

Homelessness MATTERS



October 3rd, 2025

COALITION NEWS



Join Our Homeless Does Not Mean Voteless: Power to the Polls Campaign!

There is a major election in New Jersey on Tuesday, November 4, which will decide who the next Governor will be and the make-up of the entire State Assembly. The deadline to register to vote in this upcoming election is **Tuesday, October 14**, meaning we have *less than two weeks* to help people [register](#) and [check their registration status](#).

We are offering \$100 to homeless service providers to cover costs associated with hosting a voter registration event or party ahead of the October 14 deadline: <https://forms.office.com/r/TPKTnVn0pL>

Please email Raisa at rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org for more information about how to get involved with these efforts.

Last Week to Apply for the 2025 Garden State Leaders Program: Elevating the Voices of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness

GARDEN STATE LEADERS

Use Your Experience to Create
Positive Change in New Jersey!



(PHOTO: Garden State Leaders 10 Year Celebration)

Garden State Leaders is a leadership and advocacy training program for individuals who have experienced housing insecurity or homelessness in New Jersey.

The 2025 program begins in October and will be made up of four day-long, in-person sessions, once a month through January, as well as four virtual sessions.

- Learn how to advocate and tell your own story to effect change on public policies that matter to you.
- FREE to participate (technology and transportation assistance may be available).
- Network with state and local leaders in government and nonprofit fields.
- Join a community of over 100 graduates from around the state!
- Visit the NJ State House and interact with legislators in the place where policy decisions are made.



**4 in-person sessions at *CLiME,
at Rutgers University's Newark,
NJ
+ 4 virtual sessions.**

*CLiME—Center on Law, Inequality & Metropolitan
Equity

[Click Here To Apply To Become A
Garden State Leader!](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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Employment Opportunity:

AmeriCorps Program Manager

Join the Coalition and lead meaningful change with AmeriCorps

We are hiring a Full-time Program Manager to recruit and support members, manage program operations, and drive impact in the community.

Learn more about this great opportunity!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION



Take
Action
NOW!

[Urge New Jersey Leaders to Restore the Affordable Housing Trust Fund](#)

The NJ budget diverted \$125 million from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF), a critical resource for building affordable housing for low income and very low-income residents. With a shortfall of nearly 290,000 affordable homes in NJ, restoring this fund needs to be a top priority. Your voice has already made an impact: **\$45 million** was restored to the Trust Fund as a result of our advocacy, but more action is needed. [Contact Governor Murphy and your state legislators](#) to urge them to restore the AHTF, using revenue from the new mansion tax.

[Stop the Dramatic Cuts and Federal Weaponization of CoC Funding, Putting Over 170,000 People at Risk of Homelessness](#)

In a change expected to put more than 170,000 Americans at risk of experiencing homelessness, Politico reported this week that HUD is planning to make dramatic cuts to the FY25 Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). These include capping CoC funding for permanent supportive housing programs at 30%, compared with 87% of CoC funds for supportive housing now, and penalizing communities not aligned with the administration's partisan agenda. Urge Congress to not politicize life-saving homeless services funding and hold HUD accountable to their promised 2-year funding cycle!

RESOURCES FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

[From the National Alliance to End Homelessness:](#)

HOMELESSNESS DOESN'T SHUT DOWN WHEN THE GOVERNMENT DOES

Top tips for federally-funded organizations to ensure the least amount of potential impact on people experiencing homelessness.

- ☒ Confirm access to e-snaps and eLOCCS for all who need it.
- ☒ Review any grant-associated deadlines (not associated with the CoC competition).
- ☒ Be patient with federal offices if they are slow to respond.
- ☒ Check in with program participants and come up with a plan for how to support them in accessing public benefits.



NJ Eviction Guide Released

The NJ Department of Community Affairs recently released the NJ Eviction Guide, a guide available in English and Spanish to help tenants understand where they are in the eviction process and connect with free legal help in their county:

<https://www.nj.gov/dca/dhcr/offices/evictionguide.shtml>. Please share this resource widely and contact evictionprevention@dca.nj.gov or (609) 376-0810 with any questions.

NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



Time to Raise Federal Poverty Line, Dozens of Lawmakers Say

msn

New Jersey lawmakers have passed bill AR131, a resolution urging the federal government to raise the outdated federal poverty line so more families can qualify for critical programs like Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF. Sponsors argue that the current formula, created in the 1960s and based only on food costs, fails to reflect today's high expenses for housing, childcare, and healthcare, leaving millions of struggling households ineligible for aid. While symbolic, the measure highlights the growing push to modernize poverty guidelines and address the "benefits cliff" faced by low-wage workers.



