



Eye on Advocacy

Weekly E-Newsletter
November 4, 2025




NJCDD's Eye on Advocacy weekly e-newsletter is published every Tuesday, focusing on important news and events for the intellectual and/or developmental disabilities community. You are welcome to submit news items and feedback to njcdd@njcdd.org

[Subscribe to NJCDD's Publications](#)



National Caregiver Awareness Month

Caregiver Action Network (the National Family Caregivers Association) began promoting national recognition of family caregivers in 1994. They spearheaded the annual national celebration of a national caregiver awareness month every November.

President Bill Clinton signed the **1997 National Family Caregivers Week Presidential Proclamation**. Every U.S. president since has followed the practice each November. You can visit the archive of presidential proclamations for national caregiver recognition month.

[Learn More](#)

Take Action



NACDD

National Association of Councils
on Developmental Disabilities

The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities and 32 State Councils on Developmental Disabilities released a statement yesterday expressing deep concern about the recent layoffs at the U.S. Department of Education and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). These cuts affect key offices that make sure people with disabilities get the education, mental health support, and community services they are entitled to under the law.

[Download the statement here](#)




Seven Years Later: Lessons from New Jersey's First Ombudsman for Individuals with Disabilities

October 28, 2025




Paul Aronsohn
New Jersey's inaugural Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families



The NJ Legislative Disability Caucus Hosts Quarterly Meeting Insightful Discussion on the Role of the Office of the Ombudsman for Individual with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

Trenton, NJ – This week, the bipartisan New Jersey Legislative Disability Caucus welcomed Paul Aronsohn, New Jersey's inaugural Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families, for a discussion titled "Seven Years Later: Lessons from New Jersey's First Ombudsman for Individuals with Disabilities."

[Read More](#)

Upcoming Events

For more details on the events listed in this issue, scroll down

- NJCDD Hybrid Public Meeting: Nov. 13: [Register Here](#)
- Assistive Technology Webinar Series - Nov. 19: [Register Here](#)
- The Boggs Center Training: [Register Here](#)

- The Boggs Center Lecture Series: [Learn More](#)
- Navigating the Medical Insurance Maze for Adults with I/DD: Nov. 6: [Register Here](#)



NJCDD Hybrid Public Meeting

November 13, 2025
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

[Register Here](#)

The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities (NJCDD) Hybrid Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Hilton Garden Inn, located at 800 US Route 130 in Hamilton, NJ. To attend in person or make a public comment, please send your in-person RSVP or written public comments to Jacinta.Williams@njcdd.org by Wednesday, November 12, 2025.

ACCOMMODATION:

For in-person accommodations, language interpretation, and/or other accommodations, please contact Jacinta Williams at Jacinta.Williams@njcdd.org with your specific accommodation request at least two weeks in advance or by Wednesday, October 30, 2025.

Reunión Pública Híbrida de NJCDD

13 de Noviembre de 2025
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

[Regístrate Aquí](#)

La Reunión Pública Híbrida del Consejo de Discapacidades del Desarrollo de Nueva Jersey (NJCDD) se llevará a cabo el Jueves 13 de Noviembre de 2025, de 9:30 a.m. a 1:30 p.m., en el Hilton Garden Inn, 800 US Route 130, Hamilton, NJ. Para asistir en persona o hacer un comentario público, envíe su confirmación de asistencia en persona o comentarios públicos por escrito a Jacinta.Williams@njcdd.org antes del Miércoles 12 de Noviembre de 2025.

ALOJAMIENTO:

Para alojamientos en persona, interpretación de idiomas y/o otros ajustes, comuníquese con Jacinta Williams en Jacinta.Williams@njcdd.org con su solicitud específica de alojamiento al menos con dos semanas de anticipación o antes del Miércoles 30 de Octubre de 2025.

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



**Division of
Developmental
Disabilities**

Office of Education on Self-Directed Services

Family Networking Sessions: Fall 2025 (October - November)

The Office of Education on Self-Directed Services hosts networking sessions for people and families who are self-directing services or interested in self-direction.

