

FEMINIST NEWS AND VIEWS

Morris County NOW

P.O. Box 394, Morristown, New Jersey 07960
Chapter Phone 973.285.1200



REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM ACT UPDATE & ACTION—Page 5 May/June 2021
Morris County NOW GARAGE SALE — Page 6

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PAID LEAVE IN NEW JERSEY¹ What it is, how it may relate to COVID-19, and how to **TAKE ACTION!**

EARNED SICK LEAVE

New Jersey's **Earned Sick Leave** law guarantees workers the right to earn 40 hours or 5 days of paid sick time. The law covers most full-time, part-time and temporary workers regardless of their immigration status. Employees accrue 1 hour of earned sick leave for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 40 hours of leave per benefit year. An employee can work additional hours to compensate for work missed rather than use earned sick leave, with the employer's consent. However, an employer cannot require this, or require an employee to use earned sick leave. You can use the time for your own health reasons or to care for a loved one -- health reasons can be related to COVID-19 or not. However, this may not give a worker enough time to quarantine if they have been exposed to the virus, possibly putting them and all they come in contact with at risk.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

In New Jersey Paid Family Leave is made up of two programs, **Family Leave Insurance (FLI)** and **Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)**. Both programs provide 85% of workers' average weekly wage, up to a maximum weekly benefit of \$903 for 2021 (adjusted annually). New Jersey workers contribute a fraction of their earnings to the FLI program and the TDI program. To be eligible you must work in New Jersey and meet minimum gross earnings. For 2021, you must have worked 20 weeks earning at least \$220 weekly, or have earned a combined total of \$11,000 in the base year period (approx. 18 months before taking leave).

New Jersey Family Leave Insurance (FLI)

Since July 1, 2020, FLI provides workers with 12 continuous weeks (over a 12-month period) or 56 intermittent days of paid leave. Most workers take FLI to bond with a new child — birth, adopted or foster — in the first year after birth or placement. Bonding FLI leave is available for both parents, not just the birth parent.

The benefit is also now available to take leave to care for most family relatives and any loved one (the equivalent of a family relationship) with a serious health condition. When caring for a seriously ill loved one, a medical care provider must certify the condition in the application for benefits.

Additionally, workers can receive FLI benefits when taking leave to deal with issues related to domestic and sexual violence and to care for loved ones dealing with issues of domestic violence or sexual assault. You do not need a medical care provider to certify this type of leave; however you may need to provide some evidence of the need for leave which your employer must keep confidential.

Workers now have the choice whether to use their own paid time off before accessing FLI; previously employers could require employees take up to two weeks of their paid time off before accessing FLI.

Also, now workers with more than one job can take leave from one job and receive FLI benefits while continuing to work their other job.

¹Information courtesy of NJ Time to Care Coalition and Yarrow Willman-Cole, Workplace Justice Program Director, NJ Citizen Action. Morris County NOW is a member of the NJ Time to Care Coalition.

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New Jersey Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)

TDI is paid leave for one's own non-work-related injury, illness, or other disability, including pregnancy and recovery from delivery. It is available for up to 26 weeks in a 12-month period for non-work-related disability. Some employers provide TDI (often referred to as State Disability Insurance [SDI]) through a private plan. Both a private and state TDI program must provide paid leave for time your medical care provider certifies you are unable to work. Standard TDI leave for pregnancy can begin 4 weeks before your due date and continue after giving birth for either 6 weeks for a vaginal birth or 8 weeks for a cesarean. The time could be extended if your medical care provider certifies additional time before giving birth or for your recovery period — and this can even include coping with postpartum depression.

If your employer has a private TDI plan, it must provide equal or better than what the state provides. The state oversees employers' private plans (typically through an insurance company) to ensure compliance. If denied private TDI/SDI benefits you can contact the state Department of Labor, <https://www.myleavebenefits.nj.gov/worker/tidi/>, to appeal. Municipal, county (teachers) and federal employees are typically not eligible for TDI.

Yarrow Willman-Cole

In an Opinion piece, excerpted here, in the April 4, 2021 *Star Ledger* about Paid Leave and President Biden's American Rescue Plan, Yarrow Willman-Cole, *Workplace Justice Program Director, NJ Citizen Action*, stated the following:

“The historic American Recovery Plan (ARP) will bring much-needed relief to families, parents, childcare providers, and small businesses. Yet in spite of this relief, millions of Americans are still struggling to get by and could lose everything if they or a family member gets sick.

