



Home | Newsroom | Media | Administration | NJ's Priorities | Contact Us

Press Releases | Public Addresses | Executive Orders | Press Kit | Reports

Home > Newsroom > Press Releases > 2010 > Christie Reform Agenda: Best Practices for Greater Accountability, Responsible Budgeting and Management, and Property Tax Relief

# Christie Reform Agenda: Best Practices for Greater Accountability, Responsible Budgeting and Management, and Property Tax Relief

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## Administration releases guidelines for Best Practices tool kit initiative for more effective local government

**Trenton, NJ** – The Christie Administration today released guidelines for the Best Practices toolkit initiative to bring greater accountability, responsible budgeting and management and cost controls to local governments throughout New Jersey. The Best Practices reform initiative was adopted with bipartisan support as part of the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget.

"The Best Practices initiative is an integral part of the reforms I have proposed," said Governor Chris Christie. "Establishing a framework to review existing services, programs and workforces and setting budget priorities gives officials at all levels of government more of the tools they need to manage their budgets and fund priority services, without raising property taxes."

In a letter to mayors across the state, Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Lori Grifa outlined the fiscal difficulties faced by local governments and reiterated Governor Christie's commitment to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments, while implementing the necessary reforms to give local officials the tools they need to control costs and rein in property taxes.

"Governor Chris Christie understands that these extraordinary times require strong actions and significant reforms," wrote Commissioner Lori Grifa. "More than ever before, every level of government; state, county and local, needs to work together to provide necessary services to their residents while controlling property taxes."

A checklist document, meant to provide standards and descriptions of the Best Practices and assess local governments' current conformity with those guidelines, was also provided to mayors and local officials and is available on the Department of Community Affairs' website: [http://www.state.nj.us/dca/lgs/fiscal/bud\\_forms/best\\_practices\\_2010.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/lgs/fiscal/bud_forms/best_practices_2010.pdf).

Further, Commissioner Grifa's letter also notified municipalities that their level of participation and compliance with the Best Practices will determine the amount of aid received in their final state aid payment. "Each municipality will need to meet an established percentage of the checklist items in order for all or part of your last State Aid payment to be released," wrote Grifa.

- Commissioner Grifa's letter to municipalities [pdf 35kB]

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