

Transitioning to Digital Legal Notices: Guidance for Public Housing Authorities



Navigating from Print Newspapers to Online Platforms

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Overview of the New Law

- The Legislation: L. 2025, c. 72 (signed June 30, 2025) officially updates public notification requirements.
 - The Core Mandate: Traditional newspaper publication is supplanted by mandatory digital hosting of complete legal notices.
 - Effective Date: The transition fully took effect on March 1, 2026.
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Previous Law

- **The Historical Framework**
 - **Statutory Print Mandate:** Public entities were strictly required by state law to publish the full text of all legal advertisements in a designated, paid-circulation print newspaper of record.
 - **The 45-Day Timeline Baseline:** Crucial compliance procedures—such as the Annual PHA Plan posting—required a physical 45-day public clock to run from the exact date the newspaper ink hit the page.
 - **Affidavit of Publication:** Procurement and compliance files required a physical, notarized affidavit mailed by the publisher to legally prove the notice ran.
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Current Legal Notices Law

- Full text of all legal notices must be accessible on your official website free of charge (no paywalls, no required registrations).
 - Homepage Link: A direct hyperlink must be conspicuously placed on your website's main homepage.
 - Design Standards: Must be prominent, easy to read, centrally located, and entirely mobile-friendly.
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Current Legal Notices Law"

- Notices can be directly displayed (HTML) or uploaded as individual PDF links, provided the link titles are clear and descriptive.
 - Visually impaired or mobile-reliant residents shouldn't have to scroll endlessly to find public housing alerts, bid openings, or board meetings.
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Retention and Archiving Obligations (1/2)

Active Hosting: Notices must remain on the active webpage for at least one week, or longer if required by a specific statute (e.g., specific budget hearing lead times).

The Internet Archive Requirement: Public entities must transition expired notices to an online archive.



Retention and Archiving Obligations (2/2)

July 1, 2026 Deadline:

The searchable online archive must be live on your website by next month.

Retention Window:

Archived notices must be maintained online for a minimum of one year.



Accessibility Mandates (Title II of the ADA)



Action Item: Housing authorities must proactively audit their sites with webmasters and legal counsel to ensure screen-reader optimization for visually impaired residents.



Bi-Monthly Mandate

- **Frequency:** Throughout 2026, PHAs must place an advertisement in an eligible online news publication at least twice per month.
 - **Required Ad Content:**
 - 1. A statement letting the public know that full legal notices can be viewed on the PHA's official website.
 - 2. A hyperlink directing users to the central Statewide legal notices directory managed by the NJ Secretary of State.
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Bi-Monthly Mandate

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE: Pursuant to P.L. 2025, c. 72, the complete text of each legal notice for Princeton Public Library, Princeton, NJ may be obtained or viewed by the public at: <https://princetonlibrary.org/about-us/legal-notices/>

6/4,18/26 THE TIMES \$14.04

PUBLIC NOTICE: PUBLIC NOTICE: Pursuant to P.L. 2025, c. 72, the complete text of each legal notice for Princeton Public Library, Princeton, NJ may be obtained or viewed by the public at: <https://princetonlibrary.org/about-us/legal-notices/>

6/4,18/26 THE TIMES \$14.04

**STOCKTON BOROUGH
HUNTERDON COUNTY**

TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to P.L. 2025, c. 72, the complete text of each legal notice of the Borough of Stockton, Hunterdon County including the Boards, Commissions and the like may be obtained or viewed by the public on our official Internet Website: <http://stocktonboronj.us/public-notices-legal-notices>

Secretary of State's Statewide Legal Notice Website is Active and can be found here: <http://www.nj.gov/state/statewide-legal-notices-list.shtml>

11095429-01

The Gatekeepers

1. State Administrative Oversight

Two primary state agencies monitor public entities to ensure they are meeting their digital posting obligations:

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services (DLGS): DLGS issues official notices that dictate budget, procurement, and administrative guidelines for authorities.

