

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Press Releases](#)/ [Governor Sherrill Announces Funding for the Statewide Universal Newborn Home Nurse Visitation Program in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget](#)

Governor Sherrill Announces Funding for the Statewide Universal Newborn Home Nurse Visitation Program in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

Posted on 04/17/2026

The FY27 Budget Proposal will Allow Family Connects NJ to Reach Families Statewide in January 2027



CAMDEN – Governor Mikie Sherrill today visited CAMcare Health in Camden to highlight funding in her proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget to support the well-being of New Jersey’s moms and babies, including by growing Family Connects NJ, the State’s universal nurse home visitation program.

Through Family Connects NJ, families welcoming a newborn in participating counties can schedule a free home visit from a specially trained registered nurse to perform health screenings, answer questions, refer community resources, and ensure the family has a healthy and safe start. As of January 2026, Family Connects NJ has served over 10,000 families.

The Governor also honored Black Maternal Health Week during today’s visit to CAMcare. According to New Jersey’s Maternal Mortality Review Committee, in New Jersey, pregnancy-related mortality for Black, non-Hispanic women was 7.6 times higher than for white, non-Hispanic women, while the pregnancy-related mortality rate for Hispanic women was 2.7 times higher than for white, non-Hispanic women. Programs like Family Connects NJ can help to address persistent disparities in positive health outcomes for Black women.

“For too long, Black women have disproportionately struggled to access critical maternal health care, resulting in dangerous disparities within our State’s public health ecosystem and contributing to shocking maternal mortality rates. This is unacceptable and New Jersey mothers deserve better – but thankfully, New Jersey is on the right path forward,” **said Governor Sherrill**. “My budget invests in New Jersey families, providing them with the tools and resources they need to thrive. By expanding our free nurse home visitation program – Family Connects NJ – and continuing investments to support our work to combat maternal mortality, we are building a better future for our residents.”

The Governor’s proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget includes almost \$49 million to expand the program statewide for the first time since its inception in 2024. This means that more families than ever before will have the opportunity to have a nurse visit within weeks of bringing home a baby. The program is currently available in all of South Jersey, and most of Central and North Jersey—Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic, Salem, Somerset, and Sussex Counties.

As a result of this investment, the program will reach the remaining counties of Union, Hunterdon, Morris, and Warren in January 2027. Currently, there are five other states pursuing universal newborn home visitation using the Family Connects NJ model. New Jersey is on the leading edge of this work and, following the final phase of the program’s expansion in January 2027, New Jersey will be the first state in the country to make free nurse home visits available statewide.

Research has shown that programs like Family Connects NJ can significantly reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality rates. A first-year evaluation of Family Connects NJ demonstrated that in 18 percent of home visits a nurse identified a serious postpartum health concern that could not wait for the next scheduled medical appointment. With the availability of NJ FamilyCare coverage for up to 365 days postpartum, referrals from Family Connects NJ led to crucial health interventions for moms and babies.

“The Universal Newborn Home Visitation Program was inspired by my own experience with a lactation nurse who visited me after my daughter was born. That time changed my outlook and showed me how vital early support can be for families during one of parenthood’s most challenging moments,” **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**. “This wraparound care is especially critical for Black mothers, who remain one of the most underserved, understudied, and underdiagnosed groups, too often overlooked in our healthcare system. With statewide expansion, we can help reduce these preventable disparities, give every growing family a strong start, and make maternal health equity not just an aspiration, but a reality in New Jersey.”

“Black Maternal Health Week underscores the urgent reality that Black mothers and their babies continue to face disproportionate, often preventable barriers within our healthcare system. It is also a moment to reflect on how we can collaborate to eliminate these inequities,” **said Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez.** “The Universal Newborn Home Visitation program is one way we are working to close the gap; providing free, at-home care to any family in need. Expanding this support to all counties will allow us to build on that progress, ensuring every new mother in New Jersey has the resources for a healthy pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum experience.”

“I commend any efforts to invest in programs, like Universal Home Visiting, which improve maternal health outcomes and strengthen support for families. Since its inception, the program has been effective in providing essential care during the early postpartum period, which we know is critical to the health and well-being of both parent and child. However, there are still gaps in access. Additional expansion of the program will help ensure more residents can access the important resources and support they need,” **said Assemblywoman Shanique Speight.** “Alongside Senate Majority Leader Ruiz, I proudly sponsored the enabling legislation in the Assembly, and I am encouraged to see the program’s continued growth and impact.”

In addition to funding for Family Connects NJ, the Governor’s proposed FY 2027 budget supports maternal health affordability through continuous Medicaid coverage for 365 days postpartum. It also continues maternal and infant health-related funding to turn data into action, to grow the perinatal workforce, and to promote innovation in care delivery. Among FY 2027 maternal and infant health investments includes:

- \$5.22 million for the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority Fund;
- \$37.529 million for Maternal, Child, and Chronic Health Services;
- \$516,000 for the Statewide Birth Defects Registry;
- \$204,000 for the NJ Maternal Mortality Review Committee;
- \$652,000 for the Maternal Data Center, which includes the Report Card of Hospital Maternity Care;
- \$1.2 million for the Maternal Feedback on Quality of Care Database;
- \$1.125 million for direct service workforce development; and
- \$331,000 to continue implementing breastfeeding promotion strategies.



Governor Mikie Sherrill

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