

# THE HUMAN TOUCH

JULY 2018

Mercer County Department of Human Services

*The Mercer County Department of Human Services fosters a comprehensive human service delivery system that enhances the health, safety, and quality of life for all residents of Mercer County. The department's goal is to create an environment of public trust by empowering and strengthening individuals and families, advocating for sound policy, mobilizing resources, and acting as champions for those citizens who are most vulnerable and in need of services.*

## A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR MARYGRACE BILLEK

Lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer are rolling out, as Nat King Cole would say. Over the years, many artists have crooned about the joys of summer, and you may agree that it's a time to slow down, to enjoy the warm weather and the longer days. But despite the heat and temptation to relax, I assure you of this: quality service does

not cool off in the [Mercer County Department of Human Services](#).

Through seven divisions and our five-star rated library system, the Human Services' team delivers assistance to residents of Mercer County's 12 municipalities year round. We provide funding to agencies via the competitive contracting process that

serve Mercer County residents from birth through their sunset years. We also offer information and referrals, as well as direct support for some services, while our library system provides access to information, services, and resources through 560 hours per week of operating time.

We strive to serve all



*More than 250 team members work under Director Marygrace Billek to enrich the lives of Mercer County residents.*

Mercer County residents with compassion, respect, and professionalism.

## BUY FRESH, EAT FRESH, AND STAY HEALTHY!

The [Mercer County Aging & Disability Resource Connection's](#) Nutrition Program for Older Adults launched the 2018 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in June. Eligible participants receive five vouchers each

*Only produce in season may be purchased with these vouchers.*



worth \$5 to spend with local qualified farmers. These vouchers, available on a first come, first served basis, will be distributed until September and may be spent through November 30.

To be eligible, you must be at least 60 years old, reside in Mercer County, and have income up to \$22,459 annually or \$1,872 monthly for one person, or \$30,451 annually or \$2,538 monthly for two people. Those receiving Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (food stamps) or on Medicaid are automatically eligible for produce vouchers.

On July 5, representatives from the program will issue vouchers at the Hamilton Senior Center at 409 Cypress Lane in Hamilton from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Staff members will schedule dates to distribute vouchers throughout the summer at additional locations based on request.

Those interested must provide proof of identifi-

cation and residency, such as a driver's license, utility/phone bill, or birth certificate, and proof of income, such as a current income tax return, W-2 form, current pay stub, or Social Security benefit statement. You may provide a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and/or Medicaid card in lieu of proof of income.

For more information on the program or how to receive the vouchers, call Lisa Marion at 609-989-6652 or Kaitlyn Adlerman at 609-989-6468.

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### STIGMA FREE MERCER

Under County Executive Brian M. Hughes, the County of Mercer launched the “Stigma Free Mercer” campaign May 1, the start of Mental Health Month, when Mr. Hughes and County employees signed a pledge calling for increased awareness and greater understanding of mental illness and addiction.

“Mental health is vital to overall physical health for everyone, no matter age, gender, race, religion, sexuality, or social status,” says Ms. Billek. “The Department of Human Services funds agencies to provide treatment for mental health and substance abuse disorders. With the support of County Executive Hughes and the Board of Chosen Freeholders, I am proud our Department also will lead the fight against stigma in Mercer County.”

The [Mercer County Division of Mental Health](#)

and the [Mercer County Office on Addiction Services](#), with local mental health organization and partner [NAMI Mercer](#), will host awareness events and trainings to help eliminate stigma and discrimination in Mercer County. At these events, information will be disseminated, and participants can sign the Stigma Free Mercer pledge, which is [online](#) as well.

The first event will be July 12; the [Trenton Thunder](#) has invited the County to host Stigma Free Mercer Night at its 7 p.m. game. The Division of Mental Health, Office on Addiction Services, and NAMI Mercer will have a table on the concourse to provide information during the baseball game.

