

# Returning to Work After Brain Injury:

An Information and Resource Guide  
For New Jersey's One Stop Centers



The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, Inc.

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## A Information and Resource Guide For New Jersey's One Stop Centers

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
How the Brain Works .....	2
What is Brain Injury .....	3
Impact of Brain Injury on a Person’s Life .....	4
How Many People are Affected by Brain Injury .....	7
How Counselors can Assist People with Brain Injury .....	9
Accommodations for the Job Seeker	
Remembering .....	11
Focusing and paying attention .....	11
Initiation .....	12
Organizing and Planning .....	12
Decision Making .....	13
Social situations .....	13
Controlling emotions .....	14
Self awareness .....	15
The Job Interview Process .....	16
Accommodations on the Job .....	18
Resources .....	19
References .....	42

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## Introduction

**"A man's work is his dilemma: his job is his bondage, but it also gives him a fair share of his identity and keeps him from being a bystander in somebody else's world."**

**Melvin Maddocks**

If you ask people to describe themselves, often they will talk about their job or career. Work is a tremendously important aspect of how people define themselves. When work is taken away, people describe feeling like a piece of themselves has been taken away.

For people with brain injury, returning to work plays a critical role in recovery. Whether the brain injury is mild or more severe, many obstacles can prevent people with brain injury from successfully finding and keeping a job. Looking for job leads, keeping track of appointments, and going on interviews suddenly become overwhelming. On the job, performing routine tasks and interacting with co-workers may become a problem. Forgetting a meeting, giving a customer the wrong change, or not understanding a co-worker's joke may lead to losing the job.

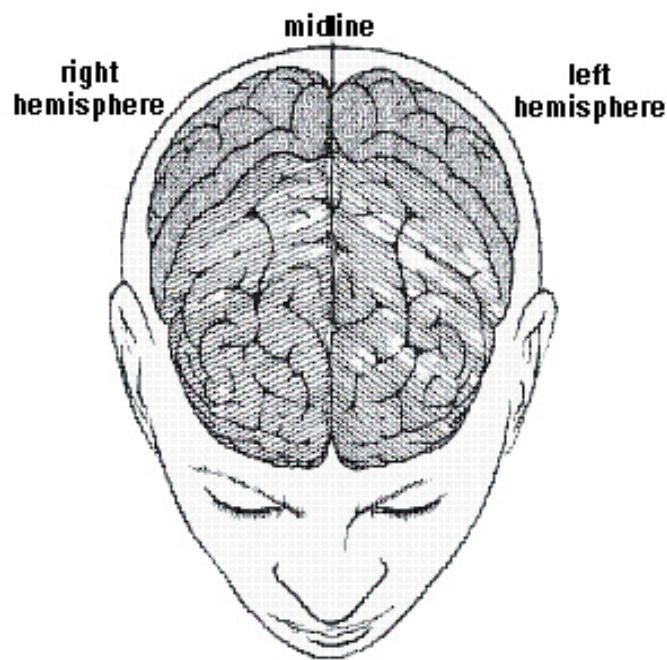
This manual is written for the One Stop Center staff in New Jersey to better understand brain injury and its impact on work. The manual provides an overview of brain injury and its consequences, as well as strategies and resources that may be beneficial to customers with brain injury. Hopefully with this information people with brain injury will have increased success in accessing and utilizing services and returning to work.

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## How Does the Brain Work?

The human brain controls the actions of the body and allows us to think, learn and remember. It is made up of billions of nerve cells that work together to control emotion, behavior, movement and sensation. To better understand what can happen to an individual when the brain is injured, it is helpful to know about the different parts of the brain and what they do.

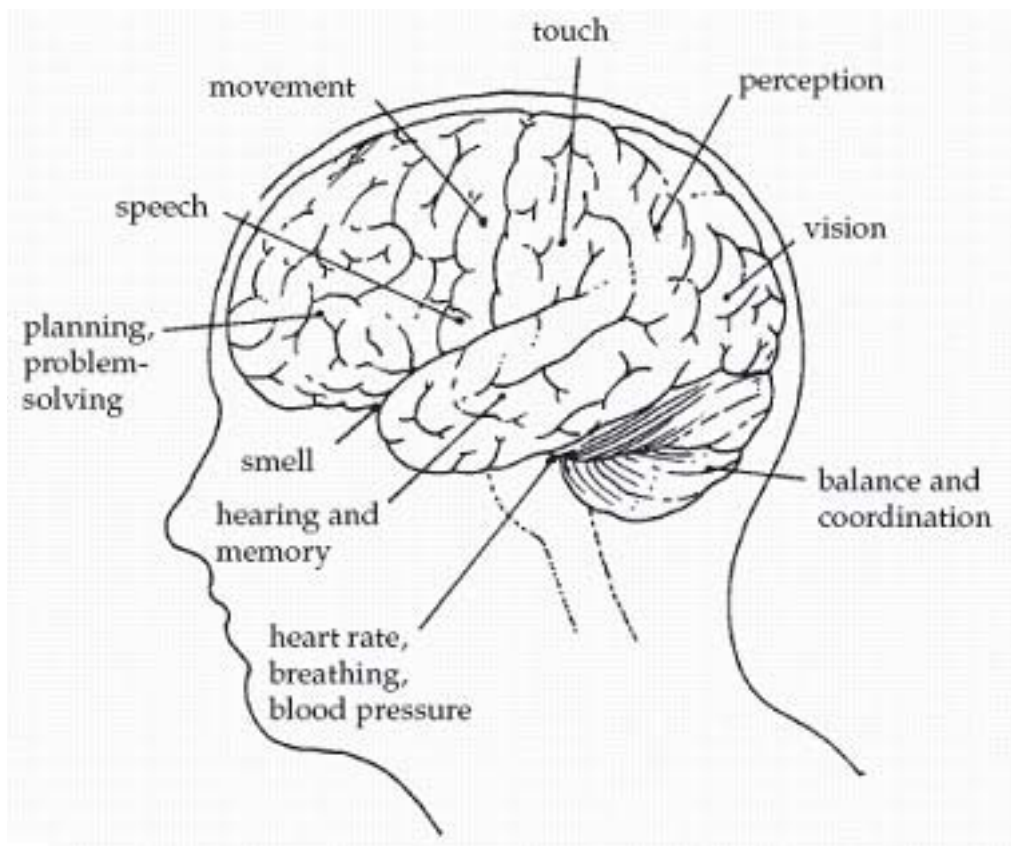
There are three main sections of the brain - the cerebral hemispheres, cerebellum and brain stem. The brain is divided into two halves. These halves are the left and right cerebral hemispheres.



