

BY PROGRESSIVE CENTER *Forward*

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TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS IN MERCER COUNTY

■ By Reed Thomas, Office on Aging/ADRC

As the Area Agency on Aging for our county, the Mercer County Office on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) conducts needs assessments, works with partner agencies, and uses advisory councils and public hearings to determine the needs in our community and devise strategies to meet them. Through our work, we recognize that older adults and people living with disabilities often cite transportation as a barrier to meeting their daily needs.

This article provides transportation options in Mercer County. Please note that no one service exists that suits all community members and addresses all needs in terms of time of service, cost, and areas available to travel. For this reason, those who cannot independently transport themselves quite often rely on multiple services, using whichever addresses the specific need to travel. Most services permit caregivers to accompany the rider at no cost, though be sure to confirm that this is available when scheduling rides.

This publication is brought to you by staff of Progressive Center for Independent Living and Mercer County ADRC.

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Hood's Neighborhood

Where **ALL** minds and bodies are welcome.

Empowering youth with disabilities
to **speak up for themselves**
early in life.



Learn More & Sign Up Today!

Email: richhood1998@gmail.com

PREPARING RICHARD HOOD FOR THE HAMILTON TOWNSHIP TRANSITION FAIR

■ By Bill Donohue of PCIL Mercer

In preparing for the Hamilton Township School District Transition Fair, I was privileged to have the opportunity to work alongside Richard Hood as he takes an exciting step forward in launching his new initiative, Hood's Neighborhood. The project is focused on helping youth with disabilities gain the skills and confidence they need to find their own voice and become self-advocates at an early age. Richard, one of our newest PCIL Board members, asked to be supported on this endeavor.

We worked together to bring his vision to life in a way that would resonate with the youth and families that would be in attendance. An important part of this was creating a visually appealing and relevant poster that would effectively communicate his mission and message. Using his own life experiences as an example, we worked to ensure that the message and passion behind the project shine through and communicate his desire to help young people become more independent and self-directed in their own lives.

In addition to the creation of the poster, we also worked to prepare him for his first tabling experience, creating a sign-in sheet to help him make connections with families and interested parties, as well as a photo release form to ensure that he is able to continue using social media and other forms of outreach to promote his project and its growth. We also worked to refine his elevator pitch, helping him feel confident as he introduces himself and the mission behind Hood's Neighborhood to families and interested parties.

This project was not only focused on the actual task of creating the visual components, but also on helping Richard take an important step forward as he finds his own voice and becomes more self-advocating in his own right. His passion and commitment to helping others, combined with his own life experiences, make Hood's Neighborhood an exciting and impactful project for young people with disabilities and their families.



WHAT DOES PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

▪ By Amy Watts of PCIL Mercer

Person centered planning is a process designed to help guide people, particularly those with disabilities or who are older adults, as they plan their lives and supports in a way that reflects their personal goals, preferences, and needs. It ensures that the person receiving services is the primary decision-maker and is designed to prioritize their participation and control over the decisions that affect their lives, even when a legal representative (Guardian or Power of Attorney) is involved. This process is completely individualized and focuses on a person's wants, hopes and dreams and how they want to achieve them.

PCIL provides Support Coordination which is person-centered, intensive and ongoing case management for people who have Developmental and/or Intellectual Disabilities. We help them find the supports they need to achieve the life they want, surrounded by the people they choose to be with.

We recognize that a person's family members have a vital and meaningful role in their lives, and we value their input and involvement. The challenge is finding the balance between listening to their input while also completing our primary responsibility of ensuring that the individual's voice, choices, and goals remain at the center of all planning. Here are a few examples of what this can look like:

Megan

Megan had significant behavioral concerns and through a guided conversation, shifted her schedule to include her leaving her program early every day, having "down time" where she listened to the music she enjoys, and cooking and eating dinner with her supports at her apartment. Her behavioral concerns have become almost non-existent, and she is learning how to tell her supports that she needs a break.

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Steve

Steve's mom passed away and his family lives out of state, and he did not want to move in with them. He decided to move to a group home, visited the homes with his family, and prepared the questions he wanted answers to in advance. The home agency ensured that he was able to continue to do the activities he likes to do in the evening, at the locations he used in the past. Steve is now comfortable in his new home, making new friends, and has started learning how to cook.

Carrie

Carrie told her support team that she did not want to attend a program anymore. Her team asked her what she preferred to do instead and helped her to try out new activities. Carrie now has a support person during the day who does the activities she chooses with her, and they enjoy each other's company a great deal.

