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## Providing For Those In Need

July 19, 2012

Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)

### Governor Christie Is Committed To Protecting New Jersey's Most Vulnerable Citizens

*"We must work in multiple ways to improve the quality of life for everyone. Creating jobs and fixing the schools are probably the two most important ways to do that, but there are other steps we can take as well to improve the quality of life in New Jersey. ... We need to reclaim our inner cities, respond to underserved regions, and engage our most vulnerable citizens."*

— Governor Chris Christie, State Of The State Address, 1/17/12

#### PROVIDING A SECOND CHANCE TO NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS

##### Expanding The Drug Court Program For Non-Violent Offenders:

Governor Christie followed through on his commitment to take a smarter and more effective approach in how the state treats drug-addicted offenders by signing into law landmark, bipartisan legislation to put in place a statewide, mandatory Drug Court program. The legislation, S-881, acts on the principles laid out by Governor Christie in his January State of the State Address – that no life is disposable and that it is a common sense, fiscal, and moral imperative to help individuals dealing with drug addiction reclaim their lives with treatment, rather than warehousing them in prison.

Through the Fiscal Year 2013 budget, Governor Christie provided an additional **\$2.5 million** in funding.

The program will be phased in over 5 years and additional drug courts will be established so that access will be available in all 21 counties.

In addition, the legislation provides for:

- Increased identification of eligible drug addicted non-violent offenders.
- Court ordered clinical assessment to determine suitability for drug court.
- Courts to make a finding regarding addiction for any offender having a clinical assessment.
- The court to consider a defendant's cooperation in the process of drug treatment and assessment in sentencing.
- Judges to be given ultimate discretion in determining whether an individual poses a threat to society and should not be sent to a drug treatment facility as part of his or her sentencing.

##### A Smarter Approach To Helping Ex-Offenders Re-Enter Society:

To address the current lack of coordination among the many treatment and re-entry programs across State government, Governor Christie signed Executive Order 83, creating the Governor's Task Force for Recidivism Reduction. The primary functions of the task force will be:

- Collecting and analyzing performance data from various State departments for budgeting, programming and procurement purposes.
- Developing recommendations for the Governor regarding how best to ensure the effectiveness and success of New Jersey's efforts towards recidivism reduction
- Undertaking an initial benchmarking study of existing program effectiveness and performance, and the development and implementation of a system to measure program effectiveness in an ongoing, real-time way.

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**Ongoing Program Assessment And A Real-Time Recidivism Database:**

The path forward to improve prisoner re-entry requires the Administration to gauge the successes, failures and the depth of gaps in program delivery – inside and outside of prison. Programming gaps will be rectified by expanding existing, successful programs and hitting capacity thresholds, particularly relating to program delivery within prison.

Data will be used to populate a real-time recidivism database, which will allow the Administration to track outcomes for individuals and trends and level of effectiveness in programs in a real-time manner.

**ENSURING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE****Increasing Access to Health Centers:**

Governor Christie is increasing funding for Health Centers in fiscal year 2013 by \$3.6 million. The Christie Administration is supporting FQHCs with **\$50 million** in reimbursement for providing care to the uninsured—a record high:

More than 400,000 patients receive care at 20 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) with 95 licensed satellite sites that provide well woman, dental, pediatric and other health exams;

75% of those who receive health care through FQHCs are women and children; and

The total number of patient visits each year exceeds 1.3 million. Nearly half of the patients are uninsured and 41% are on Medicaid.

**Funding New Jersey's Hospitals:**

Providing the necessary resources to keep safety net hospitals operating, while recognizing that all hospitals provide care to the uninsured and underinsured, remains the principle behind hospital funding in fiscal year 2013. In response to concerns expressed by hospitals, fiscal year 2013 charity care payments will again be tied to the level of charity care provided during the most recent calendar year for which claims data is available. The amended distribution formula continues the principles of:

Transparency: Distribution of subsidy amounts will be shared with the industry early in the year.

Predictability: A portion of the proposed fiscal year 2013 subsidy will be based on the fiscal year 2012 subsidy.

Equity: A portion of the subsidy will be based on the change in documented charity care from the prior year 2009 to the base year 2010 and no single hospital is significantly advantaged or disadvantaged.

*Despite economic challenges facing the state, hospital funding will be maintained at the enhanced fiscal year 2012 level. A total of **\$956 million** has been provided in the FY 2013 budget for hospital funding through Charity Care, Graduate Medical Education support and Hospital Relief Subsidy Fund.*

*In addition **\$30 million** will be made available through Hospital Stabilization Aid.*

**Increased Funding For Nursing Homes:**

Governor Christie is increasing state funding for nursing home reimbursements by \$15 million over fiscal year 2012. Combined with federal matching funds, this represents **\$30 million** in additional resources available.

**WorkFirst New Jersey:**

WorkFirst NJ emphasizes work as the first step toward building a new life and a brighter future. The goal is to help people get off welfare, secure employment and become self-sufficient, through job training, education and work activities. WorkFirst NJ provides temporary cash assistance and other support services to families through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

Under Workfirst NJ, the fiscal year 2013 budget is increasing State and federal funding by **\$5 million** for subsidized child care for eligible families regardless of where the child resides.