Each part of the brain has special jobs to do. The right cerebral hemisphere controls the left side of the body and is responsible for speech, thought and memory. The left cerebral hemisphere controls the right side of the body and is responsible for creative thinking and expression of emotions. Specific parts

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of the brain control specific functions, like vision, balance and coordination, heart rate and breathing, smell, or hearing. Thus, what happens to a person when the brain is injured will differ depending on the part of the brain that was affected.



## What is Brain Injury?

Brain injuries that occur after birth are called acquired brain injuries. An acquired brain injury can be the result of a medical condition. Some of these conditions include stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, anoxia (lack of oxygen during surgery, drug overdose, or near drowning), metabolic disorders, meningitis, or brain tumors.

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Acquired brain injuries can also occur when an outside force strikes the head hard enough to cause the brain to move inside of the skull and damage the brain. This type of injury is called a traumatic brain injury, and can be caused by car crashes, falls, being hit on the head, or any physical violence.

Traumatic brain injuries are classified as mild, moderate, or severe, depending upon the amount of neurological damage caused to the brain at the time of injury.

Mild brain injury is also known as a “concussion”. A person may experience a brief loss of consciousness (usually a few seconds or minutes) or **NO** loss of consciousness.

Moderate brain injury occurs when there is a loss of consciousness lasting from a few minutes to a few hours, which is followed by a few days or weeks of confusion.

Severe brain injury occurs when an unconscious state or coma lasts days, weeks or months.

## **What is the Impact of Brain Injury on a Person’s Life?**



### Mild Brain Injury

Following a mild brain injury, a person may have a dazed, vacant stare and appear “out of it” for a few minutes. Immediately following a mild brain injury, headaches, dizziness, and slurred speech are common. A person may have difficulty answering simple questions and be disoriented. Over the next several hours, days, or weeks, these symptoms typically disappear and a person is able to return to normal functioning at home and at work.

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Sometimes, however, a person will continue to have symptoms long after a mild brain injury. These changes may be permanent and affect all aspects of a person's life. The symptoms can be grouped into problems with thinking, personality/behavior, and physical functioning:

**Thinking Changes**

- Memory problems
- Poor concentration
  - Distractibility
- Difficulty making simple decisions
- Problems with organization

**Personality and Behavior Changes**

- Lack of motivation
- Sad and/or depressed affect
  - Anxiety
  - Irritability

**Physical Changes**

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Balance problems
- Fatigue and/or weakness
- Sleep disturbance

Studies have shown that while most people will be able to return to work without difficulty following a mild brain injury, as many as one-third will experience considerable difficulty; resulting in reduced productivity, frequent job changes, and being reassigned to a position with lowered levels of

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responsibility. It is easy to understand why some people turn to the services of the One Stop Center for assistance in finding work following a mild brain injury.

### Moderate and Severe Brain Injury

A wide range of cognitive, physical, emotional and behavioral changes may occur following a moderate or severe brain injury. The effects of brain injury can be complex and impact all aspects of a person's life. Recovery is measured in weeks, months and years. The effects of brain injury are long lasting and recovery may be incomplete. It is important to remember that the effects of brain injury will vary greatly from person to person. Although some people with severe brain injuries experience only mild long-term difficulties, other people may require care or special services for the rest of their lives.

Returning to work following a moderate or severe brain injury is a particular challenge. A survey conducted by the National Association of Protection & Advocacy (2005) reported that obtaining vocational supports and employment was the top concern for people who experienced a traumatic brain injury. A referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) for ongoing vocational supports and services should always be considered for a person with a moderate or severe brain injury.



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## How Many People Are Affected by Brain Injury?



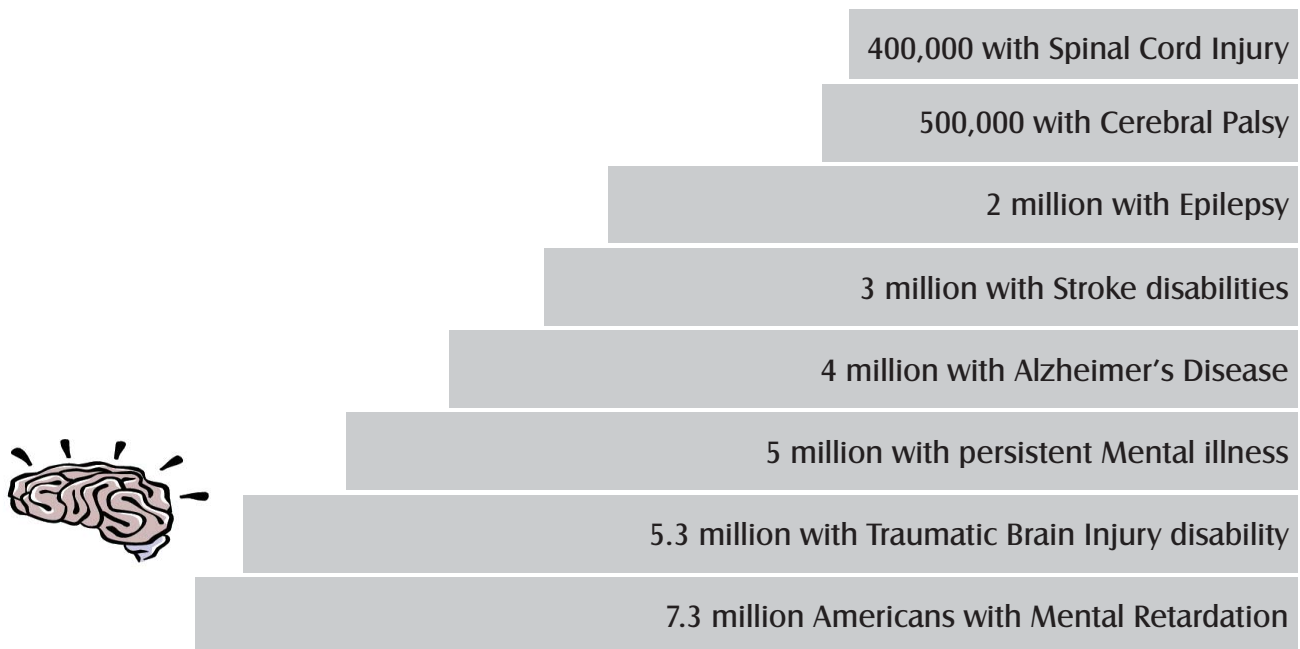
Brain injury is called the “silent epidemic” because of the staggering number of people injured each year. Of the 1.4 million people who sustain a traumatic brain injury in the United States each year:

