

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Bill to Establish Menstrual Hygiene and Diaper Benefit Programs

06/28/2024

Department of Human Services to Receive \$2.5 Million Appropriation to Administer Essential Benefits

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed A2027/S2330 to establish the State Work First New Jersey Menstrual Hygiene Benefit Program and the State Work First New Jersey Diaper Benefit Program. The bill also appropriates \$2.5 million from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development to administer these programs.

Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) (<https://nj.gov/humanservices/wfnj/>) is the State's cash assistance program, which provides monthly cash, child care, job search and readiness, and short-term housing support for eligible New Jersey residents. Under the Menstrual Hygiene Benefit Program, certain eligible adults ages 18 through 50 who are participating in WFNJ may purchase menstrual hygiene products using a dedicated \$14 monthly State benefit through their electronic benefits card. Menstrual hygiene products include tampons, menstrual cups, and sanitary napkins. Similarly, under the Diaper Benefit Program, individuals with a dependent under 36 months of age and who participate in WFNJ will receive a \$30 monthly State benefit through their electronic benefits card. The funds shall be for the benefit of the dependent child and shall be dedicated to purchase of diaper products. The monetary benefit shall carry over to the next month for use by the participants for the same respective purchases. These additional funds will be distributed on the same issuance date as the participants standard WFNJ benefits.

"Work First New Jersey provides essential assistance to residents facing financial hardship and I am proud to extend this financial relief to cover costs of menstrual products and diapers. This bill provides residents across our state a necessary resource to purchase some of the most essential products for their health and the health of their babies," **said Governor Murphy**. "My Administration will continue to prioritize affordability at every level, ensuring that every resident has access to the vital health services and supplies that support their well-being, dignity, and quality of life."

"Menstrual and baby products are not luxuries—they are necessities," **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "The benefit included in this bill is a necessary step to ensuring cost is never a barrier to accessing these products. This bill brings us closer to a stronger, fairer, more equitable reality for the women and families of our state."

This legislation builds upon the Murphy Administration's commitment to reproductive, maternal, and child health in New Jersey. For example, under P.L. 2023, c. 147 and supported by \$3.5 million in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025), school districts are required to provide menstrual products free of charge in every public school teaching students in one or more of grades six through twelve.

"Ensuring all mothers across our state have the financial means to purchase these fundamental products is one of the most basic and direct ways we can improve the health and well-being of New Jersey's families," **said Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority President/CEO Lisa Asare**. "I applaud Governor Murphy and the Legislature for taking common sense action that supports the individuals and families of our state who struggle to access basic needs."

"Menstrual care products and diapers are a basic need and a significant recurring expense that strains tight budgets, yet traditionally have not been covered by assistance programs. This law provides additional benefits for eligible households to help individuals afford these essential products. I am grateful to Governor Murphy, Senate Majority Leader Ruiz and the Legislature for recognizing this inequity and advancing this important new benefit," **said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman**.

The primary sponsors for A2027/S2330 are Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, Assemblywoman Shanique Speight, Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin, and Assemblyman Reginald Atkins.

"The cost of diapers and period products can be a substantial portion of a family's monthly budget. Anecdotally, providers have shared stories with me of parents purchasing larger diapers for their infants with the intent of the diapers lasting longer to make ends meet. These actions are taken in an effort to save money but pose risks to a baby's well-being," **said Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz**.

"The funding secured in this year's budget for a menstrual and diaper hygiene benefit pilot program is not just about providing these essential supplies; it's about supporting families in need and ensuring the health of our most financially vulnerable citizens," **added Senator Ruiz**. "Easing the financial burden these essentials put on New Jersey residents will reduce the impact of period and diaper poverty and help all families maintain their hygiene with dignity."

"The signing of this bill is a significant achievement in ensuring that residents who struggle to afford basic necessities in New Jersey have access to essential menstrual hygiene and diaper products. I am proud that the cost of these products will no longer separate a person from living a healthy life," **said Assemblywoman Shanique Speight**. "By signing A2027 into law, we address a significant need within our communities, easing the financial burdens faced by so many families in New Jersey."

"Access to menstrual hygiene products and diapers should not be a luxury afforded solely to those that can afford them; access to these products is a basic right," **said Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin**. "This law provides much-needed financial assistance to families, ensuring that everyone has access to the resources to maintain their health and well-being."

"Everyone deserves dignity and no one should be deprived of access to basic health and hygiene products," **said Assemblyman Reginald W. Atkins**. "I'm proud to sponsor this legislation, because no families in our state should ever have to worry about diapers for babies and no New Jerseyan should ever suffer stigma or financial burden for menstruation."

To apply for Work First New Jersey and other assistance programs, visit NJHelps.gov ([https://urldefense.com/v3/https://t.e2ma.net/click/zkwc9l/nrdit/jc3rt9...:!!J30X0ZmC1o0tbAIOX339CMcRT5IT1yEWy9t8LYKoM5dYSafz5TjFDcdG1BYE3UPTBFu9XNmknXH91layZmFw7tqbrzUk6pNhGy1m9pVPrgQ\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://t.e2ma.net/click/zkwc9l/nrdit/jc3rt9...:!!J30X0ZmC1o0tbAIOX339CMcRT5IT1yEWy9t8LYKoM5dYSafz5TjFDcdG1BYE3UPTBFu9XNmknXH91layZmFw7tqbrzUk6pNhGy1m9pVPrgQ$)).

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