

**COUNTY OF MORRIS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**DIVISION OF COMMUNITY & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES**

P.O. Box 900  
Morristown, New Jersey 07963-0900

Board of County Commissioners

*Director*  
John Krickus

*Deputy Director*  
Christine Myers

Douglas R. Cabana  
Thomas J. Mastrangelo  
Tayfun Selen  
Stephen H. Shaw  
Deborah A. Smith



*County Administrator*  
Deena Leary

*Department Director*  
Katharine A. Errico  
973.285.6863

*Deputy Director*  
Gary L. Denamen  
973326.7240

*Division Director*  
Amy Archer  
973-285-6852

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HSAC)**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 2024, Hybrid Meeting**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions**

Ms. Sherrod called the Meeting to order at 5:18 pm. A quorum was established, and attendance was as follows:

**Board Members:**

Joann Bjornson, Family Promise – Vice-Chair  
Donna Boyce, Citizen Representative  
Kelly Martins, EDGE NJ (virtual)  
Kenneth Oexle, Citizen Representative  
Michelle Roers, United Way of Northern New Jersey, Morristown  
Rebecca Sherrod Capozzi, Child & Family Resources – Chair

**Board Liaisons:**

Leena George, Morris County Division of Child Protection & Permanency  
Yosef Hegazy, Morris County East Division of Child Protection & Permanency  
Sean McGinnis, Morris County West Division of Child Protection & Permanency  
Nelson Troche, New Jersey Department of Human Services (virtual)

**Morris County Staff:**

Amy Archer, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services  
Kasey Errico, Director of Human Services  
Maria Fodali, Office of Temporary Assistance (virtual)  
Christine Hellyer, Division on Aging, Disabilities & Veterans (virtual)  
Anna Marie Hess, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services

**Community Members:**

Jeff Bashe, Citizen Representative

Theresa Gallagher, Morris Sussex Youth Advocate Program

Kayla Gieger, Child & Family Resources

Marcia Lenox, Morris County Organization of Hispanic Affairs (virtual)

Jackie Looby, Cornerstone Family Programs, Morristown Neighborhood House

Maria Lopez, Zufall Health Center (virtual)

Emily Savino, Mental Health Association (virtual)

**II. Approval of January 23, 2024, Minutes**

Ms. Roers motioned to approve the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes. Ms. Bjornson seconded the motion. All were in favor, with no opposition and one abstention. Motion carried.

**III. Open to the Public**

A. Ms. Gallagher is the Program Director for the Morris Sussex Youth Advocate Program. The program has offices in Sparta and Denville, serving Sussex County and Morris County. Ms. Gallagher administers the Family Preservation Services (FPS) and Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic. We only accept New Jersey Family Care and New Jersey Medicaid insurance. For more information about our services, please visit our website: <https://www.yapinc.org/Locations/Morris-Sussex>.

1. Ms. Roers asked how many Morris County clients she could see. Ms. Gallagher stated since the Morris Sussex Youth Advocate Program is new to this area, we currently have twelve clients from Morris.

B. Ms. Martins announced that EDGE NJ is moving into their space at 35 Water View Boulevard, Suite 201, Parsippany, on Monday, March 11, 2024.

**IV. Chair Report – Ms. Sherrod Capozzi**

A. Our next State HSAC meeting is Friday, March 1, 2024. We will have a presentation on the updated 2-1-1 website <https://nj211.org/>. They have made upgrades to the site's Dashboard, which is a valuable tool for gathering information.

**V. New Jersey Department of Human Services – Mr. Troche**

A. The Governor held the budget hearing today. As a department, we fare well; however, there are cutbacks this year. Additional information will be distributed once received.

**VI. New Jersey Department of Children & Families – no report**

**VII. Division of Child Protection & Permanency – Ms. George**  
**A. Morris East Office**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>January 2024</b>
Children <5-years old, Mother <30 -years old	9
Substance Affected Newborn Cases (aka Safe Care)	2
New	52
Reopens	36
Active	8
CPS	91
CWS	16
Domestic Violence	30
Sex Abuse	6
Unhoused	4
SPRU	19
Spanish Speaking	27
< 90 Day Re-opens	11
Substance abuse	27
Child on Child Sex Abuse	1
Unaccompanied Minors	0

