

December 12th, 2024



Homeless Persons Memorial Day is Next Week

Each year on or around the longest night of the year, December 21st, people across the country come together in remembrance of individuals who have lost their lives while experiencing homelessness. In New Jersey, **Mercer County will be holding an event Friday, December 20th at 10:00 am at Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton** for those in Mercer County who died without a home.

Middlesex County will be holding a vigil on Saturday the 21st at 5pm at Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in Old Bridge. [Click here](#) for more information:

For more information on how to get involved or organize an event for your community, please see the National Coalition for the Homeless' [Memorial Organizing Manual](#)

In solidarity,
The Staff of the NJ Coalition to End Homelessness

COALITION NEWS



Assemblywoman Lopez Announces Securing \$1.5 Million in Funding to Support Shelter Staff and Retention

The Coalition is grateful to Assemblywoman Lopez and Senator Lagana for their extraordinary efforts to secure \$1.5 million for shelter staff and retention in the 2025 budget!

This funding is critically needed as we have seen a 24% increase in homelessness in NJ since 2023. Shelters across our state are operating near or at full capacity, a situation that becomes even more dire as we transition into the harsh winter months.

Thank you to Assemblywoman Lopez for uplifting the importance of funding for homeless services in this [media release and video](#) and for her unwavering commitment to those in the community who are most in need.

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

- Thursday, December 12th at 10am: The [Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee](#) is meeting and will hear testimony on the evolving challenges of veteran homelessness. The hearing will be held in Committee Room 13 on the 4th floor of the State House Annex or you can watch the Committee proceedings [live](#) on the NJ Legislature website.
- Thursday, December 19th: the NJ Assembly and Senate both have their floor voting sessions. See more information about the legislative calendar [here](#).

Please let us know if there are any bills related to homelessness you would like to see the Coalition take on. Email: rrubinstankiewicz@njceh.org

RESOURCES FOR HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDERS

Murphy Administration Announces Opening of Wait List for State Rental Assistance Program

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has announced the opening of the pre-application period to enter the lottery for placement onto the State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) waiting list. Beginning on Monday, January 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (EST) and running through Friday, January 31, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. (EST), New Jersey residents who meet eligibility criteria are invited to apply online at: www.WaitlistCheck.com/NJ559.

Shelter Providers' Consortium Upcoming Monthly Meeting: December 19th at Noon

*"Most important, relative meeting I attend each month."
- Zammeeah Bivins-Gibson, Isaiah House*

Shelter Directors: Please join our monthly meetings for Shelter Providers, the third Thursday of each month from 12pm - 1:15pm. Meetings provide crucial relevant information and bring experts from a range of fields to deliver resources and opportunities for shelters. Meetings are also an energizing chance to network and share best practices and challenges among peers.

Register in advance [here](#).



SAVE THE DATE: Friday December 13th, 2024

Changes to Medicaid are coming - don't be left behind! Wellpoint (formerly Amerigroup) will be holding an in-person "round table" on Medicaid and the 1115 Waiver. We hope you'll attend.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Rhonnda Talton at: rhonnda.talton@wellpoint.com



Surveys on Lived Experience

The National Alliance to End Homelessness' Homelessness Research Institute has released two surveys to gather more information about how people

with lived experience are involved and integrated into homeless services systems. The first asks about experiences working or volunteering in the homeless response system as a person with lived expertise of homelessness. [Take survey here.](#)

The second aims to better understand how the homeless response system partners with people with lived expertise of homelessness. This survey is intended for leaders and directors that coordinate and/or provide resources to people experiencing homelessness in the United States. To complete the survey, the respondent(s) will need to consider basic information about your organization's structure, strategy, planning process, staff and budget. You may choose to complete the survey with a colleague. [Take the survey here.](#)

Survey responses will close on January 6, 2025.



Homeless and Housing Resource Center Offers Trauma-Informed Outreach and Engagement Training

This training course is accredited for 3 CEUs from NASW and provides foundational information about trauma-informed outreach and engagement strategies, approaches, and service delivery models. This will focus on ways to support individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness who have serious mental illness, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders.

[Click here](#) for more information on this and other trainings available.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are you ready to make a **real difference**
in the lives of individuals experiencing homelessness?

APPLY TO BE A



AmeriCorps
New Jersey



Housing Readiness Coordinator

Empower shelter clients to achieve **Housing Readiness** by working with them to **navigate the complexities of securing housing**

(Locations vary at shelters across NJ)

BENEFITS

- Living Allowance of \$21,500
- Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of \$7,395 upon completion of service
- Health coverage and childcare benefits
- Professional development and networking opportunities

INTERESTED? HAVE QUESTIONS?

