

# NJAC COUNTY BIZ

An Educational and Informative Newsletter for Counties and Businesses

New Jersey Association of Counties

ISSUE 171 - MARCH 2026

## Is Your Public Sector Organization Struggling To Finance Your Dream Project? There's Probably A Grant For That!

by Linda Heiss, Director, Funding & Community Strategy, SHI

### Grant Support Program

Get customized funding support for your technology initiatives



Often, public sector organizations are forced to put their dream projects on hold — or scrap them entirely — because they lack proper funding or resources to get the initiative off the ground. But it doesn't have to be this way — not when there might be a grant for that.

The key to success in 2026 is knowing where to look and how to position your technology projects around current funding priorities, whether federal, state, local, or foundation grants. We understand that it is not that simple. With increased competition due to program eliminations and funding cuts, organizations need expert guidance more than ever.

### A powerful grants partnership

The SHI Grants Support Program provides public sector organizations with complimentary services including customized funding reports tailored to your technology needs, location, and eligibility, expert consultation calls, resources to help you understand which opportunities align with your goals, and support throughout the grant application process. Whether you need hardware, software, cybersecurity solutions, cloud infrastructure, networking equipment, AI solutions, or professional training, our team helps you identify the right funding sources.

SHI has partnered with Grants Office, a national grants development services firm with a 20-year track record of helping [public sector](#) agencies find and secure funding for technology projects. Our goal is to make the process of identifying and responding to grants as seamless as possible for your public sector organization.

And don't forget E-rate! E-rate helps fund networking equipment and services for public libraries. SHI's dedicated E Rate team includes tenured Senior E Rate Program Managers, OEM specialists, and networking experts. We can help navigate the E Rate program, application strategy, compliance, procurement, and successful implementation.

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## Is Your Public Sector Organization Struggling To Finance Your Dream Project? There's Probably A Grant For That!

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### Make your technology dreams a reality

Financing your dream technology initiative(s) is expensive. But that doesn't make it impossible. Grant funding can dramatically increase your capacity to leverage technology, advance your mission, and impact your community. The [SHI](#) Grants Support Program, in partnership with the Grants Office, can help you identify and secure funding for your technology projects — and turn your technology dreams into a reality.

To learn more about the SHI Grants Support Program, contact your SHI account executive or [grants@shi.com](mailto:grants@shi.com). Alternatively, you can visit [shi.com/grants](http://shi.com/grants) and fill out the information form to receive a customized report of funding opportunities for your organization.



### *SHARE THE NEWS!*

*Let us know what educational or informational articles you would like published in the NJAC COUNTY BIZ*

Contact Loren Wizman, Director of Business Development  
(609) 394-3467  
or  
[loren@njac.org](mailto:loren@njac.org)

# Why Spring Is One Of The Best times For Counties To Sell Surplus Assets

by Shari Williams, Content Creator, GovDeals

March marks a shift in how counties think about their equipment. After winter operations wind down, vehicles are inspected, storage areas are revisited, and departments begin identifying assets that are no longer essential to daily operations. What often goes unnoticed, however, is that this timing aligns with one of the strongest resale windows of the year.

## Spring Brings a Surge in Buyer Demand

Contractors, landscaping companies, smaller municipalities, and public works departments begin preparing for their busiest season. They are actively looking for vehicles, heavy equipment, and operational assets they can put to use immediately. This creates a larger, more competitive buyer pool compared to other times of the year.

For counties, this shift in demand can directly impact how quickly surplus assets sell and how much value they recover.

After winter, counties have a clearer view of which vehicles are ready to be retired. At the same time, buyers entering their peak work season are actively searching for pickup trucks, utility vehicles, and maintenance equipment.

## Fleet and Equipment Timing Matters More Than Expected

Heavy equipment follows a similar pattern. As construction and infrastructure projects ramp up, buyers search for loaders, trailers, and specialized machinery to support new contracts. Equipment that may have sat idle through winter can suddenly become valuable to someone preparing for an increased workload.

Timing plays an important role in this process.

When surplus assets sit unused for extended periods, they continue to depreciate. Even when they remain in good condition, their market value typically declines over time. Waiting until later in the year can mean entering a slower buying cycle, when fewer organizations are actively expanding their fleets or operations.

By contrast, listing assets during spring aligns with when buyers are ready to act.

