



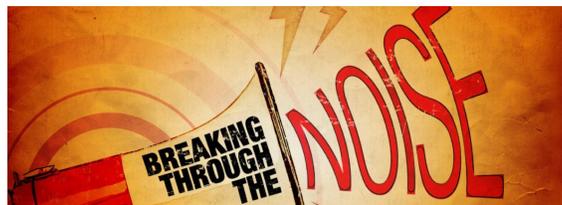
We Need Your Advocacy: Keep NJ Emergency Homeless Shelters and Services Afloat to Provide Life-Saving Services!

We set up meetings in March and early April with key state legislators to advocate for life-saving investments in addressing homelessness, specifically \$10 million in the upcoming state budget toward our underfunded system of homeless emergency services.

Please contact Raisa, our Policy Associate, at rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org or (609) 865-2534 to join these legislative meetings.

Legislators need to hear from you directly about the need we face! We will provide training beforehand in how to lobby and meet with legislators.

This funding could not be more critical, given rising homelessness and the threat of losing federal funding. New Jersey is also facing a particularly tight budget season this year, so our power comes from being unified in advocating together to meet this need.



Lobbying 101 for NJ Residents

The Coalition hosted several lobbying basics training sessions earlier this month. If you missed them, you can see the recording here: <https://youtu.be/7sdjt2V3QP8>. You can also email Raisa if you have any questions or are interested in participating in future lobbying trainings: rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org.

COALITION IN THE NEWS



[Federal Cuts Threaten Affordable Housing in NJ, Officials and Advocates Say](#)

north jersey.com

Gabriel Douglas, a 2024 graduate of the Garden State Leaders program, stood behind Sen. Andy Kim in Newark on March 18th at a rally against staffing and funding cuts the Trump administration has made to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). She shared her powerful story as a former shelter resident who, with the help of housing assistance, transformed her life and now helps others do the same. The Coalition is proud to see one of our 2024 Garden State Leaders using her voice and lived experience to advocate for programs that uplift and empower communities.



[Coalition Testimony to the NJ Assembly Budget Committee](#)

Coalition CEO, Connie Mercer testified yesterday before the NJ State Assembly's Budget Committee. The testimony focused on the dire need for increased funding for the state's homeless shelters in order to stay afloat and continue to provide critical emergency support for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Read the full testimony [here](#).

We are so grateful for all who testified at yesterday's hearing including our Garden State Leaders Director, Alicia Alvarez, board members Sue Byrne and Rich Uniacke, and John Donnadio from the NJ Association of Counties, who underscored the need for funding for emergency shelters and his commitment that the counties will play a role in addressing homelessness.

RESOURCES FOR HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDERS

[Grants for Homeless Emergency](#)



Be on the lookout! The Coalition has been allocated funds for emergency operations, which will be distributed through one-time grants, to be provided as staff bonuses to improve staff retention and help ensure the continued operation of New Jersey's homeless services. Information on how to apply will be coming soon!



Potential Impact to NJ Medicaid of Congressional Budget Proposals

The NJ Department of Human Resources has modeled the impact of budget proposals put forward by Congressional leadership. These potential changes to Medicaid would have significant effect on provider pay, eligibility and benefits.

Medicaid in NJ (NJ Family Care) currently covers 1.8 million NJ residents including low and moderate income children and parents, other low-income adults, elderly and disabled requiring long-term care, and many others. The annual budget is \$24 million, with approximately \$14 million of this cost coming from the federal government. [This document](#) provides more information and proposed scenarios on the impact on NJ based on numerous budget models.

On a positive note, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced that NJ's 1115 waiver is still scheduled for implementation in July of this year. This waiver will help New Jersey improve health coverage and access, and advance health equity. It also addresses health-related social needs (HRSN) like housing instability and food insecurity.

ICE Raid Guidance for Homeless Service Providers

The National Homeless Law Center and Crowell & Moring LLP have put together ICE Raid Guidance for Homeless Service Providers: "What to do Before, During, and After a Raid": <https://homelesslaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/ICE-Guidance.pdf>.