In May, the Division of Mental Health began publishing [“Stigma Free Mercer News,”](#) a monthly newsletter that features personal stories from resi-



*For additional information about the Stigma Free Mercer campaign, contact Mental Health Administrator Michele Madiou at 609-989-6529 or [mmadiou@mercercounty.org](mailto:mmadiou@mercercounty.org).*

dents living with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders or from their family members, as well as other information about stigma. Residents also are encouraged to search and use the hashtag #StigmaFree on social media as part of this yearlong campaign.

Those who participate in the Stigma Free Mercer campaign will promote the message of hope and the belief that healing and recovery are attainable. Treatment for mental

health and substance abuse disorders are effective, but many do not seek them due to shame and/or fear.

“Individuals are much more than their diagnoses and should not be judged because of any illness,” says Ms. Billek. “Every person living with a mental health and/or substance abuse disorder should be treated with respect and compassion and ought not be afraid to seek help.”

## READING IS FUN ALL SUMMER LONG

Children, teens, and families will find a wealth of activities at Mercer County Library System branches with the “Libraries Rock!” summer reading program. Fun and educational events are scheduled until August 11.

Children can visit their

local branch to receive a reading log, keep track of minutes or number of books read, and return to the library for prizes each week. The program is free and open to children of all abilities. The teen reading program is held online; registration takes place

via the library’s website. Teen events and prizes are available in-person at branch locations.

The library system serves the municipalities of East Windsor, Ewing, Hightstown, Hopewell, Lawrence, Robbinsville, and West Windsor.



*Events will in part celebrate all things musical to tie in with this year’s theme.*

For more information and full program listings, visit the library’s website, [www.mcl.org](http://www.mcl.org).

## TOWN HALL ABOUT OPIOID MISUSE IN MERCER

The [Mercer County Office on Addiction Services](#) assisted with the implementation of the [Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey's](#) 20th “Knock Out Opioid Abuse” town hall meeting, held May 23 at The College of New Jersey. This town hall series, which started in April 2017 and has been presented in all New Jersey counties, provided information to help residents make better decisions for

*Panelists addressed concerns of citizens at the final Knock Out Opioid Abuse town hall meeting.*



loved ones, and to help them understand the link between opioid prescription drug abuse and rising heroin abuse.

Panelists were [Mercer County Prosecutor](#) Angelo J. Onofri; Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson from the 15th [Legislative](#) District; Rachael Evans, M.D., chief medical officer of [Henry J. Austin Health Center](#); Barrett T. Young, chief operating officer of the [Rescue](#)

[Mission of Trenton](#); Barbara Sprechman, assistant executive director of [Mercer Council](#); and Stuart L. Roe, Ph.D., chairperson of [The College of New Jersey's](#) Department of Counselor Education. [Horizon Foundation of New Jersey](#) also was a sponsor of the event.

In 2016, more than 3,000 Mercer County residents were admitted into substance abuse treatment programs. Of those, more than 43% admissions were for heroin or other opiate use.

“The admissions for substance abuse treatment programs for Mercer County residents with heroin or other opiate dependency increased 64% between 2011 and 2016,” says Ms. Billek. “Opioid abuse is a threat to public health and affects individuals, families, and our community.”

The opiate crisis is a result of a combination of

misuse of opiate painkillers and the influx of heroin, the latter often cut with fentanyl. This additive, which is at least 50 times stronger than heroin, is responsible for a surge in overdose deaths. A recent spate of nine overdoses in Mercer County left seven people dead.

To combat this crisis, behavioral health organizations use evidence-based practices such as medication-assisted treatment (MAT), which combines behavioral therapy and medications for a “whole-patient” approach to treating substance use disorders. The most commonly used medications to treat opioid addiction are methadone, naltrexone, and buprenorphine. The Office on Addiction Services has funded medication-assisted treatment programs since 2017.

Are you looking for more information from the Mercer County Department of Human Services, Mercer County non-profit agencies, and other organizations? [Sign up](#) for our weekly email newsletter to find funding announcements from the County of Mercer and other agencies, to discover job opportunities, to learn about upcoming events, to read agency newsletters, to find area resources, and much more.

