

# NJAC COUNTY BIZ

An Educational and Informative Newsletter for Counties and Businesses

New Jersey Association of Counties

ISSUE 169 - DECEMBER 2025

## Why Government Customer Service IS So Complicated-And How To Fix It

by Kimberly Bui, Demand Gen Specialist, Polimorphic

When most people think about government, they don't think *customer service*. Yet every city, county, and state agency exists to serve residents. Whether it's answering questions about trash pickup or processing complex public records requests, government touches people's lives daily—and it's rarely simple.

As Parth Shah, CEO of Polimorphic, explained on the [PIO Podcast](#):

“Government might be the most complicated customer service organization in the world.”

### Why It's So Complicated

Even small municipalities effectively run multiple “businesses” at once: utilities, public works, planning and zoning, public safety, and more. Unlike a private company focused on a single service, government must manage entirely different operations under one roof. The only consistent thread is customer service.

Parth shared that after studying front-desk operations, he found that **half of staff time** goes to repeat questions—often from residents who simply can't find information online. Another **25%** is spent on status updates: *Where is my request?* That leaves little bandwidth for the high-value work staff are actually trained to do.

As he put it:

“Most time is being spent on laundry and dishes—the laundry and dishes of customer service.”

### The Impact on Residents

This complexity directly affects the public. Outdated websites, missing forms, and backlogged inboxes lead to frustration and erode trust. Staff—already stretched thin—end up juggling phone calls, emails, and walk-ins without modern tools to help them keep up.

And resident expectations have changed. People want the same transparency and convenience from their government that they get from Amazon or Domino's: 24/7 access, real-time updates, and the ability to communicate in their preferred language. Meeting those expectations with shrinking staff and legacy processes is incredibly difficult.

### How to Fix It

The good news: solutions exist. Polimorphic partners with agencies nationwide to streamline communication and automate repetitive tasks. Our AI-powered tools:

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## Why Government Customer Service Is So Complicated-And How To Fix It (continued)

- Answer resident questions across [chat](#), [voice](#), SMS, and email—using only official, controlled content.
- Support 75+ languages so every community can access information equitably.
- Automate [workflows](#) for FOIA/public records requests, preventing missed deadlines and lost emails.
- Provide [staff with analytics and audit trails](#) to identify bottlenecks and continuously improve.

By offloading the “laundry and dishes” of government customer service, staff can focus on what matters most: solving problems, improving transparency, and strengthening community trust.

### Don't Be Last

Shah leaves agencies with one final piece of advice:

“Now is the time to be second—don’t be last.”

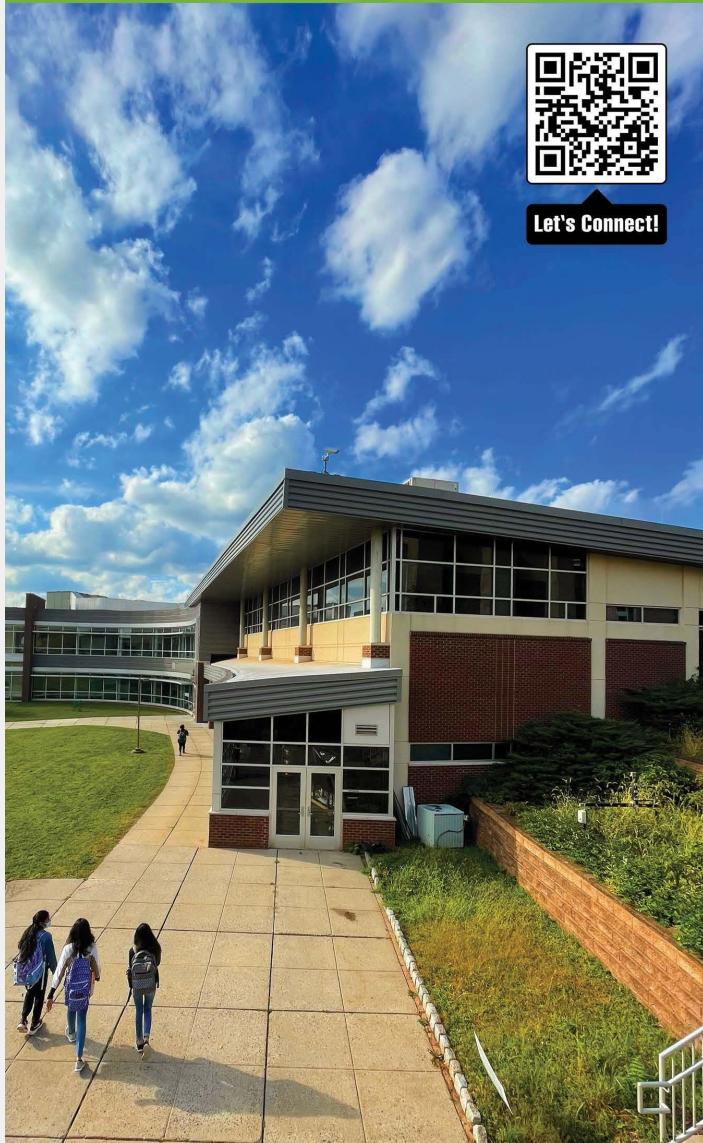
More than **30 million Americans** are already served by governments using AI tools like Polimorphic. The shift is underway. The question is no longer *whether* AI will play a role in government operations—but *how quickly* agencies will adapt.