How Rent Control Works in New Jersey

The Jersey Bee

More than one-third of New Jersey households rent their homes, but there's no statewide rent control system—each municipality sets its own rules. As of 2025, only about 1 in 5 towns have rent control ordinances, mostly in the state's largest counties, and enforcement varies widely. Tenants can confirm whether their unit is covered by local rent control by checking municipal ordinances, contacting rent boards or clerks, and filing complaints if landlords impose unlawful increases.



Housing and Community Development Network Launches Action Fund to Advance Housing Justice

INSIDER NJ

The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey has launched the **Housing and Community Development Network Action Fund (HCDN Action Fund)**, a 501(c)(4) focused on advancing housing justice through lobbying, community education, and political engagement. The Fund will advocate for policies that prioritize housing as a human right, support community development corporations, and revitalize neighborhoods across New Jersey. By directly engaging with policymakers and promoting leaders who share these values, the Action Fund aims to build stronger, more affordable communities statewide.



Controversial Homelessness Policy Tabled, As Haddonfield Considers New Paths

Patch

Haddonfield officials have tabled a controversial ordinance that would have criminalized sleeping outside and imposed fines or jail time on unhoused residents. Following strong public outcry and alternative proposals, the borough is now considering hiring a social worker to work with police and local organizations to provide support rather than punishment. While the ordinance could be revisited, commissioners signaled that pursuing compassionate, community-based solutions may be the more effective path forward.



Over 15K Households Have Applied for Section 8 Waitlist in Newark

PIX 11

More than 15,000 households have already applied for Newark's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher waitlist just two weeks after it opened, highlighting the city's urgent demand for affordable housing. It's the first time the waitlist has been opened



New Jersey Families Benefit from PSEG Foundation's Support of HomeFront

MORNINGSTAR

HomeFront, with support from the PSEG Foundation, is making a significant impact for families in New Jersey by providing shelter, meals, housing assistance and

since 2013, and applicants will be selected through a lottery system. To qualify, households must earn less than 80% of the area median income, with priority given to those earning significantly less.

children's programs. In 2024 alone, the organization supported more than 30,000 individuals, distributed over 1.8 million meals and 1.1 million diapers, enrolled 139 children in enrichment programs, and more.

Westfield Honored for Efforts Addressing Homelessness, Affordable Housing

Patch

Westfield, NJ has been recognized with the 2025 Municipal Award from the Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey for its leadership in advancing supportive housing. The town was honored for programs like its Affordability

Assistance initiative, emergency preparedness in affordable buildings, and community engagement, as well as for developing 22 permanent housing units for homeless and at-risk veterans in partnership with local veterans' organizations. This project highlights how municipalities can play a key role in expanding housing and services for vulnerable populations.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



Trump Admin Looks at Deep Cuts to Homelessness Housing Program

POLITICO

The Trump administration is preparing major cuts to HUD's Continuum of Care program, reducing funding for permanent housing and redirecting it toward transitional housing with work or service requirements. This shift would lower permanent housing support from \$3.3 billion to about \$1.1 billion, potentially putting more than 170,000 people, including families and people with disabilities, at risk of returning to shelters or the streets. Critics warn the change undermines proven housing solutions, may violate federal law, and will leave rural communities especially vulnerable.



2028 Olympics: Fears of Mass Displacement and Homeless Sweeps as Trump Threat Looms

The Guardian

With the 2028 Olympics on the horizon, fears are growing that Los Angeles will once again push unhoused communities out of sight, echoing the harsh crackdowns of the 1984 Games. Mayor Karen Bass has pledged a “housing first” approach, but mounting pressure from Trump and Newsom has advocates bracing for sweeps and displacement. As the city faces a worsening housing crisis, many warn the Olympics could become a flashpoint for deepening inequality unless bold, humane action is taken.