Please send resume and cover letter or direct your questions to **NJCEH AmeriCorps Program Manager, Victoria Tartivita** at vtartivita@njceh.org

Note: Positions are still available in Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Mercer and Passaic counties.

Partner Jobs



City Relief is currently seeking to fill four vacant positions in New Jersey: **Resource Coordinator, Guest Care Coordinator, Director of NJ Programs and Finance Manager**. For more information, click [here](#) or contact Lydia Lucas, Chief People Officer at lydia@cityrelief.org or 646-431-4661

Share your open positions in future publications of this newsletter at no cost.
Contact Alicia Alvarez: aalvarez@njceh.org

Sen. Bucco Calls For All Hands On Deck Approach To NJ's Homelessness Crisis

NJ Senate Republican

New Jersey's homeless population has risen by 24% in the past year, now exceeding 12,000 people, including over 2,400 children. In response, Senator Anthony Bucco is urging leaders at all levels to come together to address the lack of affordable housing and create a comprehensive plan to end homelessness. He emphasized the need for collaboration and action, calling for open discussions and solutions that include input from those directly impacted.



NJ Organizations Earn \$1.25M Grants From Bezos-Sanchez To Help Combat Homelessness

ROI.NJ

Monarch Housing Associates and three Family Promise affiliates in New Jersey, which are part of the NJCEH Shelter Consortium, were among the recipients of grants from the Day 1 Families Fund, sponsored by Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez, to combat family homelessness. This is the first time New Jersey organizations have been awarded these flexible grants, with Monarch Housing and Family Promise of Morris County each receiving \$1.25 million, and Family Promise of Essex County and Jersey Shore receiving \$425,000 each. These funds will help move families from homelessness to stable housing amid a growing national family homelessness crisis.



Bill To Provide Lifetime Housing Protections For Seniors And Disabled Tenants Advances In NJ

Jersey City Times

The NJ State Senate is moving forward with a bill to give seniors and people with disabilities lifetime protection from eviction. Senator Brian Stack introduced the bill (S-290) to update the current law, which provides 40 years of protection, to match today's longer life expectancies and growing financial challenges. The goal is to help vulnerable residents stay in their homes and communities; especially as affordable housing becomes harder to find statewide.



A Look At How Tariffs, Deportations And More Of Trump's Proposals Could Affect Housing Costs

New Jersey Monitor

Americans are struggling with housing costs, which accounted for 32.9% of consumer spending in 2023. In New Jersey, where the homeless population grew by 24% in just one year, affordability challenges are particularly severe. As President-elect Trump prepares to take office, housing advocates are watching closely to see how his policies—like proposed tariffs that could raise construction costs, stricter immigration rules impacting labor, and potential punitive approaches to homelessness—might affect both affordability and access to stable housing.

The Advantages Of The Housing And Redevelopment Law

TAP into Parsippany

New Jersey's Local Housing and Redevelopment Law (LRHL) enables municipalities and private developers to revitalize blighted properties by offering incentives like tax abatements, zoning adjustments, and streamlined approvals. Municipalities lead the process by identifying redevelopment areas, declaring them as zones, and adopting plans, while developers must align their projects with municipal goals to access these benefits. Early collaboration with local authorities, demonstrating community benefits, and maintaining transparency are key to a successful redevelopment project.

These Survivors Represent 12% Of NJ's Homeless Population

NJ 101.5

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness in New Jersey, with survivors accounting for nearly 12% of the state's homeless population. Many victims, especially women and children, face financial abuse, limiting their ability to escape, and often have nowhere to turn due to the fear of being tracked down by their abuser. Advocates stress the need for more affordable housing to help these survivors rebuild their lives, as escaping an abusive home is complicated by financial instability and limited housing options.





Trenton To Acquire Vacant Motel With \$4M Grant, One Of 12 Approved by EDA

REALESTATE NJ

State officials have approved a \$4 million grant for the City of Trenton to acquire the vacant Lafayette Park Hotel & Suites for redevelopment into a mixed-use project, including hospitality, residential, and commercial spaces. This funding is part of over \$17 million allocated through the Local Property Acquisition Grant Program, which supports municipalities in acquiring vacant properties for economic development initiatives. The program aims to transform unused real estate into vibrant community hubs and commercial spaces, driving local economic growth and job creation.



