



NETWORK of Jewish Human Service Agencies

2020 U.S. Public Policy Agenda

The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA) is the membership association for 140+ non-profit organizations that provide a full range of human services for members of the Jewish community and beyond in the United States, Canada, and Israel. The Network is the leading voice for Jewish human service organizations, the go-to resource for advocacy, best practices, innovation, and partnerships. As NJHSA strengthens and supports member agencies that serve their communities through a wide range of human services, its public policy agenda reflects identified needs within these service areas. The areas of focus listed below are intended to be flexible to accommodate the changing health and human services landscape, and differences which may occur on a local, state, or federal level.

Aging: Empowering older adults to age with dignity and an enhanced quality of life by:

- Supporting access to home- and community-based services such as affordable and accessible transportation, nutrition, affordable housing, supportive services, and respite and family caregiver support;
- Providing older adults the opportunity to live in their own homes and communities safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level through programs to promote aging in place;
- Safeguarding the critical needs of Holocaust Survivors through funding, partnerships, supportive services, and enhancement of safety net services that promote their dignity, strength, and empowerment;
- Promoting policies to serve Holocaust Survivors' unique social welfare, health, and emotional needs; and
- Promoting funding research and services for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

Children and Families: Sustaining families by:

- Supporting programs that help families combat poverty and meet their basic needs;
- Ending food insecurity by supporting kosher and non-kosher food banks, home meal programs, and congregate nutrition sites, as well as protecting and strengthening supplemental nutrition assistance and child nutrition programs;
- Supporting resources and protections for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment, including particular at-risk populations such as children, people with disabilities, and older adults;
- Maintaining policies and programs which support both domestic and international adoption; and
- Supporting and affirming full Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Questioning (LGBTQ+) inclusion and equality.

Immigration Reform and Protecting Refugees & Asylum-Seekers: Carrying out the tradition of "Welcoming the Stranger" and affirming our Jewish values and history by:

- Promoting comprehensive immigration reform and policies that support family unity in immigration reform and provide protection for undocumented immigrant youth brought as children;
- Advocating for the continuation of refugee resettlement programs;
- Advocating for safe, humane and legal asylum systems and the refugee resettlement program;
- Supporting Jews and other religious minorities fleeing persecution; and
- Advocating for robust funding that supports the integration of refugees in their new communities.

Workforce & Employment: Helping increase the diversity and number of individuals receiving education or training toward joining the workforce by:

- Supporting continued funding to help address adult education and workforce training for all individuals to successfully enter and succeed in the job market;
- Supporting job training and integrated, competitive employment for individuals with disabilities while allowing for choice; and
- Reducing barriers to senior employment and enhancing opportunities for older workers.

Other NJHSA Areas of Focus *(listed in alphabetical order):*

Disability Rights: Advocating with and on behalf of people with disabilities across the lifespan by:

- Encouraging full inclusion and physical accessibility for all aspects of life and in the workplace;
- Promoting funding and policies for recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion; and
- Advocating for affordable and accessible transportation, housing, supportive services, respite care for caregivers, and the right of all people with disabilities to live in and receive support in their own homes and communities.

Gun Violence Prevention and Response Efforts: Addressing the impact of gun violence on the communities and populations we serve. Examples of advocacy on this issue include but are not limited to:

- Advocating for increased funding for mental health services, peer support for teens, and societal education on gun violence, including but not limited to domestic violence, suicide, and mass shootings;
- Promoting policies that support safer communities and training for law enforcement and other helping professions on the traumatic impact of gun violence, especially on children and in underserved communities; and
- Supporting access to quality mental health care for every person in need, including survivors, their families, first responders, and the broader communities impacted by the traumas inflicted by gun violence.

Healthcare: Protecting long-term care, mental health and wellness initiatives, and the health safety net for all by:

- Accessing health information technology funding for behavioral health and long-term care;
- Promoting mental health services, including full mental health parity;
- Supporting efforts to bring increased prevention and treatment options for those struggling with the impact of opioid, substance abuse, and other forms of addiction;
- Supporting incentives to transition those living in nursing homes and other institutions into less restrictive settings;
- Advancing preventative measures and promoting efforts that would reduce the number of uninsured; and
- Advocating for funding to support the programs for children's health insurance at all levels of government; and
- Supporting Social Determinants of Health interventions via pilot programming and research on impact.

Housing & Homelessness: Advocating for the expansion of affordable housing options for low-income and at-risk populations, including older adults, people with disabilities, refugees and other communities by:

- Promoting social and economic services to low- and moderate-income tenants and homeowners, older adults, and persons with disabilities;
- Combatting homelessness across age groups, income levels, and sexual orientations; and
- Advocating for programs that include housing preservation and stabilization efforts, crime prevention initiatives, and commercial revitalization activities.

Security & Institutional Support: Supporting interests and goals of human service organizations by:

- Advocating for funding to improve the security of human service organizations;
- Advocating for reduction of barriers in obtaining disaster assistance for individuals and organizations;
- Safeguarding charities from regulations that threaten to reduce charitable activity;
- Opposing restrictions on the advocacy rights of charities while preserving laws which prohibit charities' intervention on behalf of or in opposition to political candidates;
- Instituting safeguards that prevent houses of worship from proselytizing or using other prohibited forms of religious practice to deliver publicly-funded social services;
- Advocating for nonprofit access to public funding streams to build and support infrastructure; and
- Promoting policies that safeguard against harassment and foster respectful workplaces, prioritize staff development and educational opportunities, and improve retention in the social services sector.