

# Supervised Visitation Program Annual Report

# **Federal Fiscal Year 2020**

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D., Administrative Director of the Courts

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTR	PAGE ODUCTION1
I.	ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM6
II.	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT6
III.	HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS7
IV.	ACCESS AND VISITATION GRANT8
٧.	APPENDICES
	A. STATISTICAL DATA9
	B. ACCESS AND VISITATION SITE LIST17

#### INTRODUCTION

This annual report on New Jersey's Supervised Visitation Program (Program), is submitted to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:12-11. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) prepared this report covering the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020. The report reflects data gathered from the visitation programs operated in the counties that are overseen by the AOC Family Practice Division.

In 1984, the Legislature enacted the Supervised Visitation Program (codified at N.J.S.A. 2A:12-7 et seq.), recognizing that "the inability of a parent to spend time with a child poses serious psychological problems to both the parent and child and prevents the growth of a normal, healthy relationship." In evaluating the Program, the Legislature sought to preserve the benefits of bonding between the child and the absent parent while ensuring the safety and welfare of the child.

The New Jersey Judiciary has received Federal Access and Visitation grant funds on an annual basis since 1997 to maintain the Program. The grant funding is used for the establishment and/or continuation of programs that support and facilitate non-custodial parents' access to and visitation with their children. The funds are distributed to the counties to fund their local programs based on need and the number of litigants served. Twenty of the twenty-one counties participate in the funded program; while Bergen County does not participate in the program, the county does provide county funded visitation services.

The Program offers both supervised visitation and neutral exchange services by identifying safe facilities in local communities for visitations to take place and by enlisting and providing volunteers to monitor these often-difficult visits. Neutral exchange services encompass the supervision of the transfer of a child from one parent to another for the visitation. The supervision is limited to the exchanges.

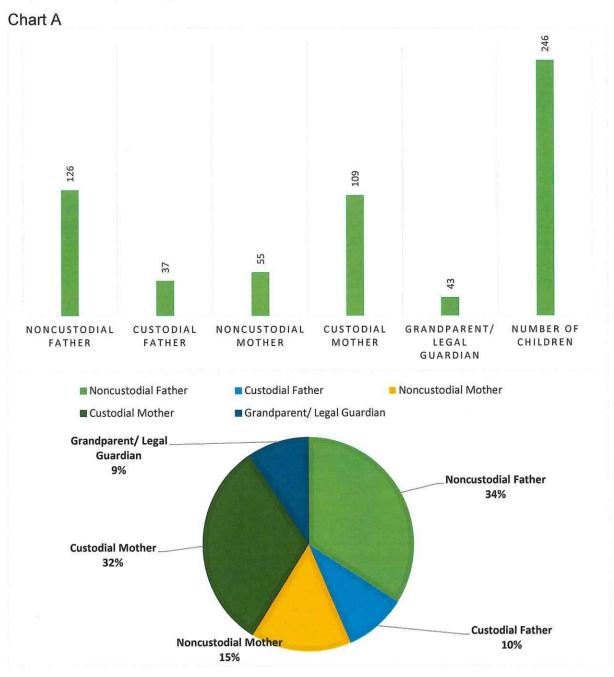
The Supervised Visitation Program is a component of the New Jersey Judiciary's effort to deliver effective services to children and parents.

Please note, beginning in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the Access and Visitation programs. Although limited services continued to be provided in-person and remotely, the impact of this ongoing event is reflected in the reduced number of services captured below. For example, in 2019, 1,008 parties received services as compared to 370 in 2020.

