

Homelessness MATTERS



January 30th, 2026

IN THIS EDITION:

- **Coalition News:** *Coalition Policy Association quoted in Shelterforce Magazine, highlights sudden HUD funding changes created "absolute chaos" for providers.*
- **New Jersey Homelessness in the News:** *74 year old woman dies from the cold in Toms River, Paterson suddenly losing 300 low-income housing vouchers*
- **News From Around the Country:** *Can AI help make the homeless healthier?*

COALITION IN THE NEWS

SHELTERFORCE

Essential Reporting on Affordable Housing

Judge Blocks HUD's Effort to Overhaul Federal Funding for Homeless Services

Shelterforce

Raisa Rubin-Stankiewicz, Coalition Policy Associate, says the sudden HUD funding changes created “absolute chaos” for providers who rely on federal support for permanent supportive housing. After the Trump administration attempted to rewrite the Continuum of Care funding rules—cutting permanent housing funds and imposing discriminatory and punitive requirements—a judge ordered HUD to revert to the original Biden-era plan, temporarily preserving critical support while legal challenges continue.



Bridges Outreach Connects People With Warming Centers, Food in Dangerous Temperatures

ABC 7 News



Extreme Cold Pushes Surge of Unhoused Residents to Newark Outreach Services

NJ Spotlight

Bridges Outreach is playing a critical role in Newark's response to extreme cold, shuttling unhoused residents from the streets and Penn Station to warming centers and shelters while providing food, supplies, and basic necessities. Led by coalition board member Richard Uniacke, the team is also helping people begin the longer process of stability by connecting them to identification, benefits, and services, even as mental health and safety concerns make outreach challenging for many living outside.

Rich Uniacke, a Coalition board member and president of Bridges Outreach, says demand for homeless services in Newark has surged during a prolonged Code Blue marked by dangerous cold, snow, and wind chills, with outreach teams encountering cases of frostbite and hypothermia. As homelessness remains at its highest level in more than a decade statewide, city and nonprofit workers are expanding emergency shelter, medical, and outreach responses to keep people safe, urging residents to report concerns so help can reach those still outside.

NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



[Federal Policy Change Could Increase Homelessness in NJ, Critics Warn](#)

New Jersey Monitor

Housing advocates warn New Jersey's growing homelessness crisis could sharply worsen under new federal housing policies that would slash funding for permanent, housing-first programs. Critics say the changes, pushed by the Trump administration, could cost the state tens of millions of dollars, put thousands at risk of losing housing, and undermine strategies that have helped reduce homelessness for vulnerable populations. With a lawsuit pending, advocates fear the ripple effects could destabilize communities statewide unless significant new funding is found.



[Why is Paterson Suddenly Losing 300 Low-Income Housing Vouchers?](#)

NorthJersey.com

Paterson is losing roughly 300 Section 8 housing vouchers due to a funding shortfall, the city's housing authority director said at a recent meeting. The reduction, imposed by HUD, will limit rental assistance available to low-income families in the city.



[Bucco: Homelessness is Up, Funding is Down - Let's Use Pork Money for NJ's Most Vulnerable](#)

New Jersey Senate Republicans



[Woman, 74, Found Dead Inside Snow Covered Car at NJ Walmart, Cops Say](#)

NJ.com

The death of a 74-year-old woman found in a snow-covered car at a Toms River Walmart highlights the dangers faced by people experiencing homelessness during extreme cold, particularly when shelter options are limited. Advocates say the tragedy underscores gaps in Ocean County's homelessness response, which relies on temporary Code Blue warming centers rather than a year-round shelter, even as local nonprofits like Just Believe step in to provide emergency help and support.



[County Encouraged to Focus on Homeless Population, Providing Options](#)

TapInto Flemington/Raritan

Local leaders warned the Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners that homelessness is becoming increasingly visible across the county, even as winter weather exposes gaps in overnight shelter options. Advocates urged the wealthy county to invest more in housing solutions, arguing that reliance on temporary warming centers and emergency measures is not enough to address a growing, long-term housing problem.

New Jersey Senate Republican Leader Anthony Bucco is urging the Sherrill administration to redirect a portion of recently approved discretionary spending to support Continuum of Care providers amid rising homelessness statewide. Bucco argues that a relatively small investment could keep critical housing and homelessness prevention programs operating, calling it a more responsible use of taxpayer dollars as need continues to grow.



