

Homelessness MATTERS



August 7th, 2025

COALITION NEWS



Read [NJCEH's Op-Ed on the Federal Executive Order on Homelessness](#):

We are horrified by the cruel, politically motivated executive order that seeks to treat Americans experiencing homelessness as criminals and circumvent their rights as citizens.

We urge NJ leaders to firmly rebuke this fatally wrong-headed approach. This executive order represents a complete reversal of bipartisan federal homelessness policy over the past few decades — promoting forced institutionalization of unhoused people, incentivizing the criminalization of homelessness in federal grants, pressuring homeless service providers to share client health data with law enforcement, and targeting proven, evidence-based solutions like Housing First and harm reduction.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION



[Tell HUD and Congress to Honor its Promised 2-Year Funding Cycle for](#)

Homeless Service Providers:

Last year, Congress decided — with bipartisan support — to extend the process to apply for HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Funding to a 2-year cycle. Recently, HUD indicated that it intends to retract this commitment and make homeless service providers apply again for FY25 CoC program funding— significantly delaying critical funding and creating the risk that HUD could weaponize this funding in alignment with the [new executive order](#) to penalize programs that engage in proven approaches like Housing First and harm reduction. [Urge HUD and congressional leaders](#) to keep the 2-year Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in place!



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

New Jersey is facing a pivotal election year. On Tuesday, November 4th, voters will decide the future of our state, with the Governor and the entire NJ Assembly on the ballot. It's critical that every voice is heard—including those of our unhoused neighbors.

To host a voter registration event ahead of the October 14th registration deadline, please complete [this form](#) or contact Raisa at rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org. The Coalition will help offset the costs of these events to ensure full participation.



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. [Contact Governor Murphy and your state legislators](#) to urge them to restore the AHTF, using revenue from the new mansion tax.



Street Homelessness in NJ Is Up 15% as Federal Resources Disappear

Gothamist

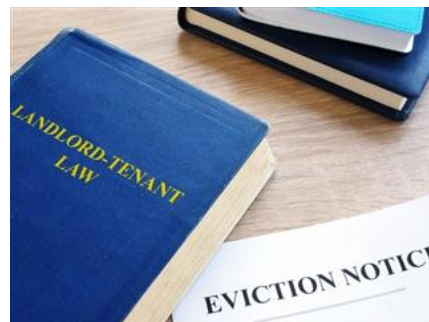
Homelessness in New Jersey has risen to its highest level since 2014, with about 13,700 people counted this year. That marks an 8 percent increase from last year, including a nearly 15 percent spike in unsheltered homelessness. The surge comes as federal cuts to vital programs threaten low-income residents' access to food, housing, and healthcare. Advocates and state leaders point to systemic racism, housing shortages, and rising criminalization as key drivers, calling for urgent investment in prevention and affordable housing.



Senator Kim Advances Historic Agreement to Build More Housing and Lower Costs for Working Americans

The Office of Senator Andy Kim

The Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee unanimously advanced a housing package led in part by Senator Andy Kim of New Jersey, marking the first housing legislation to move forward in the Senate in nearly 20 years. The package includes Senator Kim's bipartisan bills to boost affordable housing supply, streamline the federal review process, expand homeownership, and invest in underserved communities. With New Jersey short more than 220,000 affordable units and one in four renters paying over half their income on rent, these efforts aim to directly address the state's growing housing crisis.



Eviction Knocking at The Door? You Deserve a Lawyer, NJ Congress Members Say

Patch

Senator Cory Booker and Representative LaMonica McIver are pushing the Eviction Right to Counsel Act, which would create a federal grant program to help state and local governments guarantee legal representation for low-income tenants facing eviction. The bill aims to level the playing field for renters, especially in New Jersey where many evictions happen under questionable legal conditions and most tenants go to court without an attorney. Because housing instability is a major driver of homelessness in New Jersey, the bill is strongly supported by both national and local housing advocates.



Camden Police and Social Workers Team Up to Tackle Homelessness, Addiction, Mental Health Issues

FOX 29

In Camden, a partnership between police and social workers is changing how the city responds to homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. Through on-the-ground outreach, teams engage directly with residents in crisis, offering harm reduction tools, wound care, and access to recovery services. The program's soft, supportive approach has led to positive outcomes and is being looked at as a model for compassionate public safety across New Jersey.



Worries About Trump Order Targeting Homeless

NJ Spotlight News

New Jersey's annual point-in-time count found an 8% increase in homelessness compared to 2024, offering lawmakers and housing advocates a one-day snapshot of the crisis. However, advocates like Richard Uniacke of Bridges Outreach stress that the numbers vastly underrepresent the reality, noting his team encountered over 1,800 unsheltered individuals in Newark in just six months. Uniacke criticized President Trump's recent executive order to institutionalize or arrest unhoused people with mental illness or substance use disorders, calling it a harmful move that ignores root causes like eviction and the loss of shared housing.