#### SUPERVISED VISITATION STATISTICAL DATA

# Client Information

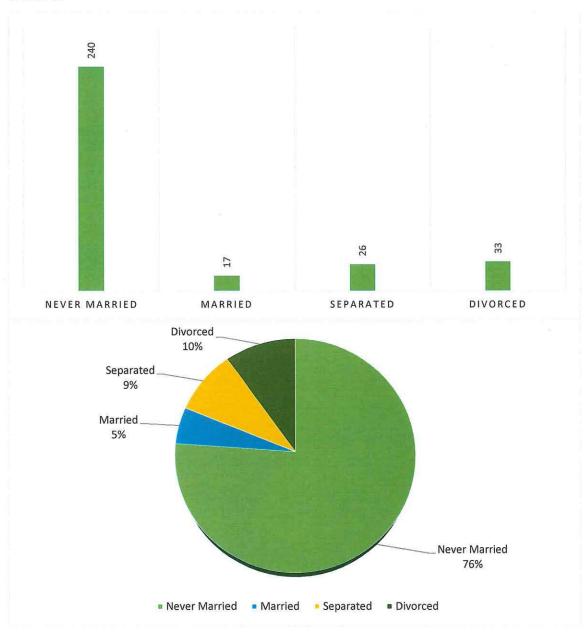
The Supervised Visitation program aims to provide services that support and facilitate noncustodial parents' access to and time with their children. Some of the allowable services outlined in the statute involve the participation of both parents. As depicted in Chart A below, of the 370 parents or guardians that received services, noncustodial fathers and custodial mothers represent the largest groups served at 34 percent and 32 percent, respectively.



# **Marital Status of Participants**

Unmarried parents must often navigate multiple, and frequently overlapping, legal proceedings to resolve issues of child support and parenting time. The Supervised Visitation Program can bridge this gap by offering a reasonable and affordable pathway for noncustodial parents to seek access to and parenting time with their children. As depicted in Chart B below, in the Supervised Visitation programs overseen by the Judiciary, 76 percent of parents were never married to the other parent.

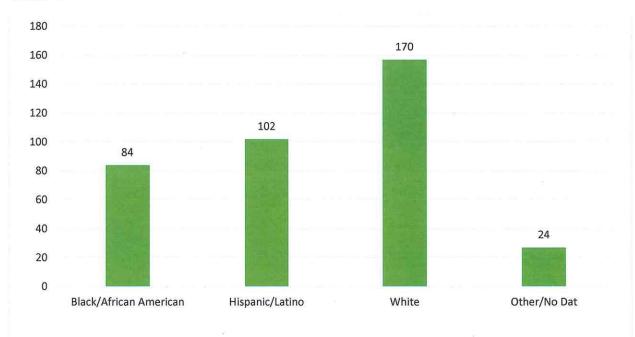
#### Chart B

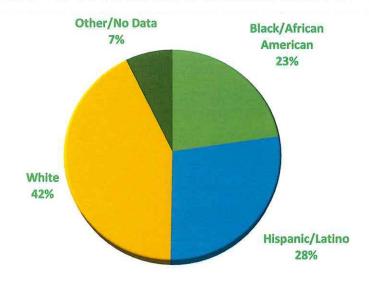


# Self-Reported Race/Ethnicity

Most participating parents self-identify as belonging to one of three racial or ethnic groups: White, Black/African American, and Hispanic or Latino. Of the 370 parties that received services, the data revealed that white parents constituted 42 percent of the supervised visitation caseload, Hispanic or Latino constituted 28 percent, and Black/African Americans accounted for 23 percent of the total caseload. The remaining 7 percent of participants self-identified among the following racial groupings: American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, two or more races, or other/data not reported.

#### Chart C





Having both parents involved in the lives of their children has a positive impact on their development. Programs designed to increase non-custodial contact, such as Supervised Visitation, provide valuable opportunities to increase the child's social, emotional, and academic growth. These services also provide children with a safe, conflict-free environment. The Judiciary will continue to foster effective communication and interaction between internal and external stakeholders in the supervised visitation process. The statewide program helps ensure the existence and application of effective standardized practices throughout the state with a focus on fairness and quality service, as well as the ongoing availability of needed visitation services.

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: June 21, 2021

# I. Administration of the Program

The following is a description of the New Jersey Judiciary's Supervised Visitation Program.

#### A. Administrator

N.J.S.A. 2A:12-7 et seq. designates the Administrative Director of the Courts as the Administrator of the Program. The legislation sets forth the specific duties and responsibilities of the Administrator, which includes arranging for technical assistance to Program Coordinators in the counties.

#### **B. State Coordinator**

The State Coordinator of the Program, as part of the staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts, serves as the Program's statewide manager, ensuring its compliance with the legislation, Court Rules and the Procedures Manual. The State Coordinator also provides technical assistance to the counties.

