



FY2026 Budget and Legislative Priorities

New Jersey must continue to invest in a strong, sustainable system of care to meet the needs of New Jersey's diverse children, youth and adults. This may only be achieved with significant investments in the behavioral healthcare workforce that is needed to sustain quality care for the many lives who depend on them and to expand capacity to increase access to care for all New Jerseyans. Toward those ends, NJAMHAA calls on the Legislature and Administration to support the following:

Invest in Sustainability for Behavioral Healthcare Programs

- Invest \$43.2 million (will draw a \$17m federal match) in Department of Human Services' behavioral health care rates and contracts.
- Provide \$10 million in state funds to maintain New Jersey's Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.
- Increase Children's Partial Hospital rates to \$112 per hour.
- Invest \$17 million (will draw a \$17m federal match) to increase Care Management Organization per child/per month rate to \$1,200.
- Invest \$3 million in School Based Youth Services Programs (SBYSPs) and other contracts within the School Linked Services budget line.
- Invest in additional inpatient beds for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Invest \$20 million in capital funding for behavioral health providers to see to necessary repairs and improvements at their aging facilities.

Invest in the Behavioral Healthcare Workforce

- Invest \$5 million for recruitment and retention bonuses for behavioral health staff.
- Invest \$5 million in incentives for behavioral health organizations to become field placement sites and provide clinical supervision of interns.
- Provide \$300,000 for training for staff providing services to children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Legislative Priorities to Support the Workforce and Sustainability

- Pass S1032/A1143 to establish a formula to calculate a recommended starting point each year for rate and contract adjustments that are indexed to actual costs.
- Amend S3565/A2803 to include Social Work Interns and Master of Social Work Alcohol and Drug Counselor students in the definition of healthcare provider for the purpose of providing telehealth services and clarify that unlicensed or non-certified staff may provide telehealth services equivalent to those they are permitted to provide in-person.
- Pass S2504/A3937 to set Medicaid rates for mental health services equal to Medicare rates for the same services.
- Pass S1761/A2805 to bring accountability to New Jersey's licensing Boards.
- Pass S2723/A112 to reinstate the 70+ year exemption of vehicle registration fees for nonprofit organizations' vehicles.