



Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

Why are we still Talking about Cameras?

“Legislation that has languished in Trenton would make cameras more readily available in group homes”¹

Because there is no unquestionable proof that cameras do or don't reduce the incidents of abuse and neglect in congregate settings, there remains much disagreement on this amongst and between providers, professionals, and families. As a compromise New Jersey's Division of Developmental Disabilities permits cameras in common areas of licensed group homes provided that the agency has a policy approved by the Office of Licensing.

New Jersey has instituted this requirement to ensure that the agency establishes policy which protects the rights of the individual, does not tread on the rights of the minority, clarifies in advance the responsibility of the provider, does not violate Home and Community Based Setting rules, and does not jeopardize federal funding. The referenced “camera bill” falls short on most, possibly all the aforementioned safeguards. To date, 31% of agencies have or are seeking approval from the Office of Licensing for use of cameras in common areas of their group homes.²

Common areas are not to be confused with privately owned public space or a semi-public space. Common areas in group homes are intended for exclusive use and benefit to the residents, the rules of which are established by the owner. No longer contract based, our competitive market-based system dictates owners respond to demands of the market while abiding by applicable state laws, regulations, and requirements, and remaining faithful to the mission of their organization. To these ends, the use of cameras is carefully evaluated by providers.

Though well intentioned, flawed and unnecessary bills should “languish in Trenton.”³

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¹ Balcerzak A., Rimbach J, Ciattarelli, Sherril agree NJ needs more enforcement of badly operating group homes. NorthJersey.com UPDATED 10.26.2025

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.