

# COMMUNITY

A Publication of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs



## ***Apartment Starts Up 1st Time Since '63: Rents Increase 10%***

For the first time since 1963, New Jersey has recorded a major increase in the construction of new multi-family dwelling units, according to a report released last month by the Department.

At the same time, the report noted, rents for the new units rose to a State-wide average of \$211 a month, a 10 per cent increase over 1969.

The publication, "New Multi-Family Dwellings in New Jersey — 1970," reported that 13,537 new multiple dwelling units were constructed during calendar year 1970, a 71 per cent increase over 1969, which recorded 7,932 new units. Except for 1967, when a slight two per cent rise was recorded, construction of multi-family dwelling units has declined every year since 1963, when a peak production of 25,000 units was reported.

The previous report issued by the Department, covering 1969, showed new construction declined 23 per cent over 1968. The Department defines "multi-family" as referring to buildings with three or more family units.

Community Affairs Commissioner Edmund T. Hume, commenting on the report's findings, said, "The significant increase in multi-family dwelling units constructed during 1970 represents the first major rise in such developments in New Jersey in seven years. Although it is virtually impossible to pinpoint any one of the many factors that might have contributed to this increase, I am hopeful that it will prove to be indicative of a trend in housing construction that will continue in the future and help alleviate our critical housing shortage."

Hume said that the figures "seem to parallel nationwide statistics, which reveal that during 1970, housing starts in the United States were at their highest level since the 1950s." He added that the increases "may also reflect a

(Left to right) William Lewis, chairman of the Plainfield Model Cities Neighborhood Council, Plainfield Mayor Frank H. Blatz, Jr. and Community Affairs Commissioner Edmund T. Hume prepare for the opening of the Model Cities Multi-Service Center. The center is funded with a \$98,700 Department grant. See story on page 4.

Photo Courtesy of Courier-News

## ***State Files Court Suits Against 45 Owners In Major Housing Code Enforcement Drive***

The Department is conducting a major Statewide drive to enforce State housing construction and maintenance laws by seeking court action against owners of multiple dwellings for failure to correct code violations.

Commissioner Edmund T. Hume filed formal complaints in State Superior Court last month against 45 owners of 56 apartments in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic and Union Counties.

The complaints were prepared and filed for the Commissioner on September 14 by Deputy Attorneys General Douglas J. Harper and Richard Grieves.

They asked the Court to compel the owners to pay within 15 days a total of approximately \$15,000 in fines, ranging from \$150 to \$900 per building and to order the abatement of all cited code violations no later than 60 days after the Court renders a decision (judgement).

If the State's action is upheld by the Court, the owners would be obliged to pay the penalties and correct the violations or face arrest and incarceration and additional penalties ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 for each continuing violation.

Hume said more than 500 residents live in the buildings, which have been cited by State and local housing inspectors for failing to meet minimum Statewide housing construction and maintenance standards, as required by the Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Law of 1967.

Under the law, the Community Affairs Department is responsible for regulating the construction and maintenance of the State's estimated 115,000 hotels, motels, and multiple dwellings under minimum Statewide health and safety standards promulgated by the Commissioner. These standards apply to multiple dwellings having at least three living

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## ***Students' Legal Rights and Responsibilities--Theme of Handbook***

May a high school student be barred from playing on the football team because of the length of his hair?

While in school, must he salute the flag if he is opposed to doing so?

May his school locker be searched?

The answers to these and similar questions regarding high school students' legal rights and responsibilities are contained in a 14-page booklet developed through the Department's Youth Services Program.

The handbook, "A Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities in New Jersey," was written by Mrs. Susan Kinsey, formerly of the Department's Youth Services staff, in conjunction with various educational agencies. It is being printed by the State Department of Education.

Designed to acquaint all the members of the school community with the students' legal position, the booklet is being distributed to New Jersey's high school students, administrators and teachers.

The guide summarizes the students' legal rights and responsibilities according to current federal and state laws and recent court and administrative decisions. Citing the legal basis for each, it covers such areas as free education, school rules and regulations, hair, dress, buttons and armbands, flag salute, distribution of literature, assembly and petition, school records, police in school, local searches, corporal punishment, suspension and expulsion and appeals.