## Early Surplus Decisions Support Stronger Operations

Counties that evaluate surplus early in the year are often able to move assets more efficiently. This not only helps recover funds but also simplifies fleet management and frees up space for equipment that is actively in use. Clearing out surplus vehicles and equipment allows departments to maintain more accurate inventories and focus resources on assets that directly support operations.



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



**CannaCoverage Insurance Services** is a National Insurance Brokerage Firm specializing in employee benefits, with innovative benefits to improve health outcomes & cost savings.

For additional information and to learn more about CannaCoverage Insurance Services please contact Nichelle Santos, Founder & CEO via email at [n.santos@cannacoverage.net](mailto:n.santos@cannacoverage.net).



**Cit-eNet** is an E-Government Solutions provider offering a suite of online interactive services to counties, municipalities, and other government agencies.

For additional information and to learn more about Cit-eNet please contact Bob Tafuri via email at [support@cit-e.net](mailto:support@cit-e.net).



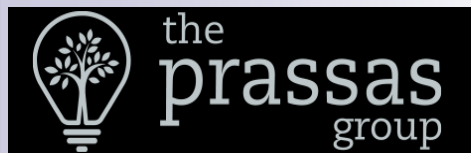
With over a decade of innovation, **Citibot** unites AI powered Voice, Text, and Web automation to help governments deliver faster, more accessible, and trusted service-anytime, anywhere.

For additional information and to learn more about Citibot please contact Sal Urbano via email at [sal@citibot.io](mailto:sal@citibot.io).



**Ramp Health** is an onsite health and injury prevention coaching company, mitigating human risk/containing healthcare and comp cost.

For additional information and to learn more about Ramp Health please contact Gene McGuire via email at [gmcguire@ramphealth.com](mailto:gmcguire@ramphealth.com).



**The Prassas Group** is a boutique consulting firm focused on supporting mission-drive organizations with their operation.

For additional information and to learn more about The Prassas Group please contact Phil Prassas via email at [phil@prassasgroup.com](mailto:phil@prassasgroup.com).



**TotalEnergies** is a global integrated energy company that produces and markets energies.

For additional information and to learn more about TotalEnergies please contact Michael Bartoszek via email at [Michael.Bartoszek@TotalEnergies.com](mailto:Michael.Bartoszek@TotalEnergies.com).

# A Strategic IT Modernization Win For Public Sector-And For PKA Technologies

by Nicole Buccola, Marketing Assistant, PKA Technologies, Inc.

For many public sector IT teams, the greatest cost is not the technology itself, but the time spent troubleshooting it. When devices slow down or behave unpredictably, it is often unclear whether the root cause is software, firmware, or hardware. This uncertainty forces IT teams into manual investigation, pulling them away from strategic initiatives and into a constant cycle of reactive support.

During a recent discussion with a large public sector organization, what began as a routine review of their tools, systems, and user experiences uncovered an opportunity to eliminate many of these inefficiencies. The focus quickly shifted from maintaining the status quo to improving outcomes, reducing troubleshooting time, minimizing manual intervention, and enabling a more proactive approach to managing thousands of endpoints.

By leveraging HP Workforce Experience Platform (WXP), the organization gained real time visibility into device health and performance. IT teams could identify, diagnose, and resolve issues faster, often before users were impacted. Automation and predictive insight reduced the burden of manual troubleshooting, improved operational stability, and allowed IT staff to redirect their time toward modernization and future planning.

Rather than reacting to problems after they occurred, the organization gained the ability to anticipate and prevent disruption. What could have remained a routine renewal became a strategic step toward greater efficiency, improved reliability, and a better overall user experience.

What started as a routine discussion ultimately became a forward-looking investment in a more resilient, scalable, and proactive IT environment.

For over 30 years, PKA has been helping public sector organizations turn routine discussions into strategic modernization initiatives. Contact us at (845) 357-0170 or [solutions@pkatech.com](mailto:solutions@pkatech.com) to schedule an executive briefing or live demonstration and discover how you can deliver greater value — with measurable results.



## SAVE THE DATE

**NJAC Conference**  
**May 6-8, 2026**  
**Caesars**  
**Atlantic City**

Registration Can Be Found [Here!](#)

## The Universal Nurse Home Visitation Program Is Now Available In All Of South Jersey, Most Of Central And North Jersey

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJ DCF) recently announced that the Family Connects NJ program (FCNJ) – the state’s Universal Nurse Home Visiting program – has been expanded to support more families welcoming home a newborn in six new counties. The service is now available in all of South Jersey, and most of Central and North Jersey, with program rollout on track to reach statewide implementation next year.

