

# MONTGOMERY NEWS



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## Warming Centers in State Can Be Found Through NJ 2-1-1 When Code Blue Notifications Are Issued

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East Hanover, NJ (Jan. 9, 2015) – When temperatures drop below freezing as they have early on in the new year, and conditions pose a threat to individuals who are homeless or medically fragile, County Offices of Emergency Management together with county or municipal government will often initiate a Code Blue Alert which enables authorities to take homeless adults to shelter programs that have agreed to make additional beds available. Warming Centers are also opened during stated hours to provide residents with a place that they can go to warm up.

NJ 2-1-1, the free, user-friendly information and referral service that connects people-in-need with critical health and human service resources, is working with county government offices throughout the state to post information on its website and through its call center when Code Blue Alerts and the opening of Warming Centers are communicated.

“We encourage new providers of these services to inform 2-1-1 so we can have the most current and accurate directory for callers and those accessing our website,” said Tom Mergola, NJ 2-1-1’s director of operations. As NJ 2-1-1 hears of locations that are available when a Code Blue Alert is activated, information is then posted on the site.

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The national 2-1-1 network makes available a free, user-friendly phone number that serves 90% of America's population, and connects some 16 million people a year to critical resources, information and services. In New Jersey close to 230,000 people called 2-1-1 for help last year. Over 212,000 visited the website in search of resources and education. Tours of the New Jersey 2-1-1 call center are available upon request. For additional reports about calls handled by NJ 2-1-1 Partnership contact Thomas Mergola at 973-929-3705 or visit [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org).