The New Jersey Department of State (DOS): The Secretary of State is responsible for enforcing the centralized connection.

2. The Judicial System & The Public (The Real Enforcement "Teeth")

- In public sector compliance, the ultimate enforcement mechanism isn't a state fine—it's a **lawsuit**.
- Because a failure to post properly results in a "defective notice," the real compliance enforcement comes from the courts via external stakeholders:
 - **Disgruntled Bidders / Contractors**
 - **Public Interest Groups and Advocates**



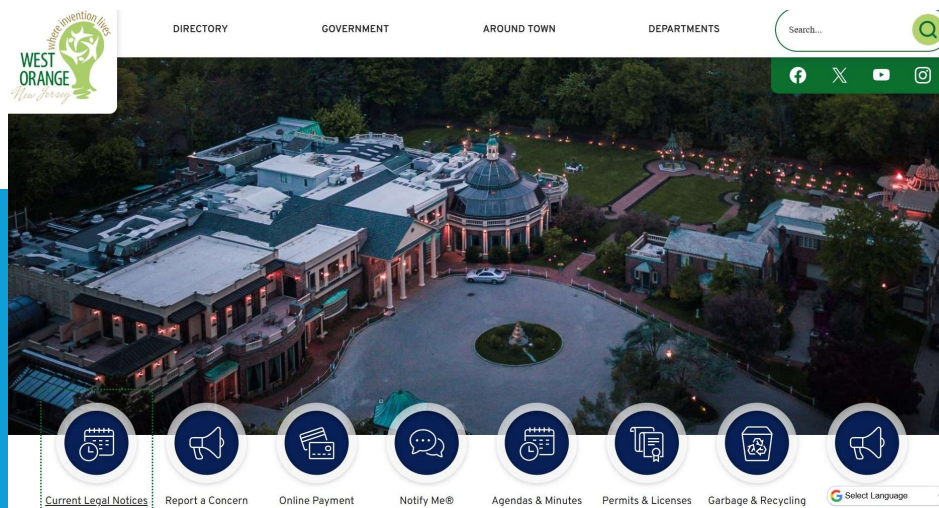
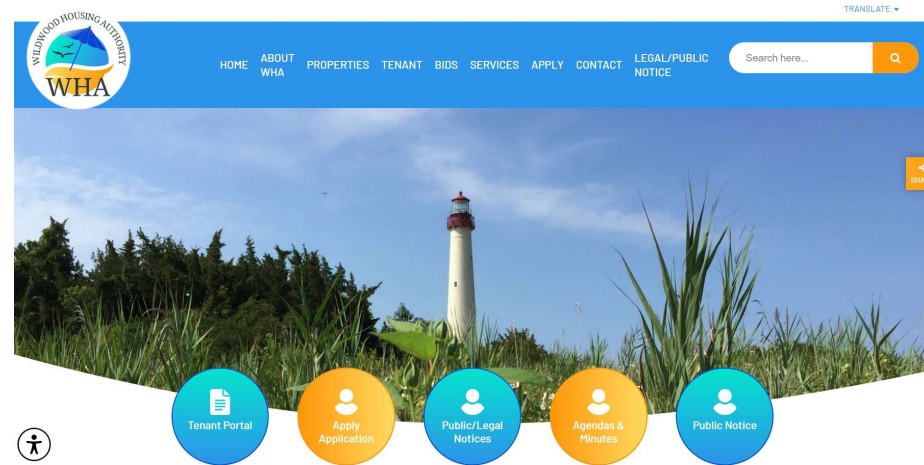
Core PHA Website Requirements (L. 2011, c. 167)

- **Reminder:** The new legal notice mandate layer on top of existing website rules. Your PHA site must still prominently display:
 - § Mission statements and official policy guidelines.
 - § Budgets (current year + 2 preceding years).
 - § Most recent audits and financial statements.
 - § OPMA meeting notices, agendas, and 3 years of approved minutes.
 - § Contact information for day-to-day management.
 - § A list of consultants/attorneys receiving \$17,500 or more in the preceding fiscal year.
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Authority Roadmap to Full Compliance (1/4)