In addition, the booklet contains a general introduction and a section on State and local governmental resources for additional information.

Explaining the need for such a booklet, John M. Cooney, director of the Department's Youth Services Program, said, "We found in our experience with the secondary school system in New Jersey that many students and administrators are unaware of what the students' legal rights and responsibilities are.

"However, if students and administrators are to settle their differences rationally, they must be equipped with proper information on what the laws are."

Providing such information is the aim of the booklet, according to the

introduction, which states, "the laws and regulations are described here as they are written — not as some feel they should be."

Cooney explained that, "the booklet is aimed at eliminating emotional confrontations based on misconceptions about the relationships involved in a school situation.

"It takes the issues away from individuals and provides an objective guide by which students, teachers and administrators can measure their actions."

Cooney noted that the booklet has received the endorsement of several educational organizations, including the New Jersey Association of Secondary School Principals and the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Some of the rights and responsibilities noted in the booklet are:

- ▶ Students may wear their hair at any length and in any style they wish as long as it does not endanger their or other students' health and safety or create classroom disorder. They may not be barred from any school activity because of their hair.
- ▶ Students may abstain from the salute or pledge of allegiance to the flag if they are opposed to such action, but must stand respectfully.

▶ Students may wear or display armbands and buttons or similar badges of "symbolic expression" unless "the manner of expression 'materially and substantially interferes with' the orderly process of the school or the rights of others."

▶ Students may distribute literature according to "reasonable guidelines setting forth the times and places for distribution and for defining fair standards for their content." Such standards will not be based on approval or agreement with the literature, but will be aimed at avoiding publications that incite violence, are pornographic or libelous.

▶ Students have the same rights in relation to police in school as out: the right to be informed of legal rights, to be protected from coercion and illegal constraint, and to remain silent.

A student's locker is not protected from reasonable search and seizure of materials.

▶ A student has a responsibility to dress according to the approved regulations of the board of education.

Copies of the guide may be obtained, free of charge, from the Department of Community Affairs, Youth Services Program, P.O. Box 2768, Trenton, New Jersey 08625.

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## ***County Aging Offices Open in Morris, Union***

County Offices on Aging have been established in Morris County (Morristown) and Union County (Elizabeth) to provide information and referral services to senior citizens in those areas.

The offices are being operated, in part, with federal funds administered by the Department through its Office on Aging under Title III of the federal Older Americans Act of 1965.

Morris and Union Counties have received grants of \$22,050 and \$21,000, respectively, to operate the offices for a one-year period.

Edward L. Donohue, director of the Office on Aging, said, "With the opening of these offices, more than 83 percent of New Jersey's 700,000 senior citizens have an available central source of information on re-

sources and programs for the elderly."

There are currently 13 other such offices located throughout the State. They are in the Counties of Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Ocean, Passaic, Sussex and Warren.

The primary functions of these offices are to:

- ▶ maintain and disseminate updated information on programs which serve senior citizens and on research in the field of aging;
- ▶ determine the needs of senior citizens and encourage the development of programs and facilities to meet these needs; and
- ▶ assist in adapting resources and programs to changing needs.



## **Guide Alerts Public to Government Housing Programs for Elderly**

More than 140,000 elderly New Jerseyans — one out of every five — live in substandard housing because of the critical shortage of housing throughout the State, according to the Department.

To help alleviate such conditions and provide decent housing for senior citizens, the Department has issued a guidebook designed to assist municipalities and community agencies in developing and financing suitable housing keyed to the special needs and income limitations of the aging.

The 21-page booklet, entitled, "A Community Guide: Housing New Jersey's Elderly," was prepared by the Department's Office on Aging, Division of Human Resources. It involved the cooperation of the Department's Division of Housing and Urban Renewal, the New Jersey Housing Finance Agency (NJHFA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Community Affairs Commissioner Edmund T. Hume said the booklet was developed "in response to requests from municipal officials, private builders and the general public for information about the federal and State programs available to help plan and finance housing for the elderly."

Hume said, "The housing shortage that affects all New Jersey residents today places a particularly heavy burden on our senior citizens, many of whom are obliged to live in substandard or inadequate housing at prices well beyond their limited, fixed in-

comes. Many have struggled for many years to buy and pay off their homes, only to face a retirement made unbearable by exorbitant property taxes that threaten to drive them into penury and disgrace."