[Sheltered vs. Unsheltered in NJ: How the Homeless Count Works](#)

New Jersey Digest

New Jersey's annual homeless count is a **one-night snapshot**, not a full-year census. It combines people living outdoors or in vehicles ("unsheltered") with those in emergency shelters or temporary housing programs ("sheltered"), meaning the same headline number can reflect very different realities. Because the count is taken on a single night, totals can shift simply due to weather, shelter availability, or outreach coverage—so changes may reflect differences in who was visible and reachable, rather than a true increase or decrease in homelessness. Despite its limitations, the count remains important because it helps policymakers and communities track trends, allocate resources, and plan services for people experiencing housing instability.





[Facing Winter Ejection, Homeless Get Extra Month at Toms River Motel](#)

Asbury Park Press

Sixteen people experiencing homelessness who have been living in a Toms River motel for more than a year will be allowed to stay through the end of February after Ocean County stepped in with short-term funding. The extension comes after residents were told they might be forced out in early January, raising fears of returning to unsafe outdoor conditions during extreme cold and snow. The situation highlights the county's lack of a permanent transitional shelter and its reliance on temporary, often-full Code Blue warming centers during severe weather.

[New Brunswick's Code Blue Initiative On Pace to Shatter Record During Frigid Winter](#)

TapInto New Brunswick

New Brunswick turned Emanuel Lutheran Church into a one-stop hub for health care, social services, and homelessness outreach, while also hosting the annual Point-in-Time Count. The event comes amid a brutal winter and a near-record number of Code Blue activations, highlighting both rising need and the city's expanded efforts to keep unhoused residents safe and connected to services.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



['Cleaning House': HUD Orders Immediate Citizenship Verification for Tenants in HUD-Funded Housing Nationwide](#)

U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development

HUD's nationwide audit of HUD-funded housing uncovered nearly 200,000 tenants needing eligibility verification, including thousands of



[Can AI Help Make Homeless Californians Healthier?](#)

CalMatters

A California health care company is rolling out an AI tool that helps outreach workers assess homeless patients and speeds up diagnoses and treatment, aiming to expand access to care in communities with too few doctors. Supporters say the technology could dramatically increase efficiency and reach more vulnerable people, while critics warn it raises serious concerns about bias, privacy, and whether AI can safely replace in-person clinical

ineligible or deceased residents—raising concerns about misallocated resources amid a worsening homelessness crisis. The agency is demanding that housing authorities and owners correct these issues within 30 days, arguing that ensuring eligibility will free up scarce housing funds for American families, including those on long waitlists for stable housing.



[Portland's Mayor Went All-in on Overnight-Only Shelters. Homelessness is Still Rising](#)

SHELTERFORCE

Portland's mayor promised to end unsheltered homelessness within a year, but local providers say his focus on expanding overnight-only shelters has failed to move people into stable housing and may mirror the Trump administration's shelter-first approach. Critics argue that emergency shelters lack the trauma-informed, housing-first supports proven to work, while data show the city's unsheltered population has grown and shelter exit rates remain low. Meanwhile, people like Steven Rock—who has been homeless for 18 months—are still struggling to find permanent housing despite the new shelter system.

judgment for people living on the streets. The pilot highlights both the promise and the risks of using AI in health care for society's most marginalized populations.



[A Housing-Centered Harm Reduction Approach to Homelessness and Public Safety](#)

Reason Foundation

Homelessness is a housing and public health crisis, not primarily a criminal one, and enforcement-focused policies won't solve it—especially as the U.S. homeless population has surged to record levels. The executive order pushing police to address visible homelessness and addiction risks worsening harm unless paired with a harm reduction strategy that emphasizes housing access, trauma-informed response, and coordinated public health support. The most effective solutions include zoning reform to expand affordable housing, diversion programs and co-responder teams that connect people to services, and measuring success by stable housing and recovery rather than arrests.



[New Anthology Rewrites the Story of Homelessness](#)

Positive News

More Than One Story is a new anthology curated by Cardboard Citizens that brings together 37 writers with lived experience of homelessness and poverty to challenge stereotypes through deeply human, diverse storytelling. Selected from an open call of 135 submissions and developed with input from members who have experienced hardship, the book combines 22 chosen pieces with commissioned work and monologues from acclaimed writers including Malorie Blackman, Chris Bush, and Joelle Taylor. Though rooted in adversity, the collection emphasizes humor, resilience, and hope, and aims to open doors for underrepresented voices in the creative industries.

We love to share news about the accomplishments, events job opportunities and noteworthy activities of NJ's homelessness service agencies. If you have something to share, please send it to us at info@NJCEH.org

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