



2022 U.S. Jewish Human Service Sector Public Policy Agenda

NJHSA member agencies serve as a critical safety net for communities across the country, providing assistance to hungry families and the recently unemployed, care and support for isolated older adults and persons with disabilities, mental health services for those in distress, and resources for resettled immigrants and those fleeing persecution.

NJHSA has identified the public policy priorities below to address the most pressing needs of member agencies and the clients they serve during the COVID-19 pandemic and as they continue to recover from its health and economic impact.

Food Insecurity & Economic Mobility: NJHSA is committed to reducing food insecurity and related struggles with economic insecurity by ensuring that all individuals and families have access to food and shelter by:

- Advocating for increased funding and program flexibilities for federal programs that support kosher and non-kosher food banks and pantries, and home-delivered meal programs and congregate nutrition sites for older adults;
- Protecting and strengthening SNAP, Child Nutrition and other benefit programs to safeguard client enrollment;
- Advocating for extensions of the expanded Earned Income and Child Tax Credits, ensuring full refundability, and preventing harmful work requirements, and promoting enrollment in these programs among agency clients;
- Pursuing opportunities for federal rental assistance and affordable housing;
- Ensuring that the Emergency Food and Shelter Program is sufficiently funded to account for community needs; and
- Advocating that recently resettled immigrants be eligible for housing, benefits, and other relevant supports.

Mental Health, Healthcare, and Long-Term Care: NJHSA is committed to promoting affordable, accessible care by:

- Advocating for continued Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance coverage and parity in payment for tele-mental health and mobile counseling services that allow clients to access services from wherever they are located;
- Supporting programs to address rising mental health caseloads by advocating for licensing reciprocity across state lines for professionals treating mental health and substance use conditions, both in-person and via telehealth, as well as increased funding for mental health and substance abuse programs; and
- Protecting and strengthening Medicaid to ensure high quality community-based health and support services, behavioral health, and long-term care options for seniors and persons with disabilities, pay parity for direct care workers, and ensuring effective implementation of new programs and funding streams.

Workforce & Employment: NJHSA is committed to expanding employment opportunities and job readiness skills for all who are seeking employment including those recently out of work, first-time job seekers, individuals with disabilities, older adults, immigrants, refugees, asylees, and veterans by:

- Advocating for increased funding to help address adult education, skills training, and technology disparities for all individuals to successfully enter and succeed in the job market including integrated, competitive employment for persons with disabilities while allowing for choice; and
- Promoting opportunities for nonprofit employee recruitment and retention including tax credits and grants.

As we pursue these priorities, we reaffirm our commitment to eradicating the systemic racism that continues to impact communities of color by promoting racially just and equitable policies, as well as combating hate, bias, and discrimination based on gender, ability, age sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, and national origin.

The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA) is the membership association for 150 non-profit organizations that provide a full range of human services for over 980,000 clients each year, including healthcare, employment, residential, and mental health services, as well as programs for youth, families, older adults, Holocaust survivors, immigrants, refugees, asylees, persons with disabilities, caregivers, and domestic violence survivors. This document was approved by the NJHSA Board on January 10, 2022 and does not preclude NJHSA from responding to or pursuing other timely policies related to core services or client-base as necessary.