

## **NJ Non-Profits Fear Effects of Prolonged Government Shutdown**

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**Mercerville, NJ** - More than three weeks into the partial federal government shutdown, concerns are growing among New Jersey non-profits about its negative impact on the organizations and the people they serve.

The Center for Non-Profits, a statewide umbrella organization serving New Jersey's charitable community, last week canvassed a cross-section of non-profits to learn what effect the shutdown is having on their programs and what will happen if it continues.

Some organizations reported already receiving requests for assistance from furloughed federal workers. Others indicated that if the shutdown lasts much longer, scheduled government grant payments will not arrive, threatening to wreak havoc on their ability to provide needed services. Some indicated that grant money is scheduled to run out at the end of this month, and questioned how long they could hold on without relief.

Among the feedback provided:

- A Bergen County organization that provides supportive housing to individuals and families transitioning from shelter to a place they can call home reports that U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care contract renewals have not been announced because of the shutdown. "This will affect our operations beginning on February 1 when the current funding cycle ends. As a small agency, our bank line of credit is limited. Unless we can draw down new contract dollars in the near term, we will be forced to suspend the wraparound supportive services that help our clients to remain stably housed. If the shutdown continues indefinitely, we will have to shut down our homes as we cannot cover the cost of utilities, repairs, etc."
- From an AIDS service provider: "Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) funding is not guaranteed past February 1. This would be highly traumatic for many of our clients, who are reliant on HOPWA funds for housing assistance."
- From an environmental organization providing cleanup and education programs at Sandy Hook in Gateway National Park: "Our office is in a federal park (Gateway National Recreation Area), so [we do] not have trash and recycling removal during the shutdown. If we want it, we need to pay the park service approximately \$500 per month, which is an unexpected and significant expense. If the shutdown continues, it could impact some of our major programs that we hold here at Sandy Hook. The National Park Service (NPS) are not issuing permits, conducting educational programs, or providing visitor services, including rest rooms, trash and recycling collection, or maintaining walkways." The organization indicated that its spring and summer beach cleanup programs at the site, with more than 4000 total participants, will not be able to occur if the shutdown is still in place. "All of these programs supply major sources of funding which would be in jeopardy if the government continues its shutdown. The ability to operate on a daily basis could also be impacted, as the NPS is not maintaining roads, walkways and sidewalks including snow plowing and ice melting. Access to our office could be blocked."

(more)

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Center for Non-Profits is a New Jersey non-profit corporation and a federally recognized 501(c)(3) publicly supported charity.

- A food pantry in Montclair last week reported their first direct request for assistance from a furloughed federal employee: “She is struggling to pay her rent and bills. Of course, we will be providing her food right away and seeing if there are other ways to help navigate this situation.”
- From a social service provider in Essex County: “We anticipate calls within 30 days for food, [as] food stamps cover 99% of our homeless and extremely low-income clients. Our county government funding through HUD will be affected, if HUD is closed, rental assistance payments will be delayed, and we will not be able to help as many families facing eviction.” This same organization reports hearing of a backlog of responses by federal offices to inquiries from county government. “...this covers community development block grants, so cities will be affected, both social service agencies and road and building projects. This is already starting.”

“The government shutdown is already having negative effects on New Jersey non-profits and the people who need them,” noted Linda M. Czipo, President & CEO of the Center for Non-Profits. “As this drags on, the more devastating the impact will be, and the harder it will be for organizations to rebound from the damage.”

The Center joined with other advocates in calling for a swift end to the shutdown. “Lives and livelihoods are on the line,” noted Czipo. “We urge the President and Congress to act immediately to reopen the federal government so that vital programs can be resumed and resolutions to long-term issues can be negotiated.”

*Founded in 1982, the Center for Non-Profits is a charitable umbrella organization serving New Jersey's non-profit community. The Center's mission is to build the power of New Jersey's non-profit community by serving as the premier voice and comprehensive resource for and about our sector. Through public education, management and compliance assistance, publications, workshops, and member services, the Center strengthens non-profits, individually and collectively, in order to improve the quality of life for the people of our state. For more information, visit the Center's Website, [www.njnonprofits.org](http://www.njnonprofits.org), or call (732) 227-0800.*

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