You can also find a toolkit of ICE Raid Resources for Homeless Shelters and Service Providers from the National Homeless Law Center and Housing Not Handcuffs, including Know Your Rights posters and social media/messaging guidance: <https://housingnohandcuffs.org/iceraidresources/>

We recommend you spend a moment reviewing this guidance as it includes some unique proposals about steps to take following an ICE raid specifically designed for homeless service providers.

Installing signage in your facility indicating private areas forces ICE agents to obtain a valid warrant, signed by a judge in order to enter those non-public areas of the facility (further explanation on page two of the guidance document linked above). For a sample sign, please contact our Policy Associate, Raisa at: rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org or call (609) 865-2534.

NEW JERSEY HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEWS



[ICYMI: Murphy Administration Surges Resources to Reduce Veterans Homelessness to Functional Zero](#)

NJ.gov

New Jersey's *Bringing Veterans Home* initiative aims to end veteran homelessness by July 1st, 2026, ensuring all newly unhoused veterans are placed in stable housing within 30 days. Backed by over \$30 million in state and federal funding, the effort brings together government agencies and veteran service organizations to expand housing, outreach, and support services across the state.



[Op-Ed: NJ Nonprofits Need Your Help](#)

Nonprofits are the backbone of our communities, quietly supporting everything from crisis response and healthcare to education and the arts. But recent federal funding cuts and agency upheaval are putting their survival at risk—threatening vital services just as more people need them than ever. It's time to recognize that when

nonprofits struggle, entire communities feel the impact—and the helpers now need our help

[Senate Panel Advances Housing Bills Despite Concern Over Loss of Local Control](#)

New Jersey Monitor

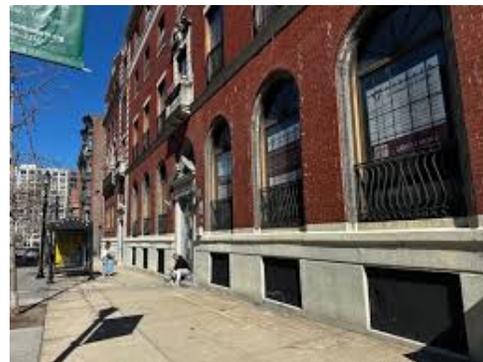
A Senate panel advanced a package of bills aimed at boosting real estate development and increasing affordable housing by repurposing underused commercial properties, reducing parking requirements near transit, and offering \$25 million in grants for high-density housing. Supporters say the measures will help address New Jersey’s housing shortage and revitalize struggling areas, while some local officials oppose the bills, citing concerns over loss of local control. Key provisions include mandatory affordable housing set-asides, streamlined redevelopment approvals, and incentives for transit-oriented development.



[Hoboken Gets \\$2.8M to Shelter Homeless Men and Expand Food Bank to Jersey City](#)

Patch.com

The Hoboken Community Center, formerly the YMCA, will receive \$2.8 million in funding to support and expand its transitional housing and food pantry services. This includes a \$1.8 million county grant for the pantry and a \$1 million state appropriation for urgent repairs and outreach expansion. The funding will help keep 96 men housed and extend food and hygiene support to Jersey City Heights.



[Need Affordable Housing? Here's How the Laws Work](#)

north jersey.com

New Jersey’s affordable housing process is complex and often contentious, involving both legal obligations and local resistance. Under a 2023 law meant to accelerate progress, towns must accept or challenge state-calculated housing quotas, or risk “builder’s remedy” lawsuits that allow developers to override local zoning if they include affordable units. While the law aims to meet growing housing needs, some towns are pushing back in court over concerns about

overdevelopment, while developers and advocates argue it's necessary to address the state's housing crisis.

[NJ Church Seeks Approval to Open 17-Bed Homeless Shelter on Property](#)

Episcopal News Service (ENS)

Christ Episcopal Church in Toms River is proposing a 17-bed overnight shelter to support unhoused adults on its property, expanding its existing outreach work. The plan, in partnership with the Affordable Housing Alliance, includes food, showers, and counseling services—but faces local opposition and requires a zoning variance. Advocates say the shelter is a needed response to the area's growing housing crisis.

