

Homelessness MATTERS



January 15th, 2026

IN THIS EDITION:

- **Coalition News:** *Legislative Victories for Homeless Policies*
- **New Jersey Homelessness in the News:** *Is Guaranteed Income Coming to Hoboken? and more...*
- **News From Around the Country:** *24 Hours of Chaos as Mental Health/Homelessness Grants are Cut and then Restored and more...*

COALITION NEWS

Lame Duck Session Delivers Key Legislative Victories

The NJ Coalition to End Homelessness applauds the NJ Legislature for passing crucial homelessness bills this week, including:

- Establishing a Code Red pilot program and protocol during extreme heat and air quality emergencies ([A2258/S2346](#); Lopez/Turner)
- Authorizing municipal housing plans and homelessness trust funds ([A3360/S4832](#); Scutari/Carter)
- Limiting excessive tenant application fees ([A4899/S3659](#); Carter/Stack)

We urge Governor Murphy to sign these bills into law and thank Senate President Scutari, Speaker Coughlin, and all of the bill sponsors for their leadership.



Staff Spotlight and Policy Update: **It's Been Absolute Chaos: Homelessness Providers Stuck in Limbo Awaiting Federal Funds**

A recent Next City/Shelterforce article examines the turmoil surrounding HUD's Continuum of Care funding after proposed changes threatened billions for homelessness services nationwide. Coalition Policy Associate, Raisa Rubin-Stankiewicz, is quoted describing the situation for providers as "absolute chaos," warning that cuts to permanent supportive housing would leave the most vulnerable people with nowhere to go. The article underscores how legal

NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



[Bon Jovi's Pay-It-Forward NJ Eatery Faces Possible Closure](#)

nj.com

JB Soul Kitchen, the pay-it-forward charity restaurant founded by Jon Bon Jovi, is set to close its pop-up location inside the Ocean County Library in Toms River at the end of the month amid ongoing debate over homelessness downtown. Local officials have cited concerns about loitering and disorderly behavior by unhoused individuals near the site, while the restaurant says most patrons face food insecurity and has provided housing referrals and other support services. A final decision on extending the restaurant's occupancy has not yet been made by the county library board.



[Former NJ Councilman Avoids Jail Time After Facing Criminal Charges For Assault, Intimidation](#)

nj.com

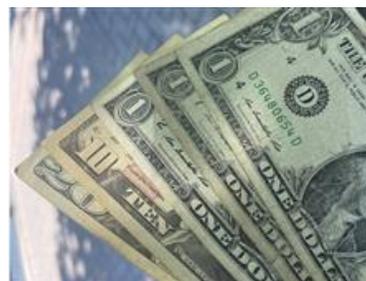
A former Dover councilman accused of harassing homeless individuals has been admitted into a pre-trial intervention program that allows him to



[New Summit Council Members Take Oath at Meeting](#)

TAPinto Summit

Summit officials highlighted progress toward “functional zero” homelessness during the city's 2026 organization meeting, crediting coordinated outreach by the mayor's homelessness task force, law enforcement, case managers, and volunteers. Mayor Elizabeth Fagan said the city's approach prioritizes humane intervention and public safety, stressing that Summit does not ignore people living without shelter.



[Is Guaranteed Income Coming to Hoboken?](#)

TAPinto Hoboken

Hoboken has formed a Guaranteed Basic Income Task Force to design a pilot program that would provide direct monthly cash payments to low-income residents to help address housing and cost-of-living pressures. Mayor Ravi Bhalla said the initiative, targeted in part at families, seniors, and residents at risk of housing instability, could launch in early 2027 and may be funded through cannabis tax revenue. The task force will develop eligibility

avoid jail time, authorities said. Sergio Rodriguez, 30, faces disorderly persons charges after prosecutors said he recorded himself confronting three homeless people drinking in public early last year, along with a separate incident involving a local business. Rodriguez will spend 12 months in the program and maintains he admitted no wrongdoing as part of the agreement.

rules, payment levels, and oversight measures while working with housing and social service organizations.



JFS "Souper Bowl" to Help Feed the Hungry.

Fideri News Network Report

Jewish Family Service of Atlantic and Cape May Counties will host its annual "Souper Bowl" food drive from Jan. 23 through Feb. 2, collecting canned and packaged soups to help combat food insecurity during the winter months. Donations will support JFS's Margate pantry and Atlantic City food truck, which together serve thousands of adults and children each year. Community members are encouraged to donate hearty soups, with pop-top cans preferred for ease of access.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



24 Hours of Chaos as Mental Health Grants are Slashed, Then Restored *WNYC/NPR*

After briefly cutting off nearly \$2 billion in SAMHSA grants, the Trump administration reversed course, restoring funding for mental health and addiction programs that many people experiencing homelessness rely on for survival and stability. The sudden defunding caused widespread panic among providers who warned that service disruptions would rapidly dismantle safety-net programs critical to preventing homelessness and overdose deaths. Although funding was restored, advocates say the episode deepened uncertainty in an already fragile system serving people with the greatest housing and health needs.