- All sessions are held in person unless otherwise noted.
- Advance registration is required.

Wed., Nov. 5 | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
**Bergen County Special Services
School District**
[Register for November 5 Session](#)



RUTGERS HEALTH
**The Boggs Center
on Disability and Human Development**
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

The Boggs Center offers training and consultation on topics relevant to addressing the needs of and supporting people with developmental disabilities and families across the lifecourse.

You may view and register for many of these trainings using [The Boggs Center Online Registration System](#).

Learn more about Boggs Center training and consultation opportunities:

Aging & Grief
Behavior & Mental Health
Community Supports & Quality
Community-Based Instruction
Employment
Meaningful Days
PCAST - Person-Centered Approaches in Schools and Transition
People With DD And Families
Supports Brokerage
Support Coordination
Transition
Workforce Development & Frontline Supervisors

[Learn More](#)

Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series



FALL 2025 WEBINARS



**Registration is open for the Fall 2025
Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series.**

[View Fall 2025 Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series Brochure](#)

[Learn More](#)

All sessions will be held online using The Zoom Webinar platform.

OFFICIAL SITE OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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Department of Human Services



Division of Developmental Disabilities

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Fiscal Intermediary (FI)
Transition Update

The transition of the Division of Developmental Disabilities’ (DDD) Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Self-Directed Services Model from Public Partnerships LLC (PPL), the current fiscal intermediary, to Acumen Fiscal Agent (Acumen), is underway.

Learn More on Upcoming Transition Webinars

Navigating the Medical Insurance Maze for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)



November 6th, 2025
9:30am - 1:15pm EST

2025 Beverly Roberts Memorial
Healthcare Symposium

2025 Beverly Roberts Memorial
Healthcare Symposium

November 6, 2025 | 9:30 AM - 1:15 PM

Register Here

Download the flyer [HERE](#)

A half day virtual conference for parents, caregivers, family members, direct support staff, and professionals who support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Questions? Email healthcareadvocacy@arcnj.org

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY WEBINAR SERIES

Disability Rights New Jersey will be hosting a three-part Lunch and Learn webinar series focusing on assistive technology solutions for individuals living with paralysis, family members and professionals who support them. Beyond the tools, the sessions will offer opportunities to brainstorm implementation ideas to ensure success and promote independence.

Sept 24 - It's in There - Built in Accessibility

Join us as we explore features you might already have access to and didn't know it. Discover how to leverage the resources you currently have at your disposal and the built-in features of your devices to avoid spending money on apps or new hardware that can accomplish what your existing device can.

Oct. 22 - Alternate Access for People with Paralysis

Join us as we explore customizable input methods to hands-free controls, and discover how these advancements enable people to interact with devices, environments, and tools in innovative ways.

Nov. 19 - Smart Home Technology

Join us as we explore how to use smart home technology to access audiobooks, improve personal security, turn on lights, appliances, access music, podcasts and much more.

You can attend one session or all three!

WEDNESDAY

SEPT. 24
OCT. 22
NOV. 19

12:00 NOON

FOR MORE
INFORMATION
OR TO REGISTER





These events are co-sponsored by the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

[DISABILITYRIGHTSNJ.ORG](http://disabilityrightsnj.org)

Smart Home Technology for
People with Paralysis Webinar

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Beyond the tools, the sessions will offer opportunities to brainstorm implementation ideas to ensure success and promote independence. Attend any or all sessions.

Nov. 19 - Smart Home Technology

Join us as we explore how to use smart home technology to access audiobooks, improve personal security, turn on lights, appliances, access music, podcasts and much more.

Register for This Event

Download Flyer

In the News

IMPORTANT
UPDATE
IF YOU GET SNAP FOOD
ASSISTANCE BENEFITS

New Jersey was notified by the federal government that if the shutdown continues, November 2025 SNAP benefits will not be available on November 1.

SNAP benefits loaded on your Families First EBT card prior to October 31, 2025 will be available for you to use after November 1, 2025. Before going to the grocery store after November 1, we encourage SNAP food assistance recipients to check their account at NJFamiliesFirst.com or by calling **800 997-3333**. If there are SNAP benefits in your **NJ FamiliesFirst account**, they are available for you to use.