Ready to learn more? [Request a demo of Polimorphic's AI for the public sector.](#)

The logo for Polimorphic features the word "polimorphic" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter "p" is lowercase, while the rest of the letters are uppercase. There are two horizontal lines above the letters: a blue line above the first four letters and a red line below the last four letters.

# HOME TO OPPORTUNITY

AND A SPECIAL OFFER FOR HUNTERDON COUNTY EMPLOYEES



Let's Connect!

**Hunterdon County** is more than just 437 square miles in central New Jersey – it's where you **live, work, and thrive**.

Hunterdon County is also a critical partner of **Raritan Valley Community College**, which has been serving the diverse needs of students since 1968.

To celebrate the contributions of employees of Hunterdon County and the County's 26 municipalities, RVCC is offering a special discount:

**25% off  
tuition and general  
services fee**

for all academic credit programs.

This is our way of saying **thank you** for being great partners and neighbors. It's also an opportunity for you to pursue a wide range of interests and pathways to advance your career or explore your interests.

Registration for Spring semester **is now open** and you must register by **January 7** to qualify for discount.

**Hunterdon County and RVCC – home to opportunity. Make the most of it today.**

• Offer subject to change

To learn more or to set up a discussion to explore the opportunities at RVCC, please contact:

- Ed Holloway, Adult Outreach Admissions Coach  
[Hunterdon\\_adults@raritanval.edu](mailto:Hunterdon_adults@raritanval.edu)

**RARITAN  
VALLEY**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# NJSTART: Empowering Local Governments Through Cooperative Purchasing

by Tania Dinis, Marketing Communications Manager, SOVRA

New Jersey's local governments are constantly striving to stretch their budgets while delivering high-quality services to their communities. One of the most effective ways to achieve these goals is through **NJSTART**, the State of New Jersey's eProcurement platform. NJSTART enables local buying units (LBUs) — including counties, municipalities, school districts, and other eligible entities — to save time by leveraging the State's collective purchasing power.

## Harnessing the Power of Statewide Contracts

Through NJSTART, local governments gain access to hundreds of competitively bid State contracts that deliver exceptional value. These contracts are established either through the State's formal bidding process or through partnerships with trusted national cooperative purchasing organizations. The result is a robust portfolio of suppliers offering **favorable pricing, advantageous terms, and high-quality goods and services**.

Local buying units that utilize these contracts could realize tangible financial benefits that can be redirected to other critical priorities such as infrastructure, public safety, or community programs.

## Streamlined and Compliant Procurement

NJSTART is designed to simplify procurement while ensuring compliance with State law. The system enables local entities to purchase from State contracts confidently, knowing that all contracts meet the State's stringent competitive procurement standards. This not only reduces administrative burden but also helps mitigate risk and ensures transparency throughout the purchasing process.

In addition, NJSTART facilitates collaboration between local governments and suppliers by centralizing contract information and communication. This streamlining of processes helps shorten procurement timelines, enhances efficiency, and reduces paperwork.

