



# GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor Shapiro Signs Executive Order Creating Pennsylvania's First Housing Action Plan to Increase Affordable Housing, Address Homelessness, and Make Commonwealth More Competitive**

*Governor Josh Shapiro recognizes that affordable housing is key to economic development and growth across the Commonwealth*

*First-Ever Comprehensive Housing Action Plan will guide efforts to increase housing availability, affordability, and quality through a coordinated, multi-agency approach to effectively address Pennsylvania's housing challenges*



**Philadelphia, PA** – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** signed [Executive Order 2024-03](#), directing his Administration to create Pennsylvania’s first comprehensive Housing Action Plan to address the state's housing shortage, address homelessness, and expand affordable housing options – ensuring Pennsylvanians have access to safe, affordable housing and attracting more people to live here in the Commonwealth.

The Executive Order tasks the **Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED)** with leading the plan’s development, working alongside various stakeholders to identify housing needs and devise a strategic response. The Housing Action Plan will guide efforts to expand affordable housing and provide support to the unhoused. It will also ensure a coordinated, multi-agency approach involving state, local, and federal partners, as well as private organizations.

“To make Pennsylvania more competitive, we must cut costs, grow our workforce, and attract more people to live and work in the Commonwealth. A key challenge we face in attracting new residents is the lack of safe, affordable housing – which is why my Administration is focused on delivering commonsense solutions to expand affordable housing and lower housing costs for Pennsylvanians,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “We recognize that Pennsylvania faces unique challenges and opportunities when it comes to housing – that's why we need a comprehensive, coordinated statewide housing plan. We’re taking action to build more homes in the communities that need them most, lower costs so

families can afford to stay in their homes, repair aging houses, and make sure our seniors can live with dignity and comfort. We're all in this together, and I'm committed to ensuring everyone has access to a place they can truly call home."

"DCED is excited to work with colleagues inside and outside state government to create an action plan that will increase the supply of workforce housing, boost the supply of affordable housing, and provide critical support for people who are currently unhoused," said **DCED Secretary Rick Siger**. "When we created the state's economic development strategy last year, we heard from stakeholders across Pennsylvania about the urgent need to address our housing challenges in a comprehensive way. The Housing Action Plan will provide a roadmap to increase Pennsylvania's economic competitiveness and complement our work to make the Commonwealth a top place to live, work, play, and innovate."

Since day one, **Governor Shapiro** has worked to create real opportunities for Pennsylvanians and build an economy where everyone can chart their own course — working together with a divided legislature to deliver major investments that will help families afford to stay in their homes, address homelessness, and support our local communities by:

- Expanding the Property Tax/Rent Rebate and the Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit
- Nearly doubling the funding cap for the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Fund to expand affordable housing
- Increasing the Homelessness Assistance Program to make sure we are protecting our most vulnerable residents
- Doubling state investments for the Neighborhood Assistance Program to encourage businesses to invest in affordable housing and community development
- Investing in access to counsel for those facing eviction for the first time ever

While progress has been made, the Housing Action Plan will address continuing challenges in Pennsylvania, including:

- Declining homeownership since 2010 — the number of people who now rent has gone up by nearly 200,000 households, from 1.47 million to 1.64 million renters
- Rising housing costs — with many spending over 30 percent of their income on housing, and the need for 100,000 additional housing units to meet current need
- Tackling Homelessness — Over 12,000 Pennsylvanians reported homeless in 2023

Under the **Governor's Executive Order**, the **Housing Action Plan** will be a data-driven statewide plan with recommendations for increasing housing supply and supporting the preservation of existing housing, including:

- Assess and determine Commonwealth-wide, and regional, and local housing needs;
- Identify goals with measurable outcomes, available resources, and other items DCED believes may be necessary for achieving the goals outlined in the Housing Action Plan;
- Identify, review, and assess the effectiveness of housing programs and resources offered by Commonwealth agencies;
- Provide recommendations for (a) state housing programs, investments, and policymaking initiatives, and (b) leveraging best practices from the public and private sector to improve housing outcomes across the Commonwealth; and
- Recommend strategic planning initiatives that may be implemented over the next five years.

Additionally, the Executive Order directs the **Department of Human Services (DHS)** to develop recommendations on policies and best practices for addressing homelessness and supporting individuals in need by collaborating with stakeholders, including the Governor's Policy and Budget Offices, state agencies, local and federal governments, and community organizations.

“Being able to access and afford safe, reliable housing is essential to a family’s health, stability, and prosperity. This interagency collaboration, along with county and local partners, will simplify navigating housing support systems, reduce bureaucratic red tape, and improve our housing stock,” said **DHS Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh**. “Housing is inextricably linked to health outcomes, employability, and quality of life. Governor Shapiro’s Executive Order is a game changing opportunity to come together and invest in strengthening this critical infrastructure for our neighbors and our future.”

The Housing Action Plan and Executive Order align with the [Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Economic Development](#) in Pennsylvania, which identifies access to housing as a key factor in increasing economic competitiveness. Lack of affordable housing has been cited as a significant reason why workers choose to seek economic opportunities outside of the Commonwealth.

Additionally, the [Aging Our Way, PA plan](#) emphasizes the need for accessible, affordable, and adaptable housing to ensure older Pennsylvanians can age with dignity.

“In some neighborhoods, adequate housing is a challenge. In others, it’s a crisis,” said **Senate Democratic Appropriations Chairman Senator Vincent Hughes**. “I applaud the Governor for taking both the broad and the long view, and I look forward to working with

him to make sure we utilize good data and find new resources to meet the need of this crucial problem.”

"Safe, secure and affordable housing is a basic necessity of life that impacts every community, from Philadelphia to rural areas across the Commonwealth," said **House Majority Appropriations Chairman Representative Jordan Harris**. "Governor Shapiro's Executive Order marks an important step toward addressing the housing challenges we face. By developing a comprehensive Housing Action Plan, we can improve access to safe, affordable housing and tackle the root causes of homelessness. This initiative is critical not only for the economic stability of Pennsylvania but also for the well-being of families and individuals throughout our state."

"The Governor's Housing Action Plan builds on the House Democrats commitment to safe, secure, affordable housing and community development. With affordable housing in crisis across our state, these programs are crucial to keeping seniors and hardworking Pennsylvanians in their home," said **Representative Morgan Cephas**. "Reliable housing is crucial to steady employment, and a key to securing improved income with a stable, good-paying, family-sustaining job. The Philadelphia House Delegation and House Democrats will continue to fight for innovative ways to keep people housed and build safer communities."

"This action could not be more timely. As the housing crisis reaches new heights, we hear of states and local governments struggling with what to do and failing the people who depend on them — but not here," said **Senator Nikil Saval**. "This Executive Order shows the commitment of our Governor, and our government, to meet the real needs of our neighbors throughout Pennsylvania. Once again, our Commonwealth is showing itself as a model for our nation."

"Our individual housing efforts by state agencies in the past have been considerable. But just imagine the good we can accomplish when these agencies have a singular vision guiding our efforts in the future. By unifying our efforts, we'll ensure that all our housing investments can accomplish the most good," said **Robin Weissman, Chief Executive Officer of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency**.

Read more about Executive Order 2024-03, Pennsylvania's First Housing Action Plan, [here](#).

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