 43

Background

Through the work of multiple state agencies, New Jersey has taken significant steps to address the needs of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other Developmental Disabilities and their families. Among these actions was the statutory establishment of the Adults with Autism Task Force (AWATF). The Department of Human Services (DHS) was charged with administering the Task Force, with support provided by its Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). DDD has been New Jersey's lead resource agency since 1959 for individuals with developmental disabilities who are seeking programs and services. DDD has a broad scope – addressing individual diagnoses that fall collectively within the definition of intellectual and developmental disabilities. DDD's mission is to assure the opportunity for individuals it serves to receive quality services and supports, participate meaningfully in their communities and exercise their right to make choices.

The AWATF was charged with making recommendations to the Governor and Legislature about programs and services that would meet the needs of adults with ASD. The AWATF released its report in October 2009. Acting upon one of the recommendations, DHS established an Office on Autism (OOA) within DDD. The purpose of the OOA is to provide a one-stop, single resource to address issues associated with ASD within DDD.

One of the first acts of the OOA was the establishment of an Interdepartmental ASD Workgroup for the purpose of enhancing and improving communication, collaboration and coordination among state agencies that are charged with providing services to qualifying residents with ASD. The Workgroup departments include: Human Services, Children and Families, Community Affairs (Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency), Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Health. The first edition of the family guide***, Autism: A Family Guide for Navigating the New Jersey Service Systems for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other Developmental Disabilities***, was the result of a concentrated effort by representatives of the ASD work group to capture virtually all state-based programs and services in one manual. This fifth edition of the autism guidebook provides an update regarding the continuing work of New Jersey's state systems that are intended to serve individuals and families living with autism, as well as other developmental disabilities.

Purpose of Guide

This fifth edition ***of Autism: A Family Guide to Navigating the New Jersey Service Systems for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Developmental Disabilities*** remains the same as its four prior iterations: assist anyone in need of ASD related services to access New Jersey's state system of programs and services for individuals with ASD. This guide is a starting point for anyone interested in developing an understanding of the way New Jersey has arranged its governmental services for individuals and families affected by ASD; it is not intended to represent every ASD service available in New Jersey. The state has local non-profit organization partners that run intensive and comprehensive programs that fill service needs, which are not addressed by state government.

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurobiological disorder that becomes evident during early childhood. ASD impacts a person's social and communication skills. People with ASD process information and perceive the world differently. An ASD is not caused by an emotional disturbance; and it is definitely not caused by any particular parenting style. A great deal of research is now occurring that explores the possible causes of ASD. For additional information regarding some of this research, please go to page 12.

In May 2013, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), 5th edition was released by the American Psychiatric Association. The DSM contains the official criteria for ASD that is used by diagnosticians. To meet diagnostic criteria for ASD according to DSM-5, a child must have persistent deficits in each of three areas of social communication and interaction plus at least two of four types of restricted, repetitive behaviors.[1] A diagnostician will rank the characteristics based on level of severity and describe the support the individual needs.[2] Please visit publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/7662/ for more details regarding the criteria. ASD affects people in different ways. Individuals with ASD each have their own interests, abilities, strengths, and challenges. There is a wide variety in levels of intelligence, ways of communicating, social skills, creativity and challenging behaviors associated with these diagnostic categories. This is why ASD is called a "spectrum" disorder.

Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Jersey

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) most recent data, an average of 1 in 31 individuals has an ASD. Among children with ASD, those born in 2018 were 1.7 times as likely as children born in 2014 to be identified as having ASD by 4 years of age.[3] The reason for the increase in all states is not yet known.

New Jersey's rate of ASD, as described by the New Jersey Autism Study (NJAS), appears to be among the highest rates of autism across the study sites and is estimated to be 1 in 29.[4] The NJAS is a multisource public health surveillance system established to monitor the number of 8-year-old children in the population with ASD or other developmental disabilities. This surveillance system tracks changes in the expression of autism over time. NJAS is a joint undertaking of researchers at the Rutgers Medical School, working in cooperation with the New Jersey Departments of Education and Health, the CDC and numerous New Jersey developmental health centers and school districts.

[1] cdc.gov/autism/hcp/diagnosis

[2] autismnj.org/understanding-autism/diagnosis

[3] cdc.gov/autism/media/pdfs/2025/04/ADDM-Community-Report-SY2022.pdf

[4] cdc.gov/autism/media/pdfs/2025/04/ADDM-Community-Report-SY2022.pdf

Diagnosing ASD in New Jersey

Child Evaluation Centers

Through a statewide network, New Jersey provides support for ten Child Evaluation Centers (CECs), which provide comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluations of children with congenital or acquired neuro-developmental and behavioral disorders. Following evaluation, the CECs develop an individualized service plan (ISP) in collaboration with families. Cost of a diagnostic evaluation is the responsibility of the individual and each clinical site varies in their fees. However, no child is denied access to these services due to the absence of third-party health insurance coverage or an inability to pay. Families should contact the evaluation team directly to determine their options regarding insurance, sliding scale fees, private pay or other funding sources. Contact information for the CEC located in your region is as follows:

New Jersey's Child Evaluation Centers

Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper University Hospital
Child Evaluation Center
Three Cooper Plaza, Suite 200
Camden, NJ 08103-1489
Phone: 856-342-2226

Children's Specialized Hospital
CEC & FASD Center
(Multiple locations throughout NJ; see link below.)
rwjbh.org/childrens-specialized-hospital
Phone: 888-244-5373

Jersey Shore University Medical Center
CEC & FASD Center
81 Davis Ave, Suite 4
Neptune, NJ 07753
Phone: 732-776-4178, ext. 3

John F. Kennedy Medical Center
Child Evaluation Center
2050 Oak Tree Road
Edison, NJ 08820
Phone: 732-548-7610

St. Joseph's Children's Hospital
Child Evaluation Center
DePaul Ambulatory Care Center
11 Getty Ave
Paterson, NJ 07503
Phone: 973-754-2510

Morristown Medical Center
Child Evaluation Center
435 South St., Suite 250
Morristown, NJ 07962
Phone: 973-971-5227

Children's Seashore House of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
FAS/FASD Diagnostic Center
Child Evaluation Center
4009 Black Horse Pike
Mays Landing, NJ 08330
Phone: 609-677-7895, ext. 33466

Rutgers/New Jersey Medical School
CEC & FASD Center
183 South Orange Ave
Behavioral Health Science Building, F Level
Newark, NJ 07103
Phone: 973-972-8930

Professionals Who Are Working with Individuals with ASD

Professionals from many medical and allied health fields will participate in the evaluation process to diagnose your child. These professionals are often referred to as the Interdisciplinary Evaluation Team. Following the assessment and as part of developing an Individualized Service Plan (ISP), your child could be referred to different types of specialists. These professionals will also register your child with the DOH Autism Registry. For more information on the Registry please go to nj.gov/health/fhs/autism/public/registry/. The Registry will link your child with important resources through its Special Child Health Services program. If children are younger than three years of age, the CEC may also refer them to the New Jersey Early Intervention System. (See "The Importance of Early Intervention" on page 17.) If your children are school age (3-21 years), they may be referred to your school district's Child Study Team (see "The School Age Years" on page 17).

The most common professionals working with individuals with ASD, as well as their area of expertise, are summarized in the following table.

Who Can Be of Help	How They Can Help
Psychiatrist	A medical doctor who can diagnose ASD as well as other illnesses and treat the mental health issues associated with ASD. A psychiatrist can prescribe medication or other treatments to treat issues such as depression and anxiety, aggression, ADD/ ADHD, obsessive-compulsive behavior, tic disorders, and more.
Neurologist	A medical doctor who can diagnose ASD and other neurological disorders. A neurologist also checks the neurological functioning of the body and may order tests such as MRIs or EEGs. A neurologist can prescribe medication or other treatments to treat issues such as depression and anxiety, aggression, ADD/ADHD, obsessive-compulsive behavior, tic disorders, seizure disorders, and more.
Developmental Pediatrician	A medical doctor who is a pediatrician with special training and certification in developmental-behavioral pediatrics. A developmental pediatrician is skilled in diagnosis of ASD and developmental disorders. This doctor looks at the whole child and can recommend treatments, including medication.
Psychologist	A licensed psychologist with specialized training in developmental disorders, such as a clinical psychologist or neuropsychologist. A psychologist, or neuropsychologist, can diagnose or recommend treatment for ASD and other developmental disorders. He or she may address coping skills, behavior management, social skills, and strategies for improving functioning.

Who Can Be of Help	How They Can Help
Behavior Analyst	A credentialed professional who has specific training and expertise in the analysis and treatment of behaviors.
Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)	A therapist who specializes in understanding and use of language, and the pronunciation of speech sounds. A speech-language pathologist may address understanding and use of words, grammar, social skills, reading comprehension, and written language.
Occupational Therapist (OT)	A therapist who specializes in assessing and treating fine motor skills, play and social skills, handwriting, sensory integration, and daily living skills such as dressing and feeding.
Child Study Team (CST)	The Child Study Team (CST) is a required multidisciplinary team under N.J.A.C. 6A:14 composed of a school psychologist, learning disabilities teacher-consultant, and school social worker. The CST works collaboratively with parents, educators, and relevant specialists to conduct comprehensive evaluations, determine eligibility, and inform data-based decision making for individualized educational programming.
Special Educator	A New Jersey–certified teacher of students with disabilities (ages 3–21) who provides individualized, standards-based instruction by adapting curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Special educators collaborate with the CST, general educators, and related service providers to support student progress and ensure services are delivered in the least restrictive environment (LRE) based on student needs.
General Educator	A New Jersey–certified teacher who provides standards-based instruction to all students and uses differentiated practices to meet diverse learning needs. General educators collaborate with the CST, special educators, and related service providers to support IEP implementation and ensure access to the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
Physical Therapist (PT)	A therapist who specializes in assessing and treating gross motor skills (jumping, ball skills, using stairs), strength, and coordination.