- 50,000 die;
- 235,000 are hospitalized; and
- 1.1 million are treated and released from an emergency room.
- The number of people with TBI who are not seen in an emergency room or receive no care is unknown.

Acquired brain injury is the leading cause of disability in the United States. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that at least 5.3 million Americans currently have a disability as a result of a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and an additional 3 million are living with the effects of a stroke.

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## Injury and Disability Prevalence Rates



Additional interesting statistics about traumatic brain injury:

- The leading causes of traumatic brain injury in the US population as a whole are falls (28%), motor vehicle crashes (20%) and assaults (11%).
- In times of combat, TBI accounts for 14 – 20% of all survivable casualties. For active duty military personnel in war zones, the leading cause of TBI is blast injuries.
- Males are much more likely than females to sustain a TBI.
- The two age groups at highest risk for TBI are birth to 4 year olds and 15 to 19 year olds.
- Mild brain injuries account for 75% of all traumatic brain injuries.

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## How Can Employment Counselors Assist People with Brain Injuries?



When people enter a One Stop Center seeking employment, they bring with them a variety of expectations and goals based on their work and education history, vocational interests, financial situation, and personal and family concerns. They may be seeking help on their own or be referred by another agency that has an interest in their return to work.

For a person with a brain injury, coming to a One Stop Center for employment assistance may be a challenging experience. The consequences of the brain injury may have affected the person's ability to perform his job and he may have been dismissed because of problems on the job. In addition, the person may be concerned about his ability to work and may be uncomfortable disclosing information pertaining to his brain injury. In fact, the person may not clearly understand how the brain injury impacts the ability to work.

People with brain injury will have a range of challenges that can impact their ability to access the services at the One Stop Center. Each person needs to be treated as an individual with strengths and weaknesses that affect the ability to find employment. It is important for the employment counselor to capitalize on the person's strengths and assist with any weaknesses. A person may have one or many issues that relate to the ability to find and keep a job. Some areas of concern that may impact upon a person with brain injury's ability to find employment include:

### **Cognitive Issues:**

- Memory and learning
- Ability to process new information
- Focus and concentration
- Decision making ability
- Sensory overload
- Organizational skills
- Planning skills

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**Behavioral/Emotional Issues:**

Depression and/or anxiety  
Difficulty reading social cues  
Lack of self-awareness  
Impulse control  
Impatience  
Mood swings  
Inflexibility

**Physical and Perceptual Issues:**

Fatigue  
Weakness  
Headaches  
Difficulty with vision, hearing, or speech  
Balance  
Difficulty with motor or physical skills

Recognizing and accommodating for these concerns becomes the primary challenge of the employment counselor working with a person with a brain injury. Below are a number of strategies that may be useful. What works well with one person may not work with another. It is important to be flexible in your approaches to best assist your customer. If the needs of your customer are beyond the scope of the One Stop Center, a referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services may be the best way to provide more comprehensive return-to-work services.

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## Accommodations for the Job Seeker

### Issue: Difficulty remembering information



A customer may have difficulty remembering tasks from day to day or instructions about job seeking tasks. She may also have difficulty remembering new information, which impacts learning. She might forget job interview appointments or follow-up appointments with the One-Stop staff.

#### Strategies:

- Establish a structured routine of daily job seeking tasks.
- Provide written information whenever possible.
- Encourage the customer to write down information in a “job-seeking notebook”.
- Remind the customer to refer to the “job-seeking notebook” often.
- Encourage the use of a day planner or calendar for recording interview dates or appointments at the One Stop Center.
- Encourage the customer to have a family member or friend provide a reminder about appointments.
- Call the customer on the morning of a scheduled interview.

### Issue: Difficulty focusing and paying attention

A One Stop Center is a busy place with lots of distractions. It is easy for a customer with a brain injury to have difficulty paying attention in this kind of environment. The customer may appear uninterested, but in fact is having problems following conversations.

#### Strategies:

- Work in an area with limited distractions.
- Be aware of surrounding noises that may interfere with concentration, such as radios, other people talking, etc. Try to limit these noises as much as possible.

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- Ask the customer to repeat information that was just heard to make sure the conversation was understood.
  - Be sure to have the customer's attention before starting a conversation.
  - Refocus the customer's attention if he becomes distracted. (For example, "John, let me repeat that point again. It's important.")
  - Reschedule the session for another time; perhaps early in the day when the customer has more energy.
  - Ask the customer if there is some way you can help. For example, "John, you appear distracted. Is there something I can do to help?"

