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NLIHC Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2022

Sen. Sherrod Brown and Rep. Maxine Waters to Address NLIHC Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2022, March 22-23!

[NLIHC's Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2022: Achieving Housing Justice](#), taking place from 12:30 to 5:30 pm ET on March 22 and 1 to 5:30 pm ET on March 23, will feature a conversation between Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Development Committee **Chair Sherrod Brown**, House Financial Services Committee **Chair Maxine Waters**, and NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel about the progress to-date and the road ahead for achieving universal, stable, affordable housing for people with the lowest incomes and the prospects for ending homelessness and achieving racially equitable housing justice. [Register today to attend the Forum.](#)



Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH)



Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA)

The forum will also feature a special address by U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Marcia L. Fudge, as well as keynote speakers and panels on: Racial Equity and Housing Justice featuring MacArthur “Genius” award-winning photographer LaToya Ruby Frazier; a Capitol Hill Insiders Panel; Expanding the Multi-Sector Affordable Housing Movement; Ending Rental Arrears to Stop Evictions; Achieving Renter Protections; Best Practices in Organizing; and Discussions with Senior Administration Officials and Members of Congress, including in-depth conversations between Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) and NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel; Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and NLIHC Board of Directors 1st Vice Chair Dora Leong Gallo; and Representative Cori Bush (D-MO) and NLIHC Board of Directors Executive Committee Member Eric Price.

Forum attendees will have an opportunity to network with other attendees, and NLIHC will provide a selection of interactive sessions with NLIHC experts on Our Homes, Our Votes 2022: Non-partisan Voter and Candidate Engagement; Disaster Housing Recovery; Effective Media/Social Media Strategies & Practices; and Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Virtual Capitol Hill Day on Thursday, March 24

NLIHC invites advocates across the country to join us for our Virtual Capitol Hill Day on Thursday, March 24. Advocates like you will meet with members of Congress or their staff to urge them to support funding affordable housing programs at the highest levels possible, advance anti-racist policies, and support legislation that will improve the lives of the lowest-income people. If you would like to set up appointments for Capitol Hill Day, please contact NLIHC’s Joey Lindstrom at jlindstrom@nlihc.org. There may be meetings already set up for your state and district that you can join.

NLIHC is also hosting a webinar, “NLIHC’s Policy Priorities for 2022,” which will take place on March 16 at 12 pm ET. NLIHC’s policy team will discuss our policy priorities, and the NLIHC field team will provide an overview of how housing providers, tenant associations, and homeless service agencies can connect their work to our policy priorities. They will also give suggestions about resources to share during Hill meetings. [Register here](#).

[Register today](#) for the March 22-23, 2022, Virtual Housing Policy Forum!

Budget and Appropriations

President Biden Signs into Law FY22 Spending Bill with Increased Funding for Housing

President Joe Biden signed into law a fiscal year (FY) 2022 [spending bill](#) on March 11 with increased funding for affordable housing and community development programs. After nearly five months of negotiations, House and Senate leaders released the final bill text on March 9 for an FY22 spending bill that would provide roughly \$1.5 trillion in federal spending for the new fiscal year. The spending bill provides HUD programs with \$53.7 billion, a [\\$4 billion](#) increase over FY21 enacted levels. The bill passed the House on March 9 by a vote of 361 to 69 and passed the Senate the following day by a vote of 68 to 31.

This is the first year that funding levels were not limited by the “Budget Control Act,” which established strict spending limits on defense and domestic programs. Despite the increase in HUD funding, the bill funds HUD programs at an overall level that is less than what was proposed in the [president’s FY22 budget request](#), the [House’s budget request](#), and the [Senate’s budget request](#). For more details on the FY22 spending proposals, see NLIHC’s [updated budget chart](#).

The \$4 billion increase above FY21 funding for HUD programs is thanks to the hard work of advocates across the nation, who weighed-in with members of Congress about the importance of increased funding for affordable

housing, and thanks to our affordable housing champions in Congress: Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Susan Collins (R-ME), and Representatives David Price (D-NC) and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), the chairs and ranking members of the Senate and House Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittees.

The spending bill provides moderate funding increases to nearly all programs compared to FY21, including enough funding to renew all existing Housing Choice Vouchers and Project-Based Rental Assistance Vouchers. The bill also provides \$200 million to expand rental assistance vouchers to an additional 25,000 households, including individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness, veterans, and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

In addition to federal funding, the FY22 bill includes congressional directives to provide further details and instructions to HUD and other federal agencies on implementing, tracking, and analyzing federal programs. The congressional directives cover a range of issues related to COVID-19 relief and the U.S. Department of the Treasury's emergency rental assistance (ERA) program, as well as directives related to disaster recovery efforts at HUD and other agencies, tribal housing, and other issues.

Congress also enacted a reauthorization of the "Violence Against Women Act" (VAWA), which supports comprehensive responses and services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. For more details on this and other housing provisions, see NLIHC's [full analysis of the FY22 spending bill](#).

The Continuing Need for Resources

While the final FY22 spending bill provides meaningful increases for vital HUD and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs, far more resources are needed to address the nation's growing affordable housing and homelessness crises. The bill does not include the House appropriators' proposed expansion of Housing Choice Vouchers to an additional 125,000 households. Congress thus missed an important opportunity to serve households that have been left more precariously housed than ever because of the pandemic.

