

# Homelessness MATTERS



April 22nd, 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:** NAACP backs bill aimed at dismantling zoning barriers, expanding affordable housing access; NJ pilots veteran housing model using underused Legion posts
- **News From Around the Country:** Louisiana bill threatens jail, forced treatment, unpaid labor for homeless; HUD policy shift guts Housing First, risking mass homelessness surge; Study finds \$750 cash boosts stability, not moves into housing

And much more...

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

A 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 a purple circle at the bottom, and three white silhouettes of people. To the right of the shield, the text "S.H.I.E.L.D. NJ" is written in large, bold, blue letters. Below the yellow stripe, the text "A plan to fund sheltering people now and to prevent homelessness before it starts." 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](mailto:rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org)

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### [Act Now Against HUD Proposals that Threaten Housing Stability](#)

Two urgent deadlines are approaching to oppose harmful HUD rules that could worsen homelessness:

- By April 27: [Preserve 30-day eviction notice protections for tenants in HUD-subsidized housing](#)
- By May 1: [Reject optional time limits and work requirements on rental assistance](#)

[Learn how to take action now from the National Low Income Housing Coalition](#)

## 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 152,000 NJ residents seeking homelessness-related services last year, 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.

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## 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*

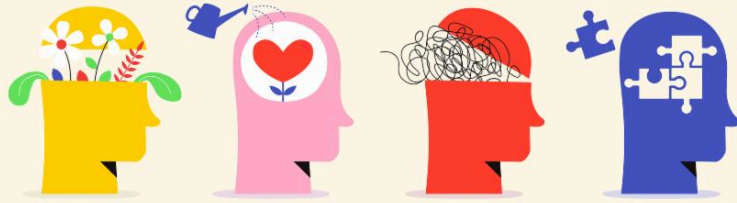


- Deep discounts for organizations with smaller budgets
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- 20% off specific courses for NJCEH member organizations
  - Use NJCEH20 at checkout

Contact Jessica Cantermen with any questions: [jcantermen@njceh.org](mailto:jcantermen@njceh.org)

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# 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](https://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](mailto: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](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.



## NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



### YIGBY Bill Would Empower Black Churches to Build Housing

*nj.com*

Although the explicit red lines of segregation were outlawed by the Fair Housing Act of 1968, advocates argue that exclusionary zoning in places like New Jersey continues to keep many



### New Jersey Wants to Help End Veteran Homelessness Nationwide

*AMERICAN LEGION*

New Jersey is piloting an innovative approach to end veteran homelessness by converting underused American Legion posts into affordable housing paired with supportive services. Led by

Black and Brown families out of high-opportunity communities. The NAACP is backing Senate Bill S1836, known as “Yes In God’s Backyard,” which would make it easier for houses of worship to build affordable housing on underused land. Supporters say the measure could help dismantle modern barriers to homeownership and allow faith institutions to play a powerful role in addressing the state’s housing crisis.

the Foundation for Sustainable Veteran Housing, the model combines housing development with community partnerships and wraparound care. Leaders aim to scale this effort into a national “playbook,” offering a replicable strategy to help reduce veteran homelessness across the country.



### [Newton Officials Tour Bergen County Shelter, Review Potential Local Approaches](#)

*TAPinto Newton*

Officials in Newton, New Jersey are exploring local strategies to address homelessness after touring a regional shelter operated by the Housing Authority of Bergen County. The visit, joined by regional partners, provided insight into shelter operations, funding models, and effective services. Leaders say the experience offered valuable ideas—and cautions—as the town considers potential next steps.



### [Morristown Memorial Fund to Help Homeless Women, Children](#)

*Patch.com*

A new memorial endowment fund has been established by Homeless Solutions Inc. to honor a dedicated volunteer, raising over \$120,000 to support programs for women and children experiencing homelessness. The fund reflects how community-driven generosity can create lasting impact, turning personal loss into ongoing support for those in need.