Please note, you may receive eligibility notices and your MyNJHelps case summary may show that you are eligible for November benefits. Even though you may receive an eligibility notice and the benefits show in your case summary, if the federal shutdown continues, November 2025 SNAP benefits will not be posted to your Families First EBT card on time.

Because November SNAP benefits are not available as a result of a federal shutdown, fair hearings will not be scheduled for this issue.

SNAP applications and recertifications will be processed. Continue to submit requested information to ensure you get your benefits when federal SNAP funding becomes available.

Visit NJSNAP.gov

ACTUALIZACIÓN
IMPORTANTE
SI RECIBE BENEFICIOS
DE ASISTENCIA
ALIMENTARIA DE SNAP

New Jersey fue notificado por el gobierno federal de que si el cierre continúa, los beneficios de SNAP para el mes de noviembre de 2025, no estarán disponibles a partir del 1 de noviembre.

Los beneficios de SNAP que hayan sido cargados a su tarjeta de EBT Families First antes del 31 de octubre, se podrán utilizar después del 1 de noviembre. A contar del 1 de noviembre, se recomienda a los usuarios que reciben asistencia alimentaria de SNAP, a chequear su cuenta en NJFamiliesFirst.com, o llamar al 800-997-3333, antes de dirigirse al supermercado. Si se encuentran disponibles sus beneficios de SNAP en su cuenta de NJ FamiliesFirst, significa que se encontrarán disponibles para su uso.

Tenga en cuenta que usted puede seguir recibiendo notificaciones de elegibilidad, y puede que su historial de caso en su portal MyNJHelps muestre que es elegible para los beneficios a contar del mes de noviembre. Incluso si usted recibe notificaciones de elegibilidad, y los beneficios se ven reflejados en su historial de caso, si el cierre federal continúa, los beneficios de SNAP para el mes de noviembre no serán posteados a tiempo en su tarjeta de EBT Families First.

Debido a que los beneficios de SNAP del mes de noviembre no estarán disponibles como resultado del cierre federal, no se agendarán audiencias imparciales por este motivo.

Las solicitudes y recertificaciones para SNAP se seguirán procesando. Continúe enviando la información requerida para asegurarse de que reciba sus beneficios cuando la financiación federal para SNAP vuelva a estar disponible.

Visite NJSNAP.gov



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

Governor Murphy, Senate President Scutari, and Assembly Speaker Coughlin Announce Accelerated Delivery of \$42.5

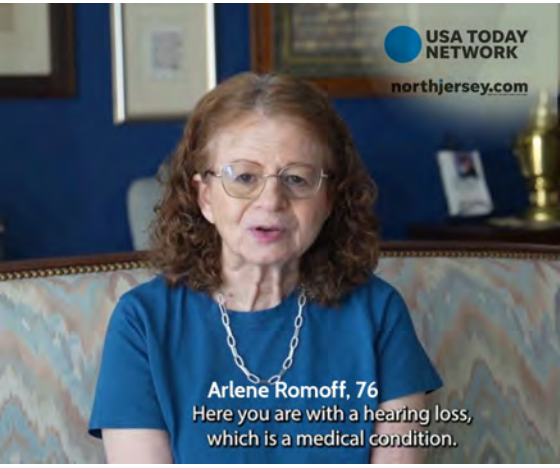
Million in Food and Hunger Grants

Murphy Administration Highlights Resources Available to Residents as Trump Administration Fails to Fund SNAP

TRENTON – The Trump Administration’s failure to fund the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as the federal government shutdown continues into November will leave hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans without the resources necessary to put food on the table. As the shutdown enters its 30th day, Governor Phil Murphy, Senate President Nick Scutari, and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin today announced that the State is accelerating the delivery of food and hunger grants to Emergency Food Organizations (EFOs), or food banks, ahead of the expected halt in SNAP benefits, as outlined in the [Fiscal Year 2026 Budget](#).