Following an ASD Diagnosis

How do I get Support?

There will always be challenges and obstacles to manage. Support is important for parent/caregiver's mental and physical health. Self-care is essential for physical, spiritual and mental health. Assistance can be found in local and state agencies, on-line support groups and helpful websites. With good support, learning and growing with your child can also be fun and filled with pride.

Who Do I Talk To About ASD?

It is a personal decision as to whom and when to tell other people that your child has been diagnosed with an ASD. Education plays an integral function in making these decisions. Many resources and websites are available throughout this document. ASD is complex. Everyone affected has a unique set of difficulties and disabilities, along with strengths and talents. Service providers will vary throughout the person's lifespan. It is strongly recommended that you give a comprehensive history to everyone providing services to your child because obtaining effective services is based on accurate information.

Next Steps/Seeking Services

Parents and caregivers can be a child's strongest advocate. Working in tandem with the school system is necessary. A child can be misdiagnosed with a different disorder such as ADHD and, as a result, not receive the interventions that she/he requires. If the school system is not meeting your child's needs, follow up with your school's child study team supervisor, school principal or, if necessary, school system superintendent.

Finding appropriate services for your family member is often dependent upon their age at the time of diagnosis. It is important to remember that New Jersey's departments and services operate under federal and state laws and regulations which may result in some constraints in the delivery of services:

Below are some initial steps you can take to learn about and access available services:

- If a child is under the age of 3, contact the New Jersey Early Intervention System at **888-653-4463**. Staff there will assess your child and provide appropriate intervention services.
- Consult with your county-based Special Child Health Services (SCHS), Case Management Unit (CMU) about community based, State and/or Federal services and supports for your child age birth to 21 years of age. You may find your county's CMU by calling the Department of Health at **609-777-7778** or referring to Department's website at: nj.gov/health/fhs/specialneeds/case-management.
- The Children's System of Care (CSOC) is New Jersey's public behavioral health system. CSOC serves youth under age 21 with emotional and mental health care needs, substance use challenges, and/or intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. CSOC provides community-based, culturally competent services and supports based on the needs of the youth and family.

  PerformCare, the Contracted Systems Administrator for the Children's System of Care, is the single point of access to CSOC's wide array of behavioral health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disability services for youth and families throughout New Jersey.

To learn more and to access services, call the PerformCare 24-hour, toll-free access line at **1-877-652-7624**, or visit the PerformCare website at performcarenj.org.

- Learn more about Special Education:
  - Visit the Department of Education, Offices of Special Education: nj.gov/education/specialed/; and/or
  - Reach out to state partner agencies that have experience helping families navigate the educational system (see *Partner Agencies* below).
  - Contact the Department of Human Services, Division of Disability Services at **1-888-285-3036** to connect with live, professionally certified, Community Resource Specialists specifically trained in disability services who screen for appropriate services and supports and assist in navigating and connecting to programs and services based on individualized needs. Be sure to also request a copy of New Jersey Resources, DDS' annually updated comprehensive resource directory. New Jersey Resources is available in English and Spanish, in both hard copy and electronic versions. To access electronically, visit: nj.gov/humanservices/dds/resources.
- Learn about eligibility requirements as well as possible costs associated with specific services since they vary from program to program. Be sure to visit each department's website or directly be in touch with staff associated with the services in order to ensure that you qualify for the program or service. Links to each department's website can be found on pages 11-13.
- Start a system for organizing reports and notes.
- Review section 12 of this guide, "Funding for Services and Supports", found on page 26. Ensuring that your child is registered with the Autism Registry will help you link to important resources.
- Work toward a routine schedule for your child at home. Try making a list of your daily activities using pictures or words in order to assist your child with ASD.
- Consult a behavior therapist who can teach you strategies for increasing desired behaviors. Your child's doctor, New Jersey's Child Evaluation Centers, and agencies that provide family support services, including those listed under *Partner Agencies* below, can assist you with this process.
- Find a Support Group or connect with a Support Parent (see *Partner Agencies* below).
- Talk with a parent of someone with autism who has volunteered to support/mentor other parents (see *Partner Agencies* below).

Partner Agencies

The Arc of NJ
732-246-2525
arcnj.org

Autism Family Services of NJ
877-237-4477
autismfamilyservicesnj.org

Autism New Jersey
1-800-4-AUTISM (1-800-428-8476)
autismnj.org

Mom2Mom
1-877-914-MOM2 (1-877-914-6662)
mom2mom.us.com

Parents of Autistic Children (POAC)
732-785-1099
poac.net

Parent Advocacy Network
1-800-654-SPAN (1-800-654-7726)
spanadvocacy.org

Learning About Available Interventions

Although there are still unanswered questions, more is understood today about ASD than at any other time. In fact, there are many therapeutic interventions available. It is important to ask questions before embarking on any therapeutic approach. Keep in mind that a child's and family's needs will change over time. Intervention plans for an individual with autism should be flexible, with the ability to evolve as the child's and family's needs evolve. Planning must be individualized because what is appropriate for your child and your family may be different from other individuals with autism and their families.

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a term that many therapeutic interventions associated with autism like to use to describe their programs. A definition that captures the critical components of what makes an EBP an EBP is the following; "The nature of EBP is defined as the integration of best available research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values."[5] True EBP can provide an individual or family with some assurances regarding the possible effectiveness of a selected intervention.

To learn more about EBP as it relates to autism spectrum disorder, you can refer to:

- The National Autism Center's National Standards Project: nationalautismcenter.org/national-standards/phase-2-2015/.
- The National Professional Development Center's Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder: autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/ebps/.

Knowing what questions to ask is just as important as asking them. Parents who have gone down this path have compiled some important questions that you may want to raise with your service providers. In addition, these parents have offered some advice.

Questions to Ask Providers



What is this treatment and what does it do?

Is this something I could do with my child and maintain? Will this cause more stress for our family or reduce stress?

Is there real science to support this treatment? Who or what are your scientific sources?

Can I afford the treatment? Are insurance options available? How will I be involved in the therapy?

How will I know whether my child is making progress?

Could I talk with another family about their experience with this therapy and this provider?

[5] DiCenso A, Guyatt G, Ciliska D, editors. St Louis, Missouri: Elsevier Mosby; 2005. *Evidence-based nursing: a guide to clinical practice.*

Parent-to-Parent Advice

Have hope about treatments, but use common sense. Be cautious when you see or hear claims of cures.

Use caution with treatments that require payment before the treatment begins.

Think about the source of the information you read. Is someone trying to sell you something?

Double-check things you read on the Internet by consulting other trusted sources of information, i.e., nonprofit agencies such as those listed on page 11 or by utilizing EBP information sources such as those listed on page 12.

Pay special attention to studies that are published in high-quality scientific journals (those reviewed positively by other researchers – or "peer-reviewed" – and aligned with findings from similar studies).

State Agencies Providing Services to Individuals with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities

Individuals with autism, living in New Jersey, may receive services and assistance from a number of different departments and agencies within state government. Seeking information and assistance for a family member with an ASD can be very confusing. Following is a list of these agencies and a general overview of the services provided by each. Becoming familiar with these agencies and how they differ, with regard to autism services, can be very helpful for families.

Department of Children and Families (DCF) | nj.gov/dcf

DCF's Children's System of Care (CSOC) serves children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral health challenges, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders, along with their families. Core services include: 24/7/365 access to care coordination, Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS), care management, intensive in-community services, applied behavior analysis, individual and family supports, residential treatment, and substance use services. DCF works in close partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), including the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), to ensure a coordinated continuum of behavioral health services across the lifespan. This partnership supports seamless access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for youth and families.

Department of Community Affairs (DCA) | nj.gov/dca

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) provides administrative guidance, financial support and technical assistance to local governments, community development organizations, businesses and individuals to improve the quality of life in New Jersey. DCA offers a wide range of programs and services including fire and building safety, housing support and community planning and development.

The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) is an affiliate agency of DCA, and is the largest affordable rental housing, purchase housing, and permanent supportive housing financing agency in the state. People with ASD or other developmental disabilities may qualify for assistance with housing issues through the HMFA or the Department of Community Affairs.

Department of Education (DOE) | nj.gov/education

The Department of Education (DOE) is New Jersey's primary educational oversight body, and is committed to setting standards that ensure all children receive the highest quality education. DOE works with local school systems to provide supports and services to all school aged children and youth. Within DOE, the Office of Special Education oversees the systems that provide educational supports and services to students with disabilities, including students with ASD.

Department of Health (DOH) | nj.gov/health

The mission of the Department of Health (DOH) is to improve health through leadership and innovation. DOH works to prevent disease, promote and protect well-being at all life stages and encourage informed choices that enrich quality of life for individuals and communities. In addition, DOH provides special needs assistance to children with ASD and other special health needs through the Early Intervention System and Title V programs, including Special Child Health Services Case Management

Units (SCHS CMU). DOH's Autism Registry directly connects families with these case management units. Funded in part through the county Boards of Social Services, there is a SCHS CMU in each county, staffed by nurses and social workers who can provide information and guidance regarding:

- Your child's medical/dental, developmental, rehabilitative, educational and socioeconomic needs;
- Development of an individual service plan and periodic monitoring;
- Referrals to related services; i.e., Social Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, transition, Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund, family support, Child Evaluation Centers and Early Intervention Services.