Families in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Monmouth and Salem counties can [now 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. Family Connects NJ nurses have already performed over 9,000 visits since the program’s launch in January 2024, and it is already available in Bergen, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, and Sussex Counties.

FCNJ is a voluntary program that offers a free nurse home visit by a specially trained registered nurse or advanced practice nurse to all families within two weeks of the arrival of a newborn. The service, now available in 17 counties, is open to all families with newborns, whether through birth, adoption, resource placement, or kinship placement. The program also assists families recovering from the tragedy of stillbirth or neonatal loss.

Family Connects NJ visits are typically scheduled within two weeks of delivery or welcoming a newborn home. During the nurse home visits, customized care and assessment is provided to the birthing parent and newborn. Nurses conduct health checkups for mom and baby and provide professional advice on breastfeeding, sleep training, and caring for a newborn, as well as referrals to community supports, if needed.

Families Connects NJ– nurse visits in the comfort of your own home, within two weeks of families welcoming home a newborn! **To learn more about Family Connects NJ, visit <https://www.familyconnectsnj.org/>**



# From AI Curiosity To AI Governance: Where Government Should Start

by Megan Olson, Director of Marketing, Polimorphic

The biggest AI risk facing government isn't the technology itself.

It's inconsistency.

When departments experiment independently, guidance is unclear, and approvals lag behind real-world use, AI doesn't stay contained—it fragments. Moving from AI curiosity to AI governance isn't about slowing progress. It's about creating a shared framework that allows governments to move forward with clarity, confidence, and trust.

## Curiosity Is a Signal

When staff ask, “Can AI help with this?”, they're not trying to bypass policy. They're pointing to friction.

Workloads are heavy. Information is difficult to navigate. Residents expect faster, clearer responses.

Ignoring that curiosity doesn't prevent AI use—it drives it underground.

## The Real Risk: Unmanaged AI

Some governments respond with blanket restrictions:

- “No generative AI tools.”
- “We'll revisit this later.”
- “IT hasn't approved anything yet.”

These reactions are understandable, but they often backfire. Without an approved path forward, staff find workarounds. Tools are used inconsistently. Leadership loses visibility. Risk increases.

Governance isn't about stopping AI. It's about bringing it into the light.

*continued on page 8*

# From AI Curiosity To AI Governance: Where Government Should Start *(continued)*

## Start Where Risk Is Lowest

A practical entry point is public-facing use cases—answering common questions or helping residents navigate services. These rely on:

- Approved public content
- Existing policies and procedures
- Information residents already have access to

This creates a controlled environment to test AI responsibly, build confidence, and establish guardrails that scale.

It's a way to learn without overexposing the organization.

## Define Boundaries Before Tools

Effective governance doesn't begin with software selection. It begins with clarity:

- What information can AI access?
- Which topics always require a human?
- Who owns oversight and updates?
- How will AI use be communicated publicly?

When boundaries are defined first, tool decisions become simpler and safer.

## Make It Cross-Functional

AI impacts multiple departments, so governance can't sit in a silo.

IT ensures security. Legal manages compliance and risk. Communications shapes messaging. Operations evaluates workflow impact. Leadership sets accountability.

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## From AI Curiosity To AI Governance: Where Government Should Start *(continued)*

When governance is shared, adoption feels supported rather than restricted.

### Transparency Builds Trust

Residents don't expect perfection—but they expect honesty. Governments that clearly explain where AI is used, what it can and can't do, how accuracy is maintained, and how humans stay involved tend to encounter less resistance.

The same applies internally. Staff are more likely to follow guidelines they helped shape.

### Governance Is the Starting Line

AI will evolve. Governance should, too.

The goal isn't a flawless, future-proof policy. It's clear ownership, shared principles, and a repeatable decision-making framework. That foundation makes future AI decisions faster and safer.

**The bottom line:** AI curiosity is already here. Governance is how government responds responsibly.

The smartest first step isn't saying yes or no to AI. It's deciding how AI decisions will be made.

