



VOLUNTEER SERVICES



WELCOME!

We've moved! JFSMW Volunteer Services is now located at 570 West Mt. Pleasant Ave in Livingston. The new location is more accessible and gives us greater opportunities to connect with clients and volunteers in-person. Our phone numbers remain the same.

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Current Community Needs

Tessie's Touch Volunteers needed in Essex and Morris Counties - Tessie's Touch brings joy & connection to isolated older adults by matching them with a caring volunteer. Together, they can do activities and excursions in the community. Tessie's Touch is an extension of our traditional Friendly Visiting program and allows us to go above and beyond for our seniors. Each senior is paired one-on-one with a volunteer to facilitate a deeper connection through shared experiences and activities. JFS Staff will work with the pair to find an activity that brings them joy such as a trip to a botanical garden, attending a show or movie they had been looking forward to seeing, or sharing a meal at a local restaurant. Tessie's Touch will cover the cost of the activities and transportation. Volunteers must submit to a background check. For more information contact Taylor Ruszczuk at TRuszczuk@jfsmetrowest.org or (973) 637-1742.

Female Money Management Volunteers - Money Management volunteers are matched with a homebound older adult in Essex County to visit once a week in their home. Volunteers assist clients with reading mail, filing papers, and paying bills enabling seniors to live independently in their own homes. Volunteers create a budget and track expenses with the client. This program helps ensure that aging residents do not end up in nursing homes or other long term care facilities prematurely. Volunteers must submit to a background check. The program commitment is 1 hour once a week and the schedule is flexible. For more information contact Taylor Ruszczuk at TRuszczuk@jfsmetrowest.org or (973) 637-1742.

Family Promise is a Montclair-based nonprofit helping homeless and at-risk families achieve self-sufficiency by providing shelter, social services, and housing assistance through a community-based approach. Volunteers are needed to answer the phones in person at their Montclair office. Volunteers are also needed every 3rd Saturday of the month to help assemble hygiene kits and care packages for struggling families from 11-1pm.

Literacy Volunteers of America - Seeking volunteers to teach English as a Second Language to small groups of 1-3 adults at local libraries. Volunteer trainings are held via Zoom over 6 weeks. Upcoming training dates: Tuesdays, 6 - 8:15 pm, August 8, 15, 22, 29, September 5, & 12, 2023 and Wednesdays, 6 - 8 pm, September 6, 13, 20, 27, October 4, & 11, 2023

JerseySTEM -

Help promote a love for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math ("STEM") among underprivileged students. JerseySTEM is entirely volunteer led. Volunteers are needed to assist the agency with marketing and communication, grants researcher and writing, finance and accounting, photographers/creative writers. Position are work-from-home and flexible.

View current volunteer needs for JerseySTEM here: <https://volunteers-jerseystem.icims.com/jobs/search?ss=1&hashed=-625974438>



SHIP UPDATE

SHIP Counselors,

Congratulations to SHIP Volunteer Jocelyn Thompson who received the NJ Governor's Jefferson Award in the Health Care Service category for her ability to support SHIP clients with kindness and patience. We are lucky to have Jocelyn on our team! Thank you Jocelyn!

Welcome to our new Spanish-speaking volunteer, Andrea Epelbaum. Andrea is serving as a volunteer Spanish translator and can assist counselors working with Spanish-speaking Medicare beneficiaries.

Congratulations to our new counselors, Lorraine De Santi and Myradage Pierre! Lorraine De Santi has returned as a SHIP Counselor and will be monitoring the phone lines on Wednesday afternoons.

Myradage Pierre is the Service Coordinator for Irvington Senior Apartments and will be counseling in Irvington.

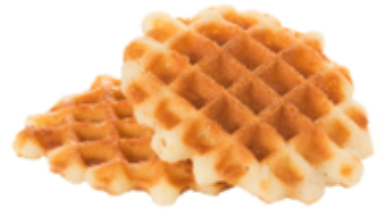
Lillie Moore also completed the recent SHIP trainings and is awaiting certification. Lillie works for East Orange Senior Center and will be joining the current counselors at this site, Frances and Inez.

Save the date! Our mandatory October Update Training for Essex County will be held on Friday, October 20th in our Florham Park office. Please reserve the hours from 9AM- 3PM for this training. More information to follow as the date nears.

Thank you for your continued services as SHIP Counselors. Your service is important to the Essex County community.

Brittany Bynum

We appreciate you a **WAFFLE** lot



Thank you for your dedication & service

For the first time since 2019, we were able to hold an indoor Volunteer Appreciation Event. On April 26th, we gathered at the JCC in West Orange to honor our amazing volunteers! Below are some highlights from the brunch. Thank you to everyone who attended.