As strong as the ARP is, it does nothing to guarantee U.S. workers access to paid leave. President Biden had proposed extending and expanding emergency paid leave, which was part of the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#)¹ but was left to expire at the end of 2020. Under the Republican-controlled Senate, Congress only extended the voluntary option for employers to provide emergency paid leave and be able to receive federal tax credits. As a result, tens of millions of workers in the U.S. have no pay or job security if they get sick during a historic pandemic.

Paid leave is a vital tool for stopping the spread of the virus and keeping workers employed. It keeps our economy running while maintaining working families' economic security.

New Jersey lawmakers have a unique opportunity to help save lives and ensure workers have enough paid sick time by requiring that all employers provide emergency paid leave. The good news is there are no valid argument against our governor and Legislature taking action; small and midsize businesses can take advantage of the [federal paid-leave tax credits](#) to fully compensate them for providing their employees with this paid leave.

As New Jersey's new cases are double the national average and there is an increase in virus variants, it is now more urgent than ever that all workers have access to adequate paid leave to protect public health and workers' economic security. Critically, everyone must also be able to take time off to receive a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them. If we do nothing, our most vulnerable workers will fall through the gap and, too often, it's the same frontline and essential workers we have been thanking for their hard work.

Workers have shared their experiences about employers who have not provided paid sick time; they are employers who are either unaware of or they cannot be bothered to apply for the federal paid-leave tax credit. Even worse, there are some reports of some employers not allowing workers to take time off when they have been exposed or have even tested positive, forcing them to return to work despite risking others' safety and public health recommendations otherwise.

New Jersey lawmakers should do everything feasible to support workers' access to paid leave. Our state's recovery and workers' health depend on it. The [NJ Time to Care Coalition](#) recently sent a sign-on letter to our elected officials asking them to take action to close these glaring gaps.

While we are glimpsing the light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel, it will be many months before widespread vaccination occurs and workers are still getting sick and being forced to choose between their health and their jobs. Workers need adequate paid leave right now, and we need our leaders to advance fiscally creative solutions that will get everyone through this crisis.”

TAKE ACTION

No worker should be forced to choose between their health and their paychecks, especially during a pandemic, and our leaders must advance fiscally creative and smart solutions that will get everyone through this crisis.

Use this link, <https://p2a.co/HuGRPLs>, to email your elected officials and urge them to require employers to provide New Jersey workers with COVID-19-related emergency paid leave during the public health emergency and for the duration of the federal paid leave tax credits.

¹Effective April 1, 2020

NEW JERSEY COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING UPDATE

By Susan J. Waldman



Legislative Update

Expanded Vacatur Bill “Provides for process to vacate and expunge certain arrests, charges, complaints, convictions, other dispositions, and DNA records, associated with violations by certain human trafficking victims.” Both the 2020 Assembly and Senate versions of these bills have been replaced for 2021. The Assembly bill was introduced on January 29, 2021 as A5322 to replace A3596 and was referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee from which it passed unanimously on March 15, 2021. It awaits final passage by the Assembly. The Senate version, S3433, was introduced on February 11, 2021, to replace S1750, and was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. So far no action has been taken by this committee.

TAKE ACTION

Please contact State Senator Nicholas P. Scutari, Chair of the Judiciary Committee, and ask him to hold a hearing and bring S3433 to a vote. His contact information:

Senator Nicholas P. Scutari
1514 E. Saint Georges Ave.
2nd Floor
Linden, NJ 07036

Phone: 908 587 0404

Email: senscutari@njleg.gov

S280 and A883 “Directs the development and posting of notices containing information for victims of human trafficking.” This bill was signed into law by Governor Murphy on January 29, 2021. The Senate and Assembly bills were consolidated as A883. The State Commission on Human Trafficking is awaiting funding so they can execute their mandate to print and post these notices.

Upcoming Events

PART 1: WHAT IS LABOR TRAFFICKING?

**Tuesday, May 4, 2021
10:30am-12:00pm**

Presentation - Jean Stockdale, Still Waters Program
Lived Experience - Harold D'Souza, Co-Founder Eyes Open International

PART 2: WHAT CAN WE DO?

**Tuesday, May 11, 2021
10:30am-12:00pm**

Lived Experience - Moninda Marube, Trafficked Athlete
Panel Discussion - Labor Trafficking Experts

PART 3: CHILD LABOR TRAFFICKING - HOW DO WE STOP IT?