John

John is his own guardian, has mental health concerns, and lives with his brother. His brother does not believe in mental health and does not see any benefit to therapy. John expressed that he wanted therapy and to explore his local community. We were able to help John find a therapist that takes his health insurance and receive travel training to learn how to use Uber to get to the community locations of his choice. He also has chosen to not have his brother be involved in any of his planning meetings.

Sarah

Sarah graduated from High School recently and was feeling unsettled without having something concrete to do every day. She discussed what she likes to do and is now taking community college courses, goes to the gym and swims, enjoys activities at Grounds for Sculpture, and is learning line dancing. Sarah continues to look for new local activities that she wants to try out as she decides what she enjoys the most.

George

George had lost touch with a friend he was close to. This caused him to be angry most of the time, combative with his home supports, and he was told he needed to find a new place to live. His support team found out where the friend was and was able to get them reconnected. George is now happily speaking to his friend on the phone a few times a week and has regularly scheduled visits with him. He has had a complete turnaround in his mood and interactions with his home supports and he was able to stay in his home.

We all engage in person-centered planning every day of our lives when we choose to stop for a latte on the way to work, pack our lunch, or decide to skip a workout.

It's important to recognize the power that making choices can have for all people, especially those who have more complicated lives.



Chili Cook-Off Chefs posing together in a photo!

RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS: WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO IN MERCER!

▪ By Jessica Gushnay of PCIL Mercer

We've had such a great time bringing everyone together through some fun, interactive, and creative events this season! Whether it was tasting delicious food or getting hands-on with art, these experiences gave everyone a chance to connect, try something new, and just enjoy the moment. Here's a closer look at what we've been up to.

Winter Ball Magic!

We kicked off the year with our Winter Ball, and it was such a fun and memorable night. Held at the Hibernian Club banquet hall, the space was perfect for dancing, socializing, and celebrating together in a festive environment. Participants enjoyed a mix of free dancing and group dances, with staff there to support and encourage everyone to join at their comfort level. There were also winter-themed word searches, desserts, and a snow globe photo session, giving everyone even more ways to connect and have fun throughout the night.



Above: Winter Ball participants having a blast dancing the night away!

It was a great opportunity for participants to socialize, express themselves, and enjoy a special night out. The Winter Ball brought everyone together and created memories that will last beyond the season.

Chilly Cook-Off Fun!

Things got heated at our Chilly Cook-Off! Six of our staff members stepped up to the challenge and volunteered to bring in their best homemade chili recipes, giving participants a wide variety of flavors to try—from classic to bold and everything in between.

Participants had the chance to sample each chili and used a score card to rate their favorites. This made the event more interactive, as everyone got to be part of the decision-making process. There were lots of laughs, conversations, and friendly debates over which chili deserved the top spot!

This was a great opportunity for everyone to come together, share their opinions, and enjoy a fun and engaging group experience.



Above: Participants taste-testing and rating various chili dishes at the cook-off.



Left: Participants painting their hand-made clay bowls during part two of a two part pottery class led by Outside the Lines Art Studio.

Pottery Class: From Clay to Creation!

Our pottery class was a standout experience, especially because it was designed as a two-part series that allowed participants to see their projects from start to finish.

The class took place at Outside the Lines Studio in Hamilton, giving everyone the chance to step into a creative environment and try something new. During the first session, participants worked with clay to build and shape their own bowls. In the second session, participants returned to paint and decorate their bowls, adding their own personal touch through color, patterns, and design choices. It was rewarding to see how each person's vision came to life!

There was a lot of encouragement, idea-sharing, and pride in the results, making it a meaningful and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

These events are more than just having fun. They give everyone the chance to build connections, express themselves, make choices, and be part of a supportive and inclusive community. We love seeing everyone show up, try new things, and create memories together – and we're so excited for what's coming next. Stay tuned for more events and opportunities to get involved.



Participants having table tennis fun at HealthQuest with R.E.C.C.

HUNTERDON HAPPENINGS

■ By Bette Ann Sinclair of PCIL Hunterdon

Let's Get Physical

The Hunterdon office kicked off 2026 with a fun and energetic start in January, bringing everyone together for an evening of socializing and activity at HealthQuest gym in Flemington. Candace Burnell and her incredible staff led the way, engaging participants in pickleball, ping-pong, cornhole, and basketball. The night was filled with movement, laughter, and excitement—especially for those trying pickleball or cornhole for the very first time. It was truly a win-win situation for all!