Department of Human Services (DHS) | nj.gov/humanservices

The Department of Human Services (DHS) serves about 2.1 million New Jerseyans in need of assistance, or about one of every five state residents and one out of every three children. DHS serves individuals and families with low incomes; people with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, or late-onset disabilities; people who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or deaf-blind; parents needing child care services, child support and/or health care for their children.

DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) | nj.gov/humanservices/ddd

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) funds a variety of services and supports for eligible individuals with developmental disabilities in New Jersey. In the community, individuals have access to a wide array of services through a network of over 600 providers, along with service planning by independent Support Coordinators. Individuals access these services through the DDD Medicaid Comprehensive waiver. The Community Care Program (CCP) was originally approved to provide a community-based alternative to institutional care. Over 11,000 individuals now use the CCP to live in licensed group homes or received comprehensive in-home supports. In 2016, the Supports Program (SP) launched in order to expand access to critical in-home and family supports to about another 11,000 individuals. Additionally, the Division operates five Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs), known as developmental centers, with a compassionate, dedicated and skilled workforce of about 4,000 employees. These ICFs provide 24/7 care to about 1,000 individuals, many of whom require specialized supports for complex medical and behavioral needs.

DHS Division of Disability Services (DDS) | nj.gov/humanservices/dds

Within the Department of Human Services, the Division of Disability Services (DDS) serves as the single point of entry for people seeking disability-related information in New Jersey. As the lead state agency charged with representing individuals with disabilities, the Division focuses on enhancing health, education, employment, recreation opportunities and social engagement. DDS aims to build meaningful relationships with other state and local organizations, have a seat at every table, ensure representation in policy and decision-making while working for greater access, equity and inclusion for all New Jersey residents with disabilities.

Through the administration of programs like the Traumatic Brain Injury Fund and the Personal Assistance Services Program, DDS promotes maximum independence and the full participation of people with disabilities within all aspects of community life.

DDS Publishes the New Jersey Guide to Accessible Parking and New Jersey Resources. New Jersey Resources, updated annually, is a comprehensive guide detailing the programs and services the New Jersey Department of Human Services offers residents, caregivers, advocates, and individuals with disabilities, statewide. Both publications are available in English and Spanish and in both print and digital formats.

DDS offers the following services and programs:

- Information and Referral Services (I & R);
- The Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (TBI FUND);
- The Personal Assistance Services Program (PASP);
- Managed Long Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) enrollment assistance for children, 20 years old and younger;
- Disability Health and Wellness Initiatives;
- NJ ABLE and NJ WorkAbility information and technical assistance.

Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) | nj.gov/labor

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) is committed to helping individuals with barriers to employment participate in the workforce.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) | nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) is to enable eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes that are consistent with their strengths, priorities, needs, abilities, and capabilities. DVRS provides a wide range of both cost and no cost vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to assist them with obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment. Services are available to assist in raising an individual's occupational skill levels to increase their employment retention, earnings, and improve the quality of the workforce.

Life Stages and Autism

The Importance of Early Intervention - Birth to age 3

The New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) is administered by the DOH Division of Nutrition and Developmental Services, which implements New Jersey's statewide system of services for infants and toddlers, birth to age three, with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. The DOH is the Governor's designated lead agency for the Early Intervention System. The goals of the NJEIS are:

- Promote collaborative partnerships among the family, their community, service and health care providers, schools and child care programs that strengthen and enhance family competence to develop and use lasting networks of natural support.
- Provide a family-centered approach which will be based upon the uniqueness of the family and its culture.
- Promote prompt service and support delivery in settings most natural and comfortable for the child and family and which foster opportunities for the development of peer relationships with children without disabilities.
- Reflect the current best practices in the field of early intervention in order to ensure uniformity of service delivery standards and yield the most positive outcome for the child and family.
- Recognize and respect the knowledge, beliefs, aspirations, values, culture and preference of families and utilize these for planning and delivery of supports and services.
- Facilitate ongoing, system-wide, participatory evaluation to ensure an effective and efficient Early Intervention System.

Families can call the statewide toll-free referral number **888-653-4463** for information about accessing the NJEIS in your community. More information can be found at nj.gov/health/fhs/eis. Please be aware that there may be costs associated with some services provided to families through the NJEIS.

The School Age Years - 3 to 21

The New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) Office of Special Education (OSE) is responsible for implementing state and federal laws and regulations governing special education to ensure that pupils with disabilities in New Jersey receive full educational opportunities. It provides statewide leadership through the development of policy and guidance documents. The office is responsible for administering all federal funds received by the state for educating pupils with disabilities ages 3 through 21. Visit the OSE at nj.gov/education/specialed.

The Office of Special Education (OSE) also provides technical assistance to school districts and parents regarding the implementation of special education programs and services.

If you are concerned that your preschool child (ages 3-5) is developing differently or a physician has recently diagnosed your preschool child as an individual with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, or other Developmental Disabilities, you can contact your local school district for educational evaluations and support. Each district has a Director of Special Education listed on the New Jersey Department of Education's School Directory web page at nj.gov/education/specialed/osedirectories. If you have questions regarding a referral to access an evaluation for special education and related services, you can contact the district's child study team, which can include a school psychologist, a social worker and a Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDTC).

The process used to identify, refer, evaluate and determine a student's eligibility for special education and related services, as well as the required steps for developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be found at nj.gov/education/specialed/policy/iepdevelopment.shtml. The IEP team is responsible for identifying appropriate programs and services for students who are eligible to receive special education and related services. The IEP team also determines where students with IEPs receive their education. The IEP team must ensure that a continuum of alternate placements is available, such as instruction in general education classes, special education classes, specialized schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The IEP team can consider placement in special classes or in a different school only when the nature or severity of the educational disability is such that education in the student's general education class, with the use of appropriate supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

The OSE also has a State Coordinator of Autism Programs and Autism Specialist who provides supports and services statewide. This specialist provides technical assistance, support and training to teachers, administrators and parents regarding autism programming, services and supports. In addition, the specialists are responsible for gathering and disseminating resources for families and educators in areas critical to improving instruction and positive outcomes for students with autism and multiple disabilities, including evidence-based practices, Functional Behavior Assessment, positive behavioral supports and IEP development. For additional resources, you may visit the autism program specialist page on the NJDOE website at nj.gov/education/specialed/programs/autism/index.shtml.

Learning Resource Centers (LRCs) are library and training centers that support the educational needs of students with disabilities ages 3 through 21. The LRC staff provides regional workshops, training institutes, statewide conferences, LRC orientations, and technical assistance to educators and parents of students with disabilities age 3 to 21 years. Current special education information is available at the LRCs through library media, professional journals, video/DVD collections, and access to online research relevant to educators and parents having responsibility for children and youth with disabilities. Learn more about the LRCs at nj.gov/education/specialed/LRC.shtml.

The OSE also plans and implements program and professional development activities related to a variety of areas including the implementation of the least restrictive environment provision, planning programs and services for preschool children with disabilities, designing programs to support students with challenging behaviors, planning the transition of students with disabilities from school to adult life and developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) nj.gov/education/specialed/policy/iepdevelopment.shtml.

Finally, the OSE is responsible for monitoring the delivery of special education programs operated under state authority, providing mediation services to parents and school districts when there is a disagreement, processing hearings with the Office of Administrative Law, and conducting complaint investigations as requested by the public.

Educational Resources

Assistive Technology – DOE's Office of Special Education works collaboratively with a variety of organizations to develop and present information and guidance to families of children with disabilities and educators on assistive technology. More information can be found at nj.gov/education/specialed/programs/additionalsupports/assistivetech/index.shtml.

Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE) – This is an important guide for parents working with their local school system and can be found at nj.gov/education/specialed/parents/index.shtml.

Council for Exceptional Children – This Council provides links with updated information on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It can be visited at exceptionalchildren.org.

United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) - This organization gives information on AAC, disabilities, advocacy, and the companies that produce AAC devices. You can visit USSAAC at ussaac.org.