# C. County Coordinators

In each county, a Supervised Visitation Program County Coordinator (hereafter referred to as County Coordinator) manages the Program at the local (Superior Court) level, reviews all cases referred for program participation, schedules sites and volunteers to meet visitation schedules, and submits statistical data to the State Coordinator. The County Coordinator ensures that the screening, training, supervising, and managing of all staff and volunteers in the Program comply with approved standards. County Coordinators report matters specific to the Program to the Vicinage Family Division Manager. (Note: Bergen County is the only county that does not participate in the funded program. However, they also must report matters specific to the program to the Vicinage Family Division Manager.)

# II. Community Involvement

The Program depends on the involvement of the community in providing this critically needed service, both in terms of volunteers and community sites.

#### A. Volunteers

Volunteers are a key component of the Program. Volunteers provide supervision not only during the day, but also during evenings and weekends so that visitation may occur at times convenient to the families. The volunteers serve as neutral observers, ensuring the safety of the child; they intervene only when necessary.

All volunteers must complete a training course before beginning supervision. The County Coordinators conduct the training under the oversight of and with technical assistance from the Administrative Office of the Courts.

# **B.** Community Sites

Community sites make the Program possible by donating the use of their facilities for the visitations. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:12-7 et seq., the Administrative Director of the Courts must approve all external sites. Sites must be accessible, functional, comfortable, and safe.

# III. How the Program Works

# A. Referral by the Court to the County Coordinator

The court refers matters to the Program. Referral is appropriate in dissolution, non-dissolution, or domestic violence cases where the court is concerned about the physical or emotional welfare of the child and after third-party supervision provisions have been exhausted. Additionally, domestic violence cases awaiting parenting time questionnaires may be referred to the Program.

#### **B.** Court Order

The court order should clearly state the duration of supervised visitation, the length of visits, the names of the individuals permitted to attend the visitation, and a date to return to court for determining whether supervision should continue.

# C. Pre-Screening Interview

The County Coordinator conducts a comprehensive interview of both parties. The purpose of the interview is to gather information and, if appropriate, to arrange a tentative schedule for the visitations. During the interview, the parties are provided a copy of the rules of visitation

that will govern each session. In some instances, the interview may reveal issues of concern that call into question the suitability of the case for the Program. In those situations, the judge may reevaluate the matter.

#### D. Role of the observer in the visitation

Each visitation must include an observer. The observer can be a County Coordinator, court staff, or a volunteer. Their role is to serve as a neutral observer and to monitor closely the visitation, intervening on behalf of the child when necessary. The observer may terminate the visitation session if in the observer's judgement, the rules of the visitation are violated or if continuation of the visit is stressful to the child or threatening to the welfare of the child.

#### IV. Access and Visitation Grant

Since 1997, the New Jersey Judiciary has been the recipient of Federal Access and Visitation grant funds to sustain the Program. The grant requires the funds be used by the states to establish and/or continue programs to support and facilitate non-custodial parents' access to and visitation with their children. In FFY 2020, the New Jersey Judiciary received \$209,884.00 in funds through the Federal Access and Visitation grant. These funds are allocated to the counties based on need and number of children and parents served.

# V. Appendices

- A. Statistical Data
- B. Supervised Visitation Site List

# Appendix A

**Statistical Data** 

This data is required to be reported annually to the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Note: These appendices reflect data only on the twenty counties that accept Program funds. Bergen County provides visitation services with county funds and these are not included in these data

# TABLE ONE SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# **NEW CASES**

This chart reflects the number of new cases added to the Program in FFY 2020.

County*	New Cases
Atlantic	17
Burlington	26
Camden	17
Cape May	4
Cumberland	21
Essex	22
Gloucester	10
Hudson	9
Hunterdon	0
Mercer	16
Middlesex	19
Monmouth	0
Morris	5
Ocean	6
Passaic	9
Salem	0
Somerset	0
Sussex	0
Union	4
Warren	0
Total	185

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

# TABLE TWO SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# **CLIENT INFORMATION**

This chart reflects the visitation participants in each county and their relationship to the child.