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



### [Louisiana Advances Bill to Funnel Homeless People Into Forced Treatment and Unpaid Labor](#)

*HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS*



### [A Grim March Toward Death" What HUD's New Homeless Policy Looks Like On The Ground](#)

*SHELTERFORCE*

Advocates are raising concerns over a Louisiana bill that would criminalize homelessness and require individuals to choose between jail or mandated treatment, potentially paired with unpaid labor if they cannot cover costs. Critics argue the proposal—linked to policy ideas from the Cicero Institute—reflects a broader national trend toward punitive approaches rather than addressing root causes like housing affordability. The debate highlights growing tensions over how states, including those influenced by figures like Donald Trump, respond to homelessness at a systemic level.

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### [How Giving Homeless People \\$750 a Month Improved Lives](#)

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

New research from the University of Southern California Homelessness Policy Research Institute finds that providing \$750 monthly cash payments to people experiencing homelessness improved financial stability and well-being, but did not significantly increase rates of securing housing. The study suggests that while direct cash support helps meet basic needs, it is insufficient on its own to overcome structural barriers like high rents and limited housing supply. The findings highlight the need for deeper housing investments alongside income support to meaningfully reduce homelessness.

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A sweeping policy shift from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has thrown homelessness services nationwide into crisis, abruptly moving away from the long-standing Housing First model that prioritizes permanent housing. Local administrators warn the change could force programs to cut permanent housing support for tens of thousands of people, potentially pushing many back onto the streets. With lawsuits pending and guidance unclear, service providers say the disruption is already destabilizing the systems that keep vulnerable people housed—and could have life-or-death consequences.

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### [Tackling Homelessness Through Data, Collaboration, and Listening to Lived Experience](#)

HARVARD T.H. CHAN

Experts at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health emphasize that homelessness is a complex crisis driven by health, economic, and social factors, requiring coordinated, cross-sector solutions. Panelists highlighted the importance of shifting away from punitive responses toward data-driven strategies, supportive services, and input from people with lived experience. The discussion underscores a growing consensus that preventing and reducing homelessness depends on collaboration across public health, housing, and community systems..

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## 'Dear America': HUD Workers Say They're Being Blocked from Doing Their Jobs

*NJPR*

## I Ran Housing Under Obama. Trump's New HUD Rule Scapegoats Immigrants.

*USA TODAY*

Former HUD Secretary Julián Castro warns that a proposed rule by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development could deny housing assistance to entire families based on one member's immigration status, potentially leading to widespread evictions. Critics argue the policy could increase housing instability and push vulnerable households—including children—into homelessness. The debate reflects broader tensions under Donald Trump's administration over immigration policy, housing access, and the risk of exacerbating the homelessness crisis nationwide.

Federal housing policy changes are raising concerns about reduced enforcement of fair housing protections at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, with staff warning that vulnerable groups may be left without recourse. Advocates note that weakened oversight could disproportionately impact those already at risk of housing instability—including people experiencing homelessness—by limiting protections against discrimination. The situation underscores how shifts in federal policy under leaders like Donald Trump can have downstream effects on housing access and homelessness nationwide.



## With a Lack of Supportive Housing, Homeless People Will End Up Back on the Streets

*Los Angeles Times*

Letters to the editor argue that while interim housing helps reduce unsheltered homelessness, it is only a temporary solution without enough affordable and supportive housing options. Without permanent pathways—especially for people with complex health needs—many individuals cycle back into homelessness. The writers emphasize that solving the crisis requires significantly increasing the supply of stable, long-term housing rather than relying on shelters alone.



## [Analysis: Homelessness Predicted to Rise Despite Policy Efforts](#)

69 NEWS

A national analysis suggests homelessness is likely to rise despite ongoing policy efforts, citing persistent structural drivers like housing costs and limited supply alongside limitations in federal measurement tools such as the Point-In-Time count used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Experts and advocates argue that current approaches often focus too narrowly on mental health or addiction while overlooking broader economic pressures driving housing instability. The discussion highlights growing concern that without deeper investment in affordable housing, homelessness may continue to increase even as new policies are introduced.



## [Time to Protest for An End to Homelessness](#)

JOLT

An opinion piece from The JOLT News Organization argues that homelessness should be treated as a major public crisis deserving of broader civic protest and attention, highlighting the scale and severity of the issue in the United States. Citing rising homelessness rates, high rates of chronic illness, disability, and housing insecurity, the article emphasizes structural drivers such as unaffordable housing and stagnant wages. It calls for greater public mobilization and policy urgency to address homelessness as a systemic national failure rather than an isolated social issue.

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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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