Assembling A Birdhouse

In February, attendees gathered at Echo Hill Park Main Lodge for an educational and hands-on event hosted by Liz and Tom from Hunterdon County Parks and Recreation. The focus of the session was bluebirds and how to help protect them from invasive house sparrows, which often take over their nesting sites. Participants worked together to build bluebird houses, assembling pre-cut wood pieces like a puzzle. Not only did



Above: R.E.C.C. participants having fun at Healthquest Gym in Flemington.

Continued to next page.

everyone leave with new knowledge, but also with a meaningful reminder of the importance of caring for our feathered friends.



Above: R.E.C.C. participants making bird houses together with Hunterdon Parks and Recreation.

Bowling at Oakwood Lanes

March brought more excitement with a bowling outing at Oakwood Lanes in Washington. The welcoming and accommodating staff ensured that everyone could participate fully, providing wheelchair ramps and EZ-Bowler ramps to make the experience accessible and enjoyable. With three lanes in play, participants shared the common goal of scoring that perfect strike. Whether lucky or not, everyone had a great time, sharing smiles and cheering each other on. The fun continued off the lanes as participants enjoyed snacks and spent time in the arcade, making it a perfect way to embrace the lively spirit of March.



Above: Participants enjoying some games of bowling at Oakwood Lanes in Washington, NJ.

Join Us Next Time!

Find all our upcoming events

www.pcil.org/events

www.facebook.com/progressivecenternj

HUNTERDON PEER SUPPORT GROUP

■ By Bette Ann Sinclair of PCIL Hunterdon

A New Year, a New Beginning: The Progressive Center for Independent Living had attendees guessing prices of everyday household items at the Peer Support Group meeting in the Lebanon office in January. Fatima Latif, from Financial Resources Credit Union, discussed ways to budget and the benefits of using a credit union. We discussed wants versus needs and realized how important it is to make smart money decisions and how essential it is to have money management skills. We played, “The Price is Right” to assess our knowledge on how costly things can be and were surprised at the actual prices of different consumer goods.

Heart Healthy Month was in February, and Claudia Shore, a dietitian/nutritionist from Shop Rite, showed up at PCIL with informative resources on eating right to stay healthy! She wanted to reinforce how to incorporate delicious and nutritious snacks into our lives to help prevent health concerns. She provided us with ideas on how to use food substitutions made with low-fat items and whipped up an easy and fun snack for us to eat! She also offered free personalized consultations! Not only did we learn, but we were able to enjoy Fiesta Parfaits (black beans, cheese, salsa, guacamole, and Greek yogurt) that we made!

Trying to stay with the theme of new beginnings, a new year, and a fresh start, we decided to create vision boards in March! This activity intended to help achieve our

goals and to help make our dreams come true! An assortment of images and expressions were available to choose from in helping the group decide what we wanted in our lives! For instance, one participant gravitated towards putting pictures of dogs on her vision board to be able to visualize her dream of getting a dog one day. MS wanted a new car, in which she placed a picture of a new car in the dead center of her poster. The idea of creating a vision board was to remind us that we can achieve anything and have desired outcomes when we focus on it! Snacks and socializing were the highlights of the evening, along with an activity that we all enjoyed.

An upcoming Peer Support Group Meeting discussing Mental Health Strategies will be on Monday, May 11th from 5:00 pm-6:30 pm. How to recognize burnout and establish healthy habits.

On Monday, June 8th, from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm, Dating and Relationships will be the topic of discussion. Kait Myers, Educational Consultant and Health Educator, will be on hand as our guest speaker!

In July, we will be learning about Summer Safety Topics that will benefit all who attend! Learn avoiding poison ivy, shooting off fireworks, and avoiding dehydration will be areas of summer concerns to talk about on Monday, July 13, 2026, in the PCIL Hunterdon office!



Above: Claudia Shore from Shop Rite shows PCIL some healthy eating tips while serving healthy treats.



Above: Hunterdon Peer Group participants create vision boards to set their goals for 2026!



Above: Hunterdon Peer Group participants discuss screen-time use and over use.

STAY CONNECTED

To better serve you, PCIL is updating how we share information.

Moving forward, all event announcements, program updates, and important news will be shared through our weekly email, PCIL Weekly Connection. We will no longer send separate fliers or individual event communications.



PCIL Weekly Connection

Hello from the Progressive Center for Independent Living!