Significant additional housing investments are needed to address a [critical driver of inflation](#): skyrocketing rents. The "Build Back Better Act" approved by the House in November 2021 includes robust funding for NLIHC's HoUsed campaign's [top policy priorities](#): \$25 billion to expand housing vouchers to an [additional 300,000 households](#); \$65 billion to preserve public housing and improve living conditions for the nation's more than 2 million public housing residents; and \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve, and operate an estimated [150,000 units of deeply affordable, accessible housing](#). These targeted housing investments must be retained in any future budget reconciliation package to help bring down housing costs for America's lowest-income and most marginalized households.

Read NLIHC's full analysis of the FY22 spending bill at: <https://tinyurl.com/3m33e8j4>

View NLIHC's updated budget chart covering selected HUD and USDA programs at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9h5xhf>

Emergency Rental Assistance

NLIHC and Housing Initiative at Penn Release Report on Implications of Pandemic Emergency Rental Assistance for Permanent ERA Programs

NLIHC and the University of Pennsylvania's Housing Initiative at Penn have released a jointly authored report, [*Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\) during the Pandemic: Implications for the Design of Permanent ERA Programs*](#). The report examines a broad range of emergency rental assistance (ERA) programs to understand the challenges they faced and identify lessons that can be used in designing permanent ERA programs in the future.

The report shows that ERA programs faced recurring challenges in four areas: (1) staff capacity, technology, and infrastructure; (2) tenant responsiveness and application completeness; (3) landlord responsiveness; and (4) federal guidance. Programs adapted to these challenges by partnering with nonprofits; conducting more targeted outreach and introducing greater documentation flexibility; loosening landlord requirements; and incorporating direct-to-tenant assistance. The report suggests that efforts to establish permanent ERA programs should take into account the importance of ensuring sufficient and sustained funding, being flexible about eligibility and documentation requirements, incorporating direct-to-tenant assistance, and utilizing clear and timely guidance.

Researchers drew on data from four national surveys of ERA program administrators to identify broad trends and to track specific changes in programs participating in both the first (Fall 2020) and final (late-2021) surveys. Using data from the final survey of 100 ERA program administrators, researchers also identified changes made by programs when switching from offering support through ERA1 to ERA2. Among other things, the research used by the report covers administrators' reflections on what they would have changed – but did not or could not change – given what they had come to know about program operations.

A consistent majority of ERA programs – ranging from 60% to 68% across surveys conducted between Fall 2020 and late-2021 – faced challenges with staff capacity, technology, and infrastructure. More programs faced challenges with tenant responsiveness and landlord responsiveness over time. Finally, many administrators reflected on the importance of federal guidance and echoed findings from earlier research that shifting guidance proved challenging. An increasing number of programs partnered with nonprofits to help administer their programs; conducted more targeted outreach through housing courts; introduced greater documentation flexibility through self-attestation, fact-specific proxies, and categorical eligibility; loosened landlord requirements; and incorporated direct-to-tenant assistance.

The report concludes by providing four important considerations for efforts to establish permanent ERA programs:

- Sufficient and sustained funding is important for building adequate infrastructure and capacity. Permanent ERA programs with sustained funding would preserve program infrastructures created by temporary ERA programs and give program administrators the opportunity to make longer-term improvements in staffing, technology, and staff training.
- Flexibility in eligibility and documentation requirements, as well as targeted outreach, are important for program accessibility. Incomplete applications and difficulties related to obtaining documents from tenants have posed persistent challenges for ERA programs, which greater flexibility may help alleviate.
- Direct-to-tenant assistance can also improve program accessibility. Providing assistance directly to tenants ensures that qualified tenants are not denied aid simply because their landlord does not engage with a government program.
- Clear and timely guidance and program parameters can increase program administrators' certainty in making decisions on infrastructure, capacity, and program design. Shifting guidance forced ERA administrators to frequently revise program design and implementation, which increased administrative burdens and slowed the disbursement of funds.

January Spending Data from Treasury Show Some State Grantees Have Exhausted their ERA1 Funds

The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) has released [Emergency Rental Assistance](#) (ERA) [spending data](#) through January 2022. An additional \$1.9 billion of ERA funds were spent in January, down from \$2.4 billion spent in December 2021 and \$3 billion spent in November. Overall, \$20.5 billion of ERA1 and ERA2 funds have been spent on assistance to households, and nearly 4.3 million payments have been made. Treasury data continue to show that funds are being spent unevenly across grantees, with a few state grantees having fully exhausted their ERA1 allocations and having already spent large portions of their ERA2 allocations.

Around \$763 million in ERA1 funds were spent in January, down from \$1.1 billion in December 2021 and \$1.6 billion in November. January was the first month since May 2021 in which grantees spent less than \$1 billion of ERA1 funds. This outcome is likely due to fast-spending grantees exhausting ERA1 funds and fully transitioning to ERA2 funds. States have spent \$11.2 billion in ERA1 funds – or 61% of the \$18.4 billion allocated to them – and localities have spent \$4.4 billion, or 81% of the \$5.4 billion allocated to them. In January, \$1.2 billion of ERA2 funds were spent, a slight decrease from the \$1.3 billion spent in December.

January spending data reveal continuing unevenness in spending performance. By the end of the month, 14 state grantees had expended over 75% of their ERA1 allocations on assistance to households. North Carolina, New Jersey, Virginia, and California spent more than 90%. Because grantees are allowed to spend 10% of their allocation on administrative expenses, it is likely that these grantees have exhausted their entire ERA1 allocation. In addition, two state grantees – New Jersey and North Carolina – have spent over 50% of their ERA2 allocation (82% and 58%, respectively).