**Tuesday, May 18, 2021
7:30pm-9:00pm**

Presentation - Jean Stockdale, Still Waters Program
Lived Experience - Harold D'Souza, Co-Founder Eyes Open International

Register Here: <https://www.safernj.org/news-events>

Community Awareness Toolkit

The NJCAHT has prepared a toolkit to empower communities with knowledge and action that will be the catalyst to end human trafficking in New Jersey. You can access/download a copy here: <https://www.safernj.org/uploads/resource/Community-Toolkit-Jan-2021-REVISED-1.29.21.pdf>

HAVE YOU GOTTEN THE COVID-19 VACCINATION? IF SO, YOU CAN THANK A WOMAN.

by **Kayleigh Lavornia**

Katalin Karikó, a key developer of the Pfizer vaccine, was leading the mRNA research movement long before the pandemic. Although a Hungarian native, Karikó moved to America in 1985 to take up a postdoctoral position at Temple University. Later, after joining the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, Karikó applied for her first mRNA research grant in 1990. The application was rejected. Then she was demoted to an adjunct position in 1995. People didn't believe in the veracity of her field.

Some of that disbelief stemmed from her being a woman scientist. When filing for a patent for her work with fellow immunologist Drew Weissman, after publishing research in the mRNA field together, someone had changed the order of the names on the submission, listing Karikó's name second. Her response? "I said 'No, it was my idea and I insisted they change it back.'"

Over the years she had been asked for the name of her supervisor in her own lab; referenced as 'Mrs.' rather than 'professor' in an article; and confused as a postdoc in Weissman's lab. "I don't work in anybody's lab," Karikó said. "I created my own field."

Today, it is mRNA technology that allowed for the swift rollout of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. These vaccines use mRNA from the virus' genome to tell the body to replicate the virus' spike protein. The body's immune system then reacts by targeting the proteins the vaccine produces, thereby creating antibodies. The rapid acceleration of the mRNA field caused by the pandemic response is opening up doors for the technology to be used in the fight against other widespread diseases, like malaria and cancer.

BOARD MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT **NOW-NJ State Board Meeting**

YOU ARE INVITED TO A ZOOM MEETING

WHEN: Saturday, May 8, 2021 at 9:30 am Eastern Time (US and Canada)

WHERE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

PLEASE RSVP/REGISTER IN ADVANCE USING THE LINK BELOW. THE ZOOM LINK WILL BE SENT ONLY AFTER YOU REGISTER.

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYocu2qrz4qE9A_PCYsYNxbVPZ6Q9DI5MRP

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The February Minutes and draft May Agenda are available in [this folder](#). Other documents/reports will be uploaded prior to the meeting.

Thanks, and see you on May 8th!

In solidarity,
Anjali Mehrotra, President
National Organization for Women of New Jersey

Morris County NOW invites its members to attend this virtual State Board Meeting. Join us and see how NOW-NJ works. You can participate in the discussions. However, only chapter delegates can vote.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR TRADES OF HOPE FUNDRAISER.





THE CATHOLIC CASE FOR THE REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM ACT

Opinion: Gaby Garcia Vera

New Jersey has a profound opportunity to protect and expand access to necessary and time-sensitive reproductive health care, including abortion, by passing the [Reproductive Freedom Act](#). [The hierarchy of the Catholic Church](#) has come out against this bill, as well as frequently and consistently against all abortion care. But I am one of the majority of the faithful in the Catholic Church who understands that our tradition supports a person’s right to follow their conscience on important moral matters like abortion. I know that protecting reproductive health care is undoubtedly a Catholic value.

I am proud to work for [Catholics for Choice](#), an organization that for more than 40 years has served as a voice for the majority of Catholics — everyday people like you and me who support access to comprehensive reproductive care, including abortion. We advocate for policies that allow each individual the freedom to make their own moral decisions about their health and their lives.

Catholics believe in prioritizing the needs of the poor and oppressed to advance the cause of justice. The Reproductive Freedom Act provides just that, by acknowledging that personal health care decisions must not only be legal, but free from financial and logistic concerns as well, or else these “rights” become reserved for the wealthy and well-connected. The Reproductive Freedom Act protects and expands access to reproductive health care in three key ways: affirm the right to abortion in state law; easing financial restrictions by requiring insurers to cover abortion care without out-of-pocket expenses; and lifting medically unnecessary regulations on abortion providers that serve only to block access.

As my organization’s [President Jamie Manson has noted](#), “The obligation to not just care for the vulnerable but to actively privilege them over everyone else lies at the heart of the Catholic faith; it’s the guiding principle of the church’s work with the poor and the marginalized.”

And lack of access to abortion care hits hardest among those most oppressed by systemic racism and misogyny, including Black, Indigenous and brown communities and other communities of color, immigrant communities, the LGBTQ community, communities with low income, and all of the areas where these communities intersect.