The Commissioner added that, "Thousands more older New Jerseyans live in rental housing that is often inadequate and unsuited to their needs."

It is our hope that this guidebook will spur all segments of our society — both governmental and private — to take the steps necessary to plan and build decent and affordable housing that will permit our distinguished senior citizens to live their retirement years in dignity and pride," Hume concluded.

The booklet opens with a brief one-page introduction that highlights the critical need for senior citizen housing. It is followed by a chapter that describes the concerns that should be considered in building housing geared to the special needs of the elderly.

Other chapters provide information on the State and federal housing assistance programs available, community and governmental sources for additional information, and how the public and local officials can act to stimulate the construction of housing.

The guide briefly describes how each housing program works, the kind of assistance provided, and the procedures for utilizing the program. It also points out who may sponsor the housing (a municipality, non-profit agency or profit-motivated group), the govern-

mental agency to contact for further information, and, where applicable, the number of housing units provided for senior citizens in New Jersey under the program.

Included in the guide are explanations of seven categories of federally financed housing assistance programs, such as low-interest, long-term construction and mortgage loans, insurance for mortgage loans, mortgage interest subsidies and rent supplement payments.

The brochure also outlines the special physical, social, psychological and general needs that should be considered in planning housing for the elderly. In addition, it summarizes "certain minimal elements of safety and design" that should characterize the housing.

The chapter on State housing assistance programs highlights the seed money loans and mortgage funds available for moderate-income housing construction and renovation from the New Jersey Housing Finance Agency (NJHFA), a quasi-independent agency within the Community Affairs Department.

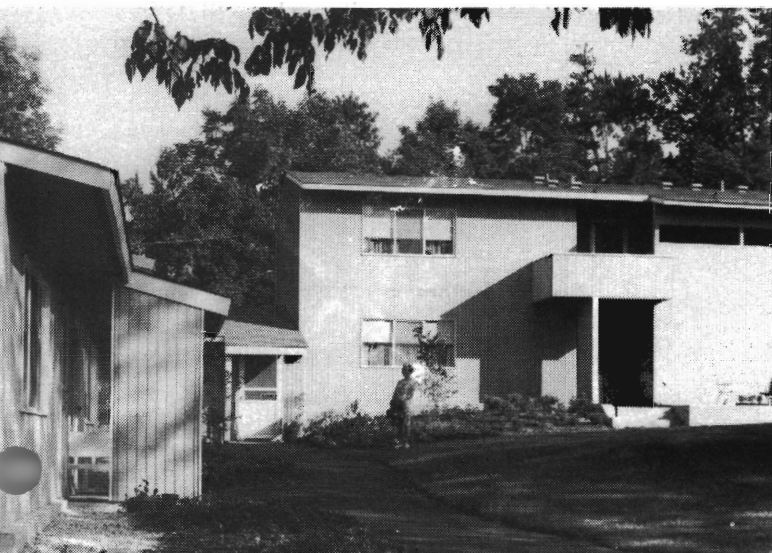
Hume said the agency has, in the past six months, approved \$21.9 million in mortgage loans to finance construction of 986 dwelling units for the elderly.

Of that total, 335 units are under construction — 93 at the Poplar Village project in Ocean Township (Monmouth County), 84 at the Doddtown project in East Orange, and 158 units of the Union Senior Citizens project in Union Township.

Three other developments are awaiting final mortgage closings in the near future. They are the Asbury Towers project of 350 units in Asbury Park, the High Street Project of 96 units in Perth Amboy, and the Victorian Towers project of 205 units in Cape May.

Hume said the agency, created four years ago by the Legislature, is in a position to provide loans through long-term mortgages with low-interest rates because the agency can sell tax-exempt bonds.