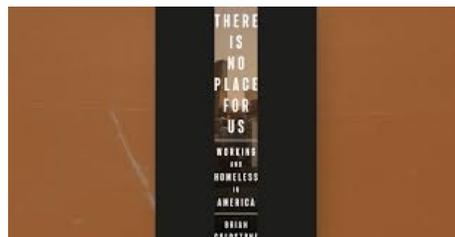


NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

[White House Releases Executive Order Targeting US Interagency Council on Homelessness and Community Development Financial Institutions Funds](#)

National Low Income Housing Coalition

A new executive order from the White House directs federal agencies, including the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the CDFI Fund, to scale back operations to only what's legally required—threatening key support systems for homelessness coordination and economic development in underserved communities. Lawmakers and advocates warn the move could undermine efforts to end homelessness and stall progress in vulnerable areas, especially rural regions where federal guidance and technical assistance are essential. .



[The Invisible Homeless Crisis that Official Statistics Miss](#)

VOX

Brian Goldstone's *There Is No Place for Us* shines a light on the invisible side of America's housing crisis—working families who are homeless but don't “count” under federal definitions. Living in extended-stay motels, cars, or temporary arrangements, they are excluded from resources and erased from public understanding. Goldstone's powerful reporting challenges the myth that homelessness stems from joblessness, showing instead how the system itself pushes

people out.



[Encampment Cleanups Aren't the Answer: Bridging the Gap Between Housing Loss and Homelessness](#)

New America

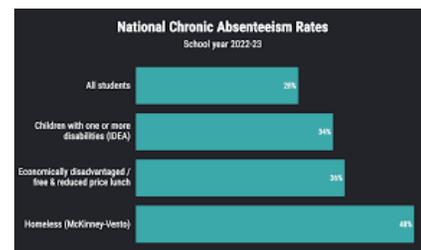
In Washington, DC, officials forcibly cleared a homeless encampment near the State Department following pressure from former President Trump, highlighting a growing trend of criminalizing homelessness without offering real solutions. While evictions and housing loss are driving record levels of homelessness, the U.S. lacks reliable data to track and address the crisis effectively. Experts stress that without better data on evictions and their long-term impacts, policymakers can't create the targeted, compassionate policies needed to break the cycle of housing instability.

Focus on Youth Homelessness

[New Report: How Districts in 7 States Are Helping Chronically Absent Homeless Kids](#)

The 74

A new report highlights how school districts in seven states are tackling chronic absenteeism among homeless students, nearly half of whom missed significant school time in 2022–23. With student homelessness rising 39% and absenteeism threatening academic outcomes, districts are using data-driven, compassionate strategies—like updating registration forms, providing transportation, and connecting families to food, counseling, and support services. These efforts, supported by the McKinney-Vento Act and local partnerships, are helping to bring students back to school and give them a better chance at success.





Tackling Youth Homelessness: How Cisco And Covenant House Are Changing Lives

Global Citizen

Youth homelessness is a growing crisis, with over 650,000 people currently experiencing homelessness across the U.S. Organizations like Covenant House, in partnership with Cisco, are stepping up to meet this urgent need—offering not only safe shelter and essential resources, but also long-term support and advocacy. Their work is a powerful example of how compassion and collaboration can drive real change.

Senator Reverend Warnock Unveils Legislative Package to Address Housing Affordability and Availability Crisis

Rev. Raphael Warnock, US Senator for Georgia



Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock has introduced a sweeping housing legislative package to tackle the U.S. housing affordability and availability crisis. The bills aim to ease rising rent burdens, support first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance, curb predatory investing in single-family homes, and build nearly three million new housing units. Warnock emphasized that these measures are essential to help working families, especially young Americans, access stable housing and build generational wealth.