As we head further into spring, our team has been on the move—connecting with the community, sharing resources, and continuing our mission of supporting people with disabilities across Mercer County and Hunterdon County, NJ.

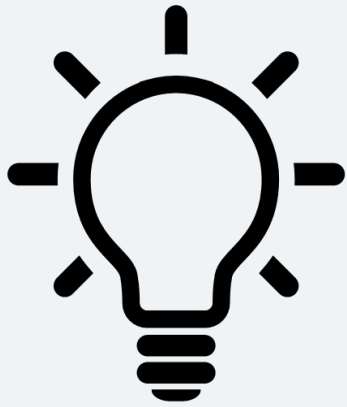
Each week, you'll find:

- Upcoming events and programs
- Important deadlines
- Community outreach highlights
- Program spotlights and success stories

To make sure you don't miss anything, add info@pcil.org to your contacts so our emails don't go to spam.

Not signed up yet?

Visit www.pcil.org/newsletter or email info@pcil.org and ask to join.



RESOURCES TO KNOW

- By Yvette Ragsdale of PCIL Mercer and Bette Ann Sinclair of PCIL Hunterdon



Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Interfaith Caregivers

Looking for extra support to stay independent at home? Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County is a local nonprofit that connects older adults and individuals with disabilities to caring volunteers who provide free, non-medical assistance.

Through their “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” program, trained volunteers help with everyday tasks such as:

- Transportation to medical appointments
- Grocery shopping and errands
- Friendly visits and companionship
- Light household tasks and wellness support

These services are designed to help individuals remain safely in their homes and stay connected to their community.

All services are completely free of charge and available without regard to income, insurance, or background.

For more information, call 609-393-9922 or visit their website at www.icgmc.org.



Mercer County Food Finder: Find Food Resources Near You

Finding food assistance in Mercer County is easier than ever with the Mercer County Food Finder, developed by Mercer Street Friends and community partners.

This free, easy-to-use tool allows residents to search for nearby food pantries, meal sites, and food distribution programs based on location, day, and time. It also features an interactive map, language options, and filters to help you find resources that best meet your needs.

Whether you need food right away or are planning ahead, this tool is a great place to start. Visit: <https://mercerfoodfinder.herokuapp.com/?keyword=>

Medical Ministries in Hunterdon County

Pluckemin Medical Equipment Ministry has been giving away free medical equipment since 2010. You can order equipment and schedule an appointment by calling 908-396-6057 or by viewing their website at <https://ppcmem.org/home>.

Deer Path Park

Hunterdon County Deer Path Park's inclusive playground offers kids and adults of all ages and abilities a chance to have fun! The park includes accessible and inclusive equipment that is beneficial to all including signs teaching children about sign language! The playground is located at 144 Woodschurch Rd, in Flemington.



PCIL PEER GROUP UPCOMING TOPICS

MAY
11

Mental Health Strategies

5 - 6:30 PM | HUNTERDON OFFICE | Lebanon, NJ

Come learn helpful strategies to combat mental health concerns.

MAY
19

Feel It, Name It, Share It

5 - 6:30 PM | MERCER OFFICE | Hamilton, NJ

Explore and express different emotions through interactive games and shared experiences in a fun, supportive environment.

JUNE
2

Survive the Summer - Reality Challenge

5 - 6:30 PM | MERCER OFFICE | Hamilton, NJ

Join us for a fun, interactive experience where real-life situations meet real-time decisions. From friendship drama to peer pressure, you'll face it all... and learn how to come out stronger.

JUNE
8

Dating & Relationships

5 - 6:30 PM | HUNTERDON OFFICE OFFICE | Lebanon, NJ

Join us for a speaker-lead discussion to share an interesting and informative discussion on dating and relationships

Please register for events in advanced at www.pcil.org/events.

Every Child
Deserves a
Summer
That Shines



The cost of summer camp can create financial challenges for some families of children with disabilities.

