



Eye on Advocacy

Weekly E-Newsletter

November 11, 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

The NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities will be closed on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, in observance of Veterans Day.



Veterans Day

Learn more about the history of the holiday and ways to celebrate U.S. military veterans.

Veterans Day, observed annually on November 11th, is the crucial federal holiday dedicated to honoring all military veterans—living or deceased—who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Unlike Memorial Day, which is reserved for those who died in service, Veterans Day celebrates the service and sacrifice of all who wore the uniform.

In 2025, Veterans Day falls on a Tuesday, which will bring a day of special ceremonies, patriotic recognition, and numerous thank-you gestures across the nation.

Learn More

Upcoming Events

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

- NJCDD Hybrid Public Meeting:
Nov. 13: [Register Here](#)
 - Accessing Information for You or Your Loved Ones with Disabilities
Nov. 18: [Register Here](#)
- Assistive Technology Webinar Series
Nov. 19: [Register Here](#)
 - The Boggs Center Training:
[Register Here](#)
 - The Boggs Center Lecture Series:
[Learn More](#)



Public Meeting

Thursday,
November 13, 2025
9:30 am-1:30 pm



Gestión Pública

Jueves, 13 de
Noviembre de 2025
9:30 am-1:30 pm

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.

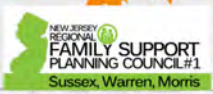
ACCOMMODATION:
For in-person accommodations, language interpretation, and/or other accommodations, please contact Jacinta Williams at Jacinta.Williams@njcdd.org with your specific accommodation request at least two weeks in advance or by Wednesday, October 30, 2025.

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.



Accessing Information for You or Your Loved Ones with Disabilities

**NOVEMBER 18, 2025
7:00PM - 8:00PM
VIRTUAL EVENT**

In collaboration with

PAUL ARONSOHN

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



Accessing Information for You or Your Loved Ones with Disabilities

Organizing services and supports that work for you or your loved ones with disabilities is an achievable goal, but what happens when they are not working? How do you get information, support, and advocacy when needed?

[Register for This Event](#)

Plan ahead and be prepared by joining this listening and learning session with New Jersey's Ombudsman for People with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families: Paul Aronsohn.

Multi-lingual closed captioning is available for this event. Contact Kerry McGrath at kerry.mcgrath@njcdd.org or 609-984-4516 if you have any questions.

[Download Flyer](#)

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.

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

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!

ATAC

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW JERSEY

DISABILITYRIGHTSNJ.ORG

Smart Home Technology for People with Paralysis Webinar

Disability Rights New Jersey will be hosting a Lunch and Learn webinar 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. 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](#)


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 lifecycle.

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

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

Governor Phil Murphy • Lt. Governor Tahesha Way

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Department of Human Services

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Home  About Us  For Individuals and Families  For Providers  News  Quality  Sign up for Email Updates 

Home / For Individuals and Families / Home and Community Based Services / Self-Directed Services/Self-Direction

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](#)

Important Information for SNAP Recipients About November 2025 Benefits

The federal government shut down as of October 1, 2025.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

New Jersey issued **full November 2025 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits** to eligible households on the morning of **Friday, November 7**, following a federal court ruling.

SNAP recipients are encouraged to **check their Families First EBT cards at NJFamiliesFirst.com** or by calling **(800) 997-3333** to **confirm their balances and use their benefits as needed**.

SNAP benefits loaded on your Families First EBT card prior to **Oct. 31** remain available for use as well.

Remember to lock your Families First EBT card when you are not using it to protect your benefits from theft. Instructions on how to lock/unlock your card can be found on the [Materials page](#) at NJSNAP.gov.

New Jersey continues to monitor developments and will continue to provide updates at [NJSNAP.gov](#) as needed. Additional assistance for SNAP households during the ongoing federal shutdown is available at [nj.gov/snapshutdown](#).

Work First New Jersey (WFNJ), Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and Child Support are not impacted at this time.

Continue to visit the [DFD Emergency/Disaster page](#) for ongoing updates on how the federal shutdown may impact these progra

Hurdles to Health Care Series by northjersey.com



Health care staff are poorly trained to treat patients with disabilities. And NJ's low Medicaid reimbursement rate makes it hard for them to find doctors.
© Tyler Rau, USA TODAY Network

NJ has a huge health care gap for people with disabilities. Dig into our series

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

NorthJersey.com reporters Scott Fallon and Gene Myers spent months digging into the many barriers — both systemic and physical — that make it much harder for people with disabilities to access health care in New Jersey.

In their series, Hurdles to Health Care, they look at how doctors often have little understanding of such patients' particular needs. They also show that, because New Jersey has such a low Medicaid reimbursement rate, few doctors in the state take on patients with disabilities who use Medicaid.

The series also looks at how managed care companies often deny particular health

coverage for the medical needs of people with disabilities, and how, 30 years after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, many New Jersey doctors' offices and clinics still lack accommodations to make it easier for people with disabilities to access them.