Section 8 Under Trump: How Policy Uncertainty is Affecting Affordable Housing

SHELTERFORCE

A sudden federal funding freeze memo issued on January 27, 2025, sent



DOGE Undermines Anti-Discrimination Protections In Housing With More Cuts

SHELTERFORCE

Since the Fair Housing Act passed in 1968,

shockwaves through housing authorities and low-income communities across the U.S. Though quickly rescinded, the scare disrupted stability for thousands relying on Section 8, sparked fear of renewed homelessness, and exposed just how fragile the safety net has become.

nonprofits have been at the heart of enforcing protections against housing discrimination—handling 75% of all complaints in 2023. But that enforcement system is now in crisis after the Trump administration abruptly canceled over half of all Fair Housing Initiative Program grants, gutting funding for investigations, public education, and legal support. Advocates warn this move effectively dismantles civil rights enforcement in many regions, leaving tenants—especially people with disabilities, racial minorities, and survivors of domestic violence—without recourse when their rights are violated.



Creating Equitable Responses

National Alliance to End Homelessness

For too long, homelessness systems have worked better for some while leaving others behind due to race, gender identity, or background. Creating equitable responses means breaking down systemic barriers, centering those most impacted, and designing targeted strategies that ensure everyone—regardless of who they are—has a real opportunity to access stable housing and support.



If You've Never Been in a Homeless Person's Shoes, Who Are You to Judge?

Real Change

Homelessness isn't a choice—it's a crisis that can happen to anyone, and getting off the streets is far harder than people realize. In a powerful firsthand reflection, one former unhoused individual challenges leaders to walk in the shoes of those experiencing homelessness, emphasizing the need for empathy, support, and policies shaped by lived experience. Real change starts with listening to those who've been there.

What is Homelessness in America?

National Alliance to End Homelessness

Homelessness in America is at a historic high, driven not by personal failings but by systemic issues like the lack of affordable housing, inadequate incomes, and limited access to healthcare. It affects a wide range of people—from families and veterans to youth and older adults—many of whom are forced into homelessness by circumstances beyond their control. Real solutions require addressing these root causes and investing in affordable housing, income support, and healthcare, while ensuring emergency systems can meet immediate needs.





How Much Would It Cost to Provide Housing First to All Households Staying in Homeless Shelters?

National Alliance to End Homelessness

Despite strong evidence that Housing First effectively addresses homelessness, most people in shelters still don't receive the housing support they need. In a single year, over a million households accessed shelters, but only a small fraction was placed into permanent housing. Researchers estimate an additional \$9.6 billion annually could close this gap—ensuring every sheltered household has access to stable housing and the supportive services that help end the cycle of homelessness.



Transition From Hotels, but Don't Make People Homeless

News & Citizen

As the legislative session gains momentum following the crossover deadline, lawmakers are focused on overhauling Vermont's General Assistance housing program, also known as the "hotel program." H.91 aims to replace emergency hotel vouchers with a more sustainable shelter system that includes supportive services to help people transition into permanent housing. With the program set to expire March 31, negotiations are underway between the Legislature and Governor to find a balanced solution that protects vulnerable populations, especially older adults and those without other housing options. .



Alliance to End Homelessness Unveils Strategic Plan to Achieve 'Functional Zero' by 2030

Capital Daily

The National Alliance to End Homelessness in the Capital Region aims to reach "functional zero" homelessness by 2030, meaning homelessness becomes rare, brief, and non-recurring. Their new strategic plan focuses on prevention, housing, and data, with a person-centered approach that emphasizes choice, safety, and the inclusion of people with lived experience. Achieving these goals will require strong collaboration across governments, organizations, and communities, as well as sustained local and regional funding.

[NYC Says It Moved 3,5000 People Out of Homeless Encampments, but Just 114 into Shelter](#)

Gothamist

Between January and September, the Adams administration spent \$3.5 million clearing 2,300 homeless encampments across New York City—but just 114 people were moved into temporary shelter, and none into permanent housing. Advocates and city officials alike acknowledge that repeated sweeps don't solve the root issues of homelessness and may even cause further harm. Critics argue the strategy prioritizes appearance over impact, calling for real investments in housing and services instead of costly, recurring removals.



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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