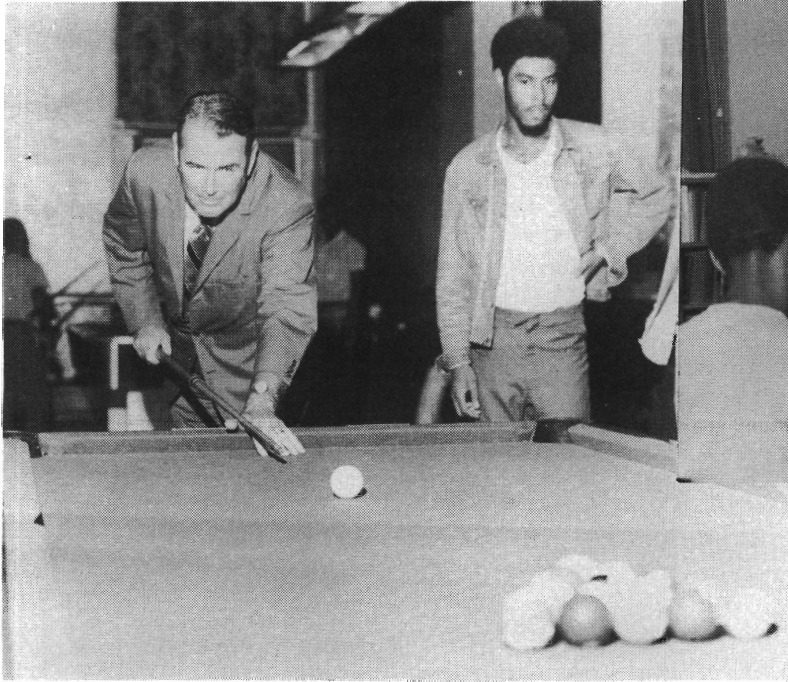
Copies of the guide may be obtained free of charge from the Office on Aging, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, P.O. Box 2768, Trenton, New Jersey 08625.



*Lloyd Terrace in Princeton is one of the low-income housing developments for senior citizens displayed in the Department's publication, "A Community Guide: Housing New Jersey's Elderly." It is operated by the Princeton Housing Authority.*



## ***Multi-Service Center Funded by Department Opens in Plainfield***



*Plainfield Mayor Frank H. Blatz, Jr. (left) introduces Commissioner Edmund T. Hume to some of the youths involved in programs sponsored by the Second Street Youth Center Foundation. The Foundation is housed in the newly opened Model Cities Multi-Service Center, funded by the Department. At left, Hume participates in one of the Foundation-sponsored recreational activities.*

The Model Cities Multi-Service Center, funded last May with a \$98,700 grant from the Department, opened last month with formal ceremonies attended by State and local officials.

Community Affairs Commissioner Edmund T. Hume joined Plainfield Mayor Frank H. Blatz, Jr. in ceremonies, held in the new Center on September 14. Harold Hodes, State Model Cities administrator, accompanied Hume.

In a statement, Hume said, "I am pleased to see that the Multi-Service Center is now prepared to open its doors to the residents of the Plainfield Model Cities Neighborhood. The Department has financed the renovation and conversion of this building, which will eventually house under one roof a variety of vitally needed services once scattered and fragmented throughout the area."

The Multi-Service Center, located at 929-935 South Second Street, was purchased by the City of Plainfield at a cost of \$46,000, paid with State Model City funds. When completed, the center will house a sophisticated complex of social services, including youth assistance programs now being offered by the Second Street Youth Center Foundation, which will be the primary tenant of the building.

After renovations of the building have been completed, the Center plans to accommodate a State-financed Day Care 100 Center for some 60 pre-school youngsters, a crime prevention unit, an office of the New Jersey State Rehabilitation Commission, the Welfare Rights Organization, and branch offices of the Union County Legal Services Corp. and the Union Psychiatric Clinic.

"I want to express my complete support for the kind of coordinated services approach which this Center will offer," said Hume. "It is just one of many worthwhile projects that have been developed by the Plainfield City Demonstration Agency, with the assistance of the federal government and

more than \$230,000 in State Model Cities funds awarded by the Community Affairs Department during the past fiscal year alone."

According to Plainfield Model City officials, extensive renovation plans for the building include improvements to the exterior, entryway, central layout, plumbing, heating and electrical systems. When completed, the Center will be totally supported through rents paid by the agencies located in the building.

Hume added that the Department also would work closely with Plainfield officials in regard to relocating the Plainfield Day Care 100 program in the Center. The program is currently housed in a church outside the Model neighborhood.