The logo for Polimorphic features the word "polimorphic" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "p" at the beginning has a red horizontal bar underneath it. The letter "i" has a blue horizontal bar above it. The letter "o" has a blue horizontal bar above it. The letter "h" has a blue horizontal bar above it. The letter "c" has a blue horizontal bar above it.

# Monmouth County State of the County Address

by Thomas A. Arnone, Commissioner Director, Monmouth County



Thomas A. Arnone  
Commissioner Director  
Monmouth County

On behalf of the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners, I was honored to deliver the 2026 Monmouth County State of the County Address on February 5<sup>th</sup> at the Hominy Hills Golf Course Clubhouse in Colts Neck.

I am proud to serve alongside Deputy Director Dominick “Nick” DiRocco, Commissioner Susan M. Kiley, Commissioner Ross F. Licitra, and Commissioner Erik Anderson, and our Constitutional Officers. Together, we remain focused on strengthening our communities and ensuring Monmouth County continues to be a great place to live, work, and visit.

During the address, I highlighted the County’s 2025 accomplishments and outlined our goals for the year ahead. In 2025, Monmouth County made significant progress in public safety, including improved response times for the Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office MedStar Emergency Medical Services unit and an increase in call volume to more than 10,000 calls. We celebrated the completion of the Rumson–Sea Bright Bridge and the voter-approved increase to the County’s Open Space Fund, allowing us to continue preserving land for future generations. The Monmouth County Park

System expanded by more than 800 acres, and two successful Made in Monmouth events supported local businesses and encouraged residents to shop locally. The County also strengthened partnerships with all 53 municipalities through the Shared Services program, achieved record-setting beach badge revenue exceeding \$32 million, and relaunched a Tourism newsletter reaching more than 40,000 subscribers. In addition, the Monmouth County Clerk’s Office, Surrogate’s Office, and Prosecutor’s Office continued to expand and enhance services for residents.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Board of County Commissioners will continue investing in public safety through MedStar and expanding Shared Services to further assist our municipal partners. We also announced the creation of a new Division of Integrated Health within the Department of Health and Human Services, which unifies public health, mosquito control, and mental wellness services to better serve residents efficiently and effectively.

Road improvement projects are planned in Freehold Township, Millstone Township, Middletown, Manalapan, Neptune Township, Neptune City, Bradley Beach, Avon-by-the-Sea, and Long Branch to improve traffic safety and efficiency. New initiatives will also include the launch of Film in Monmouth to support film and television production and the Open in Monmouth program to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses as they open and grow in our County.

During the State of the County Address, we proudly proclaimed Monmouth County as the Pizza Capital of New Jersey in recognition of our many outstanding pizzerias and vibrant small business community. As part of this effort, our Slice in Monmouth program now includes a free social media marketing video initiative to help local pizzerias share their stories and promote their businesses. The first video in this series, recorded at Federici’s Family Restaurant in Freehold, debuted during the address, and additional establishments are encouraged to participate.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead and for those who want to learn more about Monmouth County, go to [visitmonmouth.com](https://www.visitmonmouth.com).



## THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY



# OPEN HOUSE

**Date:** March 21, 2026

**Time:** 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Location:** George A. Pruitt Hall  
301 W. State St.  
Trenton, NJ 08618

At Thomas Edison State University (TESU), we know education doesn't follow a one-size-fits-all path. Whether you're finishing your undergraduate degree or pursuing a master's, doctorate, or certificate, TESU offers flexible, career-focused programs built for busy adults like you.

Join us for the TESU Open House and get the answers you need to move forward. Meet with our admissions team, connect with academic deans, and explore how TESU can fit into your life—and your goals.

**WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:**

- One-on-one guidance with academic deans, admissions and recruitment
- Insight into flexible, high-quality programs designed for working adults
- Light refreshments and free on-site parking

**EXCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITY:**

Apply during the Open House and we'll **waive your application fee.**

**To Learn More:**

**TESU.edu/openhouse**

**609-777-5680**



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## EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR NEW JERSEY PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

**LIVE WEBINAR**  
**Wednesday, March 4, 2026**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**

**Registration: Click [HERE!](#)**

([bit.ly/publicsector326](https://bit.ly/publicsector326))

**This informative meeting will cover how to:**

- Fund your education
- Find time to finish your degree
- Receive college credit for prior course work and professional experiences

**Special Guest:** Dr. Ann Prime, Associate Dean, John S. Watson School of Public Service

**Come with your questions—we will have a live Q&A!**

*Can't make the webinar?* Feel free to schedule a [15 min. appointment for more information!](#)

## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Learn about the benefits of being a part of NJAC and how you can join.