**B. Morris West Office**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>January 2024</b>
Children <5-years old, Mother <30 -years old	2
Substance abuse affected newborn cases aka Safe Care	5
New	38
Reopens	98
Active	12
CPS	113
CWS	23
Domestic Violence	49

Sex Abuse	2
Unhoused	2
SPRU	16
Spanish Speaking	29
< 90 Day Re-opens	12
Substance abuse	26
Child on Child Sex Abuse	2
Unaccompanied Minors	0

1. Ms. Errico asked if they saw any trends in the numbers. Mr. McGinnis stated the numbers have been increasing since November 2023, but he is unsure why. The number of Spanish-speaking families in our area is much higher than recorded in our numbers. We are only documenting those households that are 100% Spanish-speaking. Mr. Hegazy added that more referrals were coming in over the weekend. Ms. Bjornson asked if this was a new trend. Mr. Hegazy said this has increased more over the past year. With more police calls to the home and visitors to the house, more calls are coming in for neglect, domestic violence, and substance use. Discussion ensued.
2. During a recent discussion, Ms. Roers asked if there was a connection between the increase in calls and the legalization of marijuana use. Mr. McGinnis responded by saying that they had observed an increase in prescription drug, opioid, and alcohol misuse. Mr. Hegazy also shared that marijuana use in households has changed since legalization and is evaluated differently than opioids, cocaine, or methamphetamine due to studies on how it affects a parent's ability to parent. This sparked a discussion among the participants.
3. Ms. Errico asked if the State is offering initiatives or additional access to treatment since there has been an increase in substance use. Our local agencies and agencies Nationwide are having difficulties placing their clients in treatment. Mr. Troche stated that he is aware of the initiatives for the opioid epidemic at this time. The governor is aware of this and is pooling additional resources. Additional information will be provided.
4. Ms. Errico, "What efforts or initiatives does the state have for the Spanish-speaking population?" This is not only a local issue; State agencies are having problems finding bilingual clinicians and general services for our community members. Mr. Troche stated that even at the State level, they are having difficulties in this area. The State is also experiencing shortages of Social Workers and Nurses. Since the State does not offer remote work, these positions have become hard to fill.
5. Given the lack of Spanish-speaking services, Ms. Roers asked if the county is trying to attract more people into this profession. Ms. George stated there is a slight differential in pay. Still, there is a difference between bilingual and non-bilingual worker's compensation, but the workload is significantly larger. Discussion ensued.

## **VIII. Staff Reports:**

### **A. Human Services – Ms. Hess**

1. Received an email from Ms. Casiano, Executive Director, El Primer Paso, stating since 2019, the facility has had enrollment issues due to preschool expansion and COVID. As of this month, the facility has complete enrollment with a waiting list. Since children enroll and generally stay for the entire school year, El Primer Paso cannot guarantee that an opening will occur this year. For children not old enough for kindergarten (turning five by October 1), an opening may come up in the summer or definitely for September since about half of our kids will graduate. El Primer Paso makes this clear to the parents on the waiting list. If an opening does occur between now and June, we will go in date order to offer it to parents on the waiting list. Most will have already found other care since they cannot afford to wait if their child is not in a program and they need to work.
2. NJ's First Lady has launched Phase 2 of the NJ Child Care Facilities Improvement Grant. Phase 1 began in October 2022; the NJ Economic Development Authority began accepting applications for \$54.5 million in Child Care Facilities Improvements funding secured by the American Rescue Plan. Providing grants between \$50,00 to \$200,000 to pay for improvements that include but are not limited to installing energy-efficient windows, creating additional classroom space, purchasing new playground equipment, replacing flooring, remediation of environmental hazards such as lead or mold, or putting in child-height sinks or toilets. Phase 2 will provide \$5 million in grants, offering \$10,000 to \$20,000 to registered Family Child Care (FCC) homes. This funding can be used to purchase furniture, fixtures, and equipment and support improving health, safety, accessibility, and quality in the child environment. New Jersey has over 1,300 registered FCCs, serving 6,500 children across all 21 counties. Eligibility for Phase 2 of the program is limited to registered FCC homes that have enrolled at least one child receiving support from the NJ DHS Child Care Assistance Program.
3. Ms. Archer announced the Youth Services Coordinator, Ms. Mondino, has resigned. Her last day will be Thursday, February 29, 2024. The County will be actively recruiting to fill this position as of March 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have any grant or YSAC questions, please get in touch with Ms. Archer at [aarcher@co.morris.nj.us](mailto:aarcher@co.morris.nj.us).