PCIL's **Sunshine Scholarship** provides up to \$400 in financial aid to eligible families in Mercer County, NJ to help cover licensed summer enrichment programs between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

REQUIREMENTS

- must be between ages of 4 - 25
- living with a diagnosed disability
- must reside in Mercer County, NJ
- documentation required to verify eligibility

- awards based on household income
- awards must be applied to structured summer enrichment programs
- Funding awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis subject to funding availability

APPLICATION PERIOD

MARCH 3 -
MAY 15



Apply Here:

www.pcil.org/sunshinescholarship





**PROGRESSIVE CENTER
FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING**

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your DOORWAY

QUARTERLY

A quarterly publication written by the Mercer County Office on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Connection to help support older adults, those living with disabilities, and their caregivers

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on Aging/ ADRC**

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County Executive Dan Benson & The Board of Commissioners
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General Purpose Traveling

Mercer County TRADE, which falls under the auspices of the Office on Aging/ADRC, is available to any county resident 60 or older or those living with disabilities. With a travel area of anywhere inside the county and as far as five miles over the county border, TRADE can be used for any reason. Riders do not have to pay, although there is a suggested donation of \$1 per ride. TRADE operates every Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and provides wheelchair-accessible vehicles to its users. In addition to rides within Mercer County, TRADE offers regular shuttles to veterans to the VA medical centers in Lyons and East Orange. For more information, visit www.mercercounty.org/trade or call 609-530-1971.

NJ Transit's Access Link is the State's paratransit program that was established to provide public transportation to people living with disabilities who are unable to use the local bus service according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Access Link has wheelchair-accessible vehicles, and service is available during the same days and hours as the regularly scheduled, local, fixed-route bus service. Access Link will only go within three-quarters of a mile of NJ Transit bus routes, so your origin and destination must be within that distance of an existing bus route. Access Link is not free; fares are based on the local fixed-route bus fare, the number of zones you travel through, and any applicable transfer fees. A virtual wallet payment option and online booking mechanisms are available. There is a two-step application process during which you must provide a physician's letter

confirming diagnosis and an interview where you describe the barriers you face using the traditional fixed-route bus system. For more information, visit <https://www.njtransit.com/accessibility/access-link-ada-paratransit> or call 973-491-4224.

With New Jersey Transit's Reduced Fare Program, seniors or people living with disabilities can save 50 percent or more when riding a NJ Transit bus or train. Seniors and passengers with disabilities are asked to show a valid NJ Transit Reduced Fare ID or Medicare Card and present the appropriate fare. Applications are available online, by phone, or at many community locations such as banks and NJ Transit customer centers. For more information, visit <https://www.njtransit.com/schedules-and-fares/reduced-fare-program> or call 973-491-7112.

RideProvide is available to individuals 65 or older or visually impaired adults of any age who live in Mercer County, Plainsboro, or the southern portion of Montgomery. Most rides have costs associated with them that vary on how far you travel, although rides to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton and Penn Medicine Princeton Medial Center are at no cost. There may be a waiting list to register as a typical rider, although the waiting list does not apply to the hospital trips or to any municipal ride service where RideProvide is contracted with the township to provide transport. RideProvide does not have wheelchair-accessible vehicles, and riders must be able to independently get themselves in and out of a car. To learn more, visit <https://rideprovide.org> or call 609-452-5140.

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Life Ride is a private transportation provider that has wheelchair-accessible vehicles. The rides can be booked on demand, a rare feature for this type of transportation. The prices are significantly higher than the previously listed services, although this provider tends to be more affordable than ambulance companies. A fare estimator is available on their website. Life Ride offers service options including orderly service where staff will take someone on a stretcher and provide direct physical assistance, something the other options do not. It participates in some State of New Jersey programs such as Division of Developmental Disabilities and Modivcare (more information on Modivcare is provided in this article), so service may be available at no cost for those enrolled in those programs. For more information, visit <https://ride.life> or call 551-225-0080.

GoTrenton! is an inexpensive, all electric transportation service that began as something that could be used by everyone inside Trenton city borders. In May 2026, that will expand to include eastern Ewing Township and western Hamilton Township. Rides to select “essential service” sites are at no cost, and other rides are \$2 inside Trenton or \$4 to go outside the city borders. Except for the essential service locations, rides must be “hailed” through a dedicated smart phone app and must be paid for using a credit card, prepaid/gift card, debit card, Google Pay, Apple Pay, or pre-paid GoTrenton! card available through the Trenton organization Isles. Wheelchair-accessible vehicles are available. For more information, visit <https://www.gotrenton.org> or call 640-252-1177.

Uber and Lyft Services

These on-demand services use private citizens who transport in their vehicles and traditionally require booking via an app installed on a smartphone or other internet-connected device; however, if using a smartphone app is a barrier, there are a few ways to access service via telephone. These services are more affordable than a traditional taxi, but still have costs higher than most government-funded transportation.