Conversely, 15 state grantees expended less than 30% of their allocation by the end of January. Five of these state grantees – New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming – have spent a portion of their ERA2 funds, with New Hampshire spending a larger portion of its ERA2 allocation (36%) than its ERA1 allocation (28%). This result could be due to the increased flexibility granted by ERA2, which allows 18 months of assistance for households as opposed to the 15 months allowed under ERA1. Eighteen state grantees have yet to spend any of their ERA2 allocations.

On average, local grantees continue to spend at a faster rate than state grantees. Of the nearly 350 local grantees, over 215 reported spending more than 75% of their ERA1 funds, and approximately 140 local grantees spent 90% or more of their funds. Seventeen localities – including San Diego, Nashville, Fulton County, New Orleans, and Harris County – have also spent at least 85% of their ERA2 allocations.

Treasury is expected to base the third round of ERA1 reallocations on January spending data. This process will move funds from slower spending grantees to grantees that have spent their funds quickly and have remaining need. Treasury [released data](#) on the first round of reallocations in January and is expected to release data on the second round of reallocations in the coming weeks.

NLIHC tracks ERA spending on the [ERA Dashboard](#) and [Spending Tracker](#). Our tracking integrates Treasury data with real-time data from program dashboards and program administrators to provide a closer estimate of how much ERA funding has been obligated to date.

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing

Advocates Request President Biden Create Council on Housing Affordability

Representatives of the housing sector, including NLIHC, sent a [letter](#) to President Biden on March 9 asking that he convene a President’s Council on Housing Affordability. The letter – cosigned by NLIHC and more than 40 organizations representing nearly every section of the housing industry, including housing affordability advocates, realtors, developers, builders, labor unions, and members of the financial sector – drew attention to the severe need for affordable housing throughout the country and argued that constructing more homes would help address the problem. In particular, the letter pointed out that moves made by the Federal Reserve Board to control inflation by increasing interest rates could lead to higher rents and rising building costs. The letter called for the council to be composed of stakeholders from HUD as well as the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Labor, Treasury and Veterans Affairs. The council would aim to develop interagency solutions to address the nation’s dire housing affordability crisis.

“Despite gains in levels of building both single-family and multifamily homes, housing prices are rising rapidly,” reads the letter. “Driven by more than a decade of housing production deficits, supply shortages, rising labor and material costs, and pandemic-related supply chain issues, the cost of shelter is less affordable for everyone across the income spectrum, particularly for those least able to afford it. Housing is a continuum. Lower homeownership rates lead to higher rents where demand exceeds the already severe shortage of housing affordable to the lowest-income households. This in turn may increase homelessness among those already struggling to afford shelter.”

Read the letter at: <https://bit.ly/3qjZ10P>

Join Today’s National HoUsed Campaign Call for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing!

[Join](#) today’s (March 14) national HoUsed campaign call from 2:30 to 4:00 pm ET. We will discuss the fiscal year (FY) 2022 spending bill and its implications for affordable housing, as well as the importance of protecting critical housing investments in any budget reconciliation bill. Anne Kat Alexander, Emily Lemmerman, and Joe Fish of Eviction Lab will share conclusions from a preliminary analysis of eviction filing patterns in 2021. Meghan Henry, Tanya de Sousa, and Anna Robinson of Abt Associates will summarize findings from the 2021 Annual Homelessness Assessment [Report](#) (AHAR) to Congress. Rebecca Yae of NLIHC and Claudia Aiken of the Housing Initiative at Penn will discuss their joint [report](#) on emergency rental assistance lessons learned for establishing permanent ERA programs. We will also discuss new Treasury data on ERA spending, receive updates from the field, and more.

Recording of March 7 National HoUsed Campaign Call Now Available

In our [most recent \(March 7\) national call](#) for the “HoUsed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing” campaign, we provided the latest updates on appropriations and budget reconciliation from Capitol Hill; shared findings from a recent report on how families changed their spending strategies to afford rent during the pandemic; learned about a new analysis by the ERASE project; received updates from the field; and more.

NLIHC’s Senior Vice President of Policy Sarah Saadian provided updates on the fiscal year (FY) 2022 appropriations process. After many months of negotiations, Congress was expected to introduce the much-

anticipated final FY2022 spending bill as soon as March 7. (Congress ended up passing the bill on March 10, and President Biden signed the bill into law on March 11. See NLIHC’s [analysis](#) of the FY22 spending plan). Meanwhile, the budget reconciliation package formerly known as “Build Back Better” has been largely relegated to the backburner, giving congressional democrats more time to reach an agreement on a bill that will garner enough votes to pass the Senate with a simple majority of 51 votes.

Sophia Wedeen and Whitney Airgood-Obrychi from Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies joined the call to discuss findings from [their recent report](#) on how families changed their spending strategies to afford rent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings indicated that renter households that lost income during the pandemic were three times more likely to fall behind on rent in the last two years than households that did not lose income. Those that did lose income were significantly more likely to rely on other sources, like credit cards or loans, savings, stimulus payments, borrowing money, or selling assets in order to afford rent. Low-income households and households of color were also more likely to experience a loss of income and financial hardship during the pandemic.

