

Homelessness MATTERS



April 29th, 2026

IN THIS EDITION:

- **Opportunities for Action:** Contact your legislators to advocate for the S.H.I.E.L.D. NJ Campaign to protect the homeless response system; Act now against HUD proposals that threaten housing stability
- **Resources for Providers:** Free training for frontline service providers on co-occurring disorders; Discounted National Alliance to End Homelessness Trainings available; Mental Health Basics Training for Homeless Service Providers; Free "BATHE" training available to improve communications with clients
- **NJ Homelessness in the News:** Emergency housing vouchers end early, risking widespread housing instability; Sherrill order boosts NJ housing supply and affordability efforts; Ocean County homelessness fund gets \$1M boost for housing stability
- **News From Around the Country:** Georgia bill could spark national trend of suing cities over homelessness enforcement; Affordable housing costs outpacing funding, straining financial viability model; Atlanta model shows rapid supportive housing delivery may inform national homelessness strategies

And much more...

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

A dark blue banner with a yellow horizontal stripe. On the left is a shield-shaped logo with "S.H.I.E.L.D." at the top, "NJ" in the center, and three stylized human figures below. To the right of the shield, the text "S.H.I.E.L.D. NJ" is written in large, bold, white letters. Below the yellow stripe, the text "A plan to begin turning the tide on New Jersey's homelessness crisis." is written in white. In the bottom right corner is the New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness logo, which includes a stylized house outline and the text "NEW JERSEY COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS" and "we can. we must. we will." below it.

Your Voice Needed: Urge the Governor and NJ Legislature to Invest \$100 Million to S.H.I.E.L.D. NJ Residents from Homelessness

Homelessness in NJ has surged 57% in just three years, pushing the system to the brink. Without immediate action, the NJ Department of Community Affairs projects that by 2026, **emergency shelter demand could rise 91% and street homelessness 94%.**

NOW is the time to act. [Use this sign-on letter to contact Governor Sherrill and your state legislators](#)—New Jersey must take bold, decisive steps to address this growing crisis and ensure everyone has a safe place to call home.

With \$100 million, we can S.H.I.E.L.D. New Jersey residents from homelessness. Funds will be used for:

S — Shelter: emergency shelters and operations

H — Housing: rapid re-housing and supportive housing

I — Intervention Through Outreach: street outreach connecting unsheltered individuals to services and housing

E — Eviction Prevention: sustainable funding to prevent homelessness

L — Landlord Engagement: housing navigation and landlord partnerships

D — Data & Coordination: tools to strengthen NJ homelessness data systems and municipal supports

For more information or to get involved, contact Coalition Policy Associate Raisa at rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org



[Tell HUD by Friday May 1st: Reject Time Limits and Work Requirements on Rental Assistance That Keeps People Housed](#)

HUD proposed a rule that would allow public housing agencies (PHAs) and HUD-assisted property owners the option to impose work requirements and time limits on federal rental assistance. If a 2-year time limit were imposed across HUD rental assistance programs, **an estimated 3.3 million people—including 1.7 million children—could lose their rental assistance.**

[Submit comments to HUD by Friday, May 1:](#) Rental assistance is targeted support that helps families remain stable and avoid homelessness. **Keeping people housed strengthens communities, is more cost-effective than responding to homelessness after the fact, and is simply the right thing to do.**

RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS



Opioid
Response
Network



The Intersection of Crisis: Co-Occurring Disorders and Homelessness in New Jersey

The Coalition is excited to partner again with SAMHSA's Opioid Response Network to offer a free training for frontline staff in New Jersey's homeless response system.

This free training designed for frontline service providers will be led by Dr. Dolores Blackwell, LMSW and will explore how co-occurring disorders present and provide practical, evidence-informed tools to support engagement and connection to care.

With over 172,000 NJ residents experiencing homelessness or seeking homelessness prevention services, this is a critical conversation for frontline providers.

Register for a session by clicking on a date below:

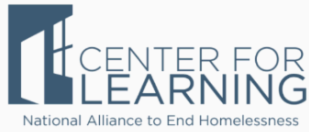
- [May 5, 8:00–9:30 AM](#)
- [May 12, 2:00–3:30 PM](#)
- [May 19, 7:00–8:30 PM](#)

[Click here](#) to download the flyer with more information.