Children's System of Care – The Department of Children and Families, Children's System of Care (CSOC) offers a wide range of services for children up to age 21 with behavioral health, substance use, or developmental disability needs. These services include community-based services, intensive in-home services, out-of-home residential treatment services, and family support services. Individuals up to the age of 21 who receive a diagnosis of ASD may qualify for services established under CSOC and/or the Office of Education. The DCF provides families with a single point of contact that registers, tracks, and coordinates care for children who are screened – at any level - into its Children's System of Care. To provide this simplified access, DCF contracts with PerformCare offering a 24-hour, toll-free Access Line at: **1-877-652-7624.**

The following services are available:

- Determination of eligibility for CSOC Functional Services and Supportive Services*
- Family Support Services - are a coordinated system of on-going public and private supports, services, resources, and other assistance, which are designed to maintain and enhance the quality of life of a young person with a developmental disability and his or her family. Family Support Services are designed to strengthen and promote families that provide care at home for a child or young adult with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Family Support Services fall into four main categories:
    1. Respite care for families, including recreational programs for youth
    2. Assistive Technology
    3. Educational Advocacy
    4. Summer Camp Services
- Comprehensive Waiver Demonstration Home and Community Based Services - Sections of the demonstration waiver will provide additional community support and coordination of services for individuals that meet the clinical criteria for services though the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Children's System of Care (CSOC). This includes services for certain NJ FamilyCare eligible individuals that have been diagnosed with a Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and a co-occurring Mental Illness (ID/DD-MI).
- Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) - intended to help children and youth who are experiencing emotional or behavioral crises. The services are designed to defuse an immediate crisis, keep children and their families' safe, and maintain the children in their own homes or current living situation (such as a foster home, treatment home or group home) in the community.
- Care Management Organizations (CMOs) - agencies that coordinate access to a full range of treatment and support services to children with the most complex needs. They work with child-family teams to develop individualized service plans to meet the identified needs of the youth and family. The CMOs' goals are to keep children in their homes, their schools and their communities.
- Family Support Organizations (FSO's) - family-run, county-based organizations that provide direct family-to-family peer support, education, advocacy and other services to families with youth experiencing mental health/behavioral, substance use, or I/DD needs.

All prior authorization for services will be provided through PerformCare. Additional information may be found at: performcarenj.org/families.

Youth ages 18 through 21 applying for eligibility for CSOC functional services must apply through DDD. CSOC will accept the DDD determination regarding whether the young adult has a developmental disability and meets the residency requirements for the receipt of functional services, but independently determines the most appropriate services. Services are provided until the young adult reaches 21 years of age.

** Youth already determined eligible for Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services need not re-apply for a determination of eligibility for CSOC functional services. CSOC will accept a DDD eligibility determination regarding a youth's developmental disability status.*

Department of Children and Families, Office of Education – The Department of Children and Families, Office of Education (OOE) provides intensive 12-month educational services and supports to children and young adults ages 3 through 21. In some cases, the severity or uniqueness of individual needs requires removal from the public school setting for a period of time. The major goal of the DCF Regional Schools is a successful return to school and participation in community life. A successful return to school and participation in community life are goals for all OOE students.

OOE regular and special education programs are individually designed and provided to students in the least restrictive environment. These education programs are designed for students who:

- Exhibit severe cognitive, physical, behavioral and emotional disabilities;
- Exhibit a variety of moderate to severe learning disabilities;
- Are struggling with success in the regular school environment and/or
- Are pregnant/parenting teens that includes a nursery for the infants and toddlers of parenting teens.

Learn more about OOE at nj.gov/dcf/divisions-offices/ooe/index.shtml.

Transition Planning from School to Adult Life

Planning a student's successful transition from school to adult life is a collaborative, long-range process that involves the student, family members, school staff, agency partners, and community members. Transition planning begins with identifying the student's strengths, preferences, and interests to guide meaningful post-school outcomes.

In New Jersey, transition planning is addressed in the IEP beginning in the school year in which the student turns age 14 and continues annually through graduation or exit. The IEP includes measurable postsecondary goals in the areas of education or training, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living, based on age-appropriate transition assessments.

A coordinated set of transition services, including instruction, related services, community experiences, and the development of employment and adult living objectives, is implemented to support the student in achieving these goals. Schools collaborate with outside agencies, such as adult service providers, to support a seamless transition to adult life when appropriate.

New Jersey's Office of Special Education provides resources, technical assistance, and professional learning to support effective transition planning, including initiatives focused on community-based instruction and person-centered planning.

Community-Based Instruction

Community-Based Instruction (CBI) is an instructional approach that provides students with disabilities opportunities to learn and apply functional, academic, social, and vocational skills in real-world community settings. As a critical component of transition planning, CBI supports the development of independence and prepares students for post-school outcomes in employment, education, and community participation.

CBI is individualized based on student strengths, preferences, and needs, and emphasizes skill generalization across settings. School districts may receive training and technical assistance to support effective implementation, including strategies for instruction, data collection, and coordination with community partners. All efforts are designed to produce meaningful, observable outcomes that improve students' ability to function successfully in adult environments.

Person-Centered Approaches

Person-centered approaches are planning processes that place the student at the center of decision making, focusing on their strengths, preferences, interests, and goals for adult life. These approaches support students and families in developing a clear vision for the future and guide transition planning across areas such as education, employment, independent living, and community participation.

In New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education (OSE), in partnership with The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, promotes the use of person-centered approaches to strengthen transition planning and improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. Through this partnership, schools are supported in implementing practices that increase student voice, self-determination, and meaningful participation in the IEP process.

These efforts are further supported through initiatives such as Planning for Adult Life (planningforadultlife.org), which provide students, families, and educators with resources, training, and tools to align school-based planning with adult service systems and life course outcomes.

The division also developed the office of Transition to Adult Life and Employment (OT&E) to support individuals and families in learning more about the process to transition from the school system into accessing service through DDD and learn more about New Jersey Employment 1st initiative. OT&E offer monthly and quarterly webinars, in person and virtual presentations, and options counseling for individuals, families, community groups, and schools. Information about The Office of Transition to Adult Life and their upcoming events can be found at nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/transition where you can also join their listserv.

The following are some questions to be answered during the transition process:

- What are the student's dreams and vision for his/her life as a young adult?
- What are the student's strengths? How will the student use them to build success during and after high school?
- What is the motivation and investment of the student and family in the process?
- What work experience/training can the student participate in to prepare for employment upon graduation or after post-secondary education?
- Does the student have a career interest now? If not, when and how can the student be helped to discover his/her interests and preferences?
- Does the IEP team believe that the student will remain in school through the maximum age of 21? If so, what age-appropriate experiences may be available after age 18?

- What skills need to be developed or improved to help the student make progress toward his or her postsecondary goals?
- In what school and community activities will the student participate?
- What does the IEP team think the student's high school course of study will look like?
- What transition services, supports and accommodations does the student need for success in high school?

Legal Issues

As the child nears age 18, it is important to explore protections within and outside of the legal system for managing his or her affairs. Families will want to consider the areas in which the young adult can manage responsibility and areas where assistance may be needed. Learn about options of supported decision making, conservatorship, power of attorney, guardianship, and other alternatives. Disabilities Rights New Jersey, the State's protection and advocacy agency for persons with developmental disabilities, may be able to provide legal information at disabilityrightsnj.org.

Estate Planning

Special needs trusts and ABLE accounts are designed for individuals with disabilities. ABLE accounts and special needs trusts, if properly structured and administered, do not affect an individual's eligibility for benefits such as Social Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid.

Supported Decision Making/Guardianship

At age 18, all individuals, including those with ASD and developmental disabilities, reach the legal age of majority. This means that parents can no longer make decisions legally on behalf of their children, regardless of the nature of their disability and regardless of whether or not they still live with their family.

Supported decision-making (SDM) allows individuals with disabilities to make choices about their own lives with support from a team of people. Individuals with disabilities choose people they know and trust to be part of a support network to help with decision-making.

Supported decision-making is an alternative to guardianship. Guardians make decisions for the person with a disability. However, supported decision-making allows the person with the disability to make his or her own decisions instead of having someone else make them for him or her. For more information on Supported Decision Making, please visit supporteddecisions.org.

Some families may want to consider guardianship as an option for their family member. A guardian is defined as "a person or agency appointed by a court to act on behalf of an individual." Establishing guardianship is a legal process, and many families turn to the Bureau of Guardianship Services at the Department of Human Services for help with the process. Guardianship, however, can be established without the Bureau's involvement. For more information about the guardianship process please go to nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/guardianship.

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Involvement with Transition

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act), as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) emphasizes the provision of services to students and youth with disabilities to ensure they have opportunities to receive the training and other services necessary to achieve competitive integrated

employment. WIOA expands the population of students with disabilities who may receive services and the kinds of services that VR agencies may provide to youth and students with disabilities who are transitioning from school or home-schooling to postsecondary education and employment. A student with a disability is an individual (between the ages of 14 and 21) in a secondary, post-secondary or other recognized education program, including home schooling; and is eligible for and receiving special education or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or is an individual with a disability for purposes of section 504 of the Act.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are provided or coordinated by the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS) as a federal requirement under WIOA to introduce and expose students to employment, help them make informed choices, learn acceptable work habits, and acquire real work experience. They are provided to all who meet the definition of a student with a disability who may need such services. The Five Required Pre-Employment Transition Services Activities (section 113(b) of the Act and 361.48(a)(2)) are:

- Job Exploration Counseling
- Work-Based Learning Experiences
- Counseling on Postsecondary Education Opportunities
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Instruction in Self Advocacy

A student with a disability should initially be opened under a Potentially Eligible (PE) case type. Transitioning to a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) case type should occur only when the student actively requests VR services.

A case initially opened under the PE status can be closed and transitioned to a VR case type to access VR services, provided that the consumer and counselor mutually agree that this is the appropriate course of action- even if the consumer is still in school. Once a VR case is established for a consumer, the case cannot revert to PE status; it must continue under the VR framework, requiring formal eligibility determination and the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Once eligible students with disabilities have identified and developed their career interests through VR transition services, they can pursue specific employment outcomes through an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Neither Pre-Employment Transition Services nor VR Services reduce the school district's obligation to provide appropriate transition services under IDEA. For more information about Pre-ETS please go to nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities.

Adult Services and Supports

As the young adult grows and families continue to develop the Person-Centered Plan, consider the places that offer the assistance he or she will need. A very helpful step to assist an individual's transition to this new phase of life is the program Planning for Adult life (planningforadultlife.org) which is described on the bottom of page 17 in this guide.

