



## NETWORK of Jewish Human Service Agencies

### Public Policy Priorities

The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA) is the membership association for 140+ non-profit organizations that provide a full range of human services for members of the Jewish community and beyond in the United States, Canada and Israel. The Network is the leading voice for Jewish human service organizations, the go-to resource for best practices, research, innovation, and partnerships. As NJHSA strengthens and supports member agencies that serve their communities through a wide range of human services, its public policy priorities reflect identified needs within these service areas including: employment and workforce, youth and family, healthcare, immigrant and refugee, disability, counseling and mental health, seniors and Holocaust survivors, and caregiver support.

\*The following priorities are listed in alphabetical order; not in order of stated priorities.

**Aging:** Empowering older adults, including those with disabilities, to age with dignity and an enhanced quality of life by:

- Supporting access to home- and community-based services such as affordable and accessible transportation, nutrition, affordable housing, supportive services, respite and family caregiver support through programs to promote aging in place;
- Providing older adults the opportunity to live in their own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level;
- Promoting funding research and services for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia; and
- Reducing barriers to senior employment.

**Children and Families:** Sustaining services by:

- Safeguarding and supporting resources and protections for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment, including particular at-risk populations such as children, people with disabilities and the aging population;
- Supporting programs that help families meet their basic needs;
- Maintaining policies and programs which support both domestic and international adoption; and
- Supporting and affirming full Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Questioning (LGBTQ+) inclusion and equality.

**Disability:** Advocating with and on behalf of people with disabilities across the lifespan by:

- Encouraging full inclusion and physical accessibility for all aspects of life and work;
- Supporting job training and inclusive employment for people with disabilities while allowing for choice;
- Promoting funding and policies for recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion, without loss of benefits;
- Advocating for affordable and accessible transportation, housing, supportive services, respite care for caregivers, and the right of all people with disabilities to live in and receive support in their own homes and communities; and
- Promoting educational equality for students with disabilities.

**Employment & Workforce:** Helping increase the diversity and number of individuals receiving education or training toward joining the workforce by:

- Supporting continued funding to help address adult education and workforce training;
- Supporting legislative policy to enhance employment opportunities for older workers, particularly Baby Boomers; and
- Advocating for funding for all levels of training for individuals to successfully enter and succeed in the job market.

**Healthcare:** Protecting long-term care, mental health and wellness initiatives, and the health safety net for all by:

- Accessing health information technology funding for behavioral health and long-term care;
- Promoting mental health services, including full mental health parity;
- Supporting member agencies in efforts to bring increased prevention and treatment options for those struggling with the impact of opioid, substance abuse, and other forms of addiction;
- Supporting incentives to transition those living in nursing homes and other institutions into less restrictive settings.
- Advancing preventative measures and promoting efforts that would reduce the number of insured; and
- Advocating for funding to support the programs for children's health insurance at all levels of government.

**Holocaust Survivor Assistance:** Easing the lives of survivors of the Holocaust by:

- Safeguarding the critical needs of at-risk Holocaust Survivors through funding, partnerships, supportive services, and enhancement of safety net services that promote the dignity, strength, and empowerment of Holocaust survivors; and
- Promoting policy to address the unique social welfare, health care, and emotional needs of Holocaust survivors.

**Housing:** Advocating for the expansion of affordable housing options for low-income and at-risk populations, including older adults, people with disabilities, refugees and other communities:

- Promoting social and economic services and assistance to low- and moderate-income tenants and homeowners, older adults, and persons with disabilities;
- Combatting homelessness across age groups, income levels, and sexual orientations while helping to establish economic independence; and
- Advocating for programs that include housing preservation and stabilization efforts, crime prevention initiatives, and commercial revitalization activities.

**Hunger & Food Assistance:** Ending food insecurity by:

- Supporting both kosher and non-kosher food banks, home-delivered meal programs and congregate nutrition sites;
- Protecting and strengthening supplemental nutrition assistance and child nutrition programs; and
- Promoting initiatives that support the needs of those who struggle with the daily challenges of food insecurity.

**Immigration Reform & Protecting Refugees:** Carrying out the tradition of "Welcoming the Stranger," affirming our Jewish values and honoring our history of welcoming immigrants and refugees by:

- Promoting comprehensive immigration reform and policies that support family unity in immigration reform and provide protection for undocumented immigrant youth brought as children;
- Advocating for the continuation of refugee resettlement programs;
- Supporting Jews and other religious minorities fleeing persecution; and
- Advocating for robust funding that supports the integration of refugees in their new communities.

**Institutional Support:** Supporting interests and goals of human service organizations by:

- Advocating for reduction of barriers in obtaining disaster assistance for individuals and organizations;
- Safeguarding charities from regulations that threaten to reduce charitable activity;
- Opposing restrictions on the advocacy rights of charities while preserving laws which prohibit charities' intervention on behalf of or in opposition to political candidates;
- Instituting safeguards that prevent houses of worship from proselytizing or using other prohibited forms of religious practice to deliver publicly-funded social services;
- Advocating for nonprofit access to public funding streams to build and support infrastructure; and
- Advocating for funding to improve the security of human service organizations.