



COUNTY OF SOMERSET DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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November 13, 2025 Continuum of Care meeting minutes

The November 2025 meeting, which took place virtually, via a Teams conference call, was called to order and began at 11:02 am. The minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

County residents are facing the loss of SNAP benefits during the federal government shutdown. In order to assist them, the County will be holding a food distribution event on November 15 from 9am-4pm at the County facility at 411 Chimney Rock Road in Bridgewater (this is the North County Public Works location). This will be a drive-through event. The County will continue to plan for how to address the ongoing shutdown and loss of benefits, and how to assist residents during this time.

The guest speaker was Richard Griffin from the Somerset County Board of Social Services. He used to work directly with clients out of the Franklin office, but no longer does so. Now he works with training, outreach, and quality control. He explained that due to the federal government shutdown, some clients missed getting their benefits on Friday. The minimum benefit amounts are \$95 from the State and \$24 from the Federal government. Some confusion has arisen because the State issued part of their benefits in October and the rest in November. Most clients do not receive a State benefit – only about 30,000 people in New Jersey who receive benefits are at the \$95 limit. There was only a short window for the State to send out benefits and everything was calculated ahead of time. Clients who do not receive their benefits have 30 days to correct it.

Benefits are funded by Federal, State and County funds. The County Board of Social Services has human services specialists who do the intake and screening of clients, and social workers who do case management. In order to be eligible for benefits, clients must be residents of Somerset County, physically in the County, and wish to remain in the County. They can receive cash assistance and funding for medical assistance. Clients may apply in person, online, or have an application mailed to them.

SNAP cards are issued to clients and benefits are uploaded to the card. Benefits are available for the initial certification period (usually a period of months), after which clients may apply to have them re-approved. There is no limit to how long someone can receive SNAP benefits.

Clients can go to NJHelps.gov to be screened for different programs, and also to find applications for SNAP, GA, TANF, and Medicaid. New applicants can be assisted at one of the County Food Banks or at one of the Board of Social Services offices.

- Mission Statement -

The County of Somerset is committed to excellence and innovation in public service, promoting the well-being of all residents and communities by providing effective, efficient and responsive leadership.

Somerset County Is An Equal Opportunity Employer

Kenya Lamarr, from Monarch, gave the Committee an update on the status of the Continuum of Care application. HUD has been vocal about rescinding the 2-year process, while many social service groups have been advocating for HUD to keep it. They have also announced their intention to cap permanent supportive housing at 30%, which is far lower than the average of 85% of funds used by CoCs around the state. This would impact over 170,000 households nationwide. An official announcement/application from HUD is expected soon.

The 2026 Point in Time Count (PITC) will take place at the end of January. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness year-over-year. Organizations collecting data should make sure to collect as much information as possible in the PITC survey. The more information that is collected, the more accurate the survey will be. In the 2025 survey, only 25% of the surveys contained municipal data.

November 20th is the last HMIS General User meeting of the year and November 26th is the last site administrator training of the year. Trainings can be accessed on the LMS (Learning Management System), especially for those who need certification. The LMS opened on Monday, November 10th. Users should work with their data team to make sure the data is clean and ready to report.

The next CoC meeting will be on January 8, 2026 via Teams. The March 2026 meeting is likely to be in person, although more information and details will be announced closer to the date.

Agency announcements will be sent via e-mail after the meeting and, as such, are incorporated as part of the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Attendees:

Kimberly Cowart
Jeremy Hirsch
Ed Prior
Richard Griffin
Tamika Levels-Hood
Fresia Skoczypec
Jacklyn Robinson
Jennifer Guyette
Kenya Lamarr
Steven Nagel
Charmaine McLawrence
Daniel Hohman
Jodi Miciak
Alisha Earp
Christine Esposito
Ana Diaz
Leonor Salgado
Courtney Smith
Kathryn Kutepow

Maria Marnell
Dana Belo
Paul Grzella
Scott Minchello
Joanne Hala
Jillian Lombardozzi
Ruby Arthur
Cynthia Ramsey
Marion Cooper
Denise White
Victor Flores-Lopez
Mollie Greene
Keisha Graham
Alyssa Martini
Jaaide Ramirez
Sarah Chelli
Paola Montaner
Tamare Momplaisir