There are many doors to assistance. Most communities offer an array of services that may meet the needs of the individual and his/her family. The type and availability of aid will vary, but utilizing these community resources can increase the amount of services an individual receives and may provide options that are not available through State agencies. Each individual's unique strengths, abilities and needs will help determine which doors to choose. Each State agency also has its own service criteria.

New Jersey supports policies, programs, and services that promote employment.

- Supports to pursue competitive employment, such as Supported Employment, Career Planning, and Prevocational Training, in the general workforce are available for working age adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are receiving services and supports from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities following the use of employment services available through Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS).
- For all individuals receiving services/supports from DDD, including those not yet achieving employment, annual service planning shall include outcomes related to achieving employment. A facilitated discussion regarding employment pathways must be conducted at least annually and lead toward identified employment outcome(s), planning goals associated with the outcome(s), and needed services/supports to assist the individual in establishing/maintaining employment or removing barriers that may be preventing the individual from pursuing employment opportunities in fully integrated work settings.

New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities

Adults with developmental disabilities age 21 and older, including those with ASD, may be eligible for services from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities. Most DDD-eligible individuals live in the community, in their own homes or apartments; with family; or a licensed community residence such as a group home or supervised apartment. Supports and services to assist individuals living in the community are offered by more than 250 agencies or more than 600 individual providers. You can learn more about DDD at nj.gov/humanservices/ddd.

- In addition to the Support Coordination services that help individuals access needed program and State plan assistance including needed medical, social, educational, and other services, DDD can provide other services such as Employment Services, Day Services, and Individual/Family Supports.

Information about current DDD services can be found by going to DDD's website at nj.gov/humanservices/ddd. The following services are available in the Supports Program and the Community Care Program:

Employment Services

- ***Supported Employment – Individual Support***
  Activities needed to help a participant obtain and maintain an individual job in competitive or customized employment, or self-employment, in an integrated work setting in the general

workforce. The individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities. The service may be delivered for an intensive period upon the participant's initial employment to support the participant who, because of their disability, would not be able to sustain employment without supports. Supports during the intensive period are delivered in a face-to-face setting, one-on-one. The service may also be delivered to a participant on a less intensive, ongoing basis ("follow along") where supports are delivered either face-to-face or by phone with the participant and/or his or her employer. Services are individualized and may include but are not limited to: training and systematic instruction, job coaching, benefit support, travel training, and other workplace support services including services not specifically related to job-skill training that enable the participant to be successful in integrating into the job setting.

- ***Supported Employment – Group Support***

  Services and training activities are provided to participants in regular business, industry and community settings for groups of two to eight workers with disabilities. Services may include mobile crews and other business-based workgroups employing small groups of workers with disabilities in employment in the community. Services must be provided in a manner that promotes integration into the workplace and interaction between participants and people without disabilities. Services may include but are not limited to: job placement, job development, negotiation with prospective employers, job analysis, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, benefit support, travel training and planning.

- ***Career Planning***

  Career planning is a person-centered, comprehensive employment planning and support service that provides assistance for program participants to obtain, maintain, or advance in competitive employment or self-employment. It is a focused, time-limited service engaging a participant in identifying a career direction and developing a plan for achieving competitive, integrated employment at or above the state's minimum wage. The outcome of this service is documentation of the participant's stated career objective and a career plan used to guide individual employment support. If a participant is employed and receiving supported employment services, career planning may be used to find other competitive employment more consistent with the person's skills and interests or to explore advancement opportunities in his or her chosen career.

- ***Prevocational Training***

  Services that provide learning and work experiences, including volunteer work, where the individual can develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that contribute to employability in paid employment in integrated community settings. Services may include training in effective communication with supervisors, co-workers and customers; generally accepted community workplace conduct and dress; ability to follow directions; ability to attend to tasks; workplace problem solving skills and strategies; and general workplace safety and mobility training. Prevocational Training is intended to be a service that participants receive over 2 plan years and with specific outcomes to be achieved in preparation for securing competitive, integrated employment in the community for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities. Prevocational Training services cannot be delivered within a sheltered workshop. Supports are delivered in a face-to-face setting, either one-on-one with the participant or in a group of two to eight participants.

Day Services

- ***Community Based Supports***

  Services that provide direct support and assistance for participants, with or without the caregiver present, in or out of the participant's residence, to achieve and/or maintain the outcomes of increased independence, productivity, enhanced family functioning, and inclusion in the community, as outlined in his/her Individualized Service Plan. Community-Based Supports are delivered one-on-one with a participant and may include but are not limited to: assistance with community-based activities and assistance to, as well as training and supervision of, individuals as they learn and perform the various tasks that are included in basic self-care, social skills, and activities of daily living.

- ***Individual Supports***

  Individual support services are self-care and habilitation-related tasks performed and/or supervised by service provider staff or an approved individual caregiver in an individual's own or family home or in other community-based settings, in accordance with approved Service Plans. Assistance to, as well as training and supervision of, individuals as they learn and perform the various tasks that are included in basic self-care, social skills, activities of daily living and behavior shaping will be provided. The Service Plan will specify the actual tasks to be performed and the anticipated outcomes. Individual support services may include personal assistance, including attendant care, household chores, errand services and training.

- ***Community Inclusion Services***

  Services provided outside of a participant's home that support and assist participants in educational, enrichment, or recreational activities as outlined in his/her Service Plan that are intended to enhance inclusion in the community. Community Inclusion Services are delivered in a group setting not to exceed six (6) individuals.

- ***Day Habilitation***

  Services that provide education and training to acquire the skills and experience needed to participate in the community, consistent with the participant's Service Plan. This may include activities to support participants with building problem-solving skills, self-help, social skills, adaptive skills, daily living skills, and leisure skills. Activities and environments are designed to foster the acquisition of skills, building positive social behavior and interpersonal competence, greater independence and personal choice. Services are provided during daytime hours and do not include employment-related training. Day Habilitation may be offered in a center-based or community-based setting.

Individual/Family Support Services

DDD funds a wide array of services intended to help support individuals with developmental disabilities who reside in the community. DDD provides self-directed individual and family supports such as adaptive technology, behavioral supports, environmental and vehicle modifications, respite, etc. via a self-directed model based upon assessed need. Individuals will choose from approved providers using established budgets.

Support services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assistive Technology;
- Behavioral Supports;
- Career Planning;
- Community Inclusion Services;

- Community;
- Day Habilitation;
- Environmental Modifications;
- Goods & Services;
- Interpreter Services;
- Natural Supports Training;
- Occupational Therapy;
- Personal Emergency Response System (PERS);
- Physical Therapy;
- Prevocational Training;
- Respite;
- Speech, Language, and Hearing Therapy;
- Supported Employment;
- Supports Brokerage;
- Transportation;
- Vehicle Modifications.

New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS)

NJDVRS provides a variety of services for individuals with disabilities interested in obtaining competitive integrated employment. Services Provided:

1. **Vocational Counseling and Guidance** – a core, individualized service designed to help individuals with disabilities select and attain the most appropriate employment outcome/ career pathway. It is a continuous process aimed at helping individuals with disabilities navigate the rehabilitation process, make informed decisions, and develop competencies needed to succeed in a work environment. It involves assisting the individual in identifying existing skills, interests, and strengths to select a suitable employment outcome/career pathway.
2. **Job Search Skill Development** – DVRS counselors provide guidance in work-search activities, such as searching for employment, resume writing, interviewing, and training in professional conduct, business etiquette, and interpersonal communication required for a work environment.
3. **Placement Services** – Through one-on-one support, individuals are assisted with job leads and receive support during the job search. Depending on the individual's needs, placement services may include interviewing skills training, soft skills training, on-the-job training (OJT), supported employment (SE), or time-limited job coaching (TLJC).
4. **Pre-Placement/Placement Services** – Pre-placement (PP) serves as a diagnostic service for job match placement by conducting comprehensive vocational assessments to determine suitable career pathways. It includes activities like exploration, job shadowing, situational assessments, and job preparation to align an individual's skills and interests with job characteristics, ultimately leading to competitive integrated employment with the assistance of a job coach. The goal is to achieve a job match that satisfies both the individual's vocational goals and the business needs of potential employers.
5. **Time-Limited Job Coaching (TLJC)** – is typically for individuals that require pre-placement services, the one-on-one front-end job match placement assistance followed by direct training services provided by the job coach. The time-limited individual needs the assistance of the job coach to learn their job duties and other routines, and make the initial adjustment to the job in order to achieve job stabilization. The time-limited individual will not require extended services and is basically independent thereafter.
6. **Supported Employment (SE)** – The individual in SE is projected to require supports/ job coaching for an extended period of time, possibly for the life of the job, under the Long-Term Follow-Along (LTFA) program or a similar funding arrangement such as provided for by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). Supported Employment Eligibility: Any individual with the most significant disabilities, including youth – for whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred; or for whom competitive integrated employment has

been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and who, because of the nature and severity of the disability, need intensive supported employment services, and extended services after the transition from support provided by the Designated State Unit (DSU) in order to perform the work.