Do you have information you would like included in future email newsletters? Email the desired attachment to [MCHumanServices@mercercounty.org](mailto:MCHumanServices@mercercounty.org) along with a brief description.

Don't forget to visit us at [www.mercercounty.org/hs](http://www.mercercounty.org/hs) or call us (see page 4) with any questions you have about how we can help you.





## HOW TO REACH US

<a href="#">Director's Office:</a>	609-989-6526 or humanservices@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Aging &amp; Disability Resource Connection:</a>	609-989-6661 or ADRC@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Division of Mental Health:</a>	609-989-6574 or mmadiou@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Division of Public Health:</a>	609-278-7165 or publichealth@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Division of Youth Services:</a>	609-278-4845 or rtaylor@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Office on Addiction Services:</a>	609-989-6826 or adoroeki@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Office for Community Centers and Child Care:</a>	609-989-6964 or kronollo@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Office on Homeless Services:</a>	609-989-6982 or HSAC@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Human Services Advisory Council:</a>	609-989-6982 or hsac@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Commission on Abused, Neglected, and Missing Children:</a>	609-989-6966 or yleon@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Commission on the Status of Women:</a>	609-989-6719 or womenscommission@mercercounty.org
<a href="#">Library System:</a>	609-989-6917 or support@mcl.org



*Assistance is a phone call or email away.*

## MERCER COUNTY EMERGENCY RESOURCES

<a href="#">211</a> (information and referral services available 24 hours a day/7 days a week)	211
<a href="#">Access Link</a> (public transportation for the disabled)	800-955-2321
<a href="#">Amani House</a> (transitional housing, support services for men)	609-393-3168
<a href="#">Anchor House</a> (24 hours a day/7 days a week, services for those 12 to 21 years old)	609-396-8329
<a href="#">Arm in Arm</a> (food, housing, and support services)	609-396-9355
<a href="#">Capital Health Emergency Mental Health Services</a> (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	609-396-4357
<a href="#">Catholic Charities</a> (mental health access)	800-360-7711
<a href="#">Catholic Charities</a> (food, clothing, housing, and assistance programs)	609-394-8847
<a href="#">Children's System of Care</a> (support services for substance abuse, mental health)	877-652-7624
<a href="#">Community Justice Center</a> (disability support, veteran support)	609-218-5120
<a href="#">HomeFront</a> (housing and supportive services for families)	609-989-9417
<a href="#">Homeless Hotline</a> (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	609-468-8296
<a href="#">Hyacinth AIDS Foundation</a> (support services for HIV positive, AIDS)	609-396-8322
<a href="#">IME Addictions Access Center</a> (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)	844-276-2777
<a href="#">Mary's Place</a> (housing, supportive services for those 18 to 21 years old)	609-671-0040
<a href="#">Mercer County Board of Social Services</a> (welfare, Medicaid, food stamps)	609-989-4320
<a href="#">Mercer County One-Stop Career Center</a> (employment services)	609-989-6523
<a href="#">Mercer County TRADE</a> (transportation for disabled/senior citizens)	609-530-1971
<a href="#">Mercer County Veterans Services</a>	609-989-6120
<a href="#">Mt. Carmel Guild</a> (food and prevention services)	609-392-5159
<a href="#">National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</a> (available 24 hours a day/7 days a week)	800-273-8255
<a href="#">New Hope Integrated Behavioral Healthcare</a> (addiction detox and treatment)	732-946-3030
<a href="#">New Horizon Treatment Services</a> (addiction services)	609-394-8988
<a href="#">Oaks Integrated Care</a> (food, housing, support services)	800-963-3377
<a href="#">Rescue Mission of Trenton</a> (food, shelter for singles)	609-695-1436 ext 139
<a href="#">Trenton Area Soup Kitchen</a> (meals, case management)	609-695-5456
<a href="#">United Progress Inc. (UPI)</a> (addictions assessment, case management)	609-392-2822
<a href="#">Womanspace</a> (domestic abuse services, shelter, crisis line 24 hours a day/7 days a week)	609-394-9000



**Mercer County Executive Brian M. Hughes**  
**The Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders**