




2024
Annual Report



**OCEAN COUNTY
OFFICE OF SENIOR SERVICES**

Maria LaFace, Director
Robert S. Arace, Commissioner Liaison



2024 *Priorities & Mission*

Mission

Here at Senior Services we are committed to providing older adults with information on services and programs that promote their health and well-being and support their independence so that they can age well in Ocean County.

Priorities

964 polled respondents:

Top Choices to Maintain an Independent Life:

Access to Healthcare 491

Financial Security 447

Affordable Services 406

Top Concerns that Impact the Ability to Maintain an Independent Life:

Chronic Health Issues 403

Isolation and Loneliness 289

Not Having Enough Money for Basic Needs 266

Top Services Viewed as a Priority to Maintain an Independent Life:

Transportation 568

Home Delivered Meals 430

Information & Assistance 390

Personal and In-Home Care Services 373

Financial Assistance 358

Thank you to our 2024 Provider Network!





Maria LaFace

Executive Director



The Office of Senior Services was established by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders in 1973 to serve as the county Area Agency on Aging. (AAA). Since its inception, the AAA has been responsible for planning, administering and monitoring a comprehensive and coordinated system of home and community-based services using federal funds under the Older Americans Act. Working with non-profits, social service agencies, and local and state government, the AAA has cultivated partnerships and developed programs to provide essential services to the nearly 200,000 older adults who call Ocean County home. In 2012, Ocean County joined the state in its ADRC initiative to implement “No Wrong Door” creating a single point of entry for older adults and adults with disabilities to access information on home and community-based services.

The AAA conducts a comprehensive needs assessment of older adults through oral testimony provided at our annual public hearing, on-line and paper surveys as well as input from community stakeholders. The most recent needs assessment was conducted in May 2024 and will inform the planning process for our 2025 – 2027 Area Plan Contract along with the priorities set by the State Unit on Aging. The results clearly demonstrate that a significant portion of older adults in Ocean County are struggling with transportation, financial security, food and housing instability as well as affordable home & personal care assistance.

2024 Department Highlights

Medicare

The Office of Senior Services administers the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Through the SHIP program, our certified counselors provide local, unbiased Medicare counseling and enrollment assistance to eligible beneficiaries in Ocean County. This program provides one-on-one counseling as well as education and outreach events to assist residents navigate the Medicare system as well as help them understand and compare plan options. The Office of Senior Services had a busy year with over 6,895 contacts.

Evidence based programs

The AAA has expanded our offerings to include two new evidence-based programs designed to support healthy aging and empower older adults. The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) is now available for individuals aged 60 and older, focusing on helping participants make informed choices to enhance their wellness, quality of life, and physical health. This program covers essential topics such as discovering personal strengths, developing a wellness toolbox for healthier and happier aging, fostering hope, strengthening social networks, and taking charge of one's wellness. Additionally, we have introduced the Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE) program, which aims to educate older adults about the facts and myths of aging. WISE provides participants with greater insight into their own feelings about aging and heightens awareness of the advantages that come with growing older. Both programs are evidence-based, ensuring that participants receive effective, scientifically-supported interventions to support their well-being and promote successful aging.

Mobile Unit Ribbon Cutting

The AAA has taken several steps to implement “No Wrong Door” and to increase outreach to our senior population. The AAA increased its footprint in the county and now has 3 separate office locations including our main office in Toms River, the county seat, a satellite office at the County Connection conveniently located in the Ocean County Mall and our newest location in the Ocean County Southern Service Center in Manahawkin. Our Manahawkin site allows us to better serve the growing senior population in the southern part of the county. We are also pleased to announce the official kick off of our mobile unit, a fully functioning office, that will allow us to bring information and assistance directly to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Caregiving

The AAA/ADRC has a highly experienced JACC Care Coordinator who is also a registered nurse, and the Project Director assigned to administer and oversee our Caregiver Information & Assistance services. Under Care Coordination, the JACC application and eligibility process is managed closely to relieve as much caregiver burden as possible by assigning dedicated staff, providing home visits, assisting with documentation, completing thorough Screens for Community Services and advocating for applicants and participants when necessary. For the year 2024, 232 Screens for Community Services (SCS) have been processed for JACC and Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS). Our Care Coordinator has extensive prior Care Management experience and conducts presentations throughout the year sharing her firsthand knowledge with providers, stakeholders, and residents. Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey (CVCJ) provide caregiver relief, and respite. They have an Alzheimer’s Respite Care Program that eases the burden and enhances the quality of life for the primary family caregiver of a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or any type of dementia. Self-help groups offered through our provider network include caregiver support groups, Care2Caregivers for dementia caregivers, bereavement support groups, grandparent supports and mental health counseling.

2024 Numbers to Highlight

**Facebook:
1.5K Followers**

**Newsletter:
2,037 Subscribers**

**Outreach
Events**

51

**SHIP Contacts:
6,895**

**SHIP Counselors:
44**

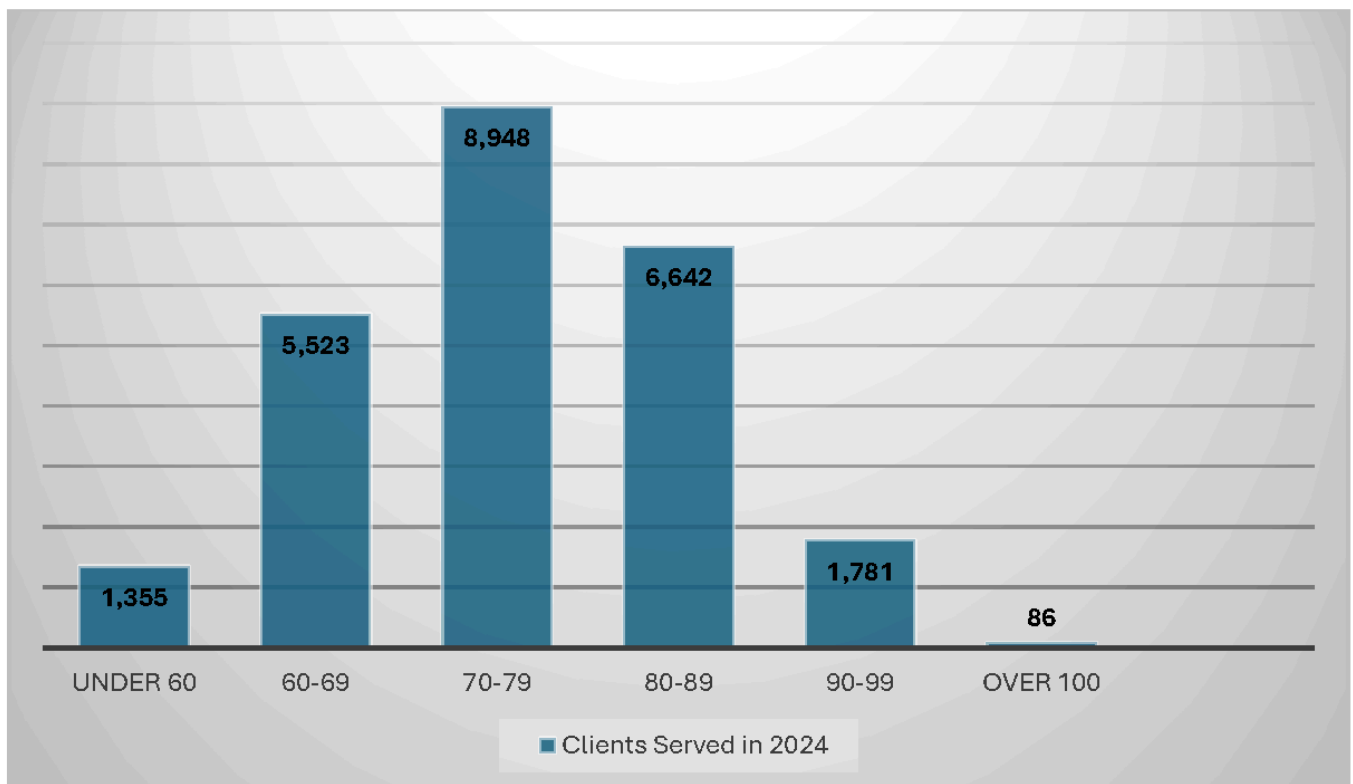
**Congregate
Meals**

21,627

Total Clients Served	41,215
Number of Providers	28
Number of Programs	56

Meals on Wheels- Home Delivered Meals	218,445
State Weekend Home Delivered Meals	23,806

Kosher- Home Delivered Meals	39,153
Kosher- State Weekend Home Delivered Meals	16,273



Taxonomy	Consumers	Units
Adult Day-Social	92	13,090
Adult Protective Services	1,086	7,453
APC Options Counseling	287	490
Assisted Transportation	1,434	29,045
Assistive Technology	603	631
Care Management	122	2,521
Congregate Nutrition	758	21,627
Education	49	208
Emergency	582	3,774
Friendly Visiting	461	8,263
Home Delivered Nutrition	1,890	257,598
Housekeeping	65	434
Housing Assistance	12	58
Information and Assistance	11,554	27,771
Information and Assistance- Non Contracted	6,940	15,520
Legal Assistance	127	1,645
Mental Health	244	2,775
NFCSP Assistive Technology	485	1,849
NFCSP Caregiver Mental Health Counseling	230	1,535
NFCSP Group Education	72	504
NFCSP Information and Assistance	1,492	3,484
NFCSP Physical Health	4	4
NFCSP Professional In-Home Education and Support	2	7
NFCSP Residential Maintenance	110	363
NFCSP Respite Care	81	6,148
NFCSP Support Group	153	1,308
NFCSP Trained Volunteer Assistance	11	152
Nutrition Counseling	62	77
Nutrition Counseling- Home Delivered	73	110
Nutrition Education	2,697	54
Nutrition Education- Home Delivered	12,869	16
Outreach	952	1,139
Physical Activity	1,803	52,830
Physical Health	1	1
Residential Maintenance	648	4,409
Socialization/Recreation	2,704	41,159
State Weekend Home Delivered Meals	557	40,079
Telephone Reassurance	48	2,114
Transportation	236	4,099
Total	41,215	554,448



The Ocean County Office of Senior Services

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Ocean County Board of Commissioners

John P. Kelly, Director

Frank Sadeghi, Deputy Director

Robert S. Arace, Liaison

Jennifer Bacchione

Virginia E. Haines

Additional Locations:

Ocean County Southern Service Center

County Connection at Ocean County Mall

Mobile Unit

Ocean County Senior Advisory Council