Contact Loren Wizman, Business Development Director at  
(609) 394-3467 or [loren@njac.org](mailto:loren@njac.org)

[Click here for an application](#)

## Save The Dates And Come Join Us!!

by Yvonne Ha, Marketing, MRA International

**March 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> PASBO in Pittsburgh**



Come join us in exchanging ideas, information, and experiences that foster members' knowledge of technology developments to better serve their organizations.

**MRA International** is a leading technology expert and a value-added HP and HPE Partner with over 20 years of experience providing unique IT solutions and turn-key results to the public sector.

**For more information**, please contact the MRA Sales Team:

Email: [sales@mrainternational.com](mailto:sales@mrainternational.com)

Phone: (732) 222-0997



**MRA**  
INTERNATIONAL



## Meetings & Events

**March 20, 2026**

**NJAC Board of Directors Meeting**  
*Virtual*

**May 6 - 8, 2026**

**NJAC Annual Conference**  
*Caesar's Hotel and Resort  
Atlantic City, NJ 08401*

**June 26, 2026**

**NJAC Board of Directors Meeting**  
*Virtual*

**September 18, 2026**

**NJAC Board of Directors Meeting**  
*State House Annex Building - Committee Room TBD  
125 West State Street, Trenton NJ 08625*

**December 18, 2026**

**NJAC Board of Directors Meeting & Summit**  
*Trenton Country Club - Oakland Room & Grand Ballroom  
201 Sullivan Way, West Trenton NJ 08628*

# Network Systems Health Check

by HPE Aruba Networking

Is your county's IT infrastructure running at peak performance? Are you confident in your network's security, reliability, and scalability?

The Network Systems Health Check is a vendor-agnostic, no-cost, 1-hour consultation led by an experienced Aruba Network Systems Engineer. This session is designed to help counties assess the current state of their IT environment—regardless of whether Aruba equipment is in use.

## ☑ What's Included:

- Review of network architecture and performance
- Evaluation of security posture and vulnerabilities
- Assessment of operational processes and workflows
- Identification of areas for optimization and modernization

## 🧠 Why It Matters:

Many counties reach a point where their IT systems have grown complex, and visibility across the network becomes limited. Performance issues, security concerns, or aging infrastructure may arise—but pinpointing the root cause can be difficult without a comprehensive review.

This health check provides:

- A clear snapshot of your network's current state
- Actionable insights to guide future upgrades or changes
- Confidence in your infrastructure before major investments

## 📅 Schedule Your Health Check:

Whether you're planning a network refresh, expanding services, or simply want peace of mind, this assessment is a smart first step.

Contact:

Cynthia Xamonthiene

Inside Sales Territory Manager – State/Local Gov & Higher Ed

📞 (541) 360-6313

✉ [cynthia.x@hpe.com](mailto:cynthia.x@hpe.com)



On behalf of the New Jersey Emergency Preparedness Association (NJEPA), nominations for several scholarships and awards are now being accepted in conjunction with the **2026 NJEPA Conference, from April 20–24, 2026 at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, NJ.**

This includes six (6) \$1,000 student scholarships for individuals pursuing careers in emergency management or related fields, as well as the 2026 Emergency Manager of the Year Award.

All submissions are due by **March 18, 2026.** Additional information, eligibility requirements, and application materials are available at [www.njepa.org/awards](http://www.njepa.org/awards).

# NJEPA AWARD & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



## NJ EMERGENCY MANAGER'S MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarships awarded in honor of **Captain Jonathan C. Young** and **Michael W. Augustyniak**, for graduating high school seniors or current college students pursuing careers in emergency management, or other related fields. **(Scholarships of \$1,000 are Awarded Annually)**



## KEVIN H. TUNO, EMERGENCY MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

An **award** named after Emergency Coordinator **Kevin H. Tuno**, who dedicated 33 years to New Jersey's Emergency Management Community, is presented to individuals whose long-term commitment to emergency preparedness has significantly and positively influenced the Emergency Management profession and community in New Jersey.