I stand with millions of Catholics in supporting the Reproductive Freedom Act, a bold declaration that all New Jerseyans have a fundamental right to access reproductive health care, including abortion, and that all people in the state have the right to make their own health care decisions without interference by politicians.

Catholic teaching regards our conscience as the final arbiter in any moral decision each of us must make. We regard it as both a gift and a responsibility in that we are called to follow our conscience and to respect the right of others to do the same.

Far too often I hear my faith used as the sword and shield that our opponents brandish to hide behind. They would stop at anything to derail us from progress; we know because they frequently harass and intimidate people entering clinics, lie about medical facts and downplay their violence in the name of their faith.

I am here to say: not today. Today we stand and bear witness to the moral arc of the universe; for today, it bends toward a more just, thriving New Jersey.

Gaby Garcia-Vera is the Domestic States Program Manager at Catholics for Choice. This article appeared in the April 1, 2021 edition of The Star Ledger. Reprinted with author’s permission.

- ★ **TAKE ACTION—CALL THE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS**
- ★ Senate President Stephen Sweeney (856) 251-9801
- ★ Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin (732) 855-7441
- ★ Senator Joe Vitale, Senate Health Committee Chair (609) 847-3700
- ★ Assembly Member Herb Conaway, Assembly Health Committee Chair (856) 461-3997

★ **Phone Scripts:**
★ **Senate President Sweeney & Senator Vitale:**
★ Hi my name is _____ and I live in _____.
★ I am calling today to urge _____ to move the Reproductive Freedom Act - Bill number S3030 - and ensure it is heard in the Senate Health Committee as soon as possible. It is critical now more than ever that we protect and expand access to reproductive health care including abortion in NJ.

★ **Assembly Speaker Coughlin and Assembly Member Conaway:**
★ Hi my name is _____ and I live in _____.
★ I am calling today to urge _____ to move the Reproductive Freedom Act - Bill number A4848 - and ensure it is posted and heard in the Assembly Health Committee as soon as possible. It is critical now more than ever that we protect and expand access to reproductive health care including abortion in NJ.



IT'S BACK. . .
THE ANNUAL MORRIS COUNTY NOW GARAGE SALE
SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021
8:30 AM—4:00 PM



After a year of going VIRTUAL, we are stepping up to REALITY!!
We are optimistic that the SALE MUST GO ON!

Now is the time of year when we begin to think about spring-cleaning and clearing out unused and unwanted items. What better time to donate those items to Morris County NOW? I will be accepting items beginning in July. Books are welcome (excluding textbooks and encyclopedias), but please limit clothing donations. With your help, the garage sale can be a great fundraiser for the chapter.

Call me, Susan J. Waldman, 973.895.2218, or email the chapter at morriscountynow@gmail.com to arrange for drop off or pick up. Also, if you would like to spend some time outdoors with a few like-minded people, please join us. You can come any time during the day and stay as long as you like.

Thank you for your donations.

The New Jersey Primary Election will take place on June 8, 2021
HERE IS THE TIMELINE

May 18 Voter Registration Deadline for Primary Election (21 days before election)
 N.J.S.A. 19:31-6

June 1 Deadline to apply for a Mail-In Ballot by Mail for Primary Election (not less than 7 days prior to election) N.J.S.A. 19:63-3

June 2 Mailing of Sample Ballots for Primary Election (on or before 12 noon on Wednesday preceding election) N.J.S.A. 19:23-34

June 7 - by 3:00 p.m. Deadline for In-Person Mail-In Ballot Applications for Primary Election (up to 3:00 p.m. on the day before election) N.J.S.A. 19:63-3

June 8 Primary Election Day (Tuesday after first Monday in June) N.J.S.A. 19:2-1, N.J.S.A. 19:23-40

June 8 Deadline for Post Office Receipt of Mail-In Ballots from the Primary Election

June 8 Deadline for In-Person Submission of Primary Election Mail-In Ballots to County Boards of Election (by 8:00 p.m. on the day of election)

For more information visit the New Jersey Division of Elections: <https://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/election-information-2021.shtml#primary>

Be A Newsletter Contributor

Wouldn't you like to see your name in print? How about submitting an article to the Morris County NOW newsletter? Maybe you have an idea or an issue that you would like to publicize? Please send any articles to our email address, morriscountynow@gmail.com. Since our newsletter is published bi-monthly at the beginning of the "odd" months (July, September, November, etc.), the deadline for submitting articles is the third Monday of the "even" months (June, August, October). This would apply for advertisements also.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR OUR MEMBER'S CORNER

Please note that all articles and advertisements submitted for printing are subject to the discretion of the editor.