Uber Call-to-Ride is a book-by-phone service for those not able to use a smart-device app but requires you to have a cell phone that can accept text messages. Connect with an Uber call center to initially set up an account with your contact information and provide a credit card to leave on file for payments. Once set up, you can request your ride, and the operator will enter it. When a driver accepts the ride, the details such as driver’s name and vehicle type will be sent via text message. Wheelchair-accessible vehicles are not available in our area, though they can be requested in Philadelphia and New York City. For more information, visit www.uber.com/us/en/ride/call-to-ride or call 833-USE-UBER (833-873-8237) to sign up.

GoGo is a membership-based service that allows seniors to obtain transportation services via registration through Uber and Lyft. Operators are available all day, every day. Additionally, GoGo offers services like delivering groceries, meals, and prescriptions. Like taxis, rates vary based on how far a person is traveling and how long it takes to arrive at the destination. Additional

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fees for membership and rides apply. For more information, visit <https://www.gogograndparent.com> or call 855-464-6872.

EZ Ryde4Life operates in a similar fashion to GoGo, but also is a way to use the on-demand services of Lyft and Uber by phone instead of navigating the smartphone app. You can request a ride from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. EZ Ryde4Life is a membership-based program. Riders fill out a registration form and establish a transportation account using a credit or debit card. Members pay the fees charged by Lyft or Uber along with a \$2.50 administrative fee, after registering and paying a small, one-time membership fee. For more information, visit <https://ezride.org/transportation/ezryde4life> or call 201-939-4242 and select option 4.

Medical Transportation

Modivcare Medical Transportation is the State's medical transportation broker for non-emergency medical transportation that is provided to those enrolled in any NJ Familycare (Medicaid) program. Modivcare does not transport clients, but coordinates with local transportation companies to provide nonemergency trips to medical appointments. Wheelchair-accessible transportation is available for those who need it. For more information, visit <https://nj.gov/humanservices/dmahs/clients/medical-transportation> or call 866-527-9933.

The American Cancer Society - Road to Recovery program uses volunteer drivers to provide free transportation to cancer-related

medical appointments such as treatments or monitoring appointments. A patient must be accompanied by a caregiver if physical assistance is required. It is unlikely that wheelchair-accessible vehicles are available, although volunteers use their vehicles, so it is possible. For more information, visit <https://www.cancer.org/support-programs-and-services/road-to-recovery.html> or call 800-227-2345.

Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton provides low-cost rides to medical-related appointments for seniors 65 or older who live within a ten-mile radius of Princeton. Riders must be ambulatory and be able to independently get in and out of vehicles (use of canes and walkers is acceptable). Transportation is not available to medical operations, to procedures, or from hospital discharge. Volunteer drivers may provide rides to grocery stores or pickup on behalf of the community members if they participate in their friendly visiting program (a separate service from the transportation). For more information, visit <https://seniorcareservicesgp.org/services/transportation> or call 609-921-8888.

Uber Health is only available if your healthcare provider participates. Many large healthcare companies such as Robert Wood Johnson and Penn Medicine do, so ask their front desk if this service is an option. Wheelchair-accessible vehicles can be provided, but you must specify your needs when making travel arrangements. Services also may include other Uber-provided options such as pharmacy and food delivery. For more

information, visit <https://www.uberhealth.com> or email support@health.uber.com.

The American Kidney Fund is not a direct transportation service but can assist with the cost of one of the most crucial medical transportation needs: getting to and from dialysis treatments. Through their “Safety Net Grant Program,” costs associated with dialysis transportation, as well as other medical expenses, can be reimbursed. For more information, visit <https://www.kidneyfund.org/get-assistance> or call 800-638-8299.

Transportation Through Your Township

Most of the municipalities in Mercer County have transportation options available for older adults, and some also accommodate people living with disabilities. Services vary, with some towns providing rides directly, while others use outside providers such as RideProvide. Some can accommodate wheelchair users; others cannot. Some have no cost, while others work on a voucher system. Some require registration with their senior center. These services almost always cover the entire town, but some go farther. The hours of operation also vary. Please connect directly with your municipality to learn about these details and determine if the service is appropriate for you. Here are transportation contacts in Mercer County by municipality:

City of Trenton

609-989-3612 or <https://www.trentonnj.org/179/Office-on-Aging>

East Windsor & Hightstown

609-371-7192 or <https://www.east-windsor.nj.us/senior-services>

<https://www.east-windsor.nj.us/senior-services>

Ewing Township

609-883-1776 or <https://ewingnj.org/community/seniors>

Hamilton Township

609-890-3686 or <http://www.hamiltonnj.com>

Hopewell & Pennington

609-537-0236 or <https://www.hopewelltp.org/482/Transportation-Options>

Lawrenceville

609-844-7048 or <https://www.lawrencetwp.com/departments/Office-on-Aging-Senior-Center>