[Read More](#)



In NJ, managed care means delays and denials for disabled patients: 'Not a fair fight'

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

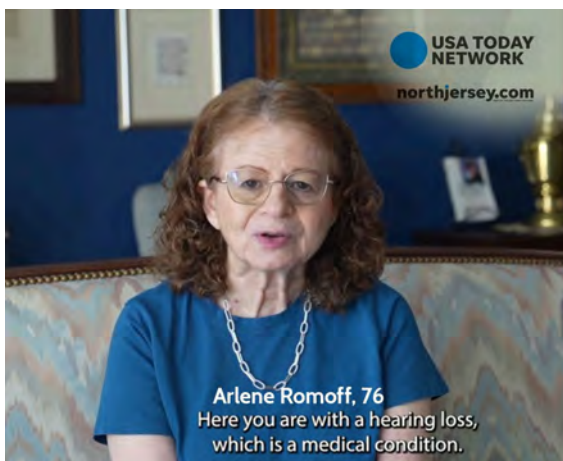
Josh Gargano knew what would happen when his therapy was cut.

His body would seize up. Without regular physical and occupational therapy, his spastic quadriplegia — a severe form of cerebral palsy — would lead to increased stiffness, reduced mobility and, eventually, chronic pain.

“You take these services away, I regress,” said Gargano, 35, who uses a wheelchair. “You put me back on them, I improve. It’s as simple as that.”

Like many New Jerseyans with disabilities, Gargano's care is funded by the state's Medicaid program. But in April of 2023, United Healthcare, the private managed-care company that administers his coverage, announced that it would be cutting his in-home nursing care from 16 hours a week to eight.

[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

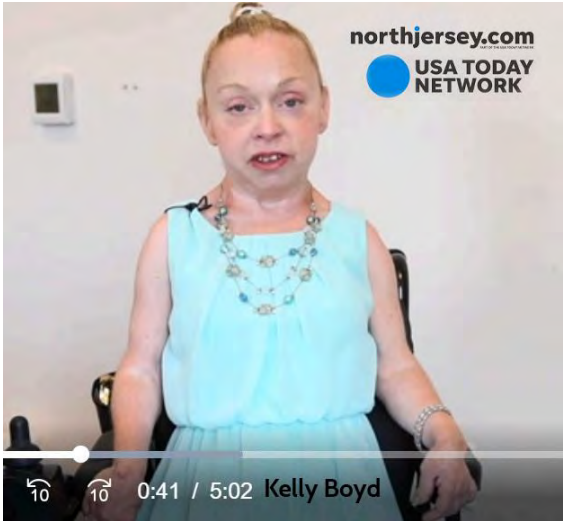
When Nantanea Koppstein found a new primary care practice in the Princeton area for her daughter, she was overjoyed — considering that it took weeks of searching for a doctor who had experience treating a patient with developmental disabilities.

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

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 Supports 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://theboggscenter.rutgers.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.dhs.gov/humanresources/add/individual/community/education>
- Email DDD.OESD@dnj.nj.gov





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



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

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

NJ SNAP is the food assistance program that helps low-income individuals and families buy the groceries needed to eat healthy.

Learn more, and apply, for food assistance

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.



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

Selecting a Service Provider: Making Choices, Becoming Empowered

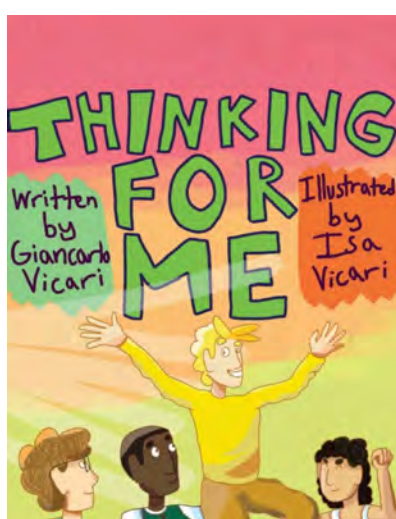
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[Download guide – English](#)

[Download guide – Spanish](#)

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

[Access the Order Form Here](#)



Thinking for Me Comic

[Learn More](#)

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!

[Download the Comic](#)



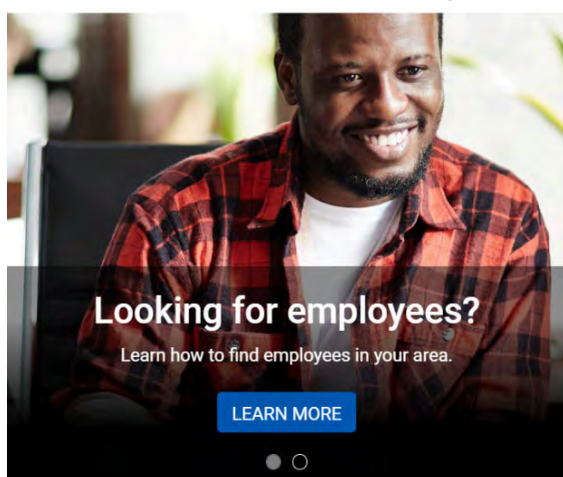
**Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals
with Intellectual or Developmental
Disabilities and Their Families**

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](#)



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