Despite the availability of approximately \$6 billion in federal SNAP contingency funds for emergency circumstances, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that it will not fund SNAP benefits starting on November 1, 2025. This unprecedented decision will impact more than 800,000 New Jerseyans across 400,000 households. Almost half of the 800,000 are children, nearly one in three are individuals with a disability, and one in five are over the age of 60.

Read More



NJ's health system has a huge gap in care for people with disabilities on Medicaid
Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

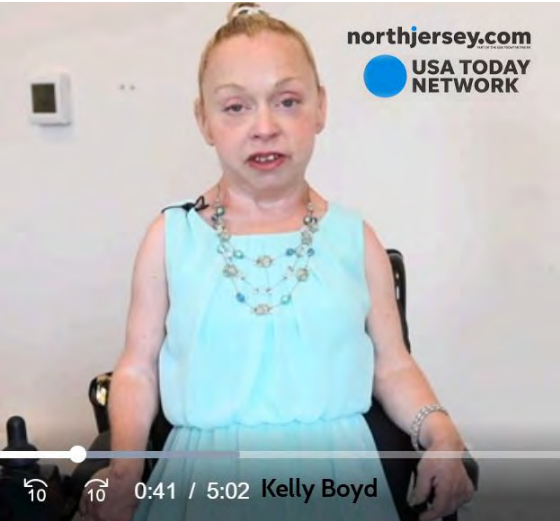
When Nantanee Koppstein found a new primary care practice in the Princeton area for her daughter, she was overjoyed — considering that it took weeks of searching for a doctor who had experience treating a patient with developmental disabilities.

The first visit was great. The doctor was kind and competent. Koppstein and her daughter, who has multiple disabilities, were confident they had found a practice that would serve them for years.

But a few weeks later, in early 2020, Koppstein's hopes came crashing down.

The practice informed Koppstein that they could no longer see her daughter because she was on Medicaid — even though it was not her primary insurance.

Read More



In NJ, people with disabilities face indignity, missed diagnoses, barriers to health care
Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

Kelly Boyd, 45, remembers a trip to a Mercer County OB/GYN not for what the doctor did, but for what she said.

“She asked me — twice — if I was a dwarf,” Boyd said.

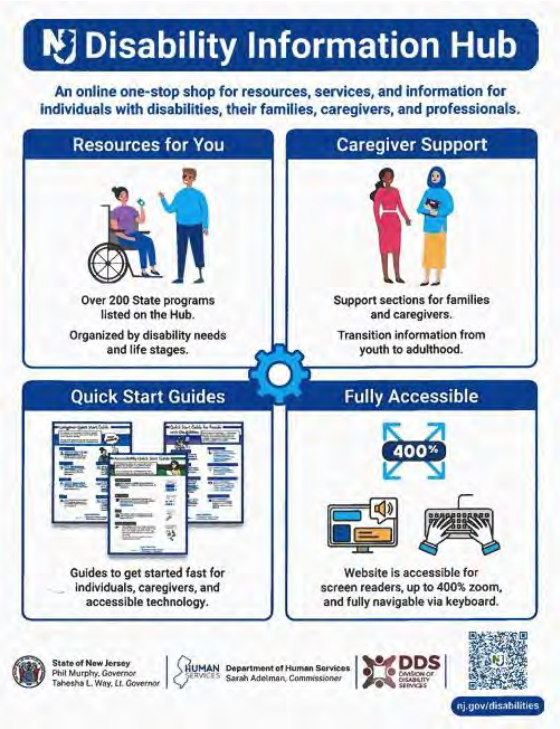
The doctor hadn’t read her chart, which noted her diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis, a condition she has battled since infancy. The Hamilton Township resident, who uses a wheelchair and is 4-foot-9, said the question was offensive — and irrelevant.

“I never went back due to her bedside manner,” she said.

That wasn’t the only indignity Boyd has experienced at the hands of a New Jersey health care provider. At one medical practice that claimed to have accessible offices, she was met with a tall curb she couldn’t navigate. The receptionist visible through the window didn’t acknowledge her struggling at the door. And at routine appointments, nurses often have tried to skip weighing her.