7. **Long-Term Follow-Along (LTFA)** – DVRS provides Long-Term Follow-Along Services (LTFA) to support individuals with significant disabilities in maintaining long-term employment, beginning once job stabilization and satisfaction for both individual and employer are achieved. LTFA requires regular follow-along contacts (a minimum of two per month) and the development and utilization of natural supports. The nature and amount of long-term follow-along needed varies from individual to individual and the type and intensity of support necessary will change over time. The consistent engagement between job coaches, individuals, and employers is crucial for job retention and can incentivize businesses to employ individuals with disabilities and use supported employment services.
8. **Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)** – are designed to introduce students with disabilities to employment, help them make informed choices, and gain work experience, without any cost to students, families, or guardians. These short-term services, available to students aged 14 to 21 who meet the disability criteria, include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on postsecondary education opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy. There are a variety of Pre-ETS services that youth may access without needing formal eligibility status or a social security number.
9. **Out-of-School Youth Employment Services (OSYES)** – are services designed for youth ages 16-24, regardless of their high school graduation status, to assist them in overcoming employment barriers and helping them prepare for the workforce and/or pursue post-secondary education. These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on post-secondary education opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.
10. **Project SEARCH** – is a business-led, ten-month school-to-work program offering vocational training and internships entirely at a workplace or regular community business. It is designed for high school students or young adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Interns participate in an hour of class time and complete three 10 to 12-week internship rotations, gaining transferrable skills through at least four hours of daily work. Upon program completion, graduate interns receive assistance in securing employment either within the community or at the host business site using their newly acquired skills.
11. **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (D/HH)** – Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH) receive specialized career services to help them prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment, with Deaf Language Specialists providing vocational counseling tailored to those who use American Sign Language (ASL) or other communication methods. Available services include ASL instruction, assistive technology, hearing aids, cochlear implants, job coaching, and placement, as well as support programs like driver education. Additionally, these individuals have access to vocational assessments, interpreters, and referrals to community resources, along with colleges that offer communication access and support services.
12. **Bilingual Services** – DVRS employs vocational counselors who are bilingual Spanish-speaking. DVRS also provides interpretation services to assist communication between individuals and DVRS staff to ensure that individuals with disabilities who are bilingual can access vocational rehabilitation services.

13. **Benefits Counseling** – is available to help individuals with disabilities understand how employment may impact their public benefits, like Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). By collaborating with Certified Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs), DVRS provides customized reports to assist individuals in making informed career decisions while considering the effects on benefits such as SSI, SSDI, and Medicaid.
14. **Assistive technology (AT) evaluations** – Assistive technology can be considered at any time while an individual has a case open with DVRS. The individual does not need to meet financial guidelines in order for DVRS to authorize the evaluation. The results of the evaluation will determine equipment and training needs. The individual is made aware that they are to use such equipment for the sole purpose of obtaining and maintaining employment.
15. **Work Related Accommodations and Assistive Technology** – Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, and improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology helps individuals who have difficulty speaking, typing, writing, remembering, pointing, seeing, hearing, learning, walking, and other barriers. When job-site or residence modifications are deemed appropriate, DVRS conducts independent evaluations by certified professionals to ensure consistency in vendor estimates. DVRS coordinates various services, such as job accommodations, mobility equipment, and vehicle modifications, to help individuals with disabilities improve their work capabilities through assistive technology (AT).
16. **Diagnostic Evaluations** – evaluate medical, psychiatric, physiatrist, psychological, neurological, or physical barriers to employment to determine eligibility. Evaluations may also be done to determine the individual's needs throughout the rehabilitation process and to provide restorative and accommodation services.
17. **Emotional and Physical Restoration Services** – emotional restoration services: short-term individual, group, or other counseling to reduce mental health and emotional problems and improve work tolerance and the individual’s ability to obtain and maintain employment; Physical restoration: satisfies the individual’s equipment or therapeutic service needs so that the individual is able to work. The service addresses physical, occupational, speech therapy, or cognitive therapy needs. Physical restoration can include helping the individual obtain prosthetics or orthotics, such as artificial limbs, braces, special shoes, hearing aids, and eyeglasses (in some instances).
18. **Extended Employment (EE)** – is a program designed to provide long-term, structured work opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities who, due to personal choice or labor market conditions, cannot currently work in/are not ready to work in, competitive integrated employment. Services often take place in community rehabilitation programs (CRP), offering a controlled environment. It serves as a, often, non-integrated, rehabilitative, or interim step offering, counseling, and training to develop, or maintain, essential work skills and habits. Referrals for Extended Employment are provided by DVRS field offices.
19. **Community Based Work Evaluation (CBWE)** – assesses an individual's suitability for a job by evaluating their academic, physical, cognitive, and social skills, as well as motivation, in a competitive work environment, while identifying any necessary supports and vocational goals. Conducted in a highly integrated employment setting, the CBWE examines potential employment barriers and involves defining job tasks and essential functions, with a job coach varying the tasks to provide a comprehensive evaluation and recommendations for appropriate work environments and necessary training.

20. **Customized Employment (CE)** – helps an individual to identify a primary vocational interest to develop an individualized plan for employment, which can include carved, modified, or self-employment opportunities, occurring in the individual's home, community, and competitive integrated settings. CE is especially beneficial for individuals with significant disabilities and complex barriers, as it allows them to demonstrate skills and talents in a non-traditional manner, relying on negotiation rather than conventional employment processes.
21. **Trial Work Experience (TWE)** – is a one-on-one service where a job coach arranges and monitors work experiences in various community-integrated settings to assess whether an individual can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services, especially when there are doubts due to the severity of their disability. TWE must provide a variety of work experiences over sufficient time, requiring at least two experiences, to determine potential benefit from services, or three with documented evidence to conclude otherwise. The TWE is not to be used to determine if an individual can work at a specific job or type of employment. TWE is particularly valuable for those with limited work experience, those who have only worked in Extended Employment (sheltered work environments), those with significant impairments, and those aged 24 and under who have exited secondary school.
22. **Internship Development and Supports (IDS)** – an internship is a temporary position focused on providing practical work experience, which can be paid or unpaid, and is available to an individual who has completed secondary school, regardless of their enrollment in post-secondary education. This experience helps individuals gain career-related skills, enhance marketability, expand professional networks, and connect with employers, especially benefiting those with limited work experience or who are developing their career pathways.
23. **Skills Training** – are individualized, employment-focused assistance designed to help individuals with disabilities obtain, maintain, or advance in employment. These services include vocational training, on-the-job training (OJT), soft skills development, job coaching, and specific training programs for careers.
24. **College Training** – support for participating in a post-secondary program leading to a degree. Funding may include tuition, fees, books, supplies, room and board, assistive technology, interpreting services or CART services for the Deaf, and support services, depending on need and financial eligibility.
25. **Driver Training** – provides specialized, employment-focused lessons designed to assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining or maintaining employment. Services may include pre-driver evaluations, on-the-road training, and, for those with medical conditions or disabilities, training on how to use adaptive equipment.
26. **Vehicle and Home Modification** – Assessment of adaptive/modification needs related to employment. For more information on DVRS services please go to: nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities. DOL Workforce Field Services provides services to individuals with all abilities through their American's Job Centers/One Stop Career Centers (OSCC). For more information on services for jobseekers please go to: nj.gov/labor/career-services/contact-us/one-stops.

Funding for Services and Supports

The Medicaid Community Care Program

The Medicaid Community Care Program (CCP) provides specialized services to support DDD eligible individuals with developmental disabilities in the least restrictive setting. This person-driven, long-term support system offers choice and access to services which aid in diverting and/or transitioning individuals from institutional settings to community living arrangements. The CCP is funded by the state and federal government's Medicaid program. DDD administers the CCP.

The CCP is intended for individuals that need CCP support services so that they may reside in the community, thus preventing the need for long-term institutional placement and can be used to support them in their own home or licensed setting such as a supervised apartment or group home.

In order to be eligible for the CCP an individual must be eligible for DDD services. This includes:

- Being a resident of NJ, be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien;
- Being 21 Years of age or older;
- Being DDD and Medicaid eligible.

CCP eligibility includes that an individual:

- Need and utilize at least one CCP service each month;
- Meet clinical level of care; and
- Meet DDD's "emergency" criteria, or be at the top of the CCW waiting list.

An individual on the CCP will receive waiver services that meet his/her needs as determined through an assessment and outlined/authorized in the individual's Individualized Service Plan. The needs of individuals on the CCP are reviewed at least annually.

For more information regarding CCP eligibility please go to: nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/programs-and-services.

The Medicaid Supports Program

The Supports Program provides services for DDD eligible individuals who are 21 and over, live in their own home, or family home (unlicensed DDD settings), and are not on the CCP.

Additional information about the Supports Program may be found at: nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/programs-and-services.

NJ Medicaid

Medicaid provides health insurance to parents/caretakers and dependent children, pregnant women, and people who are aged, blind or disabled. These programs pay for hospital services, doctor visits, prescriptions, nursing home care and other healthcare needs, depending on what program a person is eligible for. Additional information may be found at: nj.gov/humanservices/dmahs/individuals-families/familycare.

To be eligible for New Jersey Medicaid, a person must

- Be a resident of New Jersey.

- Be a U.S. Citizen or qualified alien (most immigrants who arrive after August 22, 1996 are barred from Medicaid for five years, but could be eligible for NJ FamilyCare and certain programs for pregnant women.)
- Meet specific standards for financial income and resources.

Health Coverage Plans

Some plans cover evaluation and therapy services related to the care of people with ASD; others do not. Families should call their insurance company to ask about covered services.