County*	Non-	Custodial	Non-	Custodial	Grandparent/	Children
	Custodial	Parent	Custodial	Parent	Legal	in
	Parent	Father	Parent	Mother	Guardian	Common
	Father		Mother			
Atlantic	11	5	7	9	2	21
Burlington	22	2	5	19	4	35
Camden	11	3	5	12	3	27
Cape May	2	2	0	2	2	6
Cumberland	13	3	6	11	9	26
Essex	17	3	5	17	2	29
Gloucester	7	2	3	7	1	16
Hudson	8	1	1	0	8	10
Hunterdon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	9	4	8	7	4	17
Middlesex	12	3	5	13	5	23
Monmouth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morris	3	2	2	3	0	10
Ocean	4	1	2	4	1	9
Passaic	3	6	3	5	1	13
Salem	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	4	0	3	0	1	4
Warren	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	126	37	55	109	43	246

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

# TABLE THREE SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

#### **MARITAL STATUS\***

This chart reflects the number of visitation participants in each county within the stated categories at the time of entering the Program.

County**	Never	Married to	Separated	Divorced	Data Not
	Married to	<b>Each Other</b>	from Each	from Each	Reported
	Each Other		Other	Other	
Atlantic	28	0	0	4	0
Burlington	38	2	4	4	0
Camden	23	0	2	6	0
Cape May	5	0	0	1	0
Cumberland	29	1	1	2	0
Essex	28	0	11	3	0
Gloucester	0	0	0	0	0
Hudson	14	2	0	2	0
Hunterdon	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	24	0	4	0	0
Middlesex	22	8	0	3	0
Monmouth	0	0	0	0	0
Morris	6	0	0	4	0
Ocean	5	0	2	4	0
Passaic	11	4	2	0	0
Salem	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0
Union	0	0	0	0	0
Warren	7	0	0	0	0
Total	240	17	26	33	0

<sup>\*</sup>Note: The data includes both Civil Unions and Domestic Partnerships

<sup>\*\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

# TABLE FOUR SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# RACE/ETHNICITY

This chart reflects the number of visitation participants in each county that voluntarily self-identify as the stated race/ethnicity.

County*	Am.	Asian	Black/	Hispanic	Native	White	Two	Data Not
	Indian/		African	Or	Hawaiian		or	Reported
	Alaska		American	Latino	/Pac.		More	
	Native				Islander		Races	
Atlantic	0	0	9	11	0	13	0	1
Burlington	0	0	9	5	0	36	1	0
Camden	0	0	8	8	0	18	0	0
Cape May	0	0	0	2	0	6	0	0
Cumberland	0	0	10	10	0	21	1	0
Essex	0	0	20	14	0	4	6	0
Gloucester	0	0	3	1	0	15	0	0
Hudson	0	0	0	9	0	3	2	4
Hunterdon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	0	1	15	13	0	15	0	0
Middlesex	0	7	4	9	0	17	0	1
Monmouth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morris	0	0	0	3	0	7	0	0
Ocean	0	0	0	5	0	7	0	0
Passaic	0	0	2	8	0	8	0	0
Salem	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0
Warren	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	8	84	102	0	170	10	6

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

# TABLE FIVE SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# PARTICIPANTS ANNUAL INCOME

This chart reflects the number of visitation participants in each county that voluntarily identify as having an income within the stated range.

County*	Less Than	\$10,000 -	\$20,000 -	\$30,000 -	\$40,000	Data Not
•	\$10,000	\$19,999	\$29,999	\$39,999	and above	Reported
Atlantic	0	6	1	0	3	24
Burlington	12	11	4	8	3	14
Camden	0	0	0	0	0	34
Cape May	0	0	0	0	0	8
Cumberland	6	2	4	4	6	20
Essex	3	4	4	2	9	22
Gloucester	0	0	0	0	0	20
Hudson	2	1	1	0	3	11
Hunterdon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	4	3	7	3	2	13
Middlesex	10	4	5	1	8	10
Monmouth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morris	1	2	3	0	4	0
Ocean	0	0	0	0	0	12
Passaic	0	0	0	0	0	18
Salem	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	0	0	0	0	0	8
Warren	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	38	33	29	18	38	214

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

# TABLE SIX SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# **SERVICES PROVIDED**

This chart reflects the number of visits funded through the Access and Visitation Grant.

County*	Supervised Visitation
Atlantic	35
Burlington	53
Camden	35
Cape May	9
Cumberland	43
Essex	45
Gloucester	21
Hudson	19
Hunterdon	0
Mercer	33
Middlesex	39
Monmouth	0
Morris	11
Ocean	13
Passaic	19
Salem	0
Somerset	0
Sussex	0
Union	9
Warren	0
Total	384

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.

