



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

# News

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## **Trenton City Government Receives More Federal Assistance to Aid the Homeless**

Trenton, N.J. — Mayor Eric E. Jackson today announced a \$3.8 million grant award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support the city's comprehensive work through its Department of Health and Human Services and partner organizations to find permanent housing for the homeless.

"Homelessness is a troubling national problem," said Mayor Jackson. "Locally, and I suspect that this is the case in other cities across America, we cannot address this crisis without sustained federal funding and high-intensity collaborations with local partners, such as the Rescue Mission, the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness, Arm-in-Arm, Catholic Charities, Oaks Integrated Care, and Homefront. So we are immensely grateful to HUD for implementing such an innovative and valuable program."

The grant funding will be used to help partner with providers to bolster services—permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and planning and coordinated assessment—that help individuals and families find temporary and permanent housing. The city has relationships with more than 15 nonprofit organizations to deliver services to the homeless.

HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Program provides funding to state and local governments and nonprofit providers to help find permanent housing for homeless individuals and families, in addition to providing access to mainstream programs and services that help homeless clients become self-sufficient. The federal grant program is competitive. Applicants must submit specific proposals in order to qualify. The city's grant application score was ranked one of the sixth highest in America.

According to 2016 Point-in-Time Count data, a survey taken on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness that includes both sheltered and unsheltered populations, 465 people in 380 households were homeless in Mercer County on the evening the count was undertaken. This number reflects a 22.5 percent decrease (135 people) and a 22.9 percent decrease (113 households) from the 2015 count. In 2016, Mercer County had 5.2 percent of New Jersey's statewide homeless population. Point-in-Time counts are important because they establish the dimensions of the problem of homelessness and help policymakers and program administrators track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness.

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"Our goal is to protect these services that help the homeless, expand them, and continue to partner with capable organizations to deliver services that meet the critical needs of people struggling with homelessness," said James A. Brownlee, Director of the city's Department of Health of Human Services.

In 2015, the city partnered with Mercer County and the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness to establish the Coordinated Entry and Assessment Services Center (CEAS) at 509 Perry Street. The CEAS Center is a single point of entry for homeless individuals in need of temporary and permanent housing, including access to partner health care services, such as mental health; and assistance with applying for government benefits and aid from other nonprofit organizations. The center has assisted hundreds of people since its launch. Also, the CEAS Center was a key partner with Mercer County government in accepting former First Lady Michelle Obama's challenge for communities to end veteran's homelessness.

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