Read More

Resources



The New Jersey Disability Information Hub (DIH)
The New Jersey Disability Information Hub (DIH) is an all-inclusive online resource designed to support individuals with disabilities, their families, and caregivers throughout the state.

The DIH offers a wealth of information about programs, services, and resources available across New Jersey. It includes user-friendly tools, like Quick Start Guides, to assist individuals in navigating important topics, such as housing, employment, education, and healthcare. To explore the Hub and its offerings, visit <https://www.nj.gov/disabilities>.

Download the Flyer in English

Descargar el volante en español



Supports Brokers
Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct

Getting Started

In New Jersey, people can self-direct all or some of their Home and Community Based Services, made available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Supports Program or Community Care Program. Self-directed services are provided by a person you hire, known as a self-directed employee (SDE), or a service provided by a business/vendor that serves the general public, and are paid through use of a fiscal intermediary. Your Support Coordinator will work with you and, as needed, your family to help you understand what it means to self-direct by sharing information, as well as:

- Talking with you to learn about your strengths, needs, and interests, and what you want and don't want in your life
- Supporting you to describe your life goals
- Identifying different types of support that can be used to help you achieve your life goals, including DDD services, relationship-based supports (such as a family member or neighbor), community resources, technology, and other state and local service systems
- Explaining how self-directed services are different from provider-managed services, and which DDD services can be self-directed and which cannot
- Describing the role of the fiscal intermediary and the differences between the two options – Agency with Choice and Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent
- Sharing information about the resources you use when you self-direct one or more of your services

A fiscal intermediary will be used to process payment and assigned tasks related to your approved self-directed services.

When you choose to self-direct, you can hire a Support Broker.

Supports Brokerage is a service that is available in the DDD Supports Program and Community Care Program. Your Support Coordinator can help you to identify a Supports Brokerage agency. A **Supports Broker** can help you coordinate and maintain your self-directed services. They empower you to take control of your self-directed services, grow community connections, and direct the life you want.

Learn More

- Check out **Understanding Self-Directed Services in New Jersey** by The Boggs Center: <https://2020publications.com/catalogs/edu/resources/publications/understanding-self-directed-services-in-new-jersey-and-the-role-of-the-supports-broker>
- Visit the **Office of Education on Self-Directed Services webpage**: <https://www.nj.gov/divisions/ddis/ddd/individuals/community/education>
- Email DDD.OIEC@ddis.nj.gov

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Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

DDD Division of Developmental Disabilities



Supports Brokers: Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct

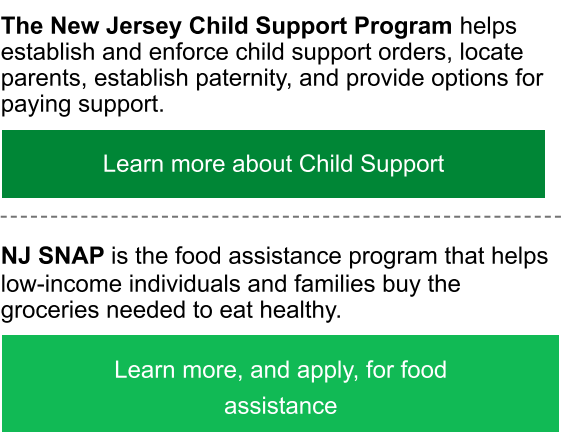
In New Jersey, people can self-direct all or some of the Home and Community Based Services, made available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Supports Program or Community Care Program. Supports Brokers can help people who choose to self-direct to coordinate and maintain their self-directed services. The Boggs Center is excited to share ***Supports Brokers: Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct***, a new one-page fact sheet to help people with disabilities and families better understand self-direction and the roles and responsibilities of Supports Brokers.