NLIHC’s Sophie Siebach-Glover provided updates on the [latest emergency rental assistance](#) (ERA) spending data. As of December 2021, grantees have spent or obligated roughly 70% of ERA1 funds and 27% of ERA funds. Nearly two-thirds of households served by ERA had extremely low incomes, and ERA managed to reach a high proportion of households of color. Low-income households and households of color have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Field updates were provided by Phyllis Chamberlain from the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, Jeannette Ruffins from Homeward NYC, Bridget Brown and Bach Pham from South Carolina Appleseed, and Fer-Rell-Maurice Malone, Jr., from FRESH Communities.

NLIHC hosts national calls every week. Our next call will be held today, March 14, at 2:30 pm ET.

Register for the call at: www.tinyurl.com/ru73qan

Watch a recording of the March 7 call at: <https://tinyurl.com/2pkbzpxn>

View presentation slides from the March 7 call at: <https://tinyurl.com/vum7ry56>

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

HUD Finds Texas Discriminated Against People of Color When Distributing Disaster Assistance

HUD’s Region VI Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity [announced](#) on March 8 that the Texas General Land Office (GLO) discriminated against communities of color in Southeast Texas when distributing over \$4 billion in much-needed disaster mitigation funding. The decision is the result of an [administrative complaint](#) filed in June 2021 by NLIHC partners Texas Housers and the Northeast Action Collective.

In its decision, HUD found that Texas violated Title VI and Section 109 of the “Housing and Community Development Act of 1974” in its distribution of \$4.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds. Some of these funds were provided by Congress to mitigate the risk of future disasters in areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. HUD found that Texas had distributed these funds through a competition that penalized areas with larger overall and larger non-white populations – those areas designated by HUD as most impacted – and favored inland counties with smaller, non-white populations designated as most impacted by the state. The number of people of color in those areas of Texas designated as most impacted by HUD is ten times greater than the number of people of color in areas designated as most impacted by the state, and eight times greater than the number of people of color in the state’s general population, yet the state created a project rating system that split funds evenly between the two areas. As a

result, less-populous inland counties with greater numbers of white residents received seven and a half times more funding per resident than counties with larger overall and larger non-white populations.

Among other findings, the report states that “Harris County and the City of Houston – the two jurisdictions with by far the largest numbers of residents who suffered harm from Hurricane Harvey (and each of whom have high future disaster risk as estimated by the GLO) – received no funds from the Competition.” Likewise, the report finds that “[f]our smaller jurisdictions within Harris County (which each submitted separate applications from the county as a whole) received awards totaling 90 million dollars, but those were the only funds from the Competition to go to residents of Houston or Harris County. Residents of Harris County (inclusive of the City of Houston, which is located in the County) comprise 51% of the total Competition eligible population yet received just 9% of the funds.”

“The lowest-income and most marginalized survivors are often hit hardest by disasters but receive the least amount of assistance to recover and protect against disasters in the future,” said Diane Yentel, President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition in a statement released when the decision was announced. “HUD’s historic decision to enforce civil rights law and uphold its mandate to increase equity will help ensure that essential funding reaches those communities often left behind by America’s disaster recovery framework. The deep inequities in infrastructure created by decades of systemic underinvestment can only be rectified by a more equitable distribution of resources.”

Read a statement from Texas Housers on the decision at: <https://bit.ly/3pTFLXp>

View [Texas Housers’ video press statement](#), in which staff and community activists provide more information on HUD’s recently published conclusions.

Read HUD’s decision letter at: <https://bit.ly/3i1O6nO>

Read NLIHC’s statement at: <https://bit.ly/3i2nGCu>

House Democrats Remove COVID-19 Aid from FY22 Spending Bill, Leave Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Untouched

House Democrats removed plans to include [\\$15.6 billion](#) for COVID-19 aid in the [omnibus package for fiscal year \(FY\) 2022](#) after multiple rank-and-file lawmakers expressed outrage that \$7 billion of the funds would be offset by rescinding [Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) (SLFRF) that were included in the “American Rescue Plan Act” (ARPA). The Biden administration requested \$22.5 billion for testing, therapeutics, vaccines, and efforts to prepare for future variants, but Congress whittled that request down to \$15.6 billion in negotiations with Republicans, who resisted spending any new money on the pandemic. Top Democrats agreed to offset the funding from existing programs, including the SLFRF program. However, more than a dozen lawmakers threatened to vote against the procedural rule needed to advance the omnibus bill, causing party leaders to [strip the COVID-19 money](#) from the broader \$1.5 trillion FY22 spending package.

The [SLFRF program](#) provides \$350 billion to state, local, and tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for an equitable recovery. States and localities across the country are [using SLFRF funds](#) to fund rental assistance, address homelessness, and expand the availability of affordable housing. Yet some states were not provided a full allotment of aid after ARPA was enacted. Instead, the law prioritized states with unemployment rates that were at least 2 percentage points above their pre-pandemic levels. While those states received full allotments, the [remaining 30 states](#) have yet to receive their second tranche of funds, which are scheduled to be delivered this May. As a result, the initial COVID-19 relief spending plan included in the omnibus package could have rescinded aid for the 30 states that

had not yet received their full shares of SLFRF funds. In a [“Dear Colleague” letter](#) sent on March 9, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) wrote that under the plan, states would have received at least 91% of the \$195 billion in total funding they were expecting and that local governments would receive no cuts in funding. Local leaders, however, expressed concerns with the proposal to rescind state funding, which would ultimately impact cities and towns.