### **B. Council on Aging, Disabilities, & Veterans – Ms. Hellyer**

1. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2024 was increased by 3.2% to keep pace with inflation
2. Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) eligibility requirements for 2024 for singles is less than \$52,124 and for married couples \$59,209.
3. Senior Gold Prescription Discount Plan eligibility in 2024 for singles is between \$52,154 and \$62,142, and for married couples is \$59,209 to \$69,209.
4. United Way of Northern New Jersey is offering free tax preparation. For additional information and assistance, call 973.993.1160 extension 5.

5. One of our providers, Tessie’s Touch, seeks female volunteers. This is a socialization program for clients 60 years of age and older. They provide home services, friendly visits, park rides, dinner, movies, and other social activities. Please call 973.285.6858 for additional information.
6. MAPS provided 30,953 rides in 2023.
7. The Transportation Network Company (TNC), Avenues in Motion, had a positive turnout in 2023 and is no longer considered a “pilot program for 2024.
8. Rutgers has completed the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP), which New Jersey Transit is currently reviewing. Once approved, it will be shared with the public.

**C. Workforce Development Board – no report**

**IX. Old Business – no comment**

**X. New Business**

- A. Mr. Roers announced the United Way had launched United for ALICE at Work. This new program allows employers to understand how their employee demographic and salary fall in their payroll. This allows employers to determine if changes are needed to benefits packages, monetary compensation, and flexibility in scheduling, to name a few tools to help better service the ALICE population.

**XI. Subcommittee Reports**

Ms. Sherrod stated that the Subcommittees had not met yet but would convene on an as-needed basis soon. If you haven’t emailed Ms. Hess with the subcommittee you would like to participate in, please do so this week.

**XII. Advisory Committee Reports:**

**A. Morris, Sussex, Warren HIV Advisory – Ms. Martins**

1. Our first meeting will be on March 25, 2024. We will conduct our orientation and relaunch our Lunch & Learn series.

**B. Mental Health Addiction Services Advisory Board – Ms. Archer**

1. At our February meeting, we did have a quorum and could vote in our Chair, Mr. Chernick, and Vice-Chair, Mr. Hill, Esq.
2. There was a presentation from Prevention is Key (PIK) by Ms. Monks on their new Morris County Harm Reduction program. PIK received funding from the Opioid Settlement Funds to increase access to harm reduction services, Narcan, and education. Harm re-education training will be provided to both community partners and community members to increase knowledge on harm reeducation, reduce the stigma associated with it, and provide support for individuals struggling with substance use disorder. The program will include installing Narcan/harm reduction vending machines and opioid emergency rescue boxes at designated hotels/motels within the county and training staff on utilizing Narcan and steps beyond the administration—more information will come soon.
  - a. Ms. Hess asked if there would be a charge for the vending machines, considering the public can obtain Narcan for free. Ms. Archer stated there

wouldn't be a charge. The implementation of the machines and access to the products are still being discussed, such as whether a PIN code or key will be used.

3. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Program Analyst provided information on several Request for Proposals (RFP) and is encouraging everyone to check the website <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/provider/funding/> for funding opportunities.
4. At our Acute Care System Review meeting, it was announced that the State, in collaboration with Rutgers University, will provide an analysis of Psychiatric Emergency Screening for adults and the boundaries they face, e.g., finding individual beds, connecting to resources, and what can be addressed on a county rather than a state level—additional information to follow.
5. Several initiatives, such as 988 and Arrive Together, relate to mental health and/or substance use. Agencies and administrators are confused about the best practice for providing the client with the needed resources or services. The State is working on an information sheet that will provide who to call, how they can respond, and resources. Additional information will be provided when it is complete.

**C. Advisory Committee on Women – Ms. Boyce**

1. The New Jersey Non-Profit Survey results were presented and discussed. Local non-profits need to support Morris County women as we continue pandemic recovery. Information was shared on evolving administrative law changes that may impact local governments.
2. Membership-seeking new members who live or work in Morris County and discussed possible sources and outreach efforts for new members.
3. The Seeds of Change Award, inspired by Ms. Leanna Brown, seeks to highlight and celebrate women who build up other women through volunteer activities. The committee convened on February 7<sup>th</sup> to review applications, and the final selection was approved.
4. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2024.