## A Wide Range of Goods and Services

Currently, **more than 800 State contracts** are available for cooperative purchasing through NJSTART. These contracts span a vast array of categories, including:

- **Technology:** Hardware, software, networking, and IT consulting services that help local governments modernize operations.
- **Public Safety:** Vehicles, emergency response equipment, and safety gear that support first responders.
- **Facilities, Buildings, and Grounds:** Maintenance supplies, equipment, and materials that keep public facilities operating efficiently.

This comprehensive catalog gives local governments the flexibility to procure nearly everything they need to serve their residents — from office supplies to complex infrastructure solutions — all through a single, trusted platform.

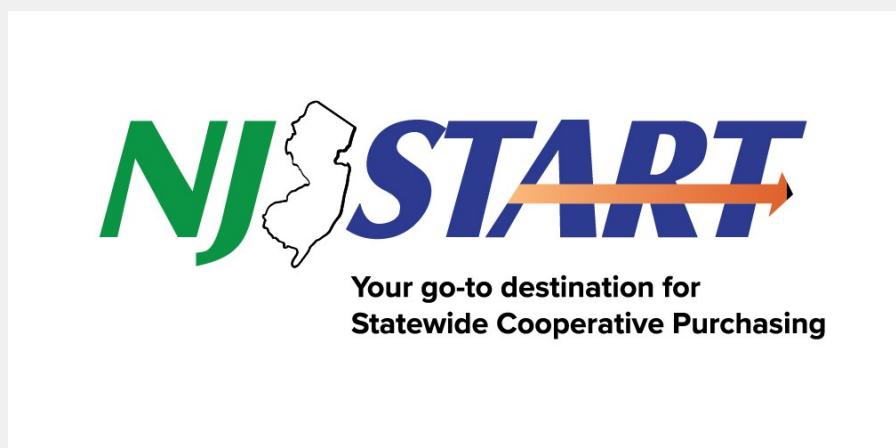
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# NJSTART: Empowering Local Governments Through Cooperative Purchasing *(continued)*

## A Strategic Resource for Local Governments

NJSTART is more than a procurement system; it's a strategic resource for local governments. By participating in cooperative purchasing through NJSTART, local entities gain access to suppliers and State-awarded contracts with standards set by the state.

For additional information or support with NJSTART, contact the **NJSTART Co-Op Team** at coop-njstart@mdfcommerce.com or visit <https://njstart.info>.



## SAVE THE DATES

**NJAC Year-End Summit**  
**December 19, 2025**

**NJAC Conference Committee**  
**January 16, 2026**

**NJAC Reorganization Meeting**  
**January 23, 2026**

**NJAC Conference**  
**May 6-8, 2026**

## Section 125 Plan - Who We Are And Who We Help

by Donna Moore, Debt Ambassador, My Debt Management

Simple, Affordable and High-Quality Health and Wellness Programs for employees and employers by providing coverage that prioritizes affordability and access to high-quality care.

Our Mission for the program is twofold: firstly, we harness section 125 tax advantages to offer significant savings, and secondly, we are on a mission to provide businesses with comprehensive healthcare fundamental benefits at zero net cost -eliminating copays and deductibles. Our approach ensures that businesses and their employees gain access to essential healthcare opportunities and benefits without additional financial burden. All while not replacing our primary health coverage or disrupting your current relationships.

Who do we work with today (household names): Denny's, WingHouse, Rosati's, Courtyard by Marriott, Little Caesars, Hyatt Place, Holiday Inn, Save A Lot, and so many more in so many industries.

### The Managed Health Solution

#### Plan Benefits:

- Primary care, specialty, and urgent care visits
- 24/7 virtual direct primary care
- 3,000 prescriptions
- 100% preventative care

#### Accessibility:

- Available to all full-time and part-time employees
- Available to all insured or uninsured workers
- Available in multiple languages

#### Plan Cost:

- \$0 net cost & \$0 co-pay
- Company savings of \$500 per employee per year
- Potential cost containment savings of \$700 per employee per

*continued on page 7*

## Section 125 Plan - Who We Are And Who We Help *(continued)*

Engagement:

- Over 90% employee enrollment
- Over 98% employee engagement
- Over 90% employee retention

Want to learn more, click and book a free call with our team: <http://125managedhealth.com/donnam>



### SHARE THE NEWS!

*Let us know what educational or informational articles you would like published in the NJAC COUNTY BIZ*