Congratulations to the 2023 Maxine Myers Award Recipient, Gail Abramowitz

An Evening of Broadway

On May 15th JFS MetroWest honored Melanie & Alan Levitan Joanne & Arthur Weinbach for their support of JFS & Rachel Coalition Domestic Violence Legal Services and the 2023 Maxine Myers Award Recipient, Gail Abramowitz.

Gail has volunteered with JFS since April 2019 when she joined the former Cooking Companions program. This service was designed to match isolated older adult clients with a volunteer for weekly visits where they'd cook and then enjoy their meal together. Gail was matched with a 93-year-old homebound man and the two quickly forged a strong bond.

Since then, Gail has supported this client via phone during the pandemic and returned in-person through Tessie's Touch, a program generously funded by a private donor with the sole purpose of bringing joy to older adults through outings and activities in the community. Gail's visits brought her client immense joy. She supported and visited him regularly until the end of his life.

Gail is an amazing example of how one person can profoundly impact life for an aging older adult.



MEDICARE MINUTE

Medicare Coverage of Mental Health and Addiction Treatment

Mental health care refers to services that can diagnose and treat mental illnesses or mental health conditions. A mental illness or mental health condition affects your thinking, feeling, or mood. Examples of mental health conditions include depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia. Some also consider addiction, like opioid use disorder and alcoholism, to be mental health conditions. Mental health conditions are typically not the result of any single event or circumstance. Rather, they are complicated conditions involving multiple factors.

Know how Medicare covers outpatient mental health services.

Medicare Part B covers outpatient mental health care, like individual and group therapy, activity therapies such as art therapy, partial hospitalization programs, and annual depression screenings. Medicare also covers outpatient substance use disorder treatment, such as services you receive from a clinic, hospital outpatient department, or opioid treatment program.

When choosing mental health care providers, make sure they accept assignment so that you avoid paying more. Accepting assignment means that a provider accepts Medicare's approved amount as full payment for a service. If you see a non-medical doctor, like a psychologist or clinical social worker, it is additionally important that they be Medicare-certified. Medicare will only pay for the services of these types of providers if they are Medicare-certified and accept assignment.

If you have Original Medicare, you still owe 20% of the cost for most services after meeting your Part B deductible. For most preventive services, however, including annual depression screenings, you pay nothing and do not need to meet your Part B deductible. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, contact your plan to find in-network providers and learn about costs.

Know how Medicare covers prescription drugs for mental health treatment.

You can get prescription drug coverage through a stand-alone Part D plan if you have Original Medicare, or as a part of your Medicare Advantage Plan. Before joining a prescription drug plan, make sure that drugs you need are on that plan's list of covered drugs. Part D plans are required to cover many drugs used to treat mental health conditions. If you have trouble accessing your prescriptions at the pharmacy, contact your doctor.



MEDICARE MINUTE

Medicare Coverage of Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Continued

Know how Medicare covers inpatient mental health services.

Medicare Part A covers inpatient mental health services. These are services you receive in a psychiatric hospital or general hospital, both for inpatient mental illness treatment and inpatient substance use disorder treatment. Your covered days in a psychiatric hospital have a lifetime limit, but your covered days in a general hospital do not. Medicare covers up to 190 days of inpatient care at a psychiatric hospital in your lifetime. If you have used your lifetime days at a psychiatric hospital but need additional inpatient mental health care, Medicare may cover your care at a general hospital.

General and psychiatric hospitals have the same out-of-pocket costs. After meeting your Part A deductible, Original Medicare pays in full for the first 60 days in your benefit period. A benefit period begins when you enter a hospital as an inpatient and it ends when you have been out of the hospital or a skilled nursing facility for 60 days in a row. After day 60, you owe a daily amount to the hospital.

Identify and report potential mental health care fraud and abuse.

Anyone can experience Medicare fraud and abuse, and it unfortunately can increase health care costs for everyone. Medicare fraud and abuse is when someone intentionally gives incorrect information to Medicare or Medicare beneficiaries in order to get payment. For example, you may be experiencing fraud if you and other people with Medicare are bused to a nice meal, and then your Medicare is billed for a psychiatric evaluation. Or perhaps you spend the day at a facility watching TV or playing games, and then your Medicare is billed for group psychotherapy. Always read your Medicare notices to catch any suspicious charges like these. If you believe you may have experienced Medicare fraud or abuse, contact your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) for help in reporting the incident.

Take Action:

- If you or someone you know is having a mental health or substance use crisis, call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Speak with your doctor if you think you are experiencing mental health or substance use challenges to discuss what treatments may help.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or your Medicare Advantage Plan to find mental health care providers in your area.
- Contact your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) at 973-637-1717 to learn more about Medicare's mental health coverage or to receive individualized help with your Medicare.
- Contact NJ's State Medicare Patrol to report potential incidents of Medicare fraud, abuse, or errors.