**Giving Families the Tools to Succeed:**

Family Success Centers are community-based grassroots organizations that provide services ranging from basic needs like day care and parenting classes, to more complex needs such as accessing mental health support, domestic violence prevention and substance abuse services.

Governor Christie protected funding at **\$9.5 million** in State funds along with \$2.5 million in federal funds. The number of Family Success Centers in New Jersey will increase from 42 to **49**.

**Increased Funding To NJCEED:**

The New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection (NJCEED) Program provides cancer outreach, education, screening, tracking and follow-up services to individuals 18-64 with incomes of up to 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Governor Christie is increasing state funding to more than **\$9 million** so it can continue to serve New Jersey's most vulnerable residents. An additional **\$1 million** dollars is also being provided in cancer research funding.

**Protecting Health Care Coverage for Uninsured Children:**

The Christie Administration has demonstrated its commitment to providing health care coverage for uninsured children by maintaining the income eligibility level for children's coverage at 350% of the federal poverty level – the second highest coverage level in the country. Recently the Department of Human Services was recognized for performance excellence in enrolling over 700,000 children in the Family Care program. The State received a \$16.8 million performance bonus payment award from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for surpassing enrollment targets and improving children's access to health care.

*During fiscal year 2013, New Jersey Family Care will use more than **\$1 billion** of State and federal resources to provide or subsidize health insurance for 162,088 children and 192,571 adults.*

#### **COMBATING HOMELESSNESS AND HELPING LOW-INCOME FAMILIES STAY IN THEIR HOMES**

##### **Expanded Veterans Haven Program:**

The Christie Administration is expanding the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs successful Veterans Haven program to provide access to veterans in the northern part of the state. The Veterans Transitional Housing Program – Veterans Haven – is a facility for homeless veterans. After being medically evaluated at a VA Medical Center, eligible veterans participate in a long-term program focusing on psychological, social and vocational rehabilitation. Hagedorn Psychiatric Hospital will provide the location for Veterans Haven North.

Startup funds for the project total **\$3.5 million**. With federal funding through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, this will allow DMAVA to provide housing, health services and social and vocational rehabilitation to approximately 50 homeless veterans.

##### **Combating Homelessness In A More Efficient, Coordinated And Strategic Manner:**

Governor Chris Christie signed Executive Order 92 creating the Interagency Council on Homelessness to combat homelessness as part of the administration's commitment to protecting the most vulnerable New Jerseyans. The Governor's action will mobilize the state government in a more efficient, coordinated and strategic manner around the goal of combating homelessness in the state.

The Council is tasked with better identifying and addressing the needs of homeless New Jerseyans as part of a long term plan to help assist those individuals affected by homelessness.

##### **Providing Housing Assistance To Those In Need:**

Governor Christie's Fiscal Year 2013 budget reaffirms his commitment to protecting the state's most vulnerable citizens by maintaining funding for a variety of housing assistance for low-income New Jerseyans.

**State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP).** Governor Christie is providing funding for SRAP at **\$21 million** in fiscal year 2013, which helps low-income residents afford housing by providing rental assistance grants to individuals and families.

**Homelessness Prevention Program.** This program provides financial assistance to low- and moderate-income tenants and homeowners in imminent danger of eviction or foreclosure due to temporary financial problems beyond their control. Governor Christie's fiscal year 2013 budget protects funding at **\$4.4 million**.

**Shelter Assistance.** In fiscal year 2013, the Christie Administration will provide **\$2.3 million** in assistance to homeless shelters in the state.

**Assistance for Needy Families.** In addition to these programs to assist homeless families and prevent homelessness, DHS serves many homeless residents through its General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs. Both provide supports that include temporary shelter placement, rental assistance, medical coverage, food assistance and job training. The Governor's fiscal year 2013 budget protects **\$78.6 million** in funding for the WorkFirst New Jersey program, part of TANF, which helps people get off welfare, secure employment and become self-sufficient through job training, education and work activities.

##### **Providing The Necessary Resources To Address And Prevent Homelessness:**

**Shelter Support Grants:** In December 2011, the Christie Administration announced the award of 37 Shelter Support grants totaling \$3,830,265 in both state and federal funding to nonprofit and local government agencies operating emergency homeless shelters and transitional housing facilities located throughout New Jersey.

It is estimated that these shelters and transitional housing facilities will assist approximately 3,000 households over the next year.

These grants will be used to create additional bed space, address life safety issues, abate code violations and support the 1,652 beds in existing homeless shelters and transitional housing, resulting in improved living conditions for homeless individuals, victims of domestic violence and military veterans.

**Homelessness Prevention Grants:** In November 2011, the Christie Administration announced the award of 10 Homelessness Prevention grants totaling \$1.2 million to nonprofit agencies administering Homelessness Prevention Programs.

The agencies will use the state-funded grants to provide assistance to low and moderate-income tenants who are in imminent danger of eviction because of temporary or extraordinary financial circumstances.

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