Affordable Housing Crisis Sparks Legal Battlegrounds Nationwide

The PINNACLE Gazette

The affordable housing crisis in the U.S. is escalating, with lawmakers and local governments navigating complex debates over housing mandates. In New Jersey, legal battles over state-mandated affordable housing requirements highlight tensions between state authority and local governance, as municipalities struggle with infrastructure limitations. While state officials like California's Governor Newsom are committing billions to address the crisis, local leaders, including those in New Jersey, are calling for more collaboration to ensure that housing mandates align with existing resources and infrastructure.

Montclair Nonprofit Awarded \$425K Besos Grant To Battle Homelessness

Montclair Local

Family Promise of Essex County, a Montclair-based nonprofit, has received a transformative \$425,000 grant from Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez's Day 1 Families Fund to expand its rapid rehousing program, which transitions families from shelters to permanent housing. This is the largest donation in the organization's history, arriving at a critical time as homelessness in Essex County has surged by 54% in the past year. The funding will help Family Promise broaden its outreach, emergency shelter services, and housing options, addressing a growing need in Montclair and across the county. Families make up more than 28% of the national homeless population, highlighting the importance of this initiative.



The Texas Village Rethinking Homelessness

NY Times- The Daily Podcast

The *Texas Village: Rethinking Homelessness* podcast discusses the complexities of homelessness in Texas, focusing on how the community can work together to create sustainable solutions. It features conversations with people with lived experience, advocates, and experts, offering new perspectives on addressing homelessness through collaboration, compassion, and innovative strategies. The podcast aims to challenge traditional approaches and promote systemic change.



How These Schools Worked With Community Groups To Fight College Homelessness

SHELTERFORCE

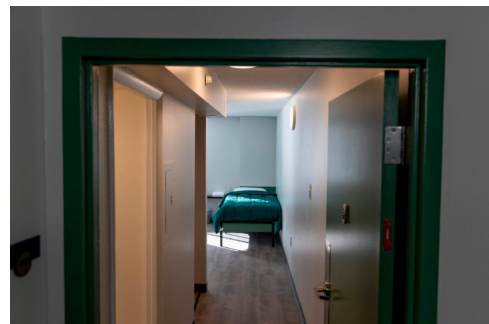
Many colleges have responded to student homelessness and housing insecurity through partnerships with community housing organizations and the implementation of College-Focused Rapid Rehousing (CFRR) programs. These programs aim to provide students with stable housing while they complete their studies, offering rental assistance, case management, and support services such as job search and mental health referrals. In some states, like California, universities and community colleges have committed substantial funding to create long-term housing solutions for students, helping them focus on their academics and improve overall well-being by reducing housing instability.



After Months Of Delay, D.C. Opens A New Kind Of Homeless Shelter

WAMU 88.5

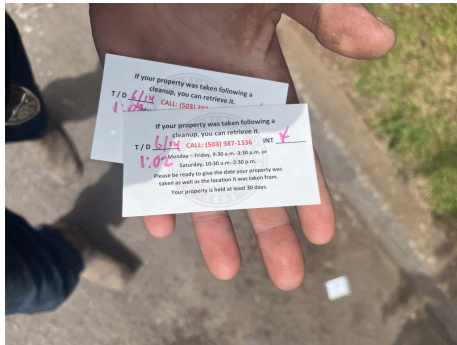
The new Aston non-congregate shelter faced delays due to legal challenges from a local community group, which argued it would negatively impact the neighborhood. Housing advocates, however, have called for the shelter's swift opening, emphasizing its importance in providing safer and more private spaces for people who might otherwise be living in encampments. The shelter is seen as a critical step in addressing the city's homelessness crisis, offering temporary relief while residents transition to permanent housing.



How One Library Is Filling The Gaps In Homeless Services

Governing

Public libraries have become critical in supporting unhoused individuals, offering safe spaces and personalized assistance. The Salt Lake City Public Library employs social workers who provide one-on-one guidance, connecting patrons with services like housing, counseling, and substance abuse programs. By building trust and treating everyone with dignity, the library empowers individuals to take steps toward stability.



**Cities Say They Store
Property Taken From
Homeless Encampments.
People Rarely Get Their
Things Back**

Salem Reporter

Encampment sweeps are leaving people experiencing homelessness without essential belongings, including ID, shelter materials, and personal items, often with no realistic way to recover them. These actions perpetuate cycles of instability and poverty, stripping individuals of their dignity and basic rights. Advocates urge cities to prioritize humane solutions that address the root causes of homelessness rather than punitive measures.



Americans With No Address

YouTube

The documentary Americans with No Address explores the realities of homelessness in the United States, highlighting the systemic challenges and personal stories of those experiencing life without stable housing. Through powerful narratives, it sheds light on the social, economic, and policy factors contributing to homelessness and the resilience of those affected.

We love to share news about the accomplishments, events and other 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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