### AWARD SELECTIONS RELY EXCLUSIVELY ON THE NOMINATION INFORMATION AND CRITERIA BELOW:

- Must be clear and descriptive with specific examples; self-nominations are not allowed.
- Nominators will be informed after the selection process is concluded.
- NJEPA will invite nominators, recipients, and guests to the 26th Anniversary Awards and Networking Reception

***\*Please note, past NJEPA scholarship recipients are ineligible to receive another scholarship.\****

**Submission Deadline: March 18, 2026**

Additional information on the Scholarships and Tuno Award, as well as a link to the online application can be found at [www.NJEPA.org/awards](http://www.NJEPA.org/awards).



# New Frontier For County Health: Re-Imagining Healthcare Through Alternative Benefits To Reduce Healthcare Spend And Improve Health Outcomes

by Nichelle Santos & Gaetano Lardieri, CannaCoverage Insurance Services

New Jersey stands at a critical crossroads in public health. The cost of healthcare continues to increase at an exponential rate that is not sustainable for county budgets. County Administrators grapple with decision making on what the best strategy is to mitigate costs whether Self-insured, Health Insurance Fund (HIF), or the State Health Plan. At the end of the day, they are all experiencing annual double digit increases.

At the same time, despite years of effort and billions spent, the opioid crisis continues to claim lives in every county. Rates of depression, anxiety, PTSD, and addiction remain unacceptably high — straining our healthcare systems, first responders, and municipal budgets. Critical illnesses are on the rise from diet, environmental issues, work fatigue, and other factors that lead to co-morbidities.

But what if counties could adopt a model that saves lives, improves outcomes, and reduces long-term costs — all while making New Jersey a national leader in safe, innovative care?

## The Next Generation of Healing

Across the country, medical cannabis, ketamine-assisted therapy, and emerging psychedelic-based treatments such as psilocybin and ibogaine are showing real promise for conditions once considered intractable — from substance use disorder and PTSD to chronic pain, depression, and traumatic brain injury.

These therapies are not experimental 'fringe science.' Ketamine is already FDA-approved, and psilocybin and ibogaine are in advanced clinical trials. Before Gov. Murphy left office he signed into law, NJ A3852 [24R], to set up a pilot program to administer psilocybin at three NJ hospitals for clinical trials. In Texas, lawmakers passed SB2308, allocating \$100 million toward ibogaine research to combat opioid addiction and veteran suicide.

## A Proven Model in Our Own Backyard

CannaCoverage Insurance Services, a national insurance brokerage firm based in New Jersey, brings innovation to healthcare with alternative benefits to scale patient access and affordability to alternative therapies, now available to enhance the existing group benefit plans design.

## Why Counties and Legislators Should Care

- **Cost Savings** – Cannabis Replacement Therapy and Ketamine Replacement Therapy can replace some or all prescription drugs from classifications such as: anti-convulsants, opioids and non-opioids, anti-depressants, sleep medications, medicated skin ointments and much more. Alternative therapies can significantly reduce long-term healthcare costs, ER visits, and long term prescription drug use. Statistics show an average of **\$1,663 savings on individual health insurance premiums in states with medical cannabis laws compared to states without.**
- **Improved Health Outcomes** – Replacement therapy of cannabis or Ketamine mitigates the risk of adverse health effects of many prescriptions, that often lead to additional cocktail of prescriptions and the downward spiral of health.
- **Safe and Regulated** – Treatments are administered by licensed medical professionals in approved facilities.

*continued on page 17*

# New Frontier For County Health: Re-Imagining Healthcare Through Alternative Benefits To Reduce Healthcare Spend And Improve Health Outcomes *(continued)*

- **Improved Productivity of Workforce** – Less absenteeism; less overtime to replace call outs; increased presenteeism, healthier, productive workforce.
- **Social and Economic Impact** – Increasing the awareness to employees, and constituents, leads to a stronger workforce, improved health outcomes, healthier communities thus reducing, the strain on emergency and social services.
- **Opioid Settlement Funds** – Counties can leverage existing opioid settlement dollars to subsidize these innovative treatments.

\*\*Currently, opioid drug overdose is the [leading](#) cause of accidental death in the United States. Meanwhile, there have been zero deaths documented from cannabis, according to the [Drug Enforcement Agency](#) (DEA).

This model is already making a measurable impact. Working with partners in Trenton, Teaneck BOE, and Orange BOE, CannaCoverage has been instrumental in the introduction of alternative benefits for municipal and school board employees – helping reduce pain medication dependency, improve productivity, and lower healthcare costs.