Congresswoman Cori Bush (D-MO) released a [statement](#) vehemently opposing efforts to rescind SLFRF funds, noting that Missouri had already appropriated these funds for housing, childcare, health care, and schools. The National Governors Association also sent a [letter](#) to congressional leadership on March 8, urging lawmakers to safeguard the SLFRF funds included in ARPA. The governors expressed strong opposition to any rescission of SLFRF funds, stating that taking away these resources “would jeopardize our shared goals of mitigating, responding to, and fostering a transformational recovery from this unprecedented national pandemic.” Meanwhile, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers sent a [letter](#) to congressional leaders condemning the plan, which would rescind an estimated \$225 million of Wisconsin’s SLFRF funds.

In addition to funding for tests, vaccines, and treatments, the [“COVID-19 Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2022”](#) included \$55 million to help the U.S. Department of the Treasury better administer coronavirus relief programs. The House has postponed consideration of the standalone COVID-19 aid bill until at least this week. The new version of the bill would be partially offset by means of unspent pandemic funds and would not require touching SLFRF funds. Unless the COVID-19 aid package is fully paid for, however, it faces a dim outlook in the Senate, where 10 Republican votes would be needed to pass the bill.

Read NLIHC’s fact sheet on the SLFRF program at: <https://bit.ly/3zztxad>

Learn more about how states and localities are using SLFRF funds for housing at: <https://bit.ly/3I7yjP2>

Coronavirus Updates – March 14, 2022

National Updates

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD announced on March 4 that it is awarding [over \\$2.4 million](#) in “American Rescue Plan Act” funding to 11 HUD Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) agencies to help combat housing discrimination related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A new resource, [Emergency Housing Vouchers \(EHV\): A How-To Guide for Public Housing Agencies](#), is now available on the HUD Exchange. The guide is a helpful resource for public housing agencies (PHAs), Continuums of Care (CoCs), and Victim Services Providers (VSPs) striving to better understand key components of the EHV program, including partnerships and referral processes, use-of-service fees, housing-search requirements, and applications of EHV waivers and alternative requirements.

New resources and information about the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) are now [available on the HUD Exchange](#).

Department of the Treasury

The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) released on March 8 [monthly ERA spending data through January 31](#).

[Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo](#) traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, on March 8 to speak with the City of Memphis and Shelby County Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program about the impact of American Rescue Plan resources on Tennessee residents. [In his remarks](#), Deputy Secretary Adeyemo emphasized that Treasury continues to urge states and localities to dedicate a portion of the money from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to continue to fund rental assistance and other eviction prevention programs and to expand the availability of affordable housing.

Advocacy & Research

The Eviction Lab at Princeton University estimates that nationwide at least 1.36 million eviction cases were prevented in 2021. Last year, millions of renters avoided the threat of eviction thanks to expanded legal protections and new social safety net programs. The reduction in eviction filings varied between jurisdictions over the course of the year and depending on neighborhood demographics. Low-income and majority-Black neighborhoods that normally see disproportionate shares of eviction cases experienced the largest absolute reductions in filings. Read [Eviction Lab's latest blog post](#) to learn more.

A report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), "[Robust COVID Relief Achieved Historic Gains Against Poverty and Hardship, Bolstered Economy](#)," outlines the myriad ways innovative relief efforts shortened and prevented hardship during COVID-19. Many of these relief efforts were implemented for the first time, including Economic Impact Payments (EIPs), expanded unemployment insurance, the Child Tax Credit (CTC), an eviction moratorium, and a federally funded emergency rental assistance (ERA) program. These efforts resulted in the shortest-ever recession – lasting only two quarters – and a dramatic decrease in poverty, with eight million individuals moving above the poverty line in 2020.

State and Local News

Arizona

Julie Gunnigle, an attorney who represents clients through the Arizona Poor People's Campaign, says several of her clients have [faced eviction while waiting for a response](#) from Phoenix's emergency rental assistance (ERA) program. "It's a full-time job to apply for rental assistance in the city of Phoenix," said Gunnigle. "The process is so bureaucratic, and it is so slow, that people are becoming unsheltered because of paperwork."

California

The Los Angeles Housing Department [announced](#) on March 3 that California's "Housing is Key" Rent Relief Program will stop accepting applications on March 31. Applications filed by the deadline will continue to be processed after March 31.

Florida

[Pinellas County commissioners](#) are considering making changes to the county's emergency rental assistance (ERA) program to help renters in the City of St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg and Pinellas County received separate ERA funding from the "American Rescue Plan Act." The city is nearly out of money, but the county has more funds left. If commissioners approve the resolution, the remaining money will go to families within St. Petersburg's city limits.

[Palm Beach County commissioners](#) approved an additional \$20 million for emergency rental assistance on March 8. Since March 2020, the county has distributed about \$100 million in rental relief.

[Collier County](#) has allocated \$7 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds to assist residents facing foreclosure and eviction or housing instability.

Kentucky

[Governor Andy Beshear](#) announced on March 8 that the City of Louisville will receive \$27 million in additional emergency rental assistance (ERA) funds and the City of Lexington will receive an additional \$11.7 million in ERA. Governor Beshear allocated funds from the commonwealth’s program to support each city’s ERA program. The funds must be spent by September 30, 2022.