- **Standardize URL:** Create a uniform path (e.g., housing-authority-website.nj.gov/notices) and submit it to the NJ Secretary of State for the central directory.
- **Build the Archive:** Ensure the digital archive infrastructure goes live before the July 1, 2026 hard deadline.
- **Establish Proof Protocols:** Coordinate with your webmaster to implement internal timestamped screenshots or administrative certifications to legally verify publication durations.
- **Physical Postings:** Continue to maintain physical bulletin board postings at your administrative offices and senior/family developments where legally required.

Authority Roadmap to Full Compliance (2/4)



Authority Roadmap to Full Compliance (3/4)

The screenshot shows the Wildwood Housing Authority (WHA) website. The top navigation bar includes links for HOME, ABOUT WHA, PROPERTIES, TENANT, BIDS, SERVICES, APPLY, CONTACT, and LEGAL/PUBLIC NOTICE. A search bar is located on the right. A dropdown menu for 'RELATED PAGES' is open, listing: Board Of Commissioners, Agendas & Minutes, Audits & Budgets, Financial Reports, Document Center, FAQ, Policies, Public Notice, and Contact Us. The main content area features a 'PUBLIC NOTICE' section with the following text:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE OF CLOSING OF THE PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LIST FOR ALL BEDROOMS PUBLIC NOTICE
Effective, Wednesday October 1, 2025 at 8:30 am.

The Wildwood Housing Authority, will CLOSE its Public Housing Waiting List for Sandman Towers and Commissioners Court; At this time no applications will be accepted for the Public Housing bedroom sizes as noted above. Public Notice will be provided when the WHA re-opens the Waiting List for the specific bedroom sizes. HUD regulations do not require a public hearing when opening and closing the Waiting List. Therefore, public notice will be provided as stated in the prevailing Admissions and Continuing Occupancy Policy (ACOP).

The screenshot shows the West Orange website. The top navigation bar includes links for DIRECTORY, GOVERNMENT, AROUND TOWN, and DEPARTMENTS. A search bar is located on the right. A dropdown menu for 'CURRENT LEGAL NOTICES' is open, listing: Affordable Housing, Bid Notices, Financial Notices, Meeting Notices, Ordinance Notices, Planning Board Notices, Resolution Notices, and Zoning Board Notices. The main content area features a 'Current Legal Notices' section with the following text:

Current Legal Notices

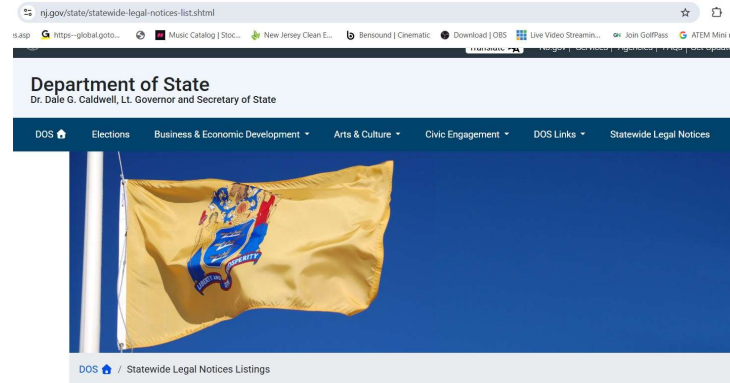
As of March 1, 2026, pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 2025, c.72, all Township of West Orange current legal notices shall be displayed on this webpage as required by law.

Once the required display period expires, notices will be transferred to the Legal Notices Archive: [Legal Notices Archive](#). Archived notices will be available for a period of one year.