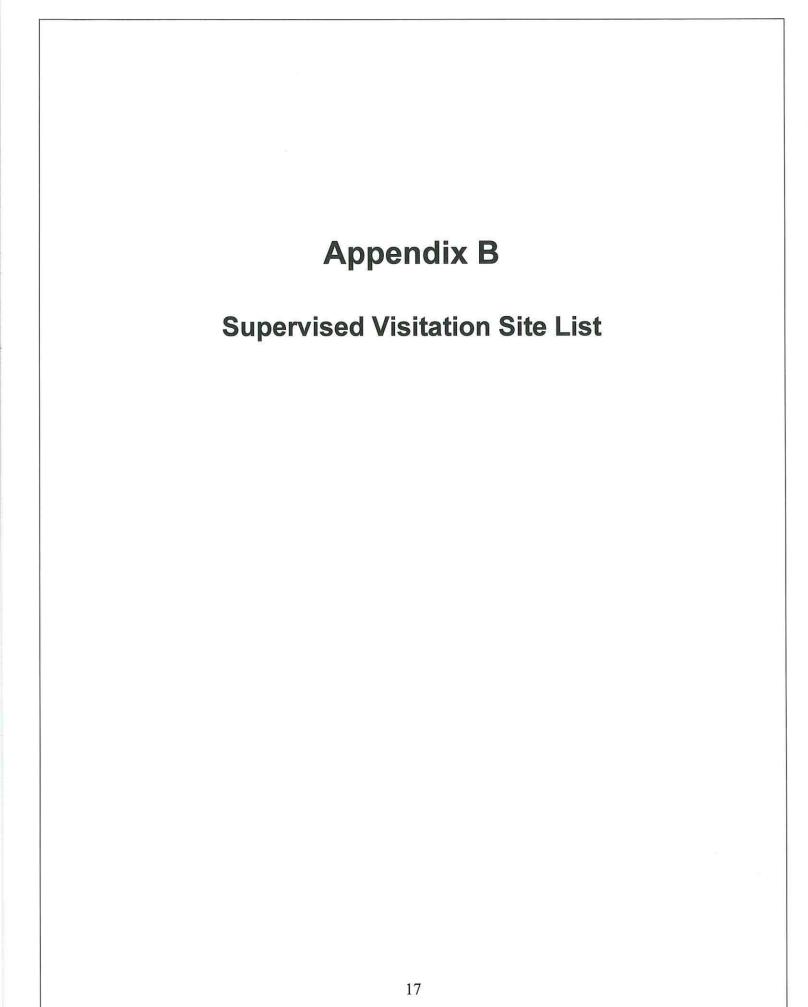
# TABLE SEVEN SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020

# **CHILD SUPPORT CASES**

This chart reflects the number of parties in the Program that voluntarily identified as receiving or paying a child support.

County*	Non-	Custodial	Non-	Custodial	Grandparent/
-	Custodial	Parent	Custodial	Parent	Legal
	Parent	Father	Parent	Mother	Guardian
	Father		Mother		
Atlantic	10	3	4	10	1
Burlington	0	0	0	0	0
Camden	5	4	6	5	2
Cape May	6	2	0	2	2
Cumberland	13	2	6	10	5
Essex	16	2	6	16	0
Gloucester	7	2	2	7	0
Hudson	8	1	3	6	0
Hunterdon	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	9	4	8	7	4
Middlesex	2	1	1	2	0
Monmouth	0	0	0	0	0
Morris	3	2	2	3	0
Ocean	0	0	0	0	0
Passaic	3	6	3	5	1
Salem	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0
Union	4	0	3	0	1
Warren	0	0	0	0	0
Total	86	29	44	73	16

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Bergen County does not participate in the Program.