**Contact Loren Wizman, Director of Business Development**  
**(609) 394-3467**  
**or**  
**loren@njac.org**

**NJAC SUMMIT ON HEALTH BENEFITS REFORM***December 19, 2025*

Trenton Country Club

201 Sullivan Way, Ewing, New Jersey

**NJAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

**REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

**OPENING REMARKS**

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

**HEALTH BENEFIT COST DRIVERS**

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

- Leading healthcare authorities will address the complex factors that have produced substantial increases in health benefit premiums for public sector employees including medical and prescription drug inflation, the high cost of health benefit plans and plan designs, excessive utilization rates, the lack of transparent medical data, and more. *Eric Scott with NJ 101.5 to moderate both panel discussions!*

**COFFEE BREAK**

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

**REDUCING HEALTH BENEFIT EXPENSES FOR EMPLOYEES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, & TAXPAYERS**

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- Management, labor, and private sector subject matter experts will examine potential solutions to reduce health benefit premiums that may consist of modernizing legacy plans, embracing reference-based pricing, increasing co-pays and deductibles, incentivizing population health efforts, utilizing custom provider networks, limiting out of network care, reconfiguring plan designs, and addressing the use of GLP1 drugs.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND LUNCHEON**

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

- The next Governor of the Garden State – Invited

*Please Click here for [Business Registration](#)**Please Click here for [Public Official Registration](#)*

# Study With The Leader In Online Education

Thomas Edison State University

## EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR NEW JERSEY PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

**LIVE WEBINAR**  
**Thursday, December 4, 2025**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**

**Registration: Click [HERE!](#)**

([bit.ly/publicsector1225](https://bit.ly/publicsector1225))

**This informative meeting will cover how to:**

- Fund your education
- Find time to finish your degree
- Receive college credit for prior course work and professional experiences

**Come with your questions—we will have a live Q&A!**

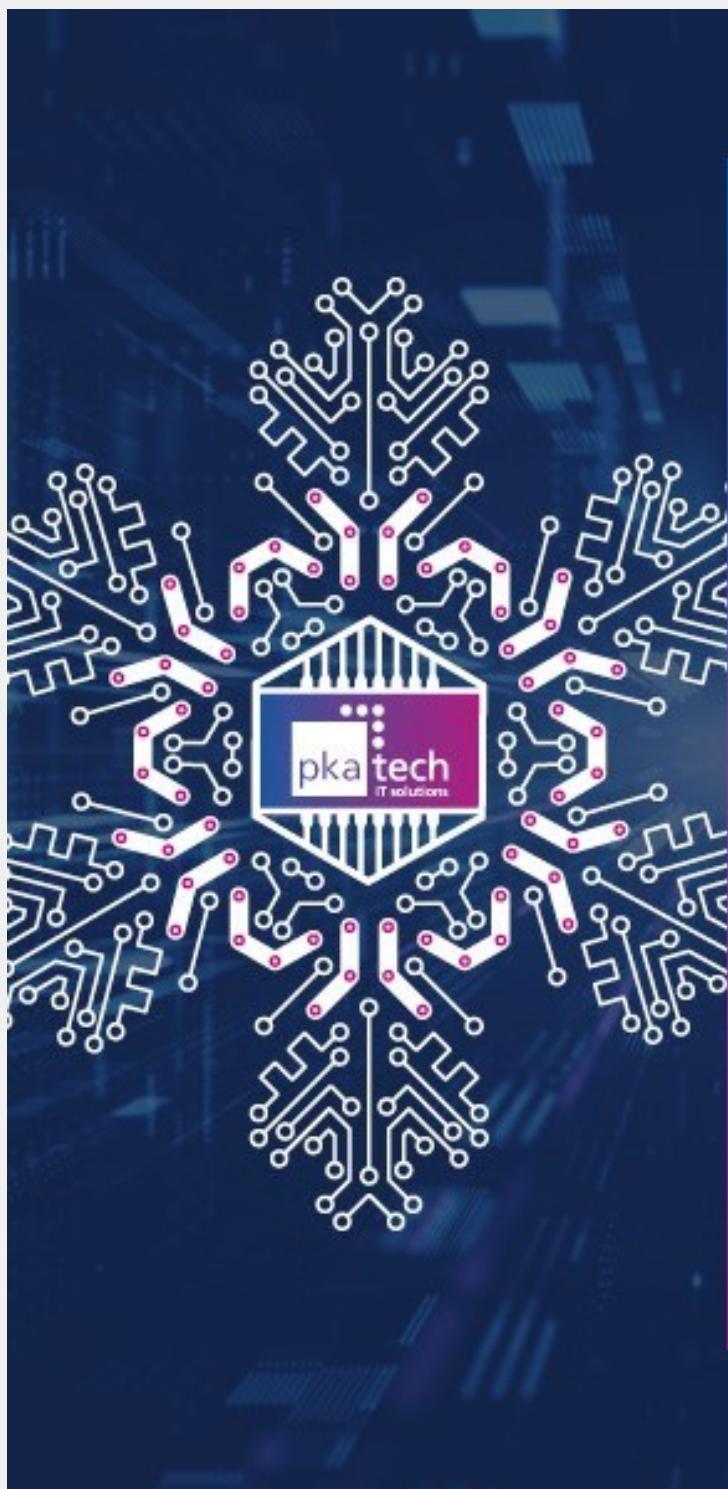
**Can't make the webinar?** Feel free to [schedule a 15 min. appointment](#) for more information!

## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Learn about the benefits of being a part of NJAC and how you can join.

Contact Loren Wizman, Business Development Director at  
(609) 394-3467 or [loren@njac.org](mailto:loren@njac.org)

[Click here for an application](#)



**2026  
POWERED BY  
PKA TECHNOLOGIES**

Thank you for being a part of our success this year. We wish you and your loved ones a New Year filled with joy, health, and prosperity.

Warm wishes,

**PKA TECHNOLOGIES**  
solutions@pkatech.com



# Atlantic City Electric Names Andrew Hendry as New Region President

*- Seasoned utility professional and lifelong New Jersey resident to lead stakeholder relations and customer-focused initiatives*

by Brian Ahrens, Sr. Communications Specialist, Atlantic City Electric



Andrew Hendry

Atlantic City Electric announced Andrew Hendry as its new vice president of Governmental and External Affairs and region president, succeeding Phil Vavala, who recently retired after 30 years with the Exelon family of companies.

Hendry brings extensive background with more than two decades of experience in the utility industry and state government. In his new role, Hendry will lead external affairs strategy development and execution, with a focus on strengthening relationships with stakeholders across Southern New Jersey, including elected officials and civic, community, and business leaders.

“Andrew’s deep industry knowledge, strong community ties, and leadership experience make him an excellent fit for this role,” said Jaclyn Cantler, senior vice president of Governmental, Regulatory and External Affairs for Pepco Holdings, which includes Atlantic City Electric. “Born and raised in the Garden State, Andrew holds a unique perspective that will be instrumental as we continue to strengthen our commitment to our customers and communities.”

Most recently, Hendry served as senior advisor of Regulatory Affairs for Jersey Central Power and Light, a FirstEnergy company, where he led regulatory strategy development and represented the company in front of the Board of Public Utilities and state government. Previously, he held the role of president and CEO of the New Jersey Utilities Association, advocating for the utility industry before the New Jersey Legislature and executive branch. His other experience includes serving as executive director of the New Jersey Senate Majority Office, and positions at the Office of Legislative Services, Assembly Majority Office and Comcast.

Hendry is also actively involved in his local community, serving as chairman of the board of trustees for the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome and on the board of directors for the New Jersey Utilities Association.

He holds a master’s degree in political science from the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University and a bachelor’s degree in political science from Rutgers College.

To learn more about Atlantic City Electric, visit [The Source](#), Atlantic City Electric’s online newsroom. Find additional information by visiting [atlanticcityelectric.com](http://atlanticcityelectric.com), on Facebook at [facebook.com/AtlanticCityElectric](https://facebook.com/AtlanticCityElectric), and on X, formerly known as Twitter, at [twitter.com/AcEleCconnect](https://twitter.com/AcEleCconnect). Atlantic City Electric’s mobile app is available at [atlanticcityelectric.com/MobileApp](http://atlanticcityelectric.com/MobileApp).

###

Atlantic City Electric is a unit of Exelon (Nasdaq: EXC), a Fortune 250 company and one of the nation’s largest utility companies, serving more than 10.7 million customers. Atlantic City Electric provides safe and reliable energy service to approximately 572,000 customers in southern New Jersey.