**D. Youth Services Advisory – Ms. Mondino provided a written report before the meeting to be distributed.**

1. The 2024 Family Court and State Community Partnership funding recommendations were approved.
2. Ms. Mondino announced that she will leave the Youth Services Coordinator position on February 29, 2024.
3. Ms. Errico attended the 2-1-1 website “ribbon cutting” upgrades to their dashboard web platform, providing an “In real-time resource directory,” making reviewing, updating, and adding events easier. <https://nj211.org/>.
4. Ms. Jacobson announced that NewBridge and the Mental Health Association are hosting a virtual screening of “My Ascension,” a 60-minute film and Q&A discussion with Emma Benoit on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. A suicide attempt left 16-year-old varsity cheerleader Emma Benoit paralyzed but propelled her on a mission to use her painful experience to help others find hope. A discussion with Ms. Benoit and filmmaker Mr. Greg Dicharry will follow the

screening. For more information or to register, please call 973.334.4052, email NJ4S@mhainspire.org, or visit [www.mhainspire.org](http://www.mhainspire.org).

5. Ms. Dinney provided flyers for the Teen RAP, Core and Cardio Community Program, Youth Night Friday Nights, and Preschool aftercare in Dover programs.
6. Ms. Alonzo announced that registration is open for preschool, and Head Start is willing to help with the registration process.
7. Ms. Dooley, Morris County Sexual Assault Center, announced MASSS would restart virtual meetings starting Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### **XIII. Partnership Announcements**

#### **A. Child Care – Ms. Gieger**

1. The total number of registered FCC providers for February was 38, and one prospect.
2. The State’s FY 2024 budget includes funding to extend payment to providers based on enrollment for children receiving benefits through the NJ Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) through June 30, 2024.
3. The Thrive by Three grant will help support the development and creation of childcare infant and toddler slots and provide technical assistance to providers for expanding childcare spaces.

#### **B. Continuum of Care (CoC) – Ms. Delcalzo provided a written report for distribution before the meeting.**

1. The last CoC Executive Committee meeting was on January 25, 2024. The Committee had its annual orientation, including presentations from five CoC-funded agencies. They discussed the Point in Time (PIT) Count and Project Homeless Connect event. They approved the policy on Collaboration and Coordination with Victims Services Systems of Care and the 2024-2025 Strategic Plan.
  - i. Ms. Archer added that the PIT took place on January 27<sup>th</sup>, and the coordinators will hold their debrief meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, February 28, 2024, from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm, here at 1 Medical Drive.
2. The next CoC office hours are scheduled for February 29<sup>th</sup> between 11:30 am. and noon. To sign up for office hours, email [Allison.delcalzo@atlantichhealth.org](mailto:Allison.delcalzo@atlantichhealth.org).
3. The next regular meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am via WebEx.
4. All open CoC committees are recruiting new members. See the committee list and contacts below:
  - Community Assistance Services (CAS), [Rebecca Butz](#) and [Sherina Caban](#)
  - Coordinated Entry Case Conferencing Teams, [Maria Fodali](#) and [Jennifer Combs](#)
  - Data Governance, [Luisa Fieno](#), and [Jennifer Amaya](#)
  - Partnership Workgroup, [Chris Kirk](#)
  - Advisory Board Committee, [Alicia Alvarez](#)
  - Permanent Housing, [Kelly Stephens](#)



5. Ms. Sherrod added at the CAS meeting, Ms. Williams, JBWS, stated that the CoC does not fund shelter or transitional housing, but the number of clients needing these services is increasing and becoming difficult to manage with limited funding. During the November 2023 CoC meeting, Ms. Muti, Homeless Solutions, also mentioned this subject and stated they provide these services without additional compensation. How can we bridge the gap between the CoC's lack of funding and ESG available funding? Ms. Bjornson stated that a Shelter Providers committee is working with the Morris County Housing Alliance to encourage the Commissioners to provide additional funding for these services. Discussion ensued, and a motion was made to Ms. Sherrod to empower the HSAC to draft a letter in support of a line item within the Morris County FY 2024 Budget to support shelter and transitional housing within Morris County. Mr. Oexle seconded the motion. All were in favor, with no opposition or abstentions. Motion carried.

#### **XIV. Adjournment**

Mr. Oexle motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Bjornson seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Marie Hess  
HSAC Coordinator