Massachusetts

[Wicked Local](#) reports that the Town of Arlington will spend about [\\$930,000 in “American Rescue Plan Act” Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) for its Tenant-Homeowner Assistance Fund, which will provide rental and mortgage assistance to households impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund will be open to all Arlington residents, [regardless of income level](#). The town began [accepting applications](#) on March 4.

Nebraska

[Governor Pete Ricketts continues to reject pleas](#) from state senators and advocates to accept \$120 million in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) funds. All nine members of the Legislature’s Appropriations Committee sent a letter to Governor Ricketts urging him to apply for ERA by the March 31 deadline. The governor said on March 7, however, that he fails to see a “justification” for the state to apply for the emergency aid.

New York

The Town of [Brookhaven is reallocating nearly \\$1.5 million](#) it had planned to spend on administering a federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) program for direct ERA payments. Brookhaven exhausted its \$29 million allocation of ERA funding in mid-November 2021. The town’s decision to spend the remaining \$1.49 million in ERA – initially allocated for administrative expenses – does not require state approval, and the funds will soon be available for rent relief.

Ohio

Ohio officials hope that the [\\$104 million](#) in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) that will be recaptured by the U.S. Department of the Treasury will be reallocated to cities and counties within Ohio. Cuyahoga County recently announced that it expects to receive an additional \$50 million in ERA funds. Housing advocates assert that the state made it too difficult for renters to access ERA.

Oklahoma

The [City of Shawnee](#) will use Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus funds to provide rental and mortgage assistance for households impacted by COVID-19.

Of the [60,727 evictions filed](#) since the start of the pandemic in Oklahoma, over 22,800 have been carried out, with nearly 7,000 of those evictions taking place since the federal eviction moratorium ended in August 2021. Community Cares Partners and Restore Hope Ministries – two organizations distributing rental relief – face a [backlog of more than 25,000 applications](#).

Oregon

Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) announced during a media briefing on March 7 that the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program (OERAP) portal will [stop accepting new applications on March 14](#). Nearly \$13 million in additional funds have been redirected to the program and will support an estimated

1,900 households. Application decisions will be made based upon an assessment of need rather than on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tennessee

[Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo visited Memphis](#) on March 8 to highlight the success of the City of Memphis and Shelby County Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program. “Ultimately, the resources of the [“American Rescue Plan Act”] were intended to make sure that we were able to unlock the potential of American communities to solve the challenges of the pandemic,” said Deputy Secretary Adeyemo. “That is exactly what has happened here in Memphis and Shelby County.”

Texas

Texas Housers is urging government officials in certain Texas cities and counties to act immediately before they [lose \\$103 million](#) in emergency rental assistance (ERA). Eleven counties and two cities are at risk of losing federal ERA funds if they do not act before March 31.

Travis County anticipates spending nearly \$9.2 million in rental assistance between March 1 and September 30, 2022, with a projected capacity of [assisting over 3,400 households](#). The rental assistance application window is expected to close in the coming days due to high demand and an overwhelming number of applications.

Washington

Seattle’s eviction moratorium expired on March 1, and service providers say the end of the moratorium has brought an uptick in calls for help. Tens of thousands of tenants have applied for emergency rental assistance, but local officials will run out of funds before serving all those in need. The [Seattle Times](#) outlines what tenants need to know about the end of the eviction moratorium and where they can find help.

Guidance

Department of Housing and Urban Development

- [HUD Notice PIH 2022-04: Expedited Regulatory Waivers for the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs](#) – March 3, 2022 (*Memo, 3/7*)

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – March 14, 2022

Flooding

[BuzzFeed News](#) examines the growing risk of basement flooding as the shortage of affordable housing pushes more renters below ground. Officials across the country are looking to convert more basements into housing, but the consequences of extreme weather events are becoming dire for renters living in basement apartments, including illegal units not designed for people threatened by hazards like fire and flooding.

Hurricanes

Since Hurricane Ida struck Louisiana six months ago, more than [563,500 applications for FEMA Individual Assistance](#) have been approved, putting more than \$1.16 billion in the hands of survivors. To date, FEMA has paid more than \$334 million in grants for repairs and more than \$309 million in rental assistance. Over 4,500 households have been approved for FEMA’s Direct Temporary Housing program, and 1,480 households are currently in temporary housing units and other facilities directly leased by FEMA.

[Chester County, Pennsylvania, is urging property owners](#) with homes for rent to open their doors to the 38 people from 17 households who are still living in hotels six months after their homes were destroyed by the remnants of Hurricane Ida. Many of the families have county-issued federally funded housing vouchers that would cover the rent, but the lack of available apartments has kept these families in limbo.

North Carolina's [New Bern Sun Journal](#) reports that nearly three and a half years after Hurricane Florence flooded almost half of the apartments in Trent Court, the New Bern Housing Authority has finally made progress in demolition efforts at the site. The New Bern Board of Aldermen gave the city approval to hire a consultant to perform an environmental review of the demolition area, the first step in the process of securing funding from FEMA for the demolition of the 12 Trent Court buildings that were permanently closed due to flood damage. No discussion has been held between the housing authority and the city about the redevelopment of Trent Court, but the housing authority says that the views of community members will be reflected in the final plan.

Tornadoes

Homeowners and renters affected by December's tornadoes in middle and west Tennessee have until [Tuesday, March 15](#), to apply for federal disaster assistance.

