

# Homelessness MATTERS



NEWS & NOTES

February 7, 2024

We're excited to launch this inaugural edition of Homelessness Matters! Sharing resources and knowledge helps us all do better — if you run across anything you think would be a good read for your peers, please let us know at [info@NJCEH.org](mailto:info@NJCEH.org).

## COALITION MATTERS

### LEGISLATIVE VICTORY

#### Thousands of NJ Families Remain Stably Housed!

Governor Murphy recently signed into law a piece of legislation the Coalition and its partners fought hard for over the past year. This critical law ensures the Emergency Assistance eligibility window is extended for several of the state's most vulnerable populations who would have otherwise found themselves homeless this March. **A special shout out to Coalition partner, Steve Leder, retired Managing Attorney for the Community Health Law Project of NJ, who fought tirelessly to ensure this positive outcome.**

**[Read testimony on the issue written by Coalition CEO Connie Mercer for a hearing on the bill in December](#)**



### COALITION CONCLUDES EIGHTH YEAR OF ITS GARDEN STATE LEADERS PROGRAM 14 NJ Residents With Lived Experience of Homelessness Graduate!

This leadership and advocacy training program was held over 8 sessions at Princeton University this fall and concluded with a graduation ceremony in Ewing in January. Participants learned how to effectively tell their stories to further advocacy goals while networking with government officials, nonprofit leaders and representatives from the media. **[Learn more about the program here.](#)**

## HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS

**[A Restart on Remaking NJ's](#)**

**[Once again, Trenton Shows More](#)**

## [Affordable Housing Process](#)

*NJ Spotlight News*

Proposed landmark legislation seeks to establish a fair and transparent framework for the development of affordable housing in NJ, these changes would increase regional cooperation, create new affordable housing trust funds, although some municipalities are resisting.

## [Making Progress on Homelessness Requires Support for our Workforce](#)

*National Alliance to End Homelessness*

In the fight against homelessness, the unsung heroes are the dedicated frontline staff. However, these essential workers are facing immense challenges- they are underpaid, understaffed, and overwhelmed. This article sheds light on the critical need to invest in and support the homeless services workforce.

## [Florida Could Adopt a New Solution to Homeless Crisis: Camps](#)

*Tampa Bay Times*

Governor Ron DeSantis is backing a proposal to establish designated camps for homeless individuals in Florida. These camps would offer security, sanitation, and behavioral health services, but the idea has sparked controversy among lawmakers and advocates.

## [Compassion for Animals Than for Humans](#)

*The Trentonian*

The City of Trenton has prioritized animal welfare over the needs of the homeless population. Community action is needed to hold law enforcement accountable and to support marginalized community members.

## [The Supreme Court Will Decide What Cities Can Do With Tent Encampments](#)

*Vox*

The Supreme Court is set to decide on the treatment of homeless individuals and tent encampments in cities, as a case challenges laws that punish homeless people. The Ninth Circuit previously ruled in favor of the homeless plaintiffs, but leaders from various cities hope the Supreme Court will overturn these decisions, citing concerns about government capabilities and potential criminalization of homelessness.

## [How One State is Tackling Homelessness by Turning Abandoned Buildings into Shelters](#)

*ABC News*

This state-funded initiative is investing in local organizations to renovate abandoned buildings into shelters and manage them. The project has added more than 1,300 shelter beds to the state since 2020 and in addition to helping people find somewhere off the streets to turn to, has been effective in placing people into permanent housing.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### [QPR Suicide Prevention Training for Homeless Service Providers](#)

**2/14 10am - 11:30am**

*In partnership with the Mental Health Association of NJ*

[Mental Health First Aid](#)

### [NJ Shelter Consortium February Meeting](#)

**2/15 12pm**

*For Directors of NJ Shelters*

[Homeless Outreach Providers](#)

Certification Course for Homeless

Service Providers

**3/5 9am - 4pm**

*In partnership with the Mental Health  
Association of NJ*

Quarterly Consortium Meeting

**2/14 1:30pm**

*For Directors of NJ's Homeless Outreach  
Programs*

**Focus Group for Shelters to Inform the  
Medicaid 1115 Waiver**

**2/8 3:00pm**

*For Shelter Directors, in partnership with Boston  
Consulting Group and NJDMHAS. Contact  
Lauren for details: lborowick@njceh.org*

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We love to share news about Homelessness Service Agencies' accomplishments, events and noteworthy activities with Coalition members — If you or your organization has something to share, please send it to us at {insert contact/submission info here with an email link [info@NJCEH.org](mailto:info@NJCEH.org)}

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NJ Coalition to End Homelessness | 10 Mercer Street, Princeton, NJ 08540 [www.njceh.org](http://www.njceh.org)

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