- Insurance bill - P.L. 2009 c. 115 requires coverage for medically necessary therapies for the treatment of autism and other developmental disabilities. However, not all plans are subject to the requirements of P.L. 2009 c. 115. All fully insured plans issued in New Jersey as well as the State Health Benefits Plan must comply with this State insurance law. Health plans that are self-funded, issued in states other than New Jersey or federally regulated are not subject to the requirements of New Jersey law. Medicaid and the New Jersey's Family Care Program are not subject to this law.
- The Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) and Autism NJ created a guide booklet to assist parents and professionals with understanding how Insurance bill P.L. 2009 may affect an individual's or families' insurance benefits. This guide booklet can be accessed at spanadvocacy.org/download/maximizing-coverage-under-nj-asd-other-dd-insurance-mandate/.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI makes monthly payments to people with low income and limited resources who are 65 or older, or blind or disabled. Your child, younger than age 18, can qualify if he or she meets Social Security's definition of disability for children and if his or her income and resources fall within the eligibility limits.

When the Social Security Administration decides if a person can get SSI, it considers his/her income and resources. It also considers the income and resources of family members living in the child's household. These rules apply if the child lives at home. They also apply if he or she is away at school but returns home from time to time is a dependent or has a guardian.

If the child's income and resources, or the income and resources of family members living in the child's household, are more than the amount allowed, the Social Security Administration will deny the child's application for SSI payments.

It is highly recommended that individuals apply for SSI as soon as possible after his/her 18th birthday. Individuals receiving SSI will automatically receive Medicaid - required for DDDp eligibility. Establishing SSI eligibility at 18 can help an individual maintain Medicaid eligibility as a "1634 DAC" (Disabled Adult Child) even if the individual later receives Social Security Disability (SSD) through a parent who has retired, become disabled, or died.

For more information, please visit nj.gov/labor/claims/dds/claimants.shtml.

Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund Commission

The Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund (CICRF) is a financial resource to help New Jersey families, regardless of income, cope with medical expenses for their children that are not fully covered by insurance, state or federal programs, or any other source, such as fundraising. The Fund provides a financial safety net to families struggling with a child's previously incurred medical expenses. The

definition of a catastrophic illness in this program is economic and is measured in terms of the financial impact of health care expenses on the family, rather than on the diagnosis or severity of the illness.

Eligibility criteria include:

- Uncovered medical expenses in any prior, consecutive, 12-month period, dating back to 1988.
- Eligible expenses must exceed 10% of the first $100,000 of a family's annual income, plus 15% of any income over $100,000.
- The child must have been 21 years or younger when the medical expenses were incurred.
- The child's family or legal guardian have been residents of New Jersey for at least 3 months prior to the date of application. Temporary residents of any type are not eligible to apply.

The Fund pays traditional medical expenses such as physician, hospital and pharmacy services. The Fund also assists with non-traditional expenses such as home modifications, modified vans and funeral expenses not usually covered by insurance. All expenses are subject to established caps and program regulations.

You can contact the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund Program at 1-800-335-FUND (3863) or visit their website at nj.gov/humanservices/cicrf.

Housing

Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

As a disability services agency, DDD strives to provide support services that allow individuals to live in their own homes or in their family homes and be part of their communities. DDD encourages individuals to use all available services, including mainstream affordable housing and/or their own resources to live independently. For some individuals who cannot be supported in their family home and are eligible for the Community Care Program (CCP), DDD can provide supports in licensed residential settings, such as group homes or supervised apartments. Individuals not eligible for the CCP will be eligible for the Supports Program.

Launched in 2016, the Supports Program offers a variety of services and supports based on an assessed level of need, that include, but are not limited to, assisting an individual in preparing for, finding and maintaining employment; developing skills used in daily living; and integrating and participating in the community; as well as behavioral supports; physical, occupational, and speech therapies; and respite. Unless enrolled in another Waiver program, all individuals who are eligible for both Division services and Medicaid are able to access the Supports Program. In addition to a variety of services, DDD partnered with New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to create the Supportive Housing Connection (SHC). SHC vouchers provide eligible individuals, seeking to live independently, with the financial assistance needed to support the cost of renting in NJ. Vouchers administered through the SHC are based on annual funding appropriations to DDD and criteria set forth by the Division.

For more information on the SHC program please visit nj.gov/dca/dhcr/offices/shc.shtml.

New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA)

The HMFA provides funding for affordable homeownership and housing opportunities for New Jersey residents. HMFA responds to the needs of its residents by implementing creative programs and establishing alliances that fund affordable home mortgages for first-time home buyers; promote construction, preservation and rehabilitation of rental housing; encourage mixed-income, owner-occupied housing growth as a means to stabilize urban neighborhoods; advance the growth and development of municipalities; contribute to the quality of life of older adults, the people with disabilities and those with special housing needs; and formulate partnerships to foster the economic development of New Jersey and the personal development of its residents. Funding for rent and operating subsidies and supportive services is not available through HMFA.

- Supported Housing and Special Needs Programs – HMFA's Supported Housing and Special Needs Programs Division administers capital financing programs for service-enriched housing developments and housing for people with special needs and provides technical assistance and coordination within HMFA and with other state agencies. The Agency works to improve the housing situation for some citizens of New Jersey with the most needs, including people with ASD and other developmental and intellectual disabilities, mental health consumers, the homeless, the frail elderly, people with HIV/AIDS, youth who are aging out of foster care, youth leaving the juvenile justice system, ex-offenders re-entering communities, individuals 18 years of age and overcoming out of nursing homes, and other under-served communities.
- Housing Resource Center (HRC) – The HRC is an award-winning website and online registry, located at nj.gov/njhrc, designed to assist households in search of affordable and/or accessible housing that allows folks the ability to search thousands of affordable units. This service is free

to both users searching for housing and landlords and property owners looking to rent or sell housing units. The housing is organized in an easy to search format with a variety of criteria tailored to narrow the search. Complete contact information as well as photos of the units (if available) are provided in the search results. Further empowering the HRC user, the system provides a private venue for people searching for housing with specific needs. In short, the user can search according to their needs without revealing personal information, thereby protecting their rights and individuality.

For additional information on HMFA Programs, please call 1-800-NJ-HOUSE or visit their website at nj.gov/dca/hmfa.

Department of Community Affairs

The Division of Housing and Community Resources is committed to strengthening and revitalizing communities through the delivery of affordable housing, supportive services and the provision of financial and technical assistance to communities, local government and community-based organizations.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program assists in making safe and quality housing in the private rental market affordable to low and very low-income households by reducing housing costs through direct rent subsidy payments to landlords. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Section 8 HCV program is based on the premise that housing costs (rent and utilities) should not exceed 30 percent of a household's income. The statewide program is available to residents of all New Jersey counties. Section 8 Existing Housing programs are administered throughout the State by a number of municipal and county authorities. To see the list of County Authorities and find the one closest to you, please check this link nj.gov/dca/dhcr/offices/section8hcv.shtml.

State Rental Assistance Program

The State Rental Assistance Program provides tenant-based and project-based rental assistance grants comparable to the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program, and shall be terminated upon the award of a Federal subsidy to the same individual or household. The program has a "Disabled set-aside" which is reserved for a head of household or spouse with a disability. For more information, please call (609) 292-4080.

Additional Assistance

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Formerly known as Food Stamps, SNAP helps eligible New Jersey residents receive benefits that help them afford a nutritionally balanced diet. Use an online screening tool or contact the Local County/Boards of Social Services to help you determine if you are eligible. To view the screening tool, complete an online application, or find a specific County Board of Social Services please click this link: nj.gov/humanservices/njsnap.

Energy Assistance

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities provides a number of programs intended to help NJ citizens that are having trouble affording their utility bills. These programs include:

- TRUE and PAGE Programs
- Comfort Partners
- LIHEAP (NJ DCA)
- Universal Service Fund-Energy
- Winter Termination Program
- Lifeline Program (Energy Assistance)
- NJSHARES
- Telephone Assistance
- NJ EASE

For more information regarding these programs please visit nj.gov/bpu/assistance/programs.

NJ Helps | njhelps.org

The site offers a free and easy screening tool to identify if you may be eligible for food assistance, cash assistance, and health care. Following the screening, individuals can then continue on to actually apply for the program or service.

Additional Information and Support Resources

Learn the Signs. Act Early.

One important key to a child's ability to develop to his or her greatest potential is to obtain help and support as early as possible. "Learn the Signs. Act Early" is a national initiative undertaken by the CDC and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). This program aims to build an informed corps of pediatricians, family practitioners, allied health providers and other professionals who work with young children to understand the signs and symptoms associated with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

In New Jersey, this effort is being implemented by the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Boggs Center) at the Rutgers - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Important informational resources for parents are also available. Learn more about this initiative and obtain helpful materials at cdc.gov/act-early.

Research

Many research initiatives are underway to study possible genetic and environmental links to ASD. Read about some of these investigations at Autism Speaks at autismspeaks.org/research, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) at nih.gov/health-information/nih-clinical-research-trials-you/personal-stories/researcher-story-national-database-autism-research-ndar, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at cdc.gov/ncbddd.

Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism

The Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism (Council) was created by State appropriation in 1999 and has been issuing research, clinical and educational enhancement grants since 2000. In 2012 the Council established the New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence (NJ ACE) with a mission to research, apply and advance best practices in the understanding, prevention, evaluation and treatment of autism spectrum disorder, enhancing the lives of individuals across their lifespans. To this end, the Council awards grants and contracts to public and private nonprofit entities. To learn more about the work of the Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism please visit nj.gov/health/autism.