#### Atlantic:

# A Chance for a Real Change

1040 Neumark Avenue Pleasantville, NJ 08232 (609) 727-9335 Patricia Miles-Jackson, Director

# The Alcove Center for Grieving Children and Families

376 Tilton Road Rear Northfield, NJ 08225 (609) 727-9335 Mindy Shemtov, Executive Director

#### Bergen:

# **Division of Family Guidance**

One Bergen County Plaza, Second Floor Hackensack, NJ 07601 (201) 336-7398

# **Burlington:**

# **Burlington County Superior Court (Wednesday evening)**

49 Rancocas Road Mount Holly, NJ 08060 (609) 288-9500 x38446 Andrea Kearney, Program Coordinator

# Catholic Charities (Tuesday/Wednesday evenings; Saturday morning)

115 West Pearl Street Burlington NJ 08016 (609) 394-5157 Amilia Gallagher, Supervising Monitor

# The Fatherhood Connection (Tuesday evening)

Willingboro, NJ 08046 (609) 877-1076 Tashon Jackson, Director

#### Camden:

#### The Center for Family Services

584 Benson Street Camden NJ 08103 (609) 463-6645 Doris Vidal, Program Coordinator

# Cape May:

Families Matter, LLC 899 Bayshore Road Villas, NJ 08251 (609) 886-8666 Patricia Campbell, Director

#### Cumberland:

# **Cumberland County Courthouse**

PO Box 866 Bridgeton, NJ 08302 (856) 453-4553 Stephanie Shaffer, Program Coordinator

#### **Robin's Nest**

42 South Delsea Drive Glassboro, NJ 08028 (856) 881-8689 ext. 190

# **Essex County:**

# **Essex County Veterans Courthouse**

50 West Market Street Newark, NJ 07102 (973) 776-9300 x55521 Gloria Brown, Program Coordinator

#### Gloucester:

# Gloucester County Courthouse (Wednesday evenings and during court hours)

70 Hunter Street Woodbury, NJ 08096 (856) 878-5050 x15548 Chastity Robinson, Program Coordinator

#### **Hudson:**

# Superior Court of New Jersey, Family Division

595 Newark Avenue Room 218 Jersey City, NJ 07306 (201) 748-4400 x60572 Rosanne Lomolino, Program Coordinator

# **Hunterdon County:**

# **Hunterdon County Family Division**

65 Park Avenue Flemington, NJ 08822 (908) 332-7700 x13486 Christine Reilly, Program Coordinator

# **Mercer County:**

# El Centro (Catholic Charities)

327 S. Broad Street Trenton NJ 08608 (609) 954-7487 Robert Hernandez, Director

# **Mercer County Courthouse**

209 South Broad Street Trenton, NJ 08690 (609) 571—4200 x74384 Paula Andrews, Program Coordinator

# **Middlesex County:**

# Middlesex County Family Court Building

120 New Street New Brunswick, NJ 08903 (732) 645-4300 x88609 Kathy Fread, Program Coordinator

# **Monmouth County:**

# **Monmouth County Superior Court**

PO Box 1252 71 Monument Park Freehold, NJ 07728 (732) 358-8700 x87198 Jeanette Santos, Program Coordinator

# **Morris County:**

Center for Evaluation and Counseling 1719 Route 10 East Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 829-6960

# **Ocean County:**

Ocean County Justice Complex
PO Box 2191
120 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08754-2191
(732) 504-0700 x64503
Terri Machamer, Program Coordinator

#### Preferred Children's Services

1200 River Avenue PO Box 2036 Lakewood, NJ 08701 (732) 905-5106 ext. 101 Stacy M. Welch, Program Director

# **Saint Francis Counseling Center**

4700 Long Beach Boulevard Brant Beach, NJ 08701 (609) 494-8861 ext. 182 Lori Tomaro, Program Director

# **Passaic County:**

#### **Paterson YMCA**

128 Ward Street Paterson, NJ 07505 (973) 247-8858 Blanca Bravo, Program Coordinator

#### Salem:

#### **Family Intake**

PO Box 233 Salem, NJ 08079 (856) 878-5050 x15881 Angela Thomas, Program Coordinator

# **Somerset County:**

#### **Catholic Charities**

540 Route 22 East Bridgewater, NJ 08807 (908) 722-1881 Esther lannetta, Program Coordinator

# **Sussex County:**

# First Baptist Church (NJCCR), (Neutral Exchange Only)

4 East Main Street Sussex, NJ 07461 (973) 875-9451

# Center for Evaluation and Counseling

1719 Route 10 East Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 829-6960

# **Union County:**

# **Union County Superior Court**

Superior Court, Family Division Union County Courthouse New Annex Building Elizabeth, NJ 07207 (908) 787-1650 x21314 Nancy Yurek, Program Coordinator

# Warren:

#### **Catholic Charities**

Phillipsburg Family Service Center 700 Sayre Ave. Phillipsburg, NJ 08865 (908) 454-2074 Susan Reimer, Supervisor