**Issue:                    Difficulty with initiation**

As a result of a brain injury, a customer may have difficulty beginning activities. It may appear that she is not interested or motivated, but instead she needs assistance to begin working on tasks.



**Strategies:**

- Establish a structured routine of daily job seeking tasks.
- Break down activities into simple steps. Encourage the customer to complete one task at a time before beginning the next.
- Make a checklist of activities that need to be completed each day.
- Instruct the customer to check off each task that is completed.
- Establish time frames in which each task should be completed.
- Provide reminders and encouragement.

**Issue:                    Difficulty with organization and planning**

In order to find employment, a customer must be able to successfully carry out a job search plan. This may be difficult for a person with a brain injury who has problems with organization and planning.

**Strategies:**

- Develop a written job search plan and include the customer in the development of the plan.

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- Break down the job search plan into simple steps, with clear and detailed instructions of how to complete each step.
  - Assign different activities for each day of the week. For example, on Sunday look in the want ads and circle job leads, on Monday make phone calls, on Tuesday send out resumes, etc.
  - Develop a checklist for the customer to use to ensure that each step of the plan gets accomplished.
  - Review the plan often to make sure that it is understood and that it is working.
  - Offer praise for a job well done.

**Issue:                    Difficulty with decision making**

Following a brain injury, a customer may have difficulty making decisions. Identifying which job leads to pursue, deciding what to wear for an interview, or answering interviewer's questions may be difficult. A customer may act impulsively and not think through the relevant options.

**Strategies:**

- Help the customer identify what the options are for solving a particular problem.
- Discuss with the customer the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- Have the customer write down (or assist him in writing) the possible options, along with the pros and cons to each.
- Encourage the customer to "stop and think" before making a decision.

**Issue:                    Difficulty in social situations**

Getting along with coworkers and bosses is as important to keeping a job as being able to perform the job tasks. After a brain injury, customers may not have a clear understanding of the impact their behavior has on others. They

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may have difficulty engaging in conversation and may not always be sensitive to social boundaries. This may be a roadblock to doing well in a job interview.

**Strategies:**

- Discuss with the customer the types of questions that can be expected on a job interview and figure out with the customer the best answers to these questions.
- Role-play the interview with the customer and give honest feedback. Rehearse until the customer appears comfortable answering a variety of questions.
- Provide clear expectations for appropriate behaviors at the One Stop Center. Provide positive feedback for expected behavior.
- Encourage the customer to consider the consequences of his/her actions.
- If undesired behavior occurs, discuss the issue privately, in a calm, reassuring manner. Review expected behaviors.

**Issue:                      Difficulty controlling emotions**



Looking for a new job is particularly stressful for a person with a brain injury. Not only does a person have to meet new people and learn new things, there is the stress of going on interviews and facing rejection. As a result of the brain injury, a person may have difficulty controlling emotions in these stressful situations.

**Strategies:**

- Expect the unexpected. Always be prepared to deal with a situation, even if it is at an inopportune time.
- Try to remain calm. By modeling calm behavior, it can help the customer modify his behavior and might prevent the situation from escalating.
- Take the person to a quiet, more private, area. Give him a few minutes to calm down and regain control.
- Redirect the customer to a different topic or activity.

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- Understand that the effects of brain injury may prevent the customer from feeling guilt or empathy.
  - Provide constructive feedback after a person has regained control.
  - Use humor in a positive, supportive way.

**Issue:                    Difficulty with self awareness**

A person with a brain injury may have difficulty developing an accurate understanding of her strengths and weaknesses, particularly those areas that have changed since the brain injury.

**Strategies:**

- Anticipate possibly skewed self-perceptions.
- Ask the customer to discuss her strengths and weaknesses with people who know her (family members and friends).
- If the customer lost her job after the brain injury, discuss with her the problems that led up to the dismissal. If the customer is unsure, ask the customer if she would be comfortable returning to the previous employer and discussing the issues. This might be done through e-mail correspondence or writing a letter to the employer.
- As the customer gains more insight into her strengths and weaknesses, discuss this information with the customer, and encourage her to present this information accurately.
- Provide positive feedback.

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## The Job Interview Process: Information Helpful to Job Applicants and Employers



Each person with a brain injury needs to decide whether to disclose the disability to an employer when applying for a job. This is a personal decision and one that needs to be thought through carefully. On the one hand, the person may feel that the chances for a job offer are reduced if there is talk about disability. On the other hand, the customer may need to have accommodations made, both during the interview process and on the job, which could enhance success in getting and keeping the job. If a person does choose to disclose his disability, the following information may be helpful to both job applicants and employers.

Title I (The Employment Provisions) of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) guarantees the rights of individuals with disabilities to seek and obtain employment. To “qualify” under the ADA as an individual with a disability, a person’s disability must substantially limit the ability to perform “one or more major life functions”. If requested by the job applicant with a disability, the employer must provide accommodations during the interview process in order to determine if the applicant has the necessary background for the position and can perform the job with or without accommodations.

The person with a brain injury may request accommodations when completing the job application. Some general accommodations may include:

- Allowing the applicant unlimited time to complete the job application.
- Allowing the applicant to take the job application home and complete it with assistance.
- Mailing the job application to the applicant.
- Offering the services of someone in the office to assist in completing the application.

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A successful information-gathering job interview should include, at a minimum, the following steps:

- Show the written job description to each applicant.
  - Discuss the physical and mental requirements of the position with each applicant.
  - Inquire of each applicant whether he or she can perform the requirements of the position.

The following are helpful strategies to use when scheduling and interviewing a person with a brain injury (if the applicant has requested accommodations). It is important to remember that everyone's needs are different. An applicant may benefit from one or more of these suggestions. Ask the applicant directly what would help during the interviewing process.

