

**If you used any of the controlled substances listed in this brochure, you may be referred to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families when your baby is born.**

The Department of Children and Families wants to make sure your baby is safe and healthy. We also want to make sure you have the support you need to care for your family.

To help families, Federal and State law requires hospitals to refer all newborns affected by their mother's substance use during pregnancy to the Department of Children and Families when:

- The mother tests positive for a controlled substance (listed on page 1) during pregnancy or at the time of delivery
- The newborn tests positive for a controlled substance (listed on page 1) after birth
- The infant displays symptoms of withdrawal from a controlled substance
- The infant displays the effects of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

The law applies when pregnant women were:

- Engaged in a Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) program and receiving methadone or buprenorphine for a substance use disorder
- Taking prescription opioids or other controlled substances for a medical condition
- Using any illegal or legal controlled substances and not engaged in treatment or recovery



## Helpful Resources

### **NJ Family Health Line, 1-800-328-3838**

This free hotline operates 24/7 and connects families to trained telephone counselors who provide information and referrals on addiction during pregnancy, postpartum depression, and health screening and treatment.

### **NJ Department of Health, 1-844-276-2777**

This free hotline operates 24/7 and provides information and referrals for pregnant women seeking treatment for addiction and substance use disorders.

### **Family Helpline, 1-800-THE KIDS (843-5437)**

If you're feeling stressed out, call the Family Helpline and work through your frustrations before a crisis occurs. You'll speak with a sensitive, trained volunteer of Parents Inc. who provides empathetic listening about parenting and refers you to resources in your community.

### **NJ Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-572-SAFE (7233)**

This 24/7 hotline assists victims of domestic violence and others seeking domestic violence services.

### **NJ 211, [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org), Dial 2-1-1 or 1-877-652-1148**

Information and referral for basic human needs.

### **Women's Referral Central Hotline, 1-800-322-8092**

This free 24/7 hotline provides comprehensive information, referrals, active listening, and crisis response related to the following concerns: child care, discrimination, displaced homemaker, divorce, employment, housing, legal assistance, single parenting, and social services.

### **Central Legal Services of New Jersey, 1-908-354-4340 and Legal Services of New Jersey – Domestic Violence Representation Project, 1-888-576-5529**

These two programs are funded to provide services to victims of domestic violence who cannot afford the cost of legal advice and/or representation. The legal assistance includes referral, advice, brief assistance, preparation of a letter or routine legal document, extended representation, and technical assistance.



# Supporting Substance Affected Newborns and their Families





## What are your hopes and dream for your baby and family?

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families wants to support you in achieving those hopes and dreams.

Family life can be challenging, and all families need support. Families struggling with addiction and substance use disorders need extra support.

We understand addiction and substance use disorder is a disease. It often isn't something you can manage on your own. And we know you want the best for your baby. You deserve our respect, our understanding and our best efforts to help you, your baby, and your family.

We also know that any substance use during pregnancy may have serious consequences for you and your child. It can threaten the well-being of your baby. Possible risks to your baby include premature birth, low birth weight, birth defects, withdrawal symptoms (irritability, seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, fever).

The good news is that addiction and substance use disorder can be treated. Please call the New Jersey Department of Health at 1-844-276-2777 to learn about treatment for yourself and your baby. With treatment and support, it is possible for your baby to be safe and thrive [in your care](#).

If you have a substance use disorder and are pregnant or parenting a newborn, seek out help. We are committed to supporting you and your child, and you will not be penalized for a good faith effort to get help.

## Are you pregnant and using any of these substances, legal or illegal, that may affect your baby?

Heroin, fentanyl, or other opioids; cocaine, methamphetamine/amphetamines or other stimulants, PCP, marijuana, hallucinogens, prescription opioids, sedatives, tranquilizers or other depressants, methadone, buprenorphine, or alcohol.

If so, it is critically important that you:

- Begin prenatal care as soon as possible
  - Call NJ Family Health Line at 1-800-328-3838 for information and referrals on addiction during pregnancy, prenatal care, postpartum depression, and health screening and treatment
- Maintain regular prenatal appointments and follow your doctor's orders
- Tell your doctor about the substances you are using
- Obtain treatment for your substance use as early as possible in your pregnancy
  - Call 1-844-276-2777 for help in accessing treatment for addiction and substance use disorder for yourself and your baby
- Be aware that Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), including methadone or buprenorphine, is the best treatment for you and your baby if you have an opioid use disorder
- Make sure your OB-GYN and treatment provider are aware of, and communicate, with each other so they can coordinate your care
- Sign consents to permit your substance use disorder treatment provider to communicate with your prenatal care provider, the hospital or birthing center where you plan to deliver, and the Division of Child Protection and Permanency
- Work with your substance use disorder treatment provider, prenatal care provider, and support system to create a Plan of Safe Care for you and your baby during your pregnancy

A Plan of Safe Care helps parents access:

- Treatment and recovery for substance use disorders, mental health concerns, and/or domestic violence
- Healthcare for themselves and their newborns
- Child care and/or Early Head Start
- Social services such as housing, income support, food assistance
- Social connections
- Parent education and support
- Early Intervention and support for child development
- And other services and support that might be unique to your family

Federal and State law requires that the New Jersey Department of Children and Families partner with you to develop a Plan of Safe Care after the birth of your baby. You can empower yourself and simplify this process by preparing a Plan before you give birth.

**PLEASE BE AWARE:** If you are pregnant, you can also call the New Jersey Department of Children and Families at 1-877-652-2873 for help in accessing healthcare and social services housing, income supplement, Medicaid as well as treatment for substance use disorder, domestic violence and mental health.

## Are you preparing to go to the hospital to deliver your baby?

If so, it is critically important that you:

- Be prepared to share information about your Plan of Safe Care, including contact information for your treatment provider(s)
- Tell the hospital staff exactly what substances you have been taking, how much and when

This information will help the hospital staff keep you and your baby safe during the delivery, and afterward.