Earlier in the month, Hume joined East Orange Mayor William Hart and officials from the city and the State in a half-day walking tour of six Model City projects financed through \$138,000 in Community Affairs grants.

Hume and Hart arranged the tour to gauge first hand the progress of the improvement projects throughout the city's Model Neighborhood area.

The tour took the Commissioner, the Mayor and their staffs to a manpower center at 188 Central Avenue, a dental program at East Orange General Hospital, a Day Care Center at 156 Freeway Drive, a Tool Library at 103 Fourth Avenue, a beautification project in the city's "teen streets" neighborhood, and a high school equivalency program at 60 North Walnut Street.

East Orange is one of eight Model Cities in New Jersey participating in the federal Model Cities program, which provides funds for concentrated and coordinated efforts to improve living conditions in delineated blighted neighborhoods.



## ***Ehret Will Speak at Conference Of League of Municipalities***

Joseph N. Ehret, Jr., director of the Department's Division of Local Government Services, will speak on the financial aspects of local government at two separate events to be held as part of the 56th Annual Conference of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities in Atlantic City next month.

The Conference, to be held at the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall Hotel November 16-19, will feature widespread participation from members of the Community Affairs Department.

Ehret will be one of the speakers addressing the Municipal Receivers, Tax Collectors and Treasurers Association on Tuesday, November 16, at 2 p.m. in the Rutland Room. The topic will be "Senior Citizens — Assessments, Deductions and Procedures."

On Wednesday, November 17, Ehret will be the guest speaker at a conference sponsored by the Municipal Finance Officers Association of New Jersey on "President Nixon's Revenue Sharing Task Force." It will be held at 9:30 a.m. in the West Room.

Later that day, at 2 p.m., Ehret and John E. Laezza, deputy director of the Division, will moderate a "School of Problems" for local finance officials. The special program will be held in the Carolina Room by the Municipal Receivers Association. Division representatives Anthony Angelini, chief auditor, and James O'Connor, assistant chief auditor, will serve as consultants.

Laezza will also address the Municipal Finance Officers Association as one of three speakers on "A New Concept — Bond Insurance and Its Effects on Interest Rates — Is It Worthwhile?"

Two other Division representatives, James Alexander Jr., chief of the Bureau of Local Management Services, and Barry Skokowski, program development specialist, will meet with the New Jersey Governmental Purchasing Agents Association to discuss the Local Public Contracts Law. The meeting will be held in the Navajo Room on Wednesday, November 17, at 10 a.m.

Also on Wednesday, Vincent Fornieri, program development specialist, Division of Housing and Urban Renewal, will participate in a group discussion sponsored by the Municipal Electrical Inspectors Association of New Jersey on "Housing Inspection — Is It Working?" The meeting will be held at 2 p.m. in the Mandarin Room.

On Thursday, November 18, Duane G. Jamison, supervisor of housing code enforcement, Division of Housing and Urban Renewal, will address two separate groups on the State's housing code enforcement efforts.

Jamison will speak before the Building Officials Association of New Jersey on "State-Local Cooperative Housing Inspection Program — An Overview," at 10 a.m. in the Solarium.

At 2 p.m., also in the Solarium, he will address the Plumbing Inspectors Association, Inc. on "State Housing Enforcement — New Amendments and Applications."

Department representatives will also be participating in other activities to be held during the Conference. On Thursday, November 18, they will staff a total of 18 consulting tables on a variety of subject areas involving community services. The consulting period, to be held in the Pennsylvania Room from 9:30 a.m. to noon, is designed to give local officials an opportunity to discuss local needs with representatives of State and federal governments and other public-oriented private organizations.

In addition, the Department's Office of Public Information will maintain an exhibit booth throughout the four-day conference. Publications describing the activities and programs of the Department will be available at the booth free of charge.

## ***Hume Appoints State Members To Housing, Renewal Agencies***

Commissioner Edmund T. Hume has named State-appointed members to one redevelopment agency and two housing authorities.

Named to the Pleasantville Redevelopment Agency was Edward S. Terry, 64, a retired postal employee who works part-time as a security officer at the Atlantic City Raceway. A resident of Pleasantville (Atlantic County) for 50 years, Terry replaces Anthony Russo.