## A Call to Lead – Not Follow

New Jersey has long been a hub for pharmaceutical innovation. By embracing this paradigm shift to alternative benefits our counties can lead the nation in the implementation of evidence-based, cost-effective, life-saving care.

*"As county leaders, we have a responsibility to explore every evidence-based, cost-effective path to healing our communities. These innovations represent an opportunity to save lives – and taxpayer dollars."*

We invite County Administrators to join us in this movement. Together, we can make New Jersey a national model for healing – one that saves lives, restores communities, and redefines public health for the 21st century.



457(b) retirement plans

## Our valued partnership helps provide retirement solutions for America's workers



The National Association of Counties (NACo) and Nationwide® are unified in our mission to help county leaders find better retirement solutions for their employees. Together we've achieved a lot:

More than  
**425,000**  
current participants

More than  
**\$24 billion**  
in assets

More than  
**40 years**  
of partnership

Nearly  
**3,000**  
participating  
counties and county  
jurisdictions

More than  
**1.5 million**  
employees and retirees  
served over the years



### For more information, contact:

Matt Ring, Program Director  
609-500-0205; RINGM3@Nationwide.com

Nationwide Retirement Solutions and Nationwide Life Insurance Company (collectively "Nationwide") have endorsement relationships with the National Association of Counties (NACo). More information about the endorsement relationships can be found online at [nrsforu.com](http://nrsforu.com).

Nationwide and the Nationwide N and Eagle are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company.  
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## NACo Webinars

**NACo Policy Insider Webinar Series: Understanding the Federal Landscape for Counties**  
Thursday, March 12, 2026  
3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET

*This series will take place on Zoom Webinar.*

Please email [nacomeetings@naco.org](mailto:nacomeetings@naco.org) with any questions regarding registration or login issues.

Last year's *Inside Washington* series is now **NACo Policy Insider**, a bi-weekly webinar offering an overview of the full federal policy landscape impacting counties, as well as deeper dives into specific policy areas, equipping county leaders with insights, context, and strategies to engage effectively on key issues from transportation and infrastructure, to public lands, to health and human services, and more.

**[Register](#)**



# NJAC CONFERENCE

May 6 - 8, 2026

NJAC's 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Caesars in Atlantic City

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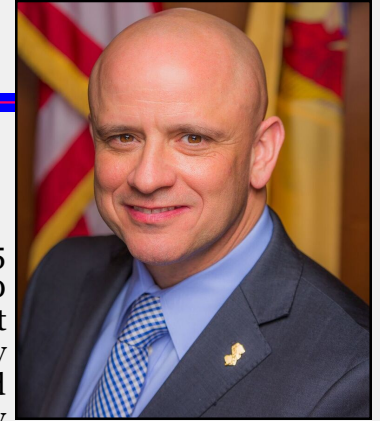
**EXHIBIT SPACE SOLD OUT!**

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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### DIVERSION OF 911 FEES

For nearly two decades, the State of New Jersey has diverted an estimated \$1.75 billion in revenues collected from a monthly telecommunication surcharge of .90 cents imposed on every telephone line in the State. Although the well-meaning intent of the 2004 law that imposed this surcharge was to build a cutting-edge and fully funded 911 system, administrations on both sides of the aisle have instead diverted approximately 90% of these monies to pay for general operating expenses primarily in the Department of Law and Public Safety.



John G. Donnadio, Esq.

As concluded by the "Ending 911 Fee Diversion Now Strike Force (911 Strike Force) established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 2021: *“911 fee diversion negatively impacts the ability of the public to access emergency assistance via reliable 911 services and technology; 911 fee diversion negatively impacts public safety, 911 operations, first responders, and the fiscal sustainability of 911 service; 911 fee receipts and expenditures should be distinguishable and auditable to ensure 911 fees are used for eligible activities directly related to the provision of 911 services; 911 systems require significant capital and recurring operational investments to accomplish the mission.”*

In addition to laying the groundwork for an imminent public safety crisis, the State's continued misallocation of 911 fees has imposed an inequitable system of double taxation on residents already burdened with paying the highest property taxes in the nation with no meaningful relief in sight. For the record, county governments alone spent an estimated \$175.0 million over the last several years on capital improvements for facility upgrades, telephone systems, computer aided dispatch, location mapping technology, voice recording technology, data analytics, and Next Generation 911 upgrades. Counties also spend an estimated \$100.0 million per year on general operating expenses for salaries, staff training, system maintenance, and network security. Although the fiscal budgets from 2023 – 2025 provided \$10.0 million in annual grant funding for county 911 centers to regionalize and upgrade facilities with NextGen 911 Technologies for the first time since 2009, the fiscal year 2026 budget cut that funding by 50% and the State of New Jersey has remained one of the worst offenders of diverting 911 fees in the entire nation.

