

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: New Jersey To Apply For Critical Rural Health Funding, Seeks Stakeholder Input by October 7

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Up to \$1 billion over five years in rural health care funding for New Jersey is on the line in Rural Health Transformation Program application

TRENTON – New Jersey will soon apply for new federal funding to support rural health care, and the State is asking residents, health care facilities, community-based organizations, and other health sector partners to help inform the proposal. The New Jersey Departments of Health (NJDOH) and Human Services (NJHHS) are inviting stakeholders to share their input on the State’s application for the new

[Rural Health Transformation Program \(https://www.cms.gov/priorities/rural-health-transformation-rht-program/overview\)](https://www.cms.gov/priorities/rural-health-transformation-rht-program/overview)

(RHT Program), a one-time \$50 billion fund to invest in rural health nationwide over five years.

“It’s critical that New Jersey put forward its best application so we can adapt to federal changes and drive investment in innovative care models for rural health,” **said Acting Health Commissioner Jeff Brown**. “To do that, we need to hear from stakeholders across the State so we’re ready to use any funds awarded through the RHT Program to maximum effect. That’s how we strengthen health care access for rural New Jerseyans.”

“As New Jersey faces unprecedented disruptions to healthcare coverage and funding, it is critical we act to protect access to affordable, high quality health care in our communities,” **Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman said**. “The Rural Health Transformation Program offers New Jersey an opportunity to strengthen our healthcare ecosystem, facilitate collaborative partnerships, and invest in technological advances that support the health of New Jersey’s residents.”

NJDOH and NJHHS, which are co-leading the submission of New Jersey’s application, are asking community stakeholders to provide input into New Jersey’s RHT Program application. The feedback provided will be used to help identify priorities, gaps, potential collaborators, and opportunities for improvement. **The request for a submission of input is not a funding application and does not guarantee funding.**

The Departments are offering multiple avenues for stakeholders to share their input.

- Provide feedback via **online survey before October 7**. [Find it here \(https://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/TakeSurveyPage.aspx?s=df65899c501f47b58c9e13d8bdb34e9b&tsid=335d98d1dc564a7696d27a9a69de5cc6&c=en-US\)](https://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/TakeSurveyPage.aspx?s=df65899c501f47b58c9e13d8bdb34e9b&tsid=335d98d1dc564a7696d27a9a69de5cc6&c=en-US). Participants are strongly encouraged to share their input as soon as possible.

- Join a **virtual listening session on October 3**. [Sign up here](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/9876543210) (<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/uhjVfVStSFmTrWGFYLEX7A#/registration>).
- Department leaders will also continue informal discussions and targeted outreach to ensure a diversity of voices are represented.

More information on the process can be found on the

[NJDOH Rural Health page](https://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/primarycare/rural-health/) (<https://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/primarycare/rural-health/>).

Federal changes will impact New Jersey's health landscape

The State of New Jersey, our communities, and health care facilities and providers are bracing for significant decreases in federal reimbursement and funding after Congress and the Trump Administration enacted major changes to Medicaid and other health insurance this summer.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed by President Trump in July, could leave over

[10 million Americans at risk of losing health insurance coverage](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61570) (<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61570>) by 2034.

In New Jersey, the State has estimated 375,000 New Jerseyans could lose Medicaid coverage and 454,000 could see increased costs for their coverage through GetCoveredNJ. OBBBA will increase the burden of uncompensated care on New Jersey health care facilities and providers, community organizations, the State, and other entities.

Changes to federal financial partnership will also leave the State with less funding to finance NJ FamilyCare, New Jersey's Medicaid program. In total, NJDHS

[estimates](https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/documents/Medicaid%20cuts_congressional.pdf) (https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/documents/Medicaid%20cuts_congressional.pdf) a \$3.3 billion cut to hospitals and public health funding, and at least \$360 million in cuts to the State budget.

Overview of the federal Rural Health Transformation Program

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' five-year RHT program is intended to strengthen rural communities across America by improving health care access, quality, and outcomes by transforming the health care delivery ecosystem. The program focuses on promoting innovation, strategic partnerships, infrastructure development, and workforce investment. States must submit comprehensive rural health transformation plans demonstrating how they will meet program priorities.

The funding cannot be used to make up for lost Medicaid funds. RHT funds cannot supplant state funding for general Medicaid services and are not intended to replace lost operating revenue due to the other impacts of OBBBA. Not all eligible health-related activities will receive funding. Responses to this comment form are for informational purposes only and will not be evaluated for any future contract opportunities.

All 50 states are eligible to apply for the funding, with applications due in November and funding decisions expected by the end of the year. Half of the funding (\$25 billion) will be split equally among approved states – meaning that, with a successful application, New Jersey would receive at least \$500 million over five years to support health care facilities and providers, community organizations, and other entities. The other half will be allocated competitively among the states based on factors including rurality, alignment with Trump Administration policy priorities, and application quality.

States must commit to at least three specific health activities, ranging from chronic disease prevention and direct provider payments to mental health expansion and workforce recruitment with five-year service commitments. The

program emphasizes technology-driven solutions, regional strategic partnerships across health care providers, development of the health care workforce, and data-driven approaches to keep care close to patients' homes while ensuring long-term financial viability of rural health care systems.

New Jersey will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that any awarded RHTP funds can deliver the greatest impact.

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