

# Homelessness MATTERS



March 26th, 2026

## IN THIS EDITION:

- **Coalition In the News:** Coalition launches \$100M SHIELD NJ campaign to fight NJ homelessness
- **Opportunities for Action:** Tell the General Services Administration by 3/30: Don't Politicize the Lifesaving Efforts of Nonprofits!
- **Resources for Providers:** Join us for upcoming trainings on reaching marginalized voters, effective case management strategies, suicide prevention, and more!
- **NJ Homelessness in the News:** NJ towns take major step to prevent homelessness through housing plans; NJ joins multi-state lawsuit to protect fair housing, prevent instability
- **News From Around the Country:** Homeless youth crisis fueling next generation of chronic homelessness; Extreme heat: an overlooked threat to unsheltered homeless populations; re-thinking homeless outreach strategies, and much more!

## COALITION IN THE NEWS



### [Coalition Testifies at State Legislative Budget Hearings, Launches SHIELD NJ Campaign for \\$100 Million to Sustain Homeless Response System](#)

Coalition CEO Connie Mercer testified at the Assembly and Senate budget hearings this week to ask the NJ Legislature to preserve \$25 million for rapid re-housing in the governor's budget proposal and invest at minimum an additional \$75 million in our homeless response system.

Homelessness in NJ has risen 57% over the past three years, placing the state's response system under severe strain. Without increased funding, DCA projects that by the end of 2026 emergency shelter demand could grow 91% and street homelessness 94%.

**With \$100 million, we can SHIELD New Jersey residents from homelessness:**

**S** — Shelter: \$17.5M for emergency shelters and operations

**H** — Housing: \$25M for rapid re-housing; \$15M for supportive housing

**I** — Intervention: \$7.5M for street outreach connecting unsheltered individuals to services

**E** — Eviction Prevention: \$20M to prevent homelessness, including sustainable funding

**L** — Landlord Engagement: \$10M for housing navigation and landlord partnerships

**D** — Data & Coordination: \$5M to strengthen NJ homelessness data systems and municipal support

**Please contact Coalition Policy Associate Raisa at [rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org](mailto:rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org) to get involved in advocating to turn the tide of homelessness in NJ.**

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION



### **Tell the GSA by March 30th: Nonprofits' Lifesaving Efforts Should Not Be Politicized!**

The General Services Administration (GSA) has proposed major changes to the System for Award Management (SAM) that, if approved, would require recipients of federal financial assistance to sign new certifications under penalty of federal law that attempt to align around federal executive orders and guidance on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and undocumented immigration.

**You have until March 30th to submit your opposition:** Emergency shelters and homeless service providers need to be able to keep people alive and serve all in need, without fear of funding loss or penalty.

## RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS



## Reaching Marginalized Voters Training

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026  
6PM

**REGISTER & LEARN MORE: [LWVNJ.ORG/TRAINING](https://lwnj.org/training)**



Join the Coalition and the League of Women Voters for a training on engaging voters who are often overlooked or face barriers to participation. Click here to register:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/C52RTUpKQC6kcRC5FK1XSg#/registration>



## 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](mailto: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.



Opioid  
Response  
Network

You asked, we listened! We are so excited to share a free training opportunity for Case Managers working in homeless services across New Jersey.

The NJ Coalition to End Homelessness is proud to partner with SAMHSA's Opioid Response Network to offer **Meeting Clients Where They Are: Stages of Change and Communication Strategies for Case Managers** on March 30th. This session will focus on practical tools to strengthen client engagement, enhance motivation, and support individuals navigating complex behavioral health and housing challenges.

Please see [this flyer](#) for full details. You can register using the links below:

Monday, March 30th 10:00am - 11:30am:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/join/8\\_obL07wQJea2KsAvHMjPg#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/8_obL07wQJea2KsAvHMjPg#/registration)

Monday, March 30th 2:00pm - 3:30pm:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/K0d0a9orTLKKDwf7-t3UGA#/registration>

Please feel free to share widely with your teams, and keep your eyes peeled for more exciting trainings in the coming months.



# Suicide Prevention

**Tuesday, April 14, 2026**

**During this 1-hour workshop, we will:**

- \* Understand the impact of suicide as a public health issue
- \* Learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide
- \* Learn how to offer hope to someone in crisis
- \* Know how to get help and save a life

**Session times:**

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



[bit.ly/14aprSP](https://bit.ly/14aprSP)

- \* Please register for this workshop in advance by scanning the QR code or clicking the link.
- \* 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](mailto:jangelini@mhanj.org)

**NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS**



### 'Historic Milestone' as NJ Towns Submit Affordable Housing Plans

*NJ Spotlight News*

New Jersey reached a major milestone as over 400 municipalities submitted plans to meet affordable housing requirements under the Mount Laurel doctrine, aiming to address a statewide shortage of more than 200,000 units. With housing costs far outpacing incomes, the expansion of affordable and supportive housing is a key step toward reducing housing instability and preventing homelessness. While some towns still resist, most are moving forward with redevelopment and mixed-income projects to meet growing demand.



