

October 2, 2015

RE: Weekly Policy Update

- I. Update on Storms & Local Finance Notice on Storm Preparation and Response
Emergency Financing and Procurement Matters**
- II. League Issues Two Reports on Affordable Housing**
- III. Police Car Camera Mandate Suspended**
- IV. Division Issues Guidance on Increase of Bid Threshold**
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Checklist for CY Municipalities is due Friday, October 16**

Dear Mayor:

Here is a brief recap of some policy issues of interest:

- I. Updates on Storms & Local Finance Notice on Storm Preparation and Response
Emergency Financing and Procurement Matters**

Please continue to monitor the "[Dear Mayor](#)" page and our twitter feed ([@NJ_League](#)) for all updates on the impending Nor'easter and Hurricane: <https://nj-njslom.civicplus.com/Archive.aspx?AMID=36>

As we noted yesterday, the Division of Local Government Services has issued Local Finance Notice 2015-21, which informs impacted municipalities of relevant post-storm financing and procurement matters. The notice outlines the process to appropriate and expend funds and the purchasing of goods and services in response to weather related emergencies. Please [click here](#) to see our October 1 letter.

Please [click here](#) for a copy of the Local Finance Notice.

Contact: Lori Buckelew at lbuckelew@njslom.org or 609-695-3481, ext. 112

- II. League Issues Two Reports on Affordable Housing**

On Monday, the League released two reports for municipalities which, as a result of the March State Supreme Court ruling, have sought declaratory judgements. For more on these important reports, please [click here](#).

Contact: Mike Cerra at mcerra@njslom.org or 609-695-3481, ext. 120

- III. Police Car Mandate Suspended**

On Tuesday, the Council on Local Mandates stated that it will be issuing an order enjoining the application of PL 2014, c. 54, which required newly acquired police cars to be equipped with a mobile video recording system. For more, please [click here](#). **Contact:** Ed Purcell, Esq., 609-695-3481 x137, epurcell@njslom.org

IV. Division Issues Guidance on Increase of Bid Threshold

The Local Public Contracts Law requires the State Treasurer adjust the minimum bid threshold every five years based on the index rate. Effective July 1 a municipality may increase, by resolution, their minimum bid threshold to \$40,000 if they have a Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA). As a result the new quote threshold will be \$6,000. If a municipality does not have a QPA the bid threshold remains at \$17,500, with the corresponding quote threshold of \$2,625. The Division of Local Government Services has issued Local Finance Notice 2015-20, [click here](#) for a copy, providing further guidance.

Contact: Lori Buckelew at lbuckelew@njslom.org or 609-695-3481, ext. 112

V. Local Finance Notice Issued on the Approval Process for Local Unit Investment in Certain Municipal Debt Obligations

One of the provisions of the “Division of Local Government Services Modernization and Local Mandate Relief Act of 2015” grants the Division of Local Government Services, rather than the Division of Investment, the role of approving local government investment in debt obligations having a maturity date of not more than 397 days from the date of purchase. Local Finance Notice 2015-18 discusses how local units subject to the Local Fiscal Affairs Law can obtain Division approval to invest in such notes issued by municipalities, counties and fire districts. Please [click here](#) for a copy of the Local Finance.

Contact: Lori Buckelew at lbuckelew@njslom.org or 609-695-3481, ext. 112

VI. State Health Benefits Open Enrollment - New Tiered Network Plan

The State Health Benefits Program Committee has approved new plan designs for 2016 that will be available during the current open enrollment period. Open Enrollment began on October 1, 2015 and continues until November 2, 2015.

The changes taking effect in 2016 will include the following:

- For active State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) members, Horizon and Aetna will each offer a new Tiered Network Plan. For more information please visit www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/tierednetwork.shtml
- **HMO plans 1525, 2030 and 2035, offered by both Aetna and Horizon, will no longer be able to active SHBP members. Active members will automatically be enrolled in**

the new tiered plans, unless they submit an application choosing an alternate plan during open enrollment.

- **Payments for Out-of-Network Chiropractic and Acupuncture visits will be limited to \$35 for chiropractic and \$60 for acupuncture, or 75% of the in-network cost per visit, whichever is less.**
- **Emergency room co-pays will increase by \$25, where the co-pay is currently less than \$100. This does not apply to dependents under age of 19 or members referred to the emergency room by a physician.**

A plan design comparison chart for active municipal employees is available at www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/hb_open_enrollment_2015/ha0896-2016.pdf

The Division has also posted a Percentage of Premium Worksheet to assist employees in calculating their approximate payroll deduction for health benefits. The worksheet is available at www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/pdf/hb/ha-0886-government16.pdf

Rates for local employers for Plan Year 2016 are available at www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions/hb_open_enrollment_2015/local-gov-with-without.pdf

We will continue to keep you posted as new information is released from the Division of Pensions.

Contact: Lori Buckelew at lbuckelew@njslom.org or 609-695-3481, ext. 112

VII. Best Practices Checklist for CY Municipalities is due Friday, October 16

As a reminder the Best Practices Checklist for Calendar Year or Transitional Fiscal Year municipalities is due by Friday, October 16. For more information [click here](#) **Contact:** Lori Buckelew, 609-695-3481 x112 or lbuckelew@njslom.org

Sincerely,

Michael J. Darcy, CAE Executive
Director