Princeton

609-751-9699 or <https://cmaprinceton.org/transportation>

West Windsor

609-799-9068 or https://www.westwindsortwp.gov/departments/human_services/senior_services

Transportation services can be fragmented and siloed. For those who cannot transport themselves, making an inventory of your transportation needs and looking at which options can address them can help you plan and may point to the combination that is right for you. Although there are many services included here, there are more niche options out there like friendly visiting programs, the State of New Jersey’s Division of Developmental Disabilities, the Traumatic Brain Injury Fund, and the Catastrophic Illness in Children Fund.

If you’d like to speak to one of our staff members about area transportation programs, please contact us at ADRC@mercercounty.org or 609-989-6661. We are happy to help.



Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton

■ By Adriana Morabito, Executive Director of Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton

Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton is a nonprofit organization in the heart of Princeton dedicated to helping older adults remain independent, connected, and supported in their daily lives. Our mission is rooted in a simple idea: neighbors helping neighbors to live well, safely, and with dignity.

We proudly serve individuals aged 65 or older within a 10-to-15-mile radius of Princeton and provide reliable, compassionate assistance tailored to everyday needs. Our services focus on three essential areas: transportation, food shopping, and friendly visits.

We offer transportation to medical appointments to ensure that clients can attend important healthcare visits safely and on time. We assist with food shopping by either shopping on a client's behalf or accompanying them to the store, helping them access groceries and household

necessities without the stress of navigating stores alone. We also provide friendly visits that offer companionship and social connections that reduce isolation and support emotional well-being.

Although our services are practical in nature, their impact is deeply personal. A ride to a doctor's appointment, help with weekly shopping, or a simple visit from a caring volunteer can make a meaningful difference in someone's daily life. Our dedicated team of volunteers build relationships with the individuals they serve, fostering trust and a sense of community.

Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton is deeply rooted in the local area. We collaborate with community partners, participate in local events, and remain committed to strengthening the network of support available to seniors. Under my leadership and with the guidance of a dedicated board of trustees, the organization

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continues to expand its impact while staying true to its mission of compassionate care.

By combining essential services with genuine human connection, we strive to be a trusted partner in helping seniors age safely, comfortably, and with dignity in the community they call home. If you or someone you know could benefit from our services, we would love to hear from you. Please feel free to reach out or share our information with anyone who might need extra support.

We also invite community members to join us as volunteers. Your time and compassion can make a lasting difference in the life of a senior. Be sure to check our website for upcoming events and fundraisers to support Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton and help us continue our mission.

To learn more about Senior Care Services of Greater Princeton, please visit our website at www.seniorcareservicesgp.org or call 609-921-8888.



Jersey Assistance for Community Caregiving

To learn more or start applying, please contact the Mercer County Office on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Connection at (609) 989-6661 or ADRC@mercercounty.org.

ABOUT JACC

Jersey Assistance for Community Caregiving (JACC) is a program that provides in-home services to seniors at risk of placement in a nursing home. It includes an array of services designed to supplement the assistance given by the individual’s caregiver network. Qualified individuals may have the opportunity to hire their eligible family, friends, or neighbors to provide the care they need.

CHAMPION YOUR HEALTH

OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH
MAY 2026



May is Older Americans' Month

Every May, we celebrate older adults during Older Americans Month. Each year features a new theme, and for 2026 it's "Champion Your Health."

Championing your health involves being proactive — making healthy choices, staying active, and taking steps to prevent problems. It's vital to stay engaged in decisions that support long-term health and independence.

Championing your health includes self-advocacy — speaking up about your needs, understanding your options, and making informed decisions. Dedicate yourself to taking charge of your well-being.

Championing your health includes a commitment to physical activity, which is

essential to good health. No matter how you choose to move, daily activity supports strength, balance, and independence. Champion your health by staying active.

This Older Americans Month, we ask you to consider committing to moving more, eating well, and staying socially connected; however, we encourage you to focus on these habits throughout the year. Small, consistent steps can promote lifelong health and healthy aging.

For information and resources that can help you Champion Your Health, please contact the Mercer County Office on Aging/ADRC by calling 609-989-6661 or by emailing ADRC@mercercounty.org. Our staff are happy to help!