Ralph J. Nastasi and Edward Hillis were named by Hume to the North Bergen Housing Authority and the East Orange Housing Authority, respectively.

Nastasi, 68, replaces Joseph McKeon. A lifelong resident of the township, Nastasi is head salesman for Nelson Freightways of Secaucus.

Hillis, 62, is a lawyer in the law firm of Robert J. Casulli. Also a lifelong resident of his town, he replaces Frank A. McHenry.

New Jersey Law provides for appointment by the Community Affairs Commissioner of one member on each housing authority and redevelopment agency. This member serves an indefinite term as the representative for State housing policy.

Under the law, local housing authorities are created by municipalities to administer their federally funded, low-income public housing programs; redevelopment agencies work to clear blighted areas.

In making the appointments, Commissioner Hume noted the long residence of the three men. "There is a special awareness of a community which can come only from seeing it grow and change over many years," he said. "Each of these three appointees has lived for more than 50 years in his municipality. Their expertise should prove invaluable."

## *ENFORCEMENT from page 1*

(family) units and to hotels that contain at least 10 dwelling units or have sleeping facilities for 25 or more persons.

The Department also is responsible under that law for registering these structures with the State and periodically inspecting them to ensure that State standards are being maintained.

"Through this concerted enforcement action, the Community Affairs Department is taking aggressive strides to prevent the further deterioration of an already dwindling housing stock throughout the State," Hume explained.

"Through vigorous enforcement of State housing regulations, we seek to conserve existing living units and ease the housing shortage. Not only must we build new housing, but we must maintain that which we have. Only in this way will the State be able to insure decent, safe and sanitary housing for our growing population."

Hume said he was "hopeful that the court actions will spur other landlords to comply with the State housing regulations and correct code violations, as they are cited, so that such action in the future will not be necessary."

Hume said the filing of complaints on September 14 followed by about two weeks the Department's first successful prosecution of two Linden apartment owners for failure to correct code violations and pay penalty fines ordered by the Commissioner.

Theodore Liscinski, acting chief of the Bureau of Housing Inspection, said the Department's enforcement actions are based on amendments to the Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Law, which were enacted in May, 1970. Under the amendments, the Commissioner is empowered to assess penalties against owners who neither correct violations after being ordered to do so, nor request a hearing to appeal the order.

"Prior to the amendments, the Commissioner could only sue for

penalties through civil action in which he had to testify to the validity of the violations in court," said Liscinski. "This was a very lengthy, time-consuming process. Now, the Commissioner can levy penalties against recalcitrant landlords and where they fail to contest his order, the Commissioner can then seek to collect the penalties and seek compliance with his abatement orders in court, without having to prove the violations are valid."

## *APARTMENT from page 1*

new interest on the part of both builders and buyers in apartment dwellings, including townhouse, garden apartment and row house developments."

Camden County, quadrupling its 1969 figure, recorded 2,975 new multiple dwelling units in 1970 to lead the State. Burlington County, generally among the annual leaders in multi-family dwelling construction, reported the second highest total of 2,304 new units. Bergen, Monmouth, Atlantic and Middlesex Counties all reported over 1,000 new units.

Totally, 15 of the State's 21 counties reported increases in new construction.

Of the six showing decreases, only Ocean County, down 60 per cent, and the 1969 State leader, Gloucester County, down 80 per cent, showed significant declines. The other counties reporting decreases in multiple dwelling unit construction were Cape May (89 to 88), Cumberland (235 to 226),

Hunterdon (68 to 46), and Mercer (543 to 328).

Statewide, rents for the new units increased by 10 per cent over 1969 to an average of \$211. Bergen County reported the State's highest average monthly rental, \$292, while last year's leader, Union County, had the second highest figure, \$256. Conversely, Salem County reported the lowest average rent, \$145, with Cape May, Gloucester, and Warren Counties all in the \$160-171 range.

In addition, a total of 95 municipalities reported 163 new construction projects during 1970. The 1969 report listed 78 municipalities and 137 new construction projects.

Issued annually, the publication covers volume, cost, size and other data by county and municipality on new private rental apartments, excluding public housing, cooperatives and hostels. It is available free of charge from the Department's Bureau of Housing Services, P. O. Box 2768, Trenton, New Jersey 08625.

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