

TITLE X GRANTEE PROFILE: NEW JERSEY FAMILY PLANNING LEAGUE, INC.

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For more than 45 years, the New Jersey Family Planning League, Inc. (NJFPL) has managed a system of subrecipient agencies to provide quality family planning services to the residents of New Jersey. NJFPL has participated in Title X since 1974, originally as one of two regional grantees. In 2013, with the support of the New Jersey Department of Health, NJFPL became the sole statewide grantee for the provision of Title X services.

New Jersey is the only state in which all 21 counties are officially classified as urban, although the NJFPL president notes that its service providers face many of the challenges associated with rural and suburban regions, too. NJFPL's vice president of program operations shares, "In urban areas, you have a high volume of social needs and a high volume of social services. In the rural areas, you might have a lower volume but fewer services to address those needs." In these rural areas, clients may have to travel upwards of 60 miles to get the service(s) they need. Conversely, in the densely populated urban areas, service providers are plentiful, but it can be challenging to see clients in a timely manner. "It's a balancing act. We have a variety of challenges that we have to address in a variety of innovative ways," continues NJFPL's vice president of program operations.

In addition to varied population densities, New Jersey is also home to diverse cultures. Nearly 17 percent of New Jersey residents speak a language other than English, mostly Spanish and Chinese, as a primary language. The NJFPL president adds, "It's not like all Spanish speakers have the same needs, either. Different cultures have their own attitudes and social service needs. We have to work to truly understand the local service area needs and make sure to involve the community in that understanding."

One organizational structure NJFPL has in place to support localized service delivery is its service provider committee. Together with NJFPL regional board members, this committee ensures that culturally competent services are available where they are most needed.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 presented challenges for Title X grantees and service providers across the United States, including in New Jersey. NJFPL service providers have all managed to continue services throughout the pandemic with a combination of in-person and telemedicine services. In addition, in some clinics, the service providers have expanded sexually transmitted disease (STD) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing services to provide coverage for areas previously served by county health departments whose services were suspended due to the pandemic.

FAST FACTS

HHS Region:	2
Year of initial Title X funding:	1974
Grantee tenure:	46 years
# of subrecipients:	9
# of service sites:	28

Website: [NJFPL](https://www.njfpl.org)

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Approximately 700,000 (8 percent) New Jersey residents lack health insurance.
- More than 37,000 New Jersey residents are living with HIV/AIDS, with women of color representing the majority of HIV infections among women.

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This coverage is critical in New Jersey, where more than 37,000 residents are living with HIV/AIDS. NJFPL plays a critical role in providing testing services and linkage to care across the state. In the past year, all NJFPL subrecipient agencies trained to become pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) prescribers and provide basic PrEP services. “We wanted to make sure every county had at least one facility where patients could come to have their PrEP prescribed, get their bloodwork done, and get their testing done quarterly,” says NJFPL’s vice president of program operations.

To ensure that clients know where to go for testing and treatment, NJFPL consults with a communications firm to strengthen messaging and optimize advertising placements. NJFPL’s vice president of program services shares, “We were already doing billboards and buses, but to be responsive to the pandemic, [we] shifted more of our resources to online and streaming platforms.”

NJFPL also has taken a leadership role in integrating male services into its health center programs. “We moved away from just STD partner treatment and made it a point to bring in hands-on clinician training for all of our advanced practice nurses and certified nurse midwives,” shares NJFPL’s vice president of program operations. “Every one of our agencies was trained and has increased the amount of comprehensive male services that they’re able to provide year over year.”

Another success for NJFPL is its network-wide clinical staff training on Human Trafficking Victim Identification and Support Services, which has helped successfully identify and refer victims for assistance.

In its nearly 50 years with Title X, NJFPL has valued the opportunity to articulate challenges and successes in providing family planning services with its subrecipients and service providers. “Title X has established a standard of care for reproductive and sexual health services,” says the NJFPL president. “We cannot overstate the value of these partnerships—being able to work from both sides to say, ‘Here are the challenges we are facing; here is how we are addressing them.’”

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Special thanks to Joe Alifante, NJFPL president and CEO; Rachel Baum, NJFPL vice president of program services; and Debbie Polacek, NJFPL vice president of program operations, for their contributions to this story.



ABOUT TITLE X

For 50 years, Title X family planning clinics have played a critical role in ensuring access to a broad range of family planning and related preventive health services for millions of low-income or uninsured individuals and others. Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services.

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