As such, NJAC is urging the Administration to restore this critical funding, and increase the amount to 21.0 million with a \$1.0 million grant being made available for each county to regionalize, upgrade, or maintain its 911 system with a precise, accurate, and reliable communication network.

# EVENTS & HOLIDAYS

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Mercer County Bridal Show</b></p> <p>10:00am-4:00pm</p> <p>Hyatt Regency</p> <p><i>Princeton</i> Mercer County</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Come Blow Your Horn</b></p> <p>3/5 8:00 pm</p> <p>Somerset Valley Playhouse</p> <p><i>Hillsborough</i> Somerset County</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Women's History Month Lecture</b></p> <p>3/8 1:00 pm</p> <p>Dey Mansion</p> <p><i>Wayne</i> Passaic County</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Mega Job Fair and Resource Event</b></p> <p>9:00am</p> <p>Rowan College of South Jersey</p> <p><i>Deptford</i> Gloucester County</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>St. Patrick's Day Parade</b></p> <p>1:00pm</p> <p>Starting @ J Street</p> <p><i>Seaside Heights</i> Ocean County</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>St. Patrick's Day Parade</b></p> <p>1:00pm</p> <p>Ocean Ave. &amp; 4th Ave.</p> <p><i>Asbury Park</i> Monmouth County</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p><b>Atlantic City Boat Show</b></p> <p>3/10-3/12</p> <p>Convention Center</p> <p><i>Atlantic City</i> Atlantic County</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p><b>Les Miserables</b></p> <p>3/13 7:00 pm</p> <p>Union PAC</p> <p><i>Rahway</i> Union County</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p><b>Spring Craft</b></p> <p>3/13-3/15</p> <p>Armory</p> <p><i>Morristown</i> Morris County</p>	<p><b>13</b></p>  <p>3/14-3/15</p> <p>NJCEC</p> <p><i>Edison</i> Middlesex County</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p><b>Hunterdon County Irish Festival</b></p> <p>3/13 - 3/15</p> <p>The Red Mill</p> <p><i>Clinton</i> Hunterdon County</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p><b>March Madness Half Marathon 10K/5K</b></p> <p>9:00 am</p> <p>Weequahic Park</p> <p><i>Newark</i> Essex County</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p><b>W. Hudson Street St. Patrick's Day Parade</b></p> <p>1:00 pm</p> <p>Broadway</p> <p><i>Bayonne</i> Hudson County</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> 	<p><b>18</b></p> <p><b>Teen Arts Festival</b></p> <p>3/18 &amp; 3/19</p> <p>RCBC</p> <p><i>Mt. Laurel</i> Burlington County</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p><b>Teen Arts Festival</b></p> <p>9:00 am - 3:00 pm</p> <p>Blackwood Campus Camden County College</p> <p><i>Blackwood</i> Camden County</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><b>International Flameworking Conference</b></p> <p>Salem County Community College Glass</p> <p>3/20 - 3/22</p> <p><i>Carneys Point</i> Salem County</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><b>NJ Makers Day</b></p> <p>10:00am - 3:00pm</p> <p>Library</p> <p><i>Gardner</i> Warren County</p>
<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p><b>Spring Extravaganza</b></p> <p>3/27 4:00 pm</p> <p>Cumberland Mall</p> <p><i>Vineland</i> Cumberland County</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p><b>Sister Funk Showcase</b></p> <p>9:00 pm</p> <p>Congress Hall</p> <p><i>Cape May</i> Cape May County</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p><b>iHeart Home &amp; Outdoor Living</b></p> <p>Fairgrounds</p> <p><i>Augusta</i> Sussex County</p>
<p><b>29</b></p> <p><b>Dream Asia Food Festival</b></p> <p>3/27-3/29</p> <p>American Dream Lot 26</p> <p><i>East Rutherford</i> Bergen County</p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>				