### New Jersey Has Joined a 16 State Lawsuit Against U.S. Dept. of HUD Alleging LGBTQ Housing Discrimination

*Out IN Jersey*

New Jersey Attorney General Jennifer Davenport joined 16 states in a federal lawsuit against U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, alleging it threatens to cut funding unless states roll back fair-housing protections for LGBTQ residents and other groups. The suit argues these actions would weaken enforcement of the Fair Housing Act and increase discrimination in an already strained housing market. Officials warn that reducing protections could worsen housing instability and make it harder for vulnerable populations to secure stable housing.

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



### Kids With No Safe Place to Rest at Night Are Becoming Chronically Homeless Adults

*CAL Matters*

The youth homelessness crisis is creating a pipeline to chronic adult homelessness, with more than 60% of homeless youth in some areas unsheltered and only a small share of shelter beds dedicated to them. Many young people face disrupted education, trauma, and long-term instability, with



### How Extreme Heat Affects the Unhoused

*University of Utah Health*

Extreme heat is emerging as a dangerous and often overlooked threat for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, according to researchers at University of Utah Health. With limited access to cooling spaces, individuals are forced to rely on improvised strategies—like riding buses

roughly half of chronically homeless adults first experiencing homelessness before age 25. The broader implication for communities nationwide is clear: without targeted interventions for homeless youth, cycles of homelessness will persist across generations.

or making small purchases to briefly escape extreme temperatures—highlighting deep inequities in urban environments. The research underscores that while short-term fixes can help, expanding access to permanent supportive housing is essential to reducing health risks and preventing homelessness long-term.



### Combatting Homelessness With Tiny Homes

*Psychology Today*

In Utah, lawmakers are backing a bold new approach to homelessness—funding the tiny-home community The Other Side Village over a controversial large-scale shelter plan. Highlighted in *Psychology Today*, the model focuses on peer support, jobs, and life skills, aiming to create lasting stability rather than temporary fixes. The shift signals growing momentum behind community-driven solutions to chronic homelessness. Early results suggest this approach can empower residents with dignity, independence, and long-term success.



### The Alternative Reality of Homelessness Policy

*City Journal*

This opinion piece argues that contemporary urban homelessness policy, as exemplified by New York's WARM outreach program, perpetuates myths that obscure the complexity of street homelessness, portraying it as a novel crisis requiring compassionate intervention while downplaying addiction, mental illness, and public safety concerns. Outreach efforts often focus on engagement with limited impact on shelter use, health outcomes, or encampment visibility, treating homelessness as a static condition rather than a range of individual needs. Critics contend this approach prioritizes ideological social justice over public order, allowing disorder to persist while failing both residents and those it aims to help.



## [The Right to a Bed in Zohran Mamdani's New York](#)

*The New Yorker*

Bellevue, long the cornerstone of New York City's shelter system, is closing due to severe disrepair, with residents transferred to other facilities. Mayor Zohran Mamdani emphasizes connecting homeless New Yorkers to housing rather than just crisis beds, and outreach workers—not police—will engage with encampments. DSS Commissioner Erin Dalton is implementing a data-driven, individualized approach based on her Allegheny County experience. The story illustrates that addressing homelessness in NYC is about more than beds—it requires balancing safety, dignity, and effective pathways to permanent housing, while modernizing facilities that have long outlived their usefulness.

## [NYC Opens New Anti-Trauma, 'Front Door' for Homeless Women Seeking Shelter](#)

*Gothamist*

New York City has opened an \$89.5 million, trauma-informed intake center for homeless women in East New York, designed to provide privacy, safety, and supportive services from the moment they enter shelter. The facility includes private rooms, clinical and therapeutic spaces, and amenities intended to reduce trauma and support faster transitions to permanent housing. This model underscores the importance of trauma-sensitive environments at the front end of the shelter system, with potential to improve outcomes for unhoused women nationwide.



## [Mental Health and the Assault on Autonomy in the New America](#)

*Mad in America*

Recent federal policies are increasingly blurring the lines between homelessness, mental illness, and criminality, raising concerns that unhoused individuals could face expanded involuntary detention or loss of rights. Evidence shows homelessness is more often driven by systemic factors like housing costs and economic inequality—not mental illness—and shifting resources away from proven solutions like housing-first programs may worsen outcomes for vulnerable populations.

## [South Philly Homeless Encampment Residents Facing Displacement Call on the City for Safe Outdoor Living Space](#)

*WHYY*

Residents of Camp Chloe, a homeless encampment in South Philadelphia, are calling on the city for safe outdoor sleep sites and better protections as sweeps are planned for the area. Outreach workers, not police, are engaging with residents to provide support, including storage, resources, and connections to shelters when needed. Advocates stress that shelters alone are insufficient, pointing to overcrowding and restrictive rules that often separate couples, pets, or people with health needs. They argue that safe outdoor

spaces allow people to wait for housing while maintaining dignity, safety, and community.

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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](mailto:info@NJCEH.org)

[DONATE TO SUPPORT THE COALITION'S WORK TO END HOMELESSNESS](#)

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