[National Alliance to End Homelessness CEO Corner](#)

*National Alliance to End Homelessness
Blog*

A recent court ruling has temporarily stopped HUD from canceling the FY24–25 Continuum of Care NOFO, preserving funding for evidence-based permanent housing programs during ongoing litigation. The decision helps prevent sudden housing instability for more than 170,000 people nationwide, especially during the winter months. Advocacy efforts continue to protect the integrity of federal homelessness policy and proven housing solutions.



[What to Know as Trump Targets Child Care and Social Service Funding to 5 States Led by Democrats](#)

The Intelligencer

The Trump administration has temporarily frozen billions in federal social safety net funds to California, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York, affecting programs that support child care, cash assistance, and homeless services for low-income families. While the administration cites concerns about fraud, critics warn the freeze could create budget shortfalls, disrupt child care centers, and leave shelters and vulnerable children without crucial support, though a federal judge has blocked the freeze for at least two weeks.



[Is Gavin Newsom Really Turning the Corner on Homelessness?](#)

Politico

California Gov. Gavin Newsom is highlighting a reported 9% decline in unsheltered (street) homelessness—the first reversal of an upward trend during his tenure—as evidence of progress after years of rising numbers. Reporters note the drop is real and significant, though it follows substantial increases since 2019 and is driven largely by gains in Los Angeles, while overall homelessness likely fell less or may still be high as more people moved



[Rural Homelessness is on the Rise. Volunteers Are Rallying to Meet The Moment](#)

Christian Science Monitor

Rural homelessness is surging as job losses, stagnant wages, and scarce housing leave many teetering on the edge. In towns like Three Rivers, Michigan, volunteers with heart—and a lot of grit—are stepping in, serving hot meals, warm coats, and a helping hand through groups like HOPE. Still,

into shelters. The data appears credible but imperfect, and while the decline gives Newsom a stronger defense politically, homelessness remains a major vulnerability as he looks toward a potential 2028 presidential run.

underfunded programs and stretched resources mean these small communities are fighting an uphill battle to keep up with a growing tide of neighbors in need.



Homeless Shelters for Seniors Pop Up, Catering to Older Adults' Medical Needs

KFF Health News

A former hotel near Salt Lake City has been transformed into a specialized shelter for seniors experiencing homelessness, offering accessible rooms and on-site medical care for older adults and people with chronic health conditions. Known as the Medically Vulnerable People shelter, the model addresses the growing number of unhoused seniors who often struggle in traditional shelters not equipped for aging or medical needs. Advocates say such shelters can be life-saving and are increasingly being replicated nationwide, though demand continues to far outpace available beds.



Slotkin Introduces Bill to Declare National Housing Emergency and Use Full Force of the Government to Build 4 Million Homes

The Office of U.S. Senator Elissa Slotkin

On January 13th, Senator Elissa Slotkin of Michigan introduced the National Housing Emergency Act of 2026 to tackle the U.S. housing crisis by declaring a national housing emergency and using the Defense Production Act to build 4 million homes. The bill aims to speed construction by boosting domestic materials, cutting local red tape, and rewarding communities that support growth, while holding back those that block housing development. Supporters say it could expand housing access and help reduce homelessness by increasing the overall supply of homes.



Federal Assistance Programs Help Mitigate The Worst of the Housing Crisis

JCHS

Skyrocketing rents are leaving millions of American renters teetering on the



Georgia is Investing \$50 Million to Curb Homelessness

WABE

edge—half of all renters, or a record 22.6 million households in 2023, spent more than 30% of their income on housing, leaving as little as \$250 a month for everything else. For these families, seniors, and households with children, programs like SNAP and Medicaid are lifelines, keeping food on the table and health care within reach—but looming federal cuts threaten to strip away that safety net. Without them, the cost of housing can quickly spiral into food insecurity, medical crises, and even homelessness.

This week, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp announced a one-time \$50 million “Homelessness Response Grant” to help local governments and nonprofits fund shelters, outreach, transitional housing, and wraparound services, as Atlanta prepares to host the World Cup. Kemp framed the investment as a statewide effort focused on long-term stability rather than optics, though the timing underscores pressure to present a positive image to global visitors. The move also comes amid concern that impending federal cuts to supportive housing programs could leave major gaps in care, making state and local funding more critical.

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

DONATE TO SUPPORT THE COALITION'S WORK TO END HOMELESSNESS



NJ Coalition to End Homelessness | 10 Mercer Street | Princeton, NJ 08540 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!