[Township of West Orange Bi-Monthly Legal Notice Until 12.31.26](#)

Authority Roadmap to Full Compliance (4/4)

Contact the Department of State:
DOS.Public-Notice@sos.nj.gov




Statewide Legal Notices Listings

In accordance with S4654/A5878, signed into law by Governor Murphy in July 2025, the New Jersey Department of State is required to maintain a centralized, publicly accessible directory of legal notice hyperlinks submitted by public entities across the State. This page serves as that official directory.

The law defines a public entity broadly to include the State, any State agency, local government units, districts, public authorities, public agencies, and any other political subdivision or political body in the State. All such entities are required by law to publish their legal notices online and to submit the hyperlink to this page for public access.

A legal notice includes any resolution, official proclamation, notice, or advertisement of any kind required by law or court order to be published by a public entity — including proposals for bids on public work.

Type	County	Agency/Entity Name	Municipality	Type of Local	
All	CAPE MAY	All	All	All	
Type	County	Public Notice URL	Agency/Entity Name	Municipality	Type
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://njgals.com/municipality/stone-harbor/?category=borough-of-stone-harbor	Borough of Stone Harbor	Stone Harbor Borough	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://njgals.com/municipality/west-wildwood/?category=west-wildwood-borough	Borough of West Wildwood	West Wildwood Borough	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://njgals.com/municipality/wildwood-crest/?category=borough-of-wildwood-crest	Borough of Wildwood Crest	Wildwood Crest Borough	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://njgals.com/municipality/woodbine/?category=borough-of-woodbine	Borough of Woodbine	Woodbine Borough	Boe
Local	CAPE MAY	https://sites.google.com/locally/sea-isle-board-legal-notice	Sea Isle City Board of Education	Sea Isle City	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.lower.org/publicnotice.php	Township of Lower	Lower Township	Toe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://upper township nj.com/legal-notice/	Upper Township	Upper Township	Toe
Local	CAPE MAY	https://upper township nj.com/public-safety/fire-commissioners/fire-district-4-seattle/	Fire District No. 4	Upper Township	Fve
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.cityofwildwoodnj.com/publicnotice	City of Wildwood	Wildwood City	City
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.avonfreepubliclibrary.org/legal-notice	Avon Free Public Library	Avon Borough	Lib
Local	CAPE MAY	https://www.avonboardofeducation.org/legal-notice	Avon Board of Education	Avon Borough	Boe
Local	CAPE MAY	https://www.stoneharborboardschools.org/legal-notice	Stone Harbor Board of Education	Stone Harbor Borough	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.statemaycity.com/public-notice	City of Cape May	Cape May City	City
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.cmcma.com/legal-notice	Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority	Middle Township	UBR
Regional School	CAPE MAY	https://www.crestrem.edu/department/legal-ads	Wildwood Crest School District		
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.districtschools.org/news/legals-notice	Dennis Township Board of Education	Dennis Township	Boe
Local	CAPE MAY	https://www.lowerelementaryschools.com	Lower Township Elementary School District	Lower Township	Boe
Local Government	CAPE MAY	https://www.lowerelementaryschools.com/public-notice	Lower Township Elementary Schools	Lower Township	Boe
Local	CAPE MAY	https://www.middle-townshipnj.com	Middle Township Fire District #3	Middle Township	Fve



The Intersection of the Open Public Meetings Act and the New Law

- OPMA regulates *meetings*, while the new public notice law regulates *advertisements and postings*.
 - However, because OPMA mandates that public bodies give advanced notice of their meetings, the new law **directly alters how you must fulfill your OPMA notice requirements**.
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Summary

- New Jersey has passed a law shifting the requirements to post Public Newspapers to an online process. Effective March 1st with an archive requirement of July 1st.
 - You must create a dedicated link for public notices on your website that meets accessibility requirements along with an archive link to previously published notices
 - The NJ Department of State has created a dedicated website for the general public, which needs to be linked to your website.
 - You must publish a notice under the old format at least two times a month guiding the general public to your public notice site.
 - Lack of compliance can lead to court challenges and render decisions unenforceable.
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Thank you for attending! See you in
September.