Download Fact Sheet



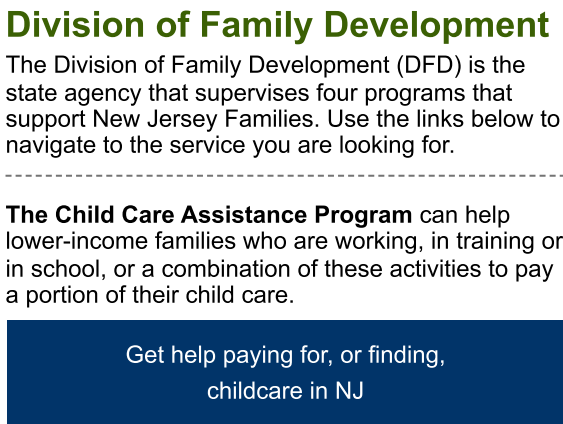
Need help with child care, child support, food assistance or cash assistance?

The Division of Family Development can help!



The New Jersey Child Support Program helps establish and enforce child support orders, locate parents, establish paternity, and provide options for paying support.

Learn more about Child Support

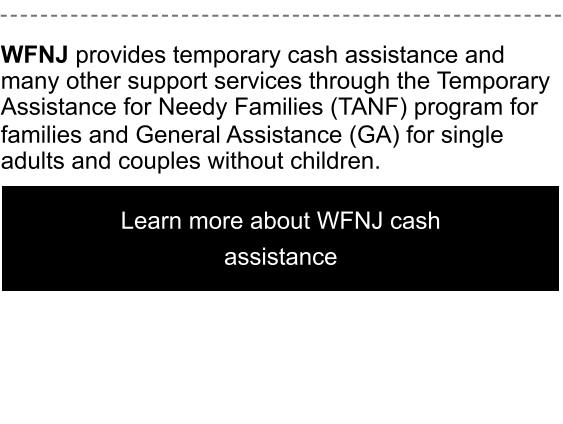


Division of Family Development

The Division of Family Development (DFD) is the state agency that supervises four programs that support New Jersey Families. Use the links below to navigate to the service you are looking for.

The Child Care Assistance Program can help lower-income families who are working, in training or in school, or a combination of these activities to pay a portion of their child care.

Get help paying for, or finding, childcare in NJ

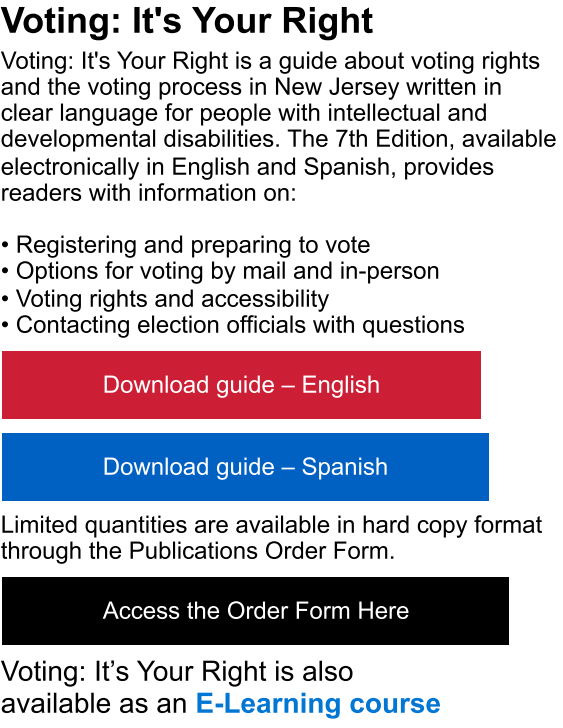


WFNJ provides temporary cash assistance and many other support services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program for families and General Assistance (GA) for single adults and couples without children.

Learn more about WFNJ cash assistance



VOTING:
IT'S YOUR RIGHT



Voting: It's Your Right

Voting: It's Your Right is a guide about voting rights and the voting process in New Jersey written in clear language for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The 7th Edition, available electronically in English and Spanish, provides readers with information on:

- Registering and preparing to vote
- Options for voting by mail and in-person
- Voting rights and accessibility
- Contacting election officials with questions