Medi-Cool Program

The summer heat will soon return. As temperatures and humidity rise, some residents may struggle due to a lack of air conditioning in their houses. Did you know that there is a program that can help?

With funding from the Mercer County Office on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton, and Rise, A Community Service Partnership, have partnered to provide air conditioning units with 6,000 BTUs for Mercer County low-income seniors and/or adults who live with a disability. Catholic Charities and Rise have begun screening applicants and will continue to do so until all units are distributed.

Interested individuals must schedule an eligibility screening. To qualify, you must:

- Be 60 or older and living with a disability or illness that restricts normal daily tasks, threatens your ability to live independently, or puts you at risk of harm due to unfavorable climate conditions
- Be 18 or older, living with a disability, and receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- Have income at or below 200% of the poverty line (\$2,660 monthly income for one person)
- Have assets of less than \$2,000
- Not have received an air conditioner through this program within the last three years

You must provide the following documentation:

- Proof of income (recent paystub, disability award letter, etc.)
- Prescription from primary care physician that must specify medical illness/condition and reason for needing an air conditioner
- Proof of assets (recent bank statement)
- Proof of residence (utility bill, lease, etc.)

Approved applicants will receive a voucher and be scheduled to pick up their air conditioner from a storage facility in Trenton. Please note that individuals receiving a unit must bring someone with them who can help carry it home from the scheduled pick-up appointment.

To schedule an eligibility screening and/or to ask questions, please contact Catholic Charities at 609-394-8847 ext. 2529, 609-924-8018 ext. 3704, or MercerMedicool@cctrenton.org or Maitiel Jimenez of Rise at 609-443-4464 or mjimenez@njrise.org.



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Personal Assistance Services Program (PASP)



GRANT SERVICES YOU NEED

PASP provides routine, non-medical personal care assistance to adults with permanent physical disabilities 18 years of age or older and are employed, preparing for employment, attending school, or involved in community volunteer work and who are able to self-direct their services. The goal of this program is to support individuals with physical disabilities so that they may remain active participants in their community. The PASP offers participants choice, flexibility, control, and the opportunity to manage their personal care assistance services. Eligibility is not income based, but there is a cost share based on income.

Mercer County ADRC

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Trenton, NJ 08650-0068



ESTADO DE NEW JERSEY DEPARTAMENTO DE SERVICIOS HUMANOS

Programa de Servicios de Asistencia Personal (PASP, por sus siglas en inglés)



El PASP es un programa de asistencia de cuidado personal que proporciona asistencia habitual para el cuidado personal no-médico a adultos con discapacidades permanentes mayores de 18 años de edad que estén empleados, se estén preparando para trabajar, asisten a la universidad, estén involucrados en trabajos voluntarios en la comunidad y sean capaces de dirigir personalmente sus propios servicios. El objetivo del PASP es apoyar a las personas con discapacidades físicas permanentes de manera que ellas puedan seguir siendo participantes activos en su comunidad. El PASP les ofrece a los participantes la elección, flexibilidad, control y la oportunidad de manejar sus propios servicios de cuidado personal. La elegibilidad no se basa en el ingreso, pero hay una repartición de costos basados en el ingreso.

Mercer County ADRC

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STATEWIDE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM

**Services To Provide Short-Term,
Intermittent Relief to New Jersey's Caregivers**

Caring for anyone is a huge job. The Statewide Respite Care Program offers services to the person who needs care so that you, the caregiver, has respite - that much needed break.

To learn more or start the application process, please contact the Mercer County Office on Aging / Aging and Disability Resource Connection at **(609) 989-6661** or **ADRC@mercercounty.org**.



ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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Santosh Gyawali

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Program Coordinator Aging &
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Janka Maya

PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

June 23, 2026 | 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM | Mercer County Connection

Please join the Mercer County Office on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) for its annual public hearing on aging-related matters in the Mercer County community at Mercer County Connection located at 957 NJ Route 33 in Hamilton!

The hearing is open to the public – your valuable input is needed!

Registration is only required if you want to provide testimony.

If you would like to provide testimony or have any questions about this public hearing, please contact the Office on Aging/ADRC by emailing ADRC@mercercounty.org, or calling 609-989-6661. Office on Aging staff will be happy to assist you!

VOL 93 SPRING 2026

A PCIL & ADRC NJ Collaboration

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FREE MATTER FOR
THE BLIND AND
HANDICAPPED

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