Homelessness Is Outpacing Affordable Housing In New Jersey, Advocates Say

Patch

Homelessness in New Jersey has reached its highest point in over a decade, with 13,748 people counted this year — a rise driven mostly by eviction and being forced to leave shared housing. While more people are accessing shelters, the number of those living unsheltered has jumped nearly 15 percent, showing that affordable housing options are not keeping pace.



Count of Homeless Finds Number Up 44% Over 2024

CAPE MAY COUNTY HERALD

Cape May County saw a 44 percent increase in homelessness this year, with 300 people counted, including 54 children. Most were staying in emergency motels or warming centers, and nearly one-third reported disabilities or experiences with domestic violence. Advocates say job loss, housing shortages, and untreated mental health needs are driving the crisis, while current responses are not addressing the root causes or offering long-term stability.

Advocates warn that without serious investment in housing and prevention programs, the crisis will only deepen.



New Jersey Church Threatened by Eminent Domain Gets a Reprieve- for Now

WORD & WAY

In Toms River, NJ, Christ Episcopal Church has been in conflict with the mayor over its rejected plan to open a homeless shelter, followed by his push to take the church's land by eminent domain to build a public park with pickleball courts. While the church refused to sell and community backlash grew, the mayor has temporarily removed the proposal from the council's agenda. Church leaders and the Episcopal Diocese argue that seizing the property would violate religious freedom and have vowed to fight any legal attempts to take it.



With Camps Shut Down, New Plan Forms to Help Homeless

JERSEY SHORE ONLINE

After more than 20 years of building and supporting homeless encampments across Monmouth and Ocean counties, Minister Steve Brigham has launched a new initiative to promote self-sufficiency through work. His nonprofit Destiny's Bridge has shifted focus from tents to tools with Just Beautiful Lawn Care, a business that employs individuals recently living on the streets, offering them meaningful work and a path to housing. Brigham's model combines hands-on employment, wraparound support, and community donations



A New Solution: Supportive Housing Advocates, Developers Hope State Law Will Spark Major Expansion of Special Needs Unit

REAL ESTATE NJ

New Jersey's updated affordable housing law is offering new incentives to expand supportive housing across the state. Developers and municipalities can now earn bonus credits toward their affordable housing obligations by including units for people with disabilities or behavioral health needs. Advocates hope these incentives, paired with increased state funding, will boost the supply

to create long-term stability, with future plans to expand into handmade crafts as a second income stream.

of supportive housing and help more residents live independently while avoiding higher-cost systems like hospitals or shelters.



New Multi-Agency Center to Address Addiction Homelessness Will Open Next Year

TAPinto Camden

Camden County is building a \$9 million Multi-Agency Center (MAC) that will bring together government and nonprofit services to support people experiencing homelessness or struggling with substance use. Set to open next year, the center will offer showers, meals, medical care, and case management in a trauma-informed space designed to help clients take the next step toward housing, recovery, or employment. Officials see the MAC as a key part of the county's strategy to reduce overdoses and improve access to care.



SNAP Benefits Don't Cover a Basic Meal Anywhere in NJ

NJ Spotlight News

A new analysis shows that SNAP benefits fall short of covering the cost of even a modest meal in nearly every U.S. county, including all 21 in New Jersey. With average benefits around \$6 per person per day and food prices rising 24% last year, many families are facing increased food insecurity. A recently passed federal law will cut \$186 billion from SNAP over the next decade, threatening benefits for up to 400,000 New Jersey households and shifting major costs to the state and counties.

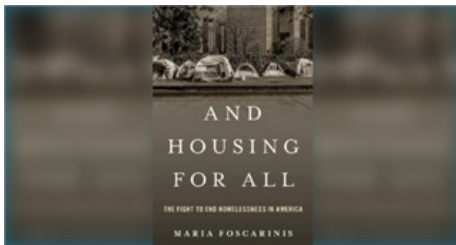
NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Trump Executive Order Raises Fear Among Advocates for People Experiencing Homelessness

News From The States

Advocates are alarmed by former President Trump's recent executive order that allows cities and states to forcibly remove homeless individuals from public spaces and involuntarily commit them to treatment, shifting away from proven "Housing First" strategies. Critics say the order promotes punishment over housing and care, labeling it dehumanizing and dangerous, especially for people with mental illness or substance use challenges. Experts warn the approach will worsen homelessness, strain already overwhelmed systems, and violate civil rights while doing little to address the root causes of the crisis.





