

**HUDSON COUNTY HOMELESSNESS TRUST FUND
BYLAWS**

I. INTRODUCTION

New Jersey P.L. 2009 Chapter 123 permits each county in New Jersey to establish a county Homelessness Trust Fund to be utilized to address the needs of homeless persons within each county.

Understanding the need for additional funding to support its initiatives to end homelessness, Hudson County was the first in New Jersey to call on the Governor and State Legislature to create a statewide system of county-based Homelessness Trust Funds. In addition, the Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness included the creation of a Homelessness Trust Fund, and support for a statewide initiative, as an explicit goal of its Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.

On January 29, 2010 the Board of Chosen Freeholders, voted, by resolution, to establish a trust fund entitled "The Hudson County Homelessness Trust Fund" (hereinafter, "Trust Fund"). The Trust Fund is funded through a surcharge of \$3 imposed on each document recorded with Hudson County.

II. GOVERNANCE

A. Membership

The County Executive, with the advice and consent of the Board of Chosen Freeholders, shall appoint voting members to the Homelessness Trust Fund Task Force (hereinafter, "Task Force") from the following categories:

1. Two (2) representatives of the County, one of whom shall be a member of the Board of Chosen Freeholders
2. One (1) representative from each of the three (3) municipalities with the highest homeless populations and all CDBG Entitlement communities
3. One (1) representative from the organization responsible for developing, implementing, or both, the local plan to end homelessness
4. Three (3) representatives of local private or non-profit organizations with experience in assisting the homeless or providing low-income housing
5. At least three (3) homeless or formerly homeless people

B. Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Task Force is for the systematic review and recommendation of applications for funding considerations from the Trust Fund, in accordance with the policies and procedures as established by this document and set forth herein.

C. Term of Office

1. The term of office of all voting members of the Task Force shall be for three (3) years.
2. All members shall serve on a voluntary basis without compensation.

D. Replacement of Members

1. A member shall serve until his/her successor has been appointed.
2. A member having three (3) consecutive absences from scheduled meetings of the Task Force (without providing advanced notification), shall be deemed as resigned from the position, and a successor appointed to fill his/her position.

E. Voting

1. A simple majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for voting sessions.
2. A quorum is not required to hold work/review sessions.
3. An affirmative vote of the majority of members present shall indicate passage of any item subject to a vote.
4. Those members who are absent from the application(s) presentations shall certify that they have fully reviewed the application(s), and visited the site(s) in order to be eligible to score and rank the application(s).
5. Conflict of Interest

F. Conflict of Interest

A Task Force Board member must disclose personal, professional, and business relationships when making decisions and taking action on items. If there is a conflict of interest, the member must recuse herself or himself from voting on or taking action on that item.

III. PROGRAM STATEMENT

A. Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit, private, or public organizations funded with public or private funds (or both), that provide housing and services to families and individuals who are homeless are eligible to participate in the application process.

B. Eligible Purposes

Eligible purposes, as voted by resolution, approved by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 22A:4-17 are:

1. Acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of housing projects or units within housing projects that supply permanent, affordable and supportive housing for homeless persons or families including those at risk of homelessness.
2. Supportive services as may be required by homeless individuals or families in order to obtain and/or maintain permanent housing.
3. Prevention services for at risk homeless individuals or families so that they can obtain, maintain (or both) permanent affordable housing.
4. Rental assistance vouchers, including tenant and project based subsidies, for affordable housing projects or units within housing projects that provide permanent affordable housing for homeless persons or families, including those at risk of homelessness.

C. Allocation

The Trust Fund will be funded through a surcharge of \$3 imposed on each document recorded with the County.

1. Each funding cycle shall be from January 1 until December 31.
2. The Task Force shall determine annually how much funding to allocate per funding cycle and how to apportion that allocation among eligible applicants.
3. Any funds allocated to a specific project and determined not to be needed for that project may be reallocated to another eligible project or placed back into the Trust Fund.
4. Any interest earned on the investment of funds of the Trust Fund shall be retained within the Trust Fund to be used for the Trust Fund purposes as described herein.
5. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 22A:4-17, funds raised by the \$3 surcharge and deposited into the Trust Fund, must be expended within four (4) years of being collected.

D. Task Force Review and Recommendation

The Hudson County Division of Housing and Community Development staff shall review applications to determine eligibility and completeness according to the Trust Fund.

The Task Force shall:

1. Generate project applications and timelines.
2. Rank and prioritize projects with funding recommendations to the County Executive for consideration.

E. County Executive's Submission of Proposed Projects

The County Executive will submit proposed projects for funding consideration to the Board of Chosen Freeholders after his/her review of the Task Force's recommendations.

F. Freeholder Funding Approval

The Board of Chosen Freeholders shall approve, by resolution, final projects and funding allocations after due notice by the County Executive.

G. Grant Agreement

1. Applicants that have been approved for funding will have sixty (60) days from the date of Freeholder approval to execute a Grant Agreement with the County.
2. Upon execution of the grant agreement, projects are expected to progress at a reasonable pace, subject to the specifics of a particular project. Any allocated funds not expended after one (1) year from the award date, shall be deemed forfeited and returned to the Trust Fund.
3. Failure to uphold any aspects of the executed grant agreement or any other requirements as described herein, may result in the forfeiture of funds. Unused funds can be allocated to other eligible projects or will revert back to the Trust Fund.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Grantees will be required to meet with the Task Force quarterly and submit reports on the program performance.
- B. Grantees must enter information in the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- C. Grantees will be required to provide the Task Force with updates on households served for up to one year after funding expires.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The Task Force will consider the following goals and objectives in reviewing applications and will endeavor to recommend projects that:

1. measurably reduce homelessness
2. demonstrate government cost savings over time
3. employ evidence based models
4. can be replicated in other counties
5. include an outcome measurement component
6. are consistent with the local housing plan
7. fund the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of projects that serve homeless individuals or families for a period of at least thirty (30) years or the equal to the longest term of affordability required by other funding sources.

VI. PROJECT PRIORITY SYSTEM

1. The Task Force will rank the eligible Trust Fund activities for each annual funding cycle and will distribute the list of priorities with the annual Trust Fund Application.
2. A priority scoring system will be used to evaluate the relative merits of proposed projects. The system will use a set of factors to evaluate each project's features and will be designed by the Task Force to reflect the degree to which projects conform to its findings, recommendations and priorities as well as the goals of Hudson County's Ten Year Plan. The Task Force will

review (revise, if necessary) its priority scoring system annually and will distribute that priority scoring system with the annual Trust Fund Application.