The Massive Stakes of The Big Federal Housing Bill Explained

Vox

The U.S. housing crisis is worsened by fragmented layers of government, where local opposition often blocks new development despite broader regional benefits. While some states like Oregon and California have stepped in to override restrictive zoning, large-scale reform remains difficult. The bipartisan ROAD to Housing Act offers modest federal steps — such as model zoning codes and financial incentives for cities that expand housing supply — which some experts believe



Trump's Push to Institutionalize Homeless Americans Offers Quick Fix and Sparks Fear

NPR

President Trump is pushing a plan to expand civil commitment, which would force many homeless people into long-term institutional treatment for addiction and mental illness. Supporters argue it could restore public order, but critics warn it threatens civil liberties, is prohibitively expensive, and lacks the treatment capacity to succeed. Experts emphasize that affordable housing and voluntary care are more effective and less costly than mass institutionalization.



Millions Could Lose Housing Aid Under Trump Plan

PROPUBLICA

The Trump administration’s new executive order rolls back support for the “housing first” model, instead promoting punitive measures like mandatory treatment, institutionalization, and criminalization of homelessness—despite strong evidence showing housing-first programs improve stability, reduce costs, and save lives. Advocates warn this shift will endanger vulnerable populations, including domestic violence survivors, youth at risk of trafficking, and people with severe mental illness, by denying them access to stable housing without preconditions. As one

could evolve into transformative “Right-to-Build Zones” that make it easier to construct new homes where they’re most needed.



To Get People off The Street, He Pays for a One-Way Ticket Home

The New York Times

An activist in Santa Monica launched a small hotline program that offers unhoused people free bus or plane tickets to reunite with family, operating as a quicker and cheaper alternative to traditional housing or rehab programs. Using an A.I. chatbot to intake calls, the effort has already sent people from Los Angeles back to places like Philadelphia, Idaho, and North Carolina, though often without long-term supports in place. The initiative reflects a growing trend in West Coast cities to reduce visible homelessness through relocation, raising both hope for reconnection and concerns about whether it truly solves the crisis.

advocate powerfully argues, housing is not a reward—it’s a lifeline that makes recovery, safety, and dignity possible.



Opinion: Preventing Youth Homelessness Before It Starts

CITYLIMITS

A mother who experienced homelessness with her two young children shared how navigating New York City’s system left her feeling invisible and unsupported until she connected with Henry Street Settlement and Point Source Youth. As a youth consultant, she helped design the Targeted Housing Assistance Program, which provides direct cash aid and personalized housing plans to young people in crisis, preventing them from entering the shelter system. The pilot, now in eight cities, has shown strong results with 90% of participants stably housed within 30 days, offering hope for scalable, compassionate solutions to youth homelessness.



Local Experts Push Back on Criminalizing Homelessness

NORTHERN express

The Trump Administration’s new executive order emphasizes incarceration and institutionalization over housing-first strategies, raising concerns among experts who stress that housing remains the essential solution to homelessness.



Bipartisan RESIDE Act Aims to Convert Vacant Spaces into Housing

Housingwire

The bipartisan RESIDE Act would launch a pilot grant program to convert vacant offices, malls, motels, and other unused buildings into affordable housing, helping address shortages in major U.S. cities.

Advocates argue that without affordable housing, it's nearly impossible for people to overcome challenges like unemployment, addiction, or mental health crises, and that evidence shows housing is both more effective and less costly than punitive approaches. Local leaders in Michigan and beyond continue to push for long-term housing solutions, harm reduction, and comprehensive support services, underscoring that homelessness is best addressed with compassion and stable housing rather than punishment.

Lawmakers describe it as a cost-neutral way to revive underused properties, boost housing supply, and support homeownership. If enacted, HUD would oversee the program through its HOME initiative, prioritizing communities with fewer regulatory barriers to conversions.



Homelessness Is Dropping in California Counties but Funding Cuts Could Derail That Progress

The MENDOCINO VOICE

Homelessness among older adults is rising sharply, with more than 138,000 seniors experiencing it on a single night in 2023. Advocates warn this “emerging crisis” is fueled by rising rents, cuts to safety net programs like Medicaid and SNAP, and the loss of federal job training programs for older people, leaving many at risk of losing stable housing late in life. Programs like PACE, which aim to help elders remain in their homes, now face the challenge of serving clients who have no home to return to.



The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Does Not Address The Root of America's Housing Challenges

Reason Foundation

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is the largest federal program supporting affordable housing, costing about \$14.4 billion annually in tax breaks to developers and creating 3.7 million units since 1987. While it has helped place affordable homes in location-efficient areas and improve neighborhood stability, critics argue it is overly complex, costly, and inefficient, often failing to expand the overall housing stock. Policymakers are now questioning whether simpler alternatives—like zoning reforms to allow more medium-density housing—could address the housing shortage more effectively and at lower cost.

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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