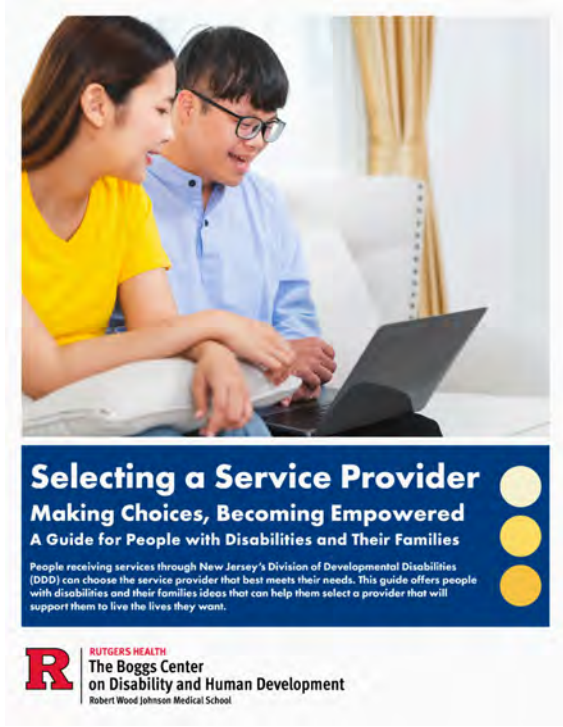
Download guide – English

Download guide – Spanish

Limited quantities are available in hard copy format through the Publications Order Form.

Access the Order Form Here

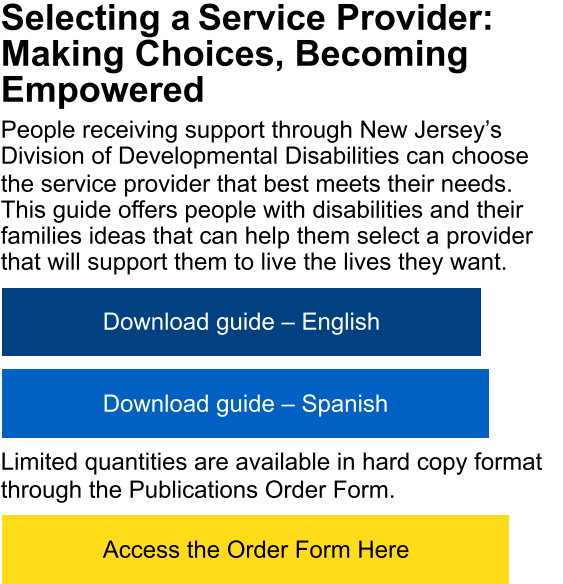
Voting: It's Your Right is also available as an **E-Learning course**



Selecting a Service Provider
Making Choices, Becoming Empowered
A Guide for People with Disabilities and Their Families

People receiving services through New Jersey's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) can choose the service provider that best meets their needs. This guide offers people with disabilities and their families ideas that can help them select a provider that will support them to live the lives they want.

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The Boggs Center
on Disability and Human Development
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School



Selecting a Service Provider: Making Choices, Becoming Empowered

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Download guide – Spanish

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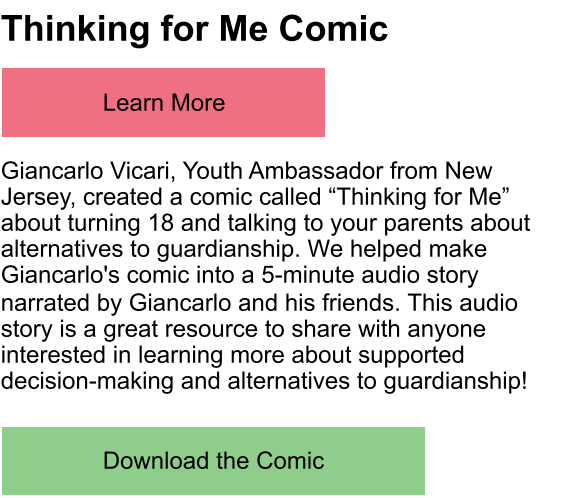
Access the Order Form Here



THINKING FOR ME

Written by Giancarlo Vicari

Illustrated by Isa Vicari



Thinking for Me Comic

Giancarlo Vicari, Youth Ambassador from New Jersey, created a comic called “Thinking for Me” about turning 18 and talking to your parents about alternatives to guardianship. We helped make Giancarlo's comic into a 5-minute audio story narrated by Giancarlo and his friends. This audio story is a great resource to share with anyone interested in learning more about supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship!