# Network Systems Health Check

by HPE Aruba Networking

Is your county's IT infrastructure running at peak performance? Are you confident in your network's security, reliability, and scalability?

The Network Systems Health Check is a vendor-agnostic, no-cost, 1-hour consultation led by an experienced Aruba Network Systems Engineer. This session is designed to help counties assess the current state of their IT environment—regardless of whether Aruba equipment is in use.

## What's Included:

- Review of network architecture and performance
- Evaluation of security posture and vulnerabilities
- Assessment of operational processes and workflows
- Identification of areas for optimization and modernization

## Why It Matters:

Many counties reach a point where their IT systems have grown complex, and visibility across the network becomes limited. Performance issues, security concerns, or aging infrastructure may arise—but pinpointing the root cause can be difficult without a comprehensive review.

This health check provides:

- A clear snapshot of your network's current state
- Actionable insights to guide future upgrades or changes
- Confidence in your infrastructure before major investments

## Schedule Your Health Check:

Whether you're planning a network refresh, expanding services, or simply want peace of mind, this assessment is a smart first step.

Contact:

Cynthia Xamonthiene

Inside Sales Territory Manager – State/Local Gov & Higher Ed

 (541) 360-6313

 [cynthia.x@hpe.com](mailto:cynthia.x@hpe.com)



457(b) retirement plans

## Our valued partnership helps provide retirement solutions for America's workers



The National Association of Counties (NACo) and Nationwide® are unified in our mission to help county leaders find better retirement solutions for their employees. Together we've achieved a lot:

More than  
**425,000**  
current participants

More than  
**\$24 billion**  
in assets

More than  
**40 years**  
of partnership

Nearly  
**3,000**  
participating  
counties and county  
jurisdictions

More than  
**1.5 million**  
employees and retirees  
served over the years



### For more information, contact:

Matt Ring, Program Director

609-500-0205; RINGM3@Nationwide.com

Nationwide Retirement Solutions and Nationwide Life Insurance Company (collectively "Nationwide") have endorsement relationships with the National Association of Counties (NACo). More information about the endorsement relationships can be found online at [nrsforu.com](http://nrsforu.com).

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## NACo Webinars

### From Secure Collaboration to AI insights: Streamlining GIS Analysis, Field Work and Records Management

Tuesday, December 2

2 p.m. - 3 p.m. ET

[Register](#)



Join county government leaders as they share practical, battle-tested ways they've transformed operations in the age of AI — from consolidating content and replacing legacy file systems to securing mission-critical election workflows.

**What you'll hear:** real use cases for content consolidation across field work and beyond

**Field-proven workflows:** how field workers trigger alerts to project teams, and keep project documentation current across large projects.

**Operational backbone & security:** how counties run standard operating procedure libraries, directive distribution, and secure election operations.

**Where AI fits:** panelists will touch on AI as an enabling topic-when useful and practical-without letting it overshadow operational priorities.

Walk away with actionable stories, implementation tips, and customer examples you can apply in your own county operations.

### Modern Networks, Smarter Budgets: A County Leader's Perspective

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET

[Register](#)

Join us for a fireside chat with Orleans County, NY, as they share how their team successfully transitioned from a traditional capital expense (CapEx) model to an operational expense (OpEx) model for network services.

When faced with rising maintenance costs and an expiring carrier contract, the county seized the opportunity to modernize its network and lock in predictable monthly costs. By bundling connectivity services with unified communications, they achieved immediate savings of over \$124,000, eliminated recurring charges such as long-distance fees and third-party integration costs, and gained access to operational upgrades like call analytics and auto-attendants.

This shift not only strengthened financial planning through fixed monthly expenses but also freed up IT staff to focus on strategic initiatives.

Key takeaway: Rethinking your budget model can be just as impactful as upgrading your technology — delivering fiscal stability and enhanced services for your community.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Don't forget to register for NJAC's "Year-End Summit on Health Benefits Reform" and the unique opportunity to hear from an outstanding lineup of healthcare leaders showcased below.

**HEALTH BENEFIT COST DRIVERS** Leading healthcare authorities will address the complex factors that have produced substantial increases in health benefit premiums for public sector employees including medical and prescription drug inflation, the high cost of health benefit plans and plan designs, excessive utilization rates, the lack of transparent medical data, and more. *Eric Scott with NJ 101.5 to moderate both panel discussions!*



John G. Donnadio, Esq.

