

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Announces Action to Seek Appointment of a Receiver at Woodland Behavioral & Nursing Center Due to Health, Safety Concerns

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TRENTON – Over concerns about residents’ health and safety, Governor Phil Murphy, Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli, and Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman today announced that the State has filed an action in Superior Court seeking a court order to appoint a receiver at Woodland Behavioral and Nursing Center at Andover. If appointed, the receiver will assume control over the facility’s operations as appropriate next steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of residents in this nursing home.

In March 2022, the Department of Health selected Atlantic Health Systems to serve as a monitor at Woodland after citing the facility for significant health and safety violations. Despite guidance from the monitor and thorough oversight from the State and federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the facility’s operators have failed to address and maintain adequate staffing levels and a safe environment of care.

In light of these ongoing issues, the State has taken legal steps to seek appointment of a receiver to control the facility’s operations and finances. If the Court grants the receivership, the receiver will take actions to retain staff and maintain services for residents.

“Our state agencies have maintained careful oversight and partnered with a reputable health system to provide guidance toward addressing the issues plaguing this facility. Yet it has become crystal clear that the people running this nursing home refuse to take responsibility for the people in their care,” said Governor Murphy. “New Jersey will not tolerate long-term care facility operators who cannot provide the care our most vulnerable residents need and deserve. Our state agencies will employ the greatest authority we have to prevent these operators from continuing to place the residents of this nursing home in jeopardy, and will work towards ensuring a continuation of care on behalf of the more than 360 individuals in this home.”

“This is a step that the State does not take lightly and we ask the staff, the residents, their families, and other long-term care facilities in the State to work cooperatively with the Departments of Health and Human Services during this transitional period,” said **Health Commissioner Persichilli**. “Ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the residents of Woodland Behavioral and Nursing Center is the Department’s highest priority.”

“The Department of Human Services expects nursing facilities serving Medicaid residents to provide quality care that meets all state and federal standards. After significant intervention by CMS and the Department of Health, this provider has not been able to achieve or maintain systemic quality improvements, and this step to seek receivership is necessary,” said **Human Services Commissioner Adelman**. “Our Department and our Medicaid Care Managers will continue to work with Woodland residents and their families to provide support throughout this transition so that every individual served by this provider is receiving the quality care they deserve.”

The State is working closely with federal CMS partners, with the primary goal being to ensure the health, safety, and rights of residents. The Administration appreciates the dedication of the frontline workforce at Woodland, who remain essential during this anticipated transition. If the Court appoints the receiver, the State will work with the receiver to support the current staff in providing care to residents.

Since its appointment as monitor, Atlantic Health Systems has been conducting an onsite assessment of business practices, operations, and infrastructure. The New Jersey Departments of Health and Human Services, the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and Medicaid Managed Care Organizations have also been on site to monitor quality of care, conduct psychiatric assessments, and offer counseling and support to residents regarding voluntary transfers to new facilities.

Going forward, the State will continue to closely monitor the situation and will hold meetings with staff, residents, families, and resident right’s advocates in the coming days to provide support and clear communication on the status of this situation.

“Conditions at Woodland remain poor for the residents who live there and for the dedicated direct care staff who work there,” said **New Jersey Long-Term Care Ombudsman Laurie Brewer**. “The people living at Woodland deserve capable, committed leadership from facility operators who value their autonomy, dignity and quality of life, yet current leadership has clearly failed to even marginally turn things around. I applaud the state for taking this necessary step.”

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