Learn More

Download the Comic

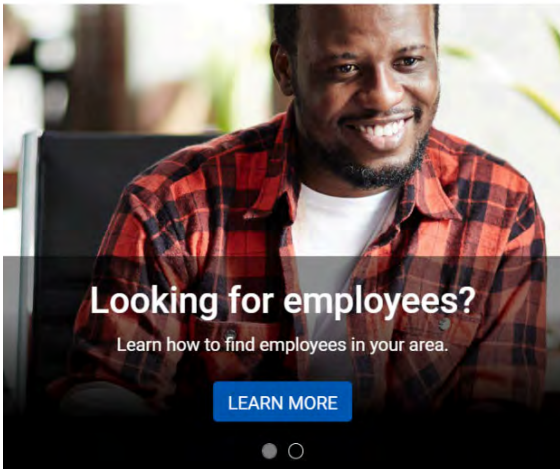


Transition Resources New Jersey State Resources

One challenge common to every individual with an intellectual or developmental disability and their families is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Known as the proverbial "cliff" – the point at which there seems to be a sudden drop in services and supports as children age out of the school system and into adult life. Below are resources to help with this transition.

[Learn More](#)

Jobs that Care New Jersey



The Direct Care and Service Workforce is critical to the lives of people with disabilities and those who are aging. The demand for these jobs is growing fast and will continue to increase in years to come. This workforce is essential to providing the supports individuals need to live healthy, active, and engaged lives in the community. From helping with personal, health, and home care to providing support with community activities, workers in these roles make a difference!

If you are interested pursuing a rewarding career, please check out the information on this site to learn more and to find jobs in your area.

[Learn More](#)



Employment First

The Employment First page on the NJCDD website has been updated with information intended for individuals living with disabilities who are interested in working!

Now, along with information about Employment First in New Jersey, the page features plain language information and links related to:

- [Seeking Employment](#)
- [Benefit Resources](#) as they relate to work
- [Transitioning to employment](#) from high school

[Learn More](#)

**DISABILITY
BENEFITS 101
NEW JERSEY**
[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)
+ FIND THE RIGHT HEALTH
COVERAGE FOR YOU
+ BENEFITS AND WORK
ESTIMATOR
+ LEARN ABOUT SSI & SSDI
BENEFITS, AND MORE!



**BENEFICIOS POR
DISCAPACIDAD 101
NUEVA JERSEY**
[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)
+ ENCUENTRE EL SEGURO
MÉDICO A SU MEDIDA
+ ESTIMADOR DE BENEFICIOS
Y TRABAJO
+ CONOZCA LOS BENEFICIOS
DE SSI Y SSDI, ¡Y MÁS!

The NJCDD is proud to support NJ DB101, a free, user-friendly, all-in-one place, resource guide for employment and benefit questions/information. Find out how working impacts benefits like SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, and more! Resources are in plain language and available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

[Learn More](#)

An Enhanced Family Support Crisis Handbook

4th Edition

Available in English and Spanish



Enhanced Family Crisis Handbook

The purpose of this expanded version of the Toolkit is to empower individuals with disabilities and their family and professional caregivers by providing information to more effectively advocate for persons with complex severe behavioral health conditions (which we formerly referred to as “dual diagnosis”) for treatments, supports, services and the conditions that promote mental wellness.

[Learn More](#)

Manual Mejorado de Crisis Familiares

El propósito de esta versión ampliada del kit de herramientas es facilitarles a las personas que tienen discapacidades y a sus cuidadores familiares y profesionales herramientas que los empoderen, al proveer información que permita abogar de una forma más efectiva por las personas que tienen condiciones graves y complejas de salud conductual (a las que antes se denominaban con “diagnóstico dual”) para conseguir los tratamientos, apoyos, servicios y las condiciones que fomentan el bienestar mental.

[Aprende Más](#)