Discounted Trainings for Service Providers From the National Alliance to End Homelessness

Courses include:

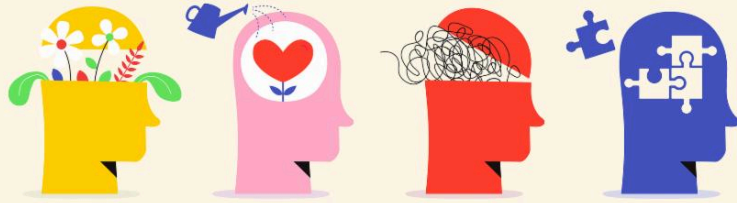
- *Key Skills for Shelter Staff: a 7 course series*
- *Understanding How We Got Here: How Historic and Ongoing Structural Racism Creates Racial Disparities*
- *Fueling Connections: Strategies for Homeless Outreach Staff*



- Deep discounts for organizations with smaller budgets
 - Contact us at learning@naeh.org
- 15% off all courses for NJCEH member organizations
 - Use NJCEH15 at checkout
- 20% off specific courses for NJCEH member organizations
 - Use NJCEH20 at checkout

Contact Jessica Cantermen with any questions: jcantermen@njceh.org

Mental Health Basics



Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Join us for a *Mental Health Basics* training, designed to build foundational understanding and practical awareness of mental health in everyday settings.

This training will cover:

- * The difference between mental health and mental illness
- * An overview of common mental health conditions and the impact of stigma
- * How mental health challenges may present in shelter settings and within the community

Session times:

6-7 AM
8-9 AM
10-11 AM
2-3 P
4-5 PM
6-7 PM



bit.ly/20mayMHB

This training is ideal for anyone looking to strengthen their knowledge, reduce stigma, and better support individuals experiencing mental health challenges.

- * Please register for this workshop in advance by scanning the QR code or visiting the URL.
- * When registering, be sure to indicate the time slot you plan to attend.



Mental Health
Association in
New Jersey, Inc.

Please contact Jaime Angelini with any questions regarding this training:
jangelini@mhanj.org



GIVE YOUR STAFF ANOTHER TOOL TO CRAFT BETTER CLIENT COMMUNICATION

NJCEH is offering a free, virtual, 45-minute class designed to:

- Increase the positive outcomes of interviews for clients
- Help staff keep control of their time
- Keep initial intake to 15 minutes
- Highlight and define the 5 key markers of a good interview

This class, known as “BATHE” – *the Background, Affect, Trouble, Handling, Empathy Technique* – will be tailored to meet the needs of your specific program and can be held at your convenience.

Email JCantermen@NJCEH.org now to schedule a BATHE Technique training for your staff.

The NJ Coalition to End Homelessness is working for your program to make every day a better day.



NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



[Emergency Housing Vouchers are Ending Early, Leaving Cities and Renters Scrambling](#)

New Jersey Monitor

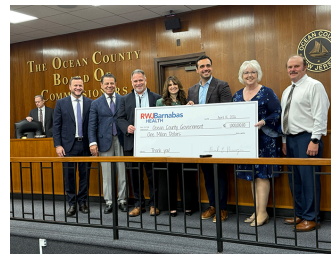
The early end of the Emergency Housing Voucher program is putting tens of thousands of people at risk of losing stable housing, with many cities unprepared to prevent a surge in homelessness. Without clear transition plans or sufficient alternative assistance, vulnerable populations—including domestic violence survivors—could be pushed back into shelters, unsafe situations, or homelessness. The situation highlights how gaps in long-term housing support and rising rents can quickly destabilize systems meant to prevent homelessness.



[Sherrill Signs Order to Boost NJ Housing Production](#)

NJBiz

New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill signed an executive order to accelerate housing production and improve affordability through a coordinated, statewide effort. The plan directs agencies to identify barriers, streamline development, and expand use of underutilized land, with the goal of increasing housing supply and access. Officials frame the move as an urgent response to rising housing costs and instability affecting residents, with a broader strategy expected later this year.



[Ocean County Homelessness Trust Fund Gets \\$1M Boost](#)

Jersey Shore Online

Ocean County's Homelessness Trust Fund received a \$1 million donation from RWJBarnabas Health to expand local efforts to address housing instability and homelessness. The fund, created in 2023, supports rental assistance, case management, and other flexible services aimed at preventing homelessness and helping people move into stable housing rather than operating shelters. Officials say the investment reflects a growing recognition that housing stability is closely tied to health outcomes and the need for coordinated, local solutions to the crisis.



[Homeless Housing Opens in New Brunswick](#)

Patch New Brunswick

A new Housing First development has opened at 293 Townsend Street in New Brunswick, providing six permanent housing units for people experiencing homelessness. The project, operated by Coming Home of Middlesex County and supported by the county's Housing First Fund, is designed to offer stable housing along with supportive services rather than shelter-based care. Officials say the goal is to expand access to safe, long-term housing for residents



[Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless Awarded More Than \\$350,000 from DCA to Prevent Evictions in Union County](#)

TapInto Elizabeth

The Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless has received \$357,213 from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to expand eviction and homelessness prevention services in Union County. The funding will support staff and flexible assistance to help households at risk of eviction through rental arrears payments, legal

experiencing homelessness and improve stability in the community.

support, and case management aimed at keeping people stably housed. Officials say the program is intended to reduce displacement by addressing housing instability before it leads to homelessness and strengthening local prevention efforts.