Email Alerts

Morris County NOW wants your email address so we can keep you aware of important up-to-the-minute chapter news. Perhaps there is an upcoming event or action on an issue important to you that came up after the newsletter was published.

Since our newsletter is bi-monthly, this can easily occur. In this day and age of instant communication we want to keep in touch with our members.

Please write to us at morriscountynow@gmail.com with your email address and you won't be left out again.

Join Us On Facebook

Morris County NOW can now be found on Facebook, a social utility site that keeps people connected. If you are not already a member of Facebook, it is free and easy to join. You can use the link www.facebook.com/mcnownj



FOLLOW US ON twitter

<http://twitter.com/mcnownj>

National NOW's Top Six Priority Issues

Abortion and Reproductive Rights

Economic Justice

Ending Sex Discrimination

LGBTQ Rights

Promoting Diversity & Ending Racism

Stopping Violence Against Women

Chapter Calendar

Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Virtual Zoom Meeting*
7:30 PM

Tuesdays, May 4, 11, & 18, 2021

NJ Coalition Against Human Trafficking
3-Part Series on Labor Trafficking
See Article Page 3

Saturday, May 8, 2021

NOW-NJ State Board Meeting
Virtual Zoom Meeting*
See Article Page 4
State Board Meetings: May 8, August 7, November 13

Tuesday, June 1, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Virtual Zoom Meeting*
7:30 PM

Saturday June 19, 2021

JUNETEENTH
See Article Below

NO CHAPTER MEETING IN JULY

Tuesday, August 3, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Virtual Zoom Meeting*
7:30 PM

*Register in advance for these meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAocO6trzooGdBrfHkpRVaoUez6hyYh98US>

**JUNETEENTH
SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 2021**

Slavery officially ended in 1863 with Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. But it wasn't till June 19, 1865 when Major General Gordon Granger of the Union Army brought the news to Texas, the last place to learn that the Civil War was over and slavery was abolished.

Although not yet a federal holiday, it is a holiday in all but three states: North Dakota, South Dakota and Hawaii.

On September 10, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation (S19) designating the third Friday in June as a State and public holiday in New Jersey. This year it falls on Friday, June 18th.

Membership Application

Morris County NOW (NJ0200)
P.O. Box 394
Morristown, New Jersey 07960

I wish to join NOW and commit myself to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

National, State, and Local Dues:

- \$35. Regular Dues
- \$15-\$34. Reduced Dues
- Additional support
- \$5. Newsletter Only

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Please return form with your check to the address above.

Our TV show "New Directions for Women" is available on YouTube

Most of the shows from 2007 to September 22, 2016, and some from as far back as 1994 are now available for on-demand viewing. More recent shows are in one 29 minute presentation. Because of limitations previously imposed by YouTube, older shows are presented as three separate ten minute segments. To help improve continuity, each subsequent segment begins by replaying approximately the last 20 seconds of the previous part. As time permits, the archives will expand to include all previous shows (to date we have produced 285 programs). To access "New Directions for Women," go to www.YouTube.com/menownj.

Come to Our Morris County NOW Monthly ZOOM Meetings

And now for something completely different. Join us at our monthly ZOOM meetings. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise noted on the chapter calendar (www.morriscountynow.org). You can register to attend at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAocO6trzooGdBrfHkpRVaoUez6hyYh98US>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Morris County NOW
P.O. Box 394
Morristown, NJ 07960

Going Green

Thank you to all the members who replied to our "Going Green" campaign. You can still let us know if you want to receive your newsletter by email only. Contact us by phone, 973 285 1200, or by email, morriscountynow@gmail.com.

Feminist News and Views

News and Views is published six times a year by Morris County NOW as a means of informing the membership of current activities and issues.

Chapter Officers

Karen Lontka, President - 973.584.0612
Rosemary Lontka, Executive V.P.
Shirley Henderson, Treasurer
Nancy Critchley, Secretary
Stacey Gregg, Action V.P. - 973.477.7574
Susan J. Waldman, Fundraising VP- 973.895.2218
Rosemary Lontka, Shirley Henderson, Susan J. Waldman - State Board Delegates
Margaret Davey, Alternate State Board Delegate
Susan J. Waldman, Newsletter Editor - 973.895.2218

Advertising Rates (business card size)

Members: \$15/issue; Non-members: \$25/issue

For Information

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www.morriscountynow.org