- Cathy Bennett, President & CEO, New Jersey Hospital Association
- Deborah Cornavaca, Director of Government Relations, NJEA
- Wardell Sanders, President, New Jersey Association of Health Plans
- Andrea Spalla, Assistant State Treasurer, Department of Treasury

**REDUCING HEALTH BENEFIT EXPENSES FOR EMPLOYEES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, & TAXPAYERS** Management, labor, and private sector subject matter experts will examine potential solutions to reduce health benefit premiums that consist of modernizing legacy plans, embracing reference-based pricing, increasing co-pays and deductibles, incentivizing population health efforts, utilizing custom provider networks, limiting out of network care, reconfiguring plan designs, and addressing the use of GLP1 drugs.

- Joseph M. DiBella, Executive Partner, Connor Strong & Buckelew
- Brad Mhyre, Administrator, Hunterdon County
- Adam Liebtag, President, CWA Local 1036
- Douglas R. Forrester, Chairman, Partnership Health Centers.

This event is free for public officials, but you must register by visiting our website at <https://njac.org> as space is limited and going fast. We look forward to seeing you then.

## NJAC SUMMIT ON HEALTH BENEFITS REFORM

*December 19, 2025*

**Trenton Country Club - West Trenton, NJ**

# EVENTS & HOLIDAYS

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<b>Holiday Festival</b> <b>12/6</b> <b>4:00pm-7:00pm</b> Warren Twp. Municipal Complex  <i>Warren</i> <i>Warren County</i>	<b>F&amp;T Cheerleading Championships</b> <b>12/6</b> <b>9:00am</b> CURE Arena	<b>Christmas Tree &amp; Menorah Lighting</b> <b>5:30pm-7:00pm</b> HDSID	<b>Whitall House Candlelight Tours</b> <b>12/5-12/7</b> Red Bank Battlefield	<b>West Cape May Christmas Parade</b> <b>5:00pm-8:00pm</b> Begins @ Volunteer Fire House	<b>Deck the Dell Holiday Event</b> <b>5:00pm-7:00pm</b> Haddon Lake Park	<b>Holiday Parade &amp; Holiday Village Parade</b> <b>3pm</b> <b>Starts @ City Hall</b> <b>Holiday Village 5:00pm-8:00pm</b> Waterfront Promenade
<b>Cherish The Ladies Celtic Christmas Concert</b> <b>3:00pm</b> UCPAC Main Stage  <i>Rahway</i> <i>Union County</i>	<b>A Christmas Carol</b> <b>12/6 &amp; 12/7</b> <b>3:00pm-5:00pm</b> Music Mountain Theatre	<b>Home For The Holidays</b> <b>12/6</b> <b>12:00pm-4:00pm</b> Macculloch Hall Historical Museum	<b>Jackson Twp. HS Band 12th Annual Vendor &amp; Craft Fair</b> <b>12/6</b> <b>10:00am-3:00pm</b> Jackson Twp. High School Gym	<b>Holiday Made in Monmouth Expo</b> <b>12/13</b> <b>10:00am-4:00pm</b> Robert J. Collins Arena-Brookdale Community College	<b>The Nutcracker</b> <b>7:00pm</b> NJPAC	<b>Winter Wonderland Festival</b> <b>12:00pm-4:00pm</b> Skate Zone
 <b>14</b>	<b>Colonial Christmas</b> <b>12/13 &amp; 12/14</b> <b>10:00am-5:00pm</b> Dey Mansion	 <b>15</b>	 <b>16</b>	<b>RCSJ Band</b> <b>7:00pm</b> Cumberland Mall	<b>18</b> <b>Colonial Christmas</b> <b>12/12</b> <b>1:00pm-3:00pm</b> Elmer Grange	<b>19</b> <b>Sleigh Bell Swing</b> <b>12/20</b> <b>7:00pm</b> Nash Theatre
 <b>21</b>	 <b>22</b>	 <b>23</b>	 <b>11:00am-6:00pm</b> Van Saun County Park	 <b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	 <b>26</b>	 <b>27</b>
 <b>28</b>	 <b>29</b>	 <b>30</b>	<b>Salute to Vienna New Year's Concert</b> <b>5:00pm</b> State Theatre New Jersey	<b>31</b>		