Bon Jovi Charity Kitchen Closes After Feeding Thousands, to the Annoyance of Some

NJ 101.5

A pop-up “pay it forward” restaurant run by the JBJ Foundation at a Toms River library has served thousands of meals to people experiencing homelessness and others in need but will close April 30 amid local controversy. Supporters say it provided healthy meals, jobs, and community support, while critics argued it drew homeless individuals to the area and relied too heavily on charitable services. The closure highlights ongoing tensions over how communities respond to homelessness and the role of public-facing aid programs.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



A Georgia Bill Paves the Way for Suing Cities That Don't Enforce Homelessness Laws

Georgia Public Broadcasting

Georgia House Bill 295 would allow property owners to sue local governments if they fail to enforce existing laws related to homelessness, arguing that this could lead to losses in property value. Supporters say the measure is intended to pressure cities to more consistently enforce local ordinances on issues like public camping and encampments, which have increased in places like Macon-Bibb County alongside a growing unsheltered population. The bill reflects a broader policy approach of using legal and financial consequences to push enforcement of homelessness-



Atlanta's Rapid Housing Approach Hits 500

Community Solutions

Atlanta has delivered 500 permanent supportive housing units in about two years through a fast, coordinated approach designed to reduce homelessness, including projects like The Beacon built on a former encampment. By combining modular construction with wraparound services, the city has been able to move people experiencing homelessness into stable housing more quickly than traditional methods allow. Leaders point to this model as evidence that homelessness can be addressed more effectively with urgency and coordination, though expansion depends on sustained funding.

related laws, which has implications for how local governments may be held accountable for managing homelessness.

SHELTERFORCE

Essential Reporting on Affordable Housing

Breaking Point: Why the Affordable Housing Business Model is Unraveling

Shelterforce

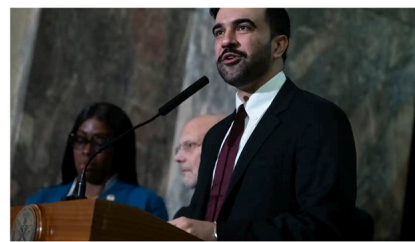
Rising costs for insurance, debt, construction, and operations are outpacing rents and subsidies, putting unprecedented strain on the already tight financial model that supports affordable housing. Providers say the traditional system of layered funding and financing is no longer keeping up, leading to increased risk of deferred maintenance, property sales, or even foreclosure. The article argues this is not a temporary challenge but a structural shift, requiring new approaches to subsidies, financing, and risk-sharing to keep affordable housing viable.



Understanding the Real Risks Behind Veteran Homelessness

VA News

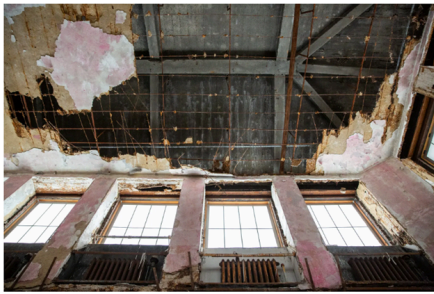
This piece from the VA reframes veteran homelessness away from individual blame and toward a systems-level understanding of layered risk—showing how mental health conditions, economic pressure, and structural barriers interact over time to drive housing instability. It highlights that even veterans who are working or recently transitioned from service can become homeless due to rent inflation and gaps in support systems, underscoring how fragile housing stability can be without sustained intervention.



Mamdani Administration Launches Tools to Help Homeowners Build Backyard Tiny Homes, Basement Apartments

Bronx Times

New York City's new accessory dwelling unit (ADU) initiative aims to expand housing supply by making it easier for homeowners to build small additional units, potentially adding thousands of homes over time. While not a large-scale solution on its own, the policy could help ease housing shortages that contribute to homelessness by creating more affordable and flexible living options. The effort highlights how local zoning reforms can play a role in preventing housing instability by increasing overall supply.



[A Shelter's Closing Is a Turning Point for Homeless Policy](#)

NY Times

New York City is closing the long-standing 30th Street intake shelter for homeless men due to severe disrepair, relocating its services as part of a broader shift away from large, institutional shelters. The move reflects a policy push toward smaller, safer facilities that people experiencing homelessness may be more willing to use, though it raises challenges around capacity, location, and ensuring people can still access the system. The transition highlights both the need to improve conditions within the shelter system and the logistical difficulties of serving a large homeless population.

[Homes, Not Assets: The Case for Housing First](#)

The United Nations

This piece argues that housing should be treated as a fundamental human right rather than a financial asset, emphasizing that homelessness and housing insecurity are systemic failures rooted in policy and economic structures rather than individual circumstances. It highlights concerns about the “financialization” of housing—where investors and private equity drive up rents, displacement, and homelessness—and calls for stronger regulation, tenant protections, and policies aligned with human rights principles. The broader implication is that global housing crises, including affordability and homelessness, are framed as the result of policy choices that fail to prioritize human dignity and adequate housing obligations under international human rights law.

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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