Wildfires

After a call with FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) [announced](#) on March 7 that April rents for 2020 fire survivors living in FEMA temporary direct housing would not be due until May 1 and would be lower than market rates for some families. Following Senator Wyden's discussion with Administrator Criswell, FEMA confirmed that a previous announcement that market-rate rents would be due on April 1 was made in error and that rents would not be due until May 1.

The [New York Times](#) reports that three wildfires that started last week in the Florida Panhandle have burned more than 29,000 acres and are threatening surrounding communities amid dry and windy weather. The fires, which are collectively called the Chipola Complex, are being fed by dead trees and other vegetation [left by Hurricane Michael in 2018](#). So far, two homes have been destroyed and others have been damaged.

Research

[New research](#) finds an increased risk of death from infectious disease, heart disease, neuropsychiatric conditions like dementia, and lung disease in the six months after a hurricane. "The youngest, fittest, and richest are able to evacuate, but many others aren't," said study author Robbie Parks, who noted that many low-income and historically marginalized people live in hurricane-prone areas. "Improving the infrastructure and housing quality in low-income or underserved areas may help reduce risks of dying during and after a hurricane," he added. The findings were published on March 8 in the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#).

HUD

HUD Posts Emergency Housing Voucher How-To Guide for Public Housing Agencies

HUD has published a new guidebook, [Emergency Housing Vouchers: A How-To Guide for Public Housing Agencies](#). The guidebook provides public housing agencies (PHAs), Continuums of Care (CoCs), and Victim Services Providers (VSPs) with an overview of the operating requirements of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, including partnerships and referral processes, use-of-service fees, housing-search requirements, and applications of EHV waivers and alternative requirements. The guidebook also offers

considerations for PHAs designing EHV programs, as well as best practices for implementation. Although the guidebook was written for PHAs, CoCs, and VSPs, advocates may also find it helpful.

The Emergency Housing Voucher program is a new housing voucher program funded by the “American Rescue Plan Act.” Through EHV, HUD is providing 70,000 housing choice vouchers to PHAs to assist individuals and families who are homeless; at risk of homelessness; fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; or recently homeless or facing a high risk of housing instability (see *Memo*, [5/10/21](#)).

EHV requires PHAs to partner directly with CoCs and VSPs to provide tenant-based voucher assistance to households most in need of assistance. EHV referrals must come primarily through a local CoC’s coordinated entry (CE) system but can also come through other direct referral partners, such as VSPs, in limited situations.

The guidebook also aims to help CoCs and VSPs better understand the EHV program and its operating requirements. PHAs, CoCs, and VSPs are urged to review [Notice PIH 2021-15](#) for a complete description of all EHV requirements. The HUD [EHV website](#) has many resources and is updated frequently with EHV-related information, such as PIH Notices, FAQs (see *Memo*, [2/28](#)), training announcements, and archived webinars and Office Hours meetings.

Emergency Housing Vouchers: A How-To Guide for Public Housing Agencies is available at: <https://bit.ly/35HIexr>

HUD Office of Multifamily Programs Reminds Owners About Obligations to Residents as Utility Costs Rise

HUD’s Office of Multifamily Programs (Multifamily), which oversees contracts with owners of private properties assisted with Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), distributed a [flyer](#) in anticipation of rising utility costs that could adversely affect residents. The flyer reminds owners and agents about their obligation to comply with Multifamily’s utility allowance calculation requirements and to improve energy efficiency. The flyer was released in response to a forecast by the U.S. Department of Energy that utility costs will reach a three-year high in 2022, affecting assisted households that pay some or all of their utility bills.

Owners of Multifamily-assisted properties for which HUD provides utility allowances on behalf of residents are reminded of the requirement to adjust their properties’ utility allowances every year at the time of annual and special adjustments of contract rents. Owners are also required to submit documentation and requests for increases in utility allowances to their Contract Administrators and to HUD when changes in utility rates result in cumulative increases in utility allowances of 10% or more from the most recently approved utility allowance. Owners must follow guidance in [Notice H-2015-04](#) regarding the completion of a Multifamily Housing Utility Analysis and should review the associated [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The flyer suggests that owners ask residents to tell them about increases in their utility bills and any outstanding unit repairs that could affect energy efficiency and household utility costs. The flyer also recommends that owners encourage residents who have medical needs and extraordinary utility bills to seek reasonable accommodations for higher utility allowances.

Read the Multifamily flyer regarding utility allowances in the event of increased utility costs at: <https://bit.ly/3tF32xw>

Read more about Multifamily housing on [page 4-64](#) of NLIHC’s *2021 Advocates’ Guide*.

Congress

House Financial Services Committee Holds Hearing on Rising Inflation

The U.S. House Committee on Financial Services Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA) held a [hearing](#) on March 8, “The Inflation Equation: Corporate Profiteering, Supply Chain Bottlenecks, and COVID-19,” addressing the causes of and solutions for growing financial pressure brought about by inflation and the critical role rising housing costs play in driving inflation. Witnesses included Demond Drummer (PolicyLink), Rakeen Mabud (Groundwork Collaborative), Sandeep Vaheesan (Open Markets Institute), Mark Zandi (Moody’s Analytics), and Tyler Goodspeed (Hoover Institution).

In her opening statement, Chair Waters emphasized the impact of housing on inflation. “Every American knows, whether they rent or own their home, that housing is also a key driver of inflation,” she said. “For too long, we have not addressed the shortfall in our housing supply, and that lack of supply is driving up costs.” The Chairwoman also noted that the [significant affordable housing investments](#) in the “Build Back Better Act” would help address the housing supply shortage, which would in turn [help address inflation](#).