Wandering Prevention Efforts

Autism Shield Project – Parents of Autistic Children (POAC) provides safety training for police, firefighters, EMTs, caregivers, teachers, and child study team members in every New Jersey County. These workshops are intended to give participants the information needed to keep individuals with autism safe, and include a safety kit full of resources. An additional facet of Autism Shield is POAC's School Bus Driver and Personnel Training.

Project Lifesaver – is a national program that uses technology to help locate missing persons. Participants wear a bracelet, equipped with a transmitter, which can aid specially trained Sheriff's Officers in locating them once reported missing. The bracelet requires daily monitoring by the caregiver. Any NJ resident that is prone to wandering is eligible for the program. Project Lifesaver is run through county sheriff's departments. The initial cost for the bracelet transmitter and battery is approximately $285. There is a monthly cost of $9-$15. There are some funds available for families in need who

cannot afford the cost. Families apply through their county Sheriff's office. For more information, visit projectlifesaver.org.

Registries

Emergency Preparedness Registry

This registration web site (nj211.org/initiative/nj-register-ready) allows residents with special needs and their families, friends and associates an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies, so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency.

New Jersey Autism Registry

Legislation was enacted in 2007 mandating that the DOH maintain a registry of individuals diagnosed with ASD who are under the age of 22. Licensed health care professionals are required to register any child whom they have diagnosed or whom they follow with ASD. They must notify parents of the registration process. Once a child is registered, services will be sent to the family. The Autism Registry is a confidential registry with three main missions:

1. Connects families to the Special Child Health Services Case Management Unit in their county of residence.
2. Provides aggregate information to policy makers to help them better plan for needed services and resources throughout the state.
3. Examines epidemiological factors to better understand the prevalence of autism in New Jersey. For more information about the Autism Registry, please call 609-292-5676 or visit nj.gov/health/fhs/autism/public/registry for more information. Information about services available from DOH to children with special needs is available at nj.gov/health/fhs/sch.

The New Jersey Autism Registry: Facts and Myths

Myth: I can refuse to have my child registered with the Autism Registry.

False. Health care providers must tell the parent/guardian about the Registry and their right to request an anonymous registration. You can only choose to be in the Registry without identifiers such as name, full date of birth, address etc. However, if you choose this option, you will not automatically be linked to Special Child Health Services, Case Management Unit.

Myth: If I don't give consent, my health care provider cannot register my child because of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

False. A provider does not need consent because this is a public health surveillance activity. All states require the reporting of certain conditions so that they can better plan for and provide services. Both health care providers who diagnose ASD and primary care providers are required to register so that children diagnosed previously or out-of-state are not missed.

Myth: There is no benefit to me or my child to be registered.

False. Once your child is registered, you will receive a letter and informational pamphlets telling you that your child has been registered, and about services that may be available for you and your family. The Special Child Health Services Case Management Unit will contact your family and inform you of available family-centered services in your community. County-based case management units are a free resource for families of children from birth to 21 years of age with special health care needs. If

your child's personal information is not included, we will not be able to link your child to important services and resources, many at no charge to the families.

Fact: Your child's personal identifying information is CONFIDENTIAL.

True. Children's personal information such as their name, address, diagnosis, etc. is NOT shared with other agencies such as the Division of Motor Vehicles, schools and colleges. We recognize the sensitivity of your information and respect the rights of all individuals with ASD and their families. We take seriously our obligation to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and we keep all personal information in a tightly secured location.

New Jersey Resources (Government, Non-Profit, Advocacy, Professional Associations)

Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens with Disabilities (ABCD)
abcdnj.org

All In for Inclusive Education
allinforinclusiveed.org

The Arc of New Jersey
arcnj.org

Advocates for Children of New Jersey
acnj.org

Autism Family Services of NJ
autismfamilyservicesnj.org

Autism NJ
autismnj.org

Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)
autisticadvocacy.org

Autism Speaks
autismspeaks.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
cdc.gov

Children's Specialized Hospital
rwjbh.org/childrens-specialized-hospital

Council for Exceptional Children
exceptionalchildren.org

Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation
djfiddlefoundation.org

Department of Children and Families
nj.gov/dcf

DCF Office of Education
nj.gov/dcf/divisions-offices/ooe

Department of Community Affairs
nj.gov/dca

Department of Education
nj.gov/education

Department of Health
nj.gov/health

Department of Human Services
nj.gov/humanservices

Department of Labor and Workforce Development
nj.gov/labor

Disability Rights New Jersey - NJ ADD Network
disabilityrightsnj.org

Division of Children's System of Care
nj.gov/dcf/divisions-offices/csoc

Division of Developmental Disabilities
nj.gov/humanservices/ddd

Division of Disability Services
nj.gov/humanservices/dds

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities

DOE Office of Special Education Programs
nj.gov/education/specialed

Elizabeth M. Boggs Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
boggscenter.rwjms.rutgers.edu

Emergency Preparedness Resources from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
njcdd.org/emergency-prep

Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey
epilepsyservicesnj.org

Family Resource Network
familyresourcenetwork.org

Family Support Crisis Handbook
performcarenj.org/content/dam/amerihealth-caritas/performcare-nj/pdf/families/family-crisis-handbook.pdf.coredownload.inline.pdf

Family Support Coalition of New Jersey
cpfamilynetwork.org/resources/resources-guide/family-support-coalition-of-new-jersey

Find a Ride: NJ public and private transportation
care-lync.com/resources/nj-find-a-ride

Housing & Community Development Network of NJ
hcdnnj.org

Housing Resource Center (HRC)
nj.gov/njhrc

Lead Safe NJ Program
nj.gov/dca/dhcr/offices/leadsafe.shtml

Learning Resource Centers
nj.gov/education/specialed/LRC.shtml

Mom2Mom - Support line for mothers 1-877-914-MOM2
mom2mom.us.com

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
nih.gov

NJ APSE - The Network on Employment
apse.org

New Jersey Association of Community Providers
njacp.org

NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
njcdd.org

NJ Dept. of Community Affairs' Division of Housing and Community Resources
nj.gov/dca/dhcr

NJ Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services
nj.gov/humanservices/dmahs

NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas

NJ Department of Health, Title V Children with Special Health Care Needs programs
nj.gov/health/fhs/sch

NJ Early Intervention System
nj.gov/health/fhs/eis

NJHelps.org
njhelps.gov

NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA)
nj.gov/dca/hmfa

NJ Parent Link: The Early Childhood, Parenting, and Professional Resource Center
nj.gov/njparentlink

NJ Positive Behavior Support in Schools
pbsisnj.org

NJ Self Advocacy Project
njselfadvocacyproject.org

NJ Self Help Clearinghouse
njgroups.org

NJ State Home Page
nj.gov

NJ State Legislature
njleg.state.nj.us

NJ Statewide Independent Living Council
njsilc.org

NJ Transit Accessible Services
njtransit.com/accessibility

NJ Work Incentive Network Support (NJWINS)
njwins.org

Northeast ADA & IT Center
northeastada.org

Parents Of Autistic Children (POAC)
poac.net

Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE)
nj.gov/education/specialed/parents

PerformCare
performcarenj.org

Special Olympics of New Jersey
sonj.org

Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)
spanadvocacy.org

Supportive Housing Association of NJ
shanj.org

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
nj.gov/humanservices/njsnap

United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USAAC)
ussaac.org

Key Acronyms

ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis
ABCD	Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens with Disabilities
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASAN	Autistic Self Advocacy Network
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASPEN	Asperger Syndrome Education Network
AWATF	Adults With Autism Task Force
CBI	Community Based Instruction
CBVI	Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
CCP	Medicaid Community Care Program
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEC	Child Evaluation Centers
CICRF	Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
CMW	Comprehensive Medicaid Waiver
DAC	Disabled Adult Child
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
DCF	Department of Children and Families
DCSOC	Division of Children's System of Care
DDD	Division of Developmental Disabilities
DDS	Division of Disability Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
DOH	Department of Health
DIR	Developmental, Individual-Difference, Relationship-Based Model
DOL	Department of Labor and Workforce Development
DMHAS	Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
DOE	Department of Education
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
DVRS	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
EBP	Evidence Based Practice
EIBI	Early Intensive Behavior Intervention

EIP	Early Intervention Program
FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
HMFA	Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
HRC	Housing Resource Center
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
ISAAC	International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
LDTC	Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant
LHCA	Lead Hazard Control Assistance
LRCs	Learning Resource Centers
MCHB	Maternal and Child Health Bureau
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NJ ACE	New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence
NJAS	New Jersey Autism Study
NJEIS	New Jersey Early Intervention System
NJWINS	New Jersey Work Incentive Network Support
NON-DAC	Non Disabled Adult Child
OOA	Office on Autism
OJT	On the Job Training
OSCC	One Stop Career Centers
OTSSS	Office of Tiered Supports and Specialized Services
OOE	Office of Education
OIAS	Office of Information and Assistance Services
OT	Occupational Therapist
PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorders
PDDNOS	Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified
PERS	Personal Emergency Response System
POAC	Parents Of Autistic Children
PT	Physical Therapist
RDI	Relationship Development Intervention
SCHS	Special Child Health Services Case Management Units
SE	Supported Employment

SLP	Speech-Language Pathologist
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SPAN	Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TEACCH	Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Related Handicapped Children
TLPC	Time Limited Placement and Coaching
USSAAC	United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act