'Housing Is a Human Right' Says Legal Advocate Maria Foscarinis

6 KTAL news.com

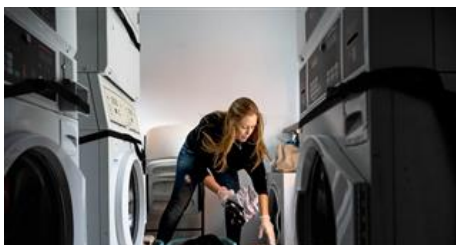
In her book *AND HOUSING FOR ALL*, legal advocate Maria Foscarinis explains that the rise in homelessness is not accidental but the result of policy decisions, especially deep federal housing cuts in the 1980s that were never fully restored. She argues that homelessness is a solvable crisis made worse by criminalizing poverty, clearing encampments, and failing to invest in stable housing. Foscarinis calls on Americans to see housing as a basic human right and a critical foundation for dignity, health, and belonging.



We Can't Arrest Our Way Out of Homelessness

OTHERWORDS

In her op-ed, Shameka Parrish-Wright criticizes President Trump's new executive order that calls for ticketing and arresting people experiencing homelessness, arguing that punishment doesn't solve poverty. She highlights how similar laws in Kentucky have only worsened homelessness and wasted taxpayer dollars, while people still lack access to housing and healthcare. Parrish-Wright urges lawmakers to reject criminalization and invest in real solutions like affordable housing, fair wages, and support services.



Trump Wants to Put Money for Homeless Kids into a Block Grant. School Staff Are Wary

CHALKBEAT

The Trump administration has proposed eliminating dedicated federal funding for homeless students and replacing it with a single K-12 block grant, drastically reducing the amount available. Advocates warn that without targeted funding like McKinney-Vento, schools may struggle to meet the unique needs of unhoused



What The Recent Executive Order Does - and Doesn't - Do

NAEH

The new Executive Order from the White House would strip away core protections for people experiencing homelessness and promote harmful practices like forced institutionalization and attacks on Housing First. It would deepen racial and social disparities and undermine the federal role in supporting local homeless response systems. While the Order itself does not carry legal

students, who face higher barriers and greater instability than their housed peers. Losing this funding would put vulnerable children at greater risk of falling through the cracks and force schools to make painful trade-offs just to keep basic supports in place.

weight without agency action, its direction could cause serious damage if implemented.



Implementing a Hospital-Based Case Management Intervention for People Experiencing Homelessness: The Navigator Program

BMC Health Services Research

The Navigator Program is a hospital-based case management intervention that supports people experiencing homelessness during their hospital stay and for several months after discharge. Its success was driven by strong stakeholder support, a flexible approach that adapted to the hospital setting, and full integration into the care team, which improved coordination and patient outcomes. The study shows that how a program is implemented can be just as important as the program itself.



Emotional Journey for Atlanta's Homeless as City Races to House 400 People Before The World Cup

11 ALIVE

Atlanta is racing to clear homeless encampments ahead of the 2026 World Cup to present a polished image to the world, but the pressure to "clean up" the streets is coming at a cost to unhoused residents. Temporary hotel placements and rushed outreach efforts leave many without stable housing or clear next steps, especially those lacking documents or unwilling to enter unsafe shelters. Advocates say this approach prioritizes appearances over people, pushing vulnerable communities further into crisis instead of offering real solutions.

House Bill Would Leave Over 400,000 More People Without Stable, Affordable Housing

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Atlanta is racing to clear homeless encampments ahead of the 2026 World Cup to present a polished image to the world, but the pressure to "clean up" the streets is coming at a cost to unhoused residents. Temporary hotel placements and rushed outreach efforts leave many without stable housing or clear next steps, especially those lacking documents or

Without Funding Increase, 400,000+ More People Would Experience Housing Instability

Inadequate funding for housing vouchers in 2026 House appropriations bill will exacerbate homelessness and housing instability

~411,000 more people wouldn't receive rental assistance

including:



Source: 2024 HUD Picture of Subsidized Households and HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program Dashboard. Estimates based on the share of people receiving Housing Choice Vouchers in 2024 belonging to each demographic category.

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

unwilling to enter unsafe shelters. Advocates say this approach prioritizes appearances over people, pushing vulnerable communities further into crisis instead of offering real solutions.

[New York Opens First-in-Nation Homeless Shelter for Transgender People](#)

Gothamist

New York City has opened Ace's Place, the first city-funded shelter in the country dedicated to transgender and gender nonconforming people experiencing homelessness. The shelter will serve 150 individuals and offer mental health care, education, and job training in a fully affirming environment. City officials and advocates say it's a critical step toward dignity, safety, and stability for a community that faces high rates of housing discrimination.



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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