“[The cost of housing] is a critical element to inflation going forward,” said Dr. Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics. “We’ve got a very severe shortage of housing, particularly for affordable housing, both on the rental side and on the homeownership side. This has resulted in the surging cost of rent – rents account for one third of the consumer price index [CPI], so the largest component of inflation is housing. As long as we don’t address this supply shortage, rents are going to grow quickly, and the cost of living is going to continue to rise quickly.” Dr. Zandi also noted that, by increasing the supply of deeply affordable housing, the housing investments proposed in the “Build Back Better Act” would “quickly start addressing the rising cost of rent.”

“The method of calculating [housing’s impact on inflation], in my view, understates the real, inflationary experience in the economy,” said Representative French Hill (R-AR). “The CPI calculation does understate the inflation in housing ordinary Americans feel,” agreed Tyler Goodspeed, a Kleinheinz fellow at the Hoover Institution. “For the rental component, it only measures continuing leases, whereas it’s in new leases that we’ve seen double-digit increases in rent.”

Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) emphasized the necessity of federal investments for addressing the affordable housing shortage. In a question addressed to Dr. Zandi, Representative Torres asked whether it is possible to “come close to solving the housing supply crisis in America without federal investments.” Dr. Zandi responded that, without significant federal investments, the country will not be able to address the affordable housing shortage “any time soon.”

“It’s a very complex issue,” responded Dr. Zandi, “but with the way it’s going, it’s going to take a long time and inflationary pressures will continue to develop.”

Dr. Zandi “strongly recommended” that lawmakers work to address the issue of affordable housing development and noted that investments in the national Housing Trust Fund could go a long way toward addressing the affordable housing shortage and relieving inflationary pressure. NLIHC’s [HoUSed campaign](#) has been pushing Congress to include in any reconciliation package \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve, and operate deeply affordable housing for households with the lowest incomes.

Watch a recording of the hearing at: <https://tinyurl.com/fmnk5r53>

Read the committee memorandum at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8d38rr>

Learn more about the connection between housing costs and inflation at: <https://tinyurl.com/3bpmwvtu>

Opportunity Starts at Home

New Podcast Episode on Building Multi-Sector Partnerships in North Carolina

The Opportunity Starts at Home campaign released a new podcast episode, “[Building Multi-Sector Partnerships in North Carolina](#).” The episode explores the work of the campaign’s state-based affiliates in North Carolina and features Adam Sotak, community engagement director at the North Carolina-based child advocacy organization NCChild.

In the episode, Mr. Sotak discusses his organization’s unique partnership with the North Carolina Housing Coalition, the opportunities and challenges of building multi-sector partnerships, best practices for organizations looking to build multi-sector coalitions, NCChild’s approach to advancing racial equity, and the ways his organization is leveraging multi-sector partnerships to advance more robust and equitable housing policies.

“What we have tried to do...is integrate the issue of safe and affordable housing for children and families into everything we do as a child advocacy organization because it is such a key part of children being able to thrive,” he explains in the episode. “We all know that affordable housing is an issue in any city or state across our country...so to us, it just makes sense to have this be a key part of the multi-issue way we are trying to make policy change in North Carolina.”

Listen to the podcast episode [here](#).

Research

Immigrant Communities Face Financial, Health, and Social Hardships Due to Rental Unaffordability

Housing Policy Debate published a report, “[Rental Affordability, Coping Strategies, and Impacts in Diverse Immigrant Communities](#),” examining how rental affordability pressures impact financial, health, and social outcomes in diverse immigrant communities. Using interviews with 132 individuals in San Diego’s City Heights neighborhood, the researchers found that residents are prioritizing rental payments by cutting spending on other essential needs. Rising housing costs are also limiting housing choice among residents who want to remain near their networks but face affordability challenges and fear displacement.

Researchers conducted 12 focus groups with low-income residents in City Heights in 2018. The groups were facilitated in seven languages and included 112 adults and 20 youths who were predominantly immigrants and children of immigrants. Each focus group concentrated on four general themes: financial tradeoffs, institutional support, resident goals for and expectations about the future, and visions and ideas of residents about creating a better future.

The researchers found that residents are making sacrifices to afford housing and prioritizing rent over all other expenses. Many respondents explained that they had reduced spending on other essentials, including food, utilities, medical appointments, and transportation costs. Respondents had picked up additional hours at work to pay rent and described the physical toll of working additional hours to afford rent. Households had also doubled up to reduce housing costs, leading to overcrowding. Together, such sacrifices could have far-reaching impacts on households’ health and well-being.

Residents described their dependency on social support networks specific to City Heights for navigating everyday life. Many residents are refugees or speak primary languages other than English, and the existence of such networks motivated many to attempt to stay in City Heights. In most of the focus groups, residents also identified local nonprofits and community organizations as important neighborhood resources. These institutions helped provide translation support, financial donations, and food, while also providing culturally relevant services across a diverse community. Such institutions were found to tie residents to the neighborhood because few communities outside of City Heights offered the same support networks or culturally relevant resources.

Though many residents were deeply connected to their community, they feared that remaining in the neighborhood would be difficult due to rising rent costs, gentrification, and neighborhood change. Residents noted that their desire to stay in City Heights constrained their choices about moving, giving