READING BUDDIES CORNER



We wrapped up the school year with a bang, giving out books to all 1085 students who participated in Reading Buddies this year. Our readers connected with students all year both virtually and in-person and made a huge impact, with 96.7% of teachers reporting improved reading and comprehension skills in their students! All those weeks of storytime help to instill a love of reading in kids, which ongoing studies show not only helps with educational attainment but also helps them to continue to love reading as adults (https://cls.ucl.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/School_Librarian.pdf)! So pat yourself on the backs, Reading Buddies – you are doing great things.

We are also so incredibly proud that two of our readers, Debbie Neher and Howard Medow, were recognized in June at the NJ Governor’s Jefferson Awards for excellence in volunteering. Howard and Debbie are Reading Buddies at Redwood Elementary in West Orange. Congratulations, you two!

Save the date, our annual Reading Buddies training will take place on Wednesday September 13th in the morning at the JCC MetroWest in West Orange. Exact time will be announced late summer. After the training, readers can schedule a day/time to peruse the library in our new offices to pick out the books for the upcoming school year.

-Julie



**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

HOLIDAY DELIVERY UPDATES

Holiday meal delivery will be undergoing some changes starting in September with our Rosh Hashanah delivery. Rather than picking up meals from Kushner Academy, volunteers can come pick them up at our Livingston office at 570 W. Mt. Pleasant Ave. We hope this new location will make the meal pickup more streamlined and prevent issues with meals coming out of the kitchen late.

We'll release the Rosh Hashanah date and sign up sheet in late summer/early fall.



LISTEN TO CHILDREN

We wrapped up the school year in June and said goodbye to our students until fall! Thank you so much to all the Listeners who participated this year.

This summer Listen to Children is partnering with New Horizons Day Camp in Florham Park to bring the program to campers from now through August. Volunteers are matched one-on-one with campers from Pre-K through 9th grade to meet weekly during the summer. We're super excited to pilot this version of Listen to Children and hope this will prove to be a lasting partnership.

If you are interested in participating in Listen to Children, now or during the school year, please reach out to Julie.





IN HOME PROGRAMS

To our Tessie's Touch, Friendly Visiting, and Money Management volunteers,

I hope you are enjoying the start of your summer! After receiving additional funding from Morris County's Division on Aging, our Tessie's Touch program is continuing to grow quickly. Welcome to our new volunteers, we are lucky to have you! Many thanks to both the new and current volunteers for so graciously stepping up to meet this need in our community.

We are still actively recruiting volunteers that can serve either Morris or Essex counties in our Tessie's Touch program. We have a few clients waiting to be matched in the West Orange area and referrals have been steady from throughout Morris County. If you volunteer in another program or would like to take on another client, please reach out to me to discuss further.

It was wonderful to see some of you during our Volunteer Meet and Mingle in our new office in May. While JFS has had office space in Livingston for years, the Volunteer Department recently moved into the expanded section. There is more space here for volunteers to get together and have meetings comfortably. Due to this change, I am in the process of planning our first in-person volunteer meeting since the pandemic. I am aiming for early to mid-September, as I know many of you are traveling through much of the summer. Expect more details next month!

Thank you for all you do,
Taylor

2023 Volunteer Satisfaction Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the annual Volunteer Satisfaction Survey. We read each response in detail and use the information to improve our programs every year. The responses were overwhelmingly positive. Our goal is to provide opportunities to serve our communities in meaningful ways. We are always interested in improving how we support our volunteers in their endeavors. Below are some highlights and responses to the survey.

- 98% of volunteers were satisfied with the support network that is in place when they have volunteer related problems
- 95% said it was easy to get help when they needed it
- 95% are satisfied with their ability to effectively help others through their volunteer work
- 97% feel their contributions are worthwhile
- 98% of volunteers are satisfied with the freedom they have in carrying out their volunteer duties
- 97% were satisfied with the flexibility they are given to fit volunteer work around their life
- 94% were satisfied with how often the organization acknowledges the work they do
- 99% are likely to continue (or resume) volunteering with JFSMW in the future
- 100% would recommend volunteering with JFSMW to a friend

Some areas we can improve include offering more opportunities for training and increasing educational resources made available to volunteers. So stay tuned - more trainings are on deck for the fall.

Many write in comments were made on ways to improve Reading Buddies, which were very appreciated. Although some areas of Reading Buddies are out of our control due to the nature of the program and our reliance on the public school systems, the ones we do control will be taken into account and addressed in the yearly Reading Buddies training this fall. Thank you for your feedback!

We also survey clients served by volunteers in SHIP, Tessie's Touch, Money Management, Friendly Visiting and school staff whose students participate in Reading Buddies and Listen to Children. Clients and staff use the surveys to rave about how their volunteers go above and beyond each year. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!

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