- Make sure the interview site is accessible to aid the applicant who may need physical accommodations.
- Follow-up spoken communications (e.g. phone calls) with a more permanent record (e.g. e-mail or letter) to assist an applicant who may have memory issues when providing information (e.g. directions, appointment times).
- Provide as much information in writing as possible during the interview.
- If the applicant has difficulty answering a question, change the format of the question or simplify it, to ensure better communication.
- If an applicant's speech pattern is unclear or difficult to understand, repeat a statement back to make sure that it was understood or ask the applicant to clarify/restate the answer.
- Ask if the applicant knows someone who could join the interview. This person can make the process more comfortable for the applicant, and can assist in presenting the applicant's skills and qualifications for the job.
- Minimize distractions in the room.
- When explaining job responsibilities, break down each job into steps, which may be easier to remember or sequence.

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- Encourage the applicant to take notes if desired.
  - Present ideas concretely rather than abstractly.
  - Move on to a new topic if the applicant appears frustrated and return to it later in the interview.

### **Accommodations on the Job**

Once a job applicant has been offered a job, he or she may request job accommodations. The ADA states that an employer must provide necessary and reasonable accommodations on the worksite, in training, and when considering job changes.

The employee with a brain injury may already know the type of accommodations that work best in the particular situation. What works well for one person with a brain injury may not be successful for another. The process of selecting an accommodation should be a dialogue between the employee and the employer. Rehabilitation professionals who specialize in working with individuals with brain injury can also be used as a resource in exploring accommodation needs. Accommodations can range from very low tech (at no or low cost) to more high tech (more expensive). Some potential examples of accommodations include:

- Memory assists: Memory logbooks, calendars, electronic/computer reminders, watches, timers, job checklists and cue cards.
- Energy conservation assists: Reduced workday or week, job sharing, scheduled break time, and scheduling demanding job tasks early in the day.
- Organization and planning assists: Calendars, established routines during the day, scheduled review of progress on job assignments, filing systems.
- Physical assists: Wheelchair-accessible facilities, ramps, raising table heights, enlarged keyboards or computer screens, electronic communication systems.

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## Using Available Resources



There are many resources available for people with brain injuries to get support and assistance in the community and on the job. The following pages include public and private programs and agencies that can be of assistance to people with brain injuries. The Family Helpline of the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey is always available to provide additional information and resources.

### Brain Injury Information & Resources

#### **Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, Inc.**

825 Georges Road, 2nd Floor

North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Telephone: 732-745-0200

Family Helpline: 800-669-4323 (Toll Free)

Fax: 732-745-0211

Website: [www.bianj.org](http://www.bianj.org)

The Association provides a number of services to assist the individual with a brain injury and his or her family. We encourage them to call the Family Helpline for:

- Information about brain injury
- Resources and services available close to home
- Brain injury support groups
- Family support programs

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**Brain Injury Association of America, Inc. (BIAA)**

8201 Greensboro Dr., Suite 611

McLean, VA 22102

Telephone: 800-444-6443 (Help Support Line)

Fax: 703-761-0755

Website: [www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org)

BIAA provides information about brain injury and resources throughout the United States. The website provides dozens of links to brain injury information sites.

Websites for Information on Brain Injury

Brain Injury Association of New Jersey

[www.bianj.org](http://www.bianj.org)

Brain Injury Association of America

[www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org)

Head Injury Hotline

[www.headinjury.com](http://www.headinjury.com)

National Resource Center for TBI

[www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu](http://www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu)

Centre for Neuro Skills

[www.neuroskills.com](http://www.neuroskills.com)

The Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems

[www.tbindc.org](http://www.tbindc.org)

Research & Training Center on Community  
Integration of Individuals with TBI

[www.mssm.edu/tbinet](http://www.mssm.edu/tbinet)

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## **Support Groups for Individuals with Brain Injuries and their Families**

Support groups allow individuals with brain injuries and their families to meet together on a regular basis to provide each other with support and information. The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey offers free professionally facilitated support groups that meet in most of the counties of New Jersey. The most current information on the meeting times, locations, and contact person for these groups can be found on the Association's website ([www.bianj.org](http://www.bianj.org)) or by calling 800-669-4323.

## **Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Brain Injury**

Rehabilitation programs provide a variety of services to assist individuals with brain injury to progress to their optimum level of recovery. Services may include physical, occupational, speech and recreation therapies; cognitive rehabilitation; residential programming; long-term supported living; vocational and employment services. Programs are listed in the county in which they are located, although they typically work with individuals from a wider geographic area. Contact the programs listed below for specific information.

### Atlantic County

#### **Betty Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation**

61 West Jim Leeds Road

Pomona, NJ 08240

Telephone: 609-652-7000

Provides inpatient and outpatient evaluations and rehabilitative therapies, driver's evaluation and training, neuropsychological services and case management.

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**PLUS-NJ**

**PLUS Galloway**

235 White Horse Pike

Egg Harbor City, NJ 08215

Telephone: 609-404-7877

Provides residential services (supervised, supported, independent living), day programming, community re-entry and community activities program.

Bergen County

**Cambridge Rehabilitation Services**

31 Sheridan Avenue Suite 1

Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423

Telephone: 201-251-8555

Provides outpatient therapies, case management, cognitive remediation, family and individual therapy and behavior management services.

Burlington County

**Aspen Post**

300 A Campus Drive

Mount Holly, NJ 08060

Telephone: 609-261-3434

Provides outpatient therapies (physical, occupational, speech) and home health services.

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## **Marlton Rehabilitation Hospital**

92 Brick Road

Marlton, NJ 08053

Telephone: 856-988-8778

Provides a comprehensive outpatient day hospital with acute and post-acute services for persons with neurological impairments. Also has a 46-bed JCAHO-accredited inpatient program. Services include day programming, physical, occupational and speech therapies, and comprehensive neuropsychological services.

## **Plus NeuroRehabilitation**

131 Cropwell Drive

Maple Shade, NJ 08052

Telephone: 856-608-0180

Provides community residential services and day program/outpatient services, including cognitive, physical, occupational and speech therapies.

## Camden County

## **Bancroft NeuroHealth**

Hopkins Lane, PO Box 20

Haddonfield, NJ 08033

Telephone: 856-429-5637

Provides physical, occupational and speech therapies, day programming, residential rehabilitation, long-term supported living, behavioral programming and crisis intervention, specialized vocational, recreational and employment services, 24-hour skilled nursing, pediatric and school-based services.

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### **Community Skills Program**

5000 Sagemore Drive, Suite 203

PO Box 687

Marlton, NJ 08053

Telephone: 856-596-5122

Provides community-based services, including cognitive rehabilitation, therapeutic recreation, vocational testing, training and job placement, individual and family counseling, instruction in independent living, case management and follow-up services.

### **Independence Rehab**

1030 N. Kings Hwy, Suite 210

Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Telephone: 856-321-1900

Provides community re-entry services, day programming; therapies, including physical, speech, occupational, vestibular and cognitive; driver training evaluation; and individual and group psychotherapy.

### **Magee-Moss Rehab at Voorhees**

443 Laurel Oak Road, Suite 200

Voorhees, NJ 08043

Telephone: 856-741-7400

Provides comprehensive care, including physical, occupational, speech and hand therapies. Other services include balance and stroke rehabilitation.

Cape May County

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Cumberland County

**Rehabilitation Hospital of South Jersey**

1237 West Sherman Ave.

Vineland, NJ 08360

Telephone: 856-697-7342

Provides specialized subacute services and outpatient rehabilitation services.

Essex County

**Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation – East Orange Facility**

240 Central Avenue

East Orange, NJ 07018

Telephone: 973-414-4700

Provides early recovery, special care and progressive care in inpatient rehabilitation, day programming, cognitive remediation program, as well as neuropsychiatry, spasticity management, driver evaluation and training, balance disorder assessment and treatment, natural setting behavioral management, neuro-ophthalmology and neuropsychological services.

**Opportunity Project**

60 East Willow St.

Millburn, NJ 07041

Telephone: 973-921-1000

Provides a clubhouse model with vocational, informational, long-term support and social/recreational programs.

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**Universal Institute**

15-17 Microlab Road

Livingston, NJ 07039

Telephone: 973-992-8181

Provides outpatient rehabilitation, day programming, residential services, individual and family counseling, educational counseling and community based services.

Gloucester County

**Bancroft NeuroHealth**

Mullica Hill Facility

Telephone: 856-429-5637 ext. 226

**Drucker Brain Injury Center**

135 South Broad Street

Woodbury, NJ 08096

Telephone: 856-853-9900

Provides community re-entry services, with day programming, diagnostic evaluation, vocational services, school re-entry, group home and independent living skills.

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Hudson County

Hunterdon County

Mercer County

**Community Options**

5 Mission Road

Trenton, NJ 08620

Telephone: 609-298-1981

Provides community based residential services, skilled nursing, assistive technology and supported employment.

**PLUS – NJ**

9F Princess Road

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Telephone: 609-895-8855

Provides residential services (supervised, supported, independent living), day programming, community re-entry and community activities program.

**St. Lawrence Rehabilitation Center**

2381 Lawrenceville Road

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Telephone: 609-896-9500

Provides acute inpatient rehabilitation and outpatient therapies, including day programming, driver evaluation and training, vision therapy, seating clinic, aquatic rehabilitation, pain management and individual therapies.

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Middlesex County

**Healthsouth Rehabilitation Hospital of NJ**

666 Plainsboro Road

Suite 2000 C

Plainsboro, NJ 08536

Telephone: 609-799-8400

Provides outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapies, psychological services and long-term residential services.

**JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute Center for Head Injuries**

65 James Street, Edison, NJ 08818

Telephone: 732-321-7733

JFK Hartwyck at Oak Tree

2048 Oak Tree Road, Edison, NJ 08820

Telephone: 732-906-2640

Provides early recovery through an acute trauma unit, coma intervention, extended recovery unit, and outpatient cognitive rehabilitation, including day programming, community re-entry, day activity program and outpatient mild brain injury program.

Monmouth County

**HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Tinton Falls**

2 Centre Plaza

Tinton Falls, NJ 07724

Telephone: 732-460-5320

Provides inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation therapies, neuropsychological services, day treatment, home assessments and case management.

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## **Lifespan/Neuropsychology Rehab Services**

Jersey Shore Medical Arts Building

1944 Route 33, Suite 203

Neptune, NJ 07754

Telephone: 732-988-3441

Provides individual counseling, biofeedback and outpatient cognitive rehabilitation.

## **Monmouth County Care Centers**

John L. Montgomery Division

115 Dutch Lane Road

Freehold, NJ 07728

Telephone: 732-431-7420

Provides subacute residential services for young adults with neurological impairments.

## Morris County

## **Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation – Welkind Facility**

Pleasant Hill Road

Chester, NJ 07930

Telephone: 973-584-7500 ext. 230

Provides early recovery, special care and progressive care in inpatient rehabilitation, day programming, cognitive remediation program, as well as neuropsychiatry, spasticity management, driver evaluation and training, balance disorder assessment and treatment, natural setting behavioral management, neuro-ophthalmology and neuropsychological services.

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**RIMM – Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Program**

Morristown Memorial Hospital Rehab Institute

95 Mount Kemble Avenue

Morristown, NJ 07962

Telephone: 973-971-4501

Provides a mild brain injury inpatient and outpatient program, including day treatment, community based programming and case management.

Ocean County

**Bancroft NeuroHealth**

Brick Facility

1200 Route 70

Brick Township, NJ 08723

Telephone: 856-429-5637 ext. 226

Provides residential services and vocational and therapy services to residents.

**HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of NJ**

14 Hospital Drive

Toms River, NJ 08755

Telephone: 732-244-3100

Provides acute rehabilitation care for persons with neurological impairments

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Passaic County

**Rehabilitation Specialists**

33 Sicomac Road

North Haledon, NJ 07508

Telephone: 973-636-9366

Provides day programming, residential services, addictive behavior services, respite, home-based services, vocational services, neuropsychological evaluations and family support.

Salem County

Somerset County

**The MENTOR Network-New Jersey**

80 Cottontail Lane, Suite 330

Somerset, NJ 08873

Telephone: 732-627-9890

Provides the Mentor Model (individual resides in a host home), supported living and in-home services. Programs include one-to-one cognitive rehabilitation, school re-entry and vocational services.

**Neurobehavioral Institute of NJ**

626 North Thompson Street

Raritan, NJ 08869

Telephone: 908-725-8877

Provides adult and pediatric neurology, neuropsychology and cognitive remediation. Services include outpatient rehabilitation, school re-entry, day programming, educational counseling and individual/family counseling.

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**Willow Creek NeuroMed Brain Injury Program**

1165 Easton Avenue

Somerset, NJ 08853

Telephone: 732-246-4100

Provides subacute residential services.

Sussex County

**Progressive Health – NJ**

350 Sparta Avenue, Suite B1

Sparta, NJ 07871

Telephone: 973-726-8279

Provides residential services.

Union County

Statewide Community-Based Programs

**Community Skills Program**

5000 Sagamore Drive, Suite 203

PO Box 687

Marlton, NJ 08053

Telephone: 856-596-5122

Provides community based services, including cognitive rehabilitation, therapeutic recreation, vocational testing, training and job placement, individual and family counseling, instruction in independent living, case management and follow-up services.

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## **The MENTOR Network-New Jersey**

80 Cottontail Lane, Suite 330

Somerset, NJ 08873

Telephone: 732-627-9890

Provides the Mentor Model (individual resides in a host home), supported living and in-home services. Programs include one-to-one cognitive rehabilitation, school re-entry and vocational services.

### Specialized Brain Injury Professionals

In addition to the professionals working in the programs that have been listed, there are professionals (in rehabilitation, law, education, etc.) who work with persons with brain injury on a private basis. Contact the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey for additional information.

## STATE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### **New Jersey Division of Disability Services (DDS)**

222 South Warren Street, PO Box 700

Trenton, NJ 08625

Telephone: 888-285-3036 (toll-free)

Fax: 609-292-1233

Website: [www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds)

DDS serves as a single point of entry for people with disabilities, whether through illness or injury. Through its toll-free hotline (888-285-3036), DDS responds to questions about information, programs and services required by people with disabilities. DDS also administers programs that allow people with disabilities to live more independently in the community including:

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**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fund** allows New Jersey residents who have survived an acquired brain injury to obtain the services and supports they need to live in the community. The Fund provides financial assistance and purchases services to foster independence and maximize quality of life. The Fund is used when insurance, personal resources, and/or public programs are unavailable to meet the needs of the applicant.

**TBI Medicaid Waiver Program** provides services in the home and community for those who sustained brain injuries after the age of 16 who qualify financially and medically.

**NJ WorkAbility:** Medicaid Buy In offers people with disabilities who are employed the ability to receive New Jersey Medicaid health coverage.

**Personal Care Assistant Services (PCA)**, an optional benefit for Medicaid recipients, provides assistance with daily tasks for those who have a disability.

**Personal Assistance Services Program** provides routine non-medical assistance to people with disabilities who work, attend school or are involved in community and volunteer activities.

**Personal Preference** is a research project that allows New Jersey Medicaid recipients with disabilities to direct their own personal care assistance services as an alternative to accepting services from an agency.

**Home and community-based services** provide services that let people with disabilities avoid institutionalization and remain in the community.

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## Employment

### **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)**

Central Office

PO Box 398

Trenton, NJ 08625

Telephone: 609-292-5987

The mission of DVRS is to assist people with disabilities to work toward gainful employment consistent with their strengths, interests, needs and abilities. Customers should be referred to their local county office.

<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Atlantic	609-813-3933	Middlesex	732-937-6300
Bergen	201-996-8970	Monmouth	732-775-1799
Burlington	609-518-3948	Morris	973-631-6304
Camden	856-614-2500	Ocean	732-255-0836
Cape May	609-523-0330	Passaic	973-977-4285
Cumberland	856-453-3888	Salem	856-453-3888
Essex	973-648-3494	Somerset	908-704-3030
Gloucester	856-384-3730	Sussex	908-852-4110
Hudson	201-217-7180	Union	908-820-3112
Hunterdon	908-704-3030	Warren	908-852-4110
Mercer	609-292-2940		

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## **NJ WINS (Work Incentive Network Support)**

NJ WINS assists individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) to make decisions about returning to work by providing:

- Benefits Analysis
- Benefits Support Planning
- Benefits Managing
- Problem Solving
- Information and Referrals

Based on county location, contact the following agencies for information and services:

**Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey**                      877-659-4672  
(Counties: Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Salem, Sussex, Warren)

**Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey**      866-946-7465  
(Counties: Burlington, Camden, Essex, Hunterdon, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Somerset, Union)

## **Ticket to Work Program**

Telephone: 866-968-7842

Website: [www.tickettowork.com](http://www.tickettowork.com) or [www.socialsecurity.gov/work](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work)

The Ticket to Work Program is an employment program for people with disabilities who are interested in going to work. This voluntary program allows SSDI and SSI disability recipients to receive a "ticket" to obtain vocational rehabilitation, employment or other support services from an approved provider of their choice to help them go to work and achieve their employment goals. The Program is coordinated by MAXIMUS, a private company.

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## **Northeast ADA & IT Center**

Telephone: 800-949-4232

Website: [www.northeastada.org](http://www.northeastada.org)

Located at Cornell University, this organization offers help to employers, people with disabilities and any organization needing a greater understanding of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990.

## Job Accommodations and Assistive Technology

### **Job Accommodations Network (JAN)**

Telephone: 800-562-7234

Website: <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu>

JAN is a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by providing individualized worksite accommodations solutions and providing technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability related legislation.

### **Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC) of NJP&A**

Telephone: 800-342-5832

Website: [www.njpanda.org](http://www.njpanda.org)

Assistive technology is a term that describes devices and services created to help people with disabilities live more independently and productively. The ATAC provides information and referrals, outreach and education, technical assistance, and legal advocacy with regards to assistive technology.

### **ABLEDATA**

Telephone: 800-227-0216

Website: [www.abledata.com](http://www.abledata.com)

This organization provides information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment available throughout the world. Although ABLEDATA does not sell any products, they can help locate companies that do.

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## County Offices for the Disabled

County Offices for the Disabled function as a clearinghouse for information about programs and services, advocate for people with disabilities and provide technical assistance at a local level.

<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Atlantic	609-645-7700	Middlesex	732-745-4013
Bergen	201-336-6500	Monmouth	732-431-7116
Burlington	609-265-5223	Morris	973-285-6855
Camden	856-858-2769	Ocean	732-506-5062
Cape May	609-886-6200	Passaic	973-881-4559
Cumberland	856-825-8707	Salem	856-935-7510 x8316
Essex	973-228-8230	Somerset	908-231-7179
Gloucester	856-401-7670	Sussex	973-579-0570
Hudson	201-271-4310	Union	908-527-4840
Hunterdon	908-788-1253	Warren	908-689-6422
Mercer	609-989-6468		

## Social Security

After a brain injury, many people face significant financial struggles. Early contact with the Social Security Administration can help identify possible sources of income replacement and medical benefits.

### **Social Security Administration**

Telephone: 800-772-1213

Website: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

SSA provides general information and will set up an appointment with your local Social Security Office. Have available the Social Security number of the individual interested in services when you place the call.

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## **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**

Telephone: 800-792-8820

SHIP provides information and assistance with Medicare-related problems.

## Legal Services

### **Brain Injury Association of New Jersey's Family Helpline**

Telephone: 800-669-4323

The association maintains a list of attorneys with experience representing individuals with brain injuries.

### **Community Health Law Project (CHLP) – Main Office**

185 Valley Street

South Orange, NJ 07079

Telephone: 973-275-1175

CHLP is a non-profit legal aid society dedicated to serving the legal needs of people with disabilities and senior citizens.

### **Legal Aid Society – Lawyer Referral Service**

Telephone: 609-695-6249

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## Information and Advocacy

### **Family Support Center**

Telephone: 800-372-6510

Website: [www.FamilySupportNJ.com](http://www.FamilySupportNJ.com)

This is a clearinghouse of information on national, state and local family support programs and services for persons with disabilities.

### **New Jersey Protection & Advocacy (NJP&A)**

210 S. Broad St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Trenton, NJ 08608

Telephone: 609-292-9742

Telephone (toll-free): 800-922-7233

Website: [www.njpanda.org](http://www.njpanda.org)

NJP&A protects and advocates for the rights of citizens with disabilities.

NJP&A recently received federal funding to increase their work on behalf of persons with brain injury.

### **NJ Statewide Independent Living Council**

7 West Lake Drive

Montville, NJ 07045-9753

Telephone: 973-316-6179

Centers for Independent Living are community based, consumer-driven organizations that provide information and referral, peer counseling, skills training, advocacy and a variety of services based on individual needs.

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## Transportation

### **New Jersey Transit – Access Link**

Telephone: 800-955-2321

Access Link is a service of New Jersey Transit for people with disabilities who are not able to use a regular fixed-route bus.

### **New Jersey Transit – Office of Special Services**

Telephone: 973-491-7385

This office provides information about accessible buses and rail stations.

### **New Jersey Transit – Reduced Fare Program (RFP)**

Telephone: 973-378-6401

The RFP allows people with disabilities to travel at a reduced fare.

## **County Para-Transit Contacts**

The following contacts can provide resource information on county-supported transportation options available to people with disabilities.

<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Atlantic	609-645-5910	Middlesex	800-221-3520
Bergen	201-368-5995	Monmouth	732-431-6480
Burlington	800-836-0580	Morris	973-366-9378
Camden	856-456-1121	Ocean	877-929-2082
Cape May	609-889-3700	Passaic	973-305-5756
Cumberland	856-691-7799	Salem	856-339-8622
Essex	973-678-1300	Somerset	908-231-7115
Gloucester	856-401-7650	Sussex	973-579-0480
Hudson	201-271-4307	Union	908-241-8300
Hunterdon	800-842-0531	Warren	908-454-4044
Mercer	609-530-1971		

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## References

### **Information on ADA and Job Accommodations:**

Working Effectively with Employees Who Have Sustained a Brain Injury. Employment and Disability, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, June, 2000.

### **Information on Brain Injury and Strategies:**

Understanding Brain Injury: A Guide For Employers. Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, 2000.

The Brain Injury Handbook: An Introductory Guide to Understanding Brain Injury for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals. Brain Injury Association of Florida, 2003.

### **Information on Statistics:**

Facts about Traumatic Brain Injury. Center for Disease Control, Washington, DC, March 2005.

“Rehabilitation Considerations Following Mild Traumatic Brain Injury”, Journal of Rehabilitation, Oct-Dec, 1998 by Robert J. Fabiano & Julie Daugherty.

### **Information on Vocational Challenges for People with Brain Injuries:**

Snapshop of the Legal Concerns of Individuals with TBI. Training and Advocacy Support Center for Protection and Advocacy Systems and Customer Assistance Programs of the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc. Washington, DC, February 2005.

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**Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, Inc.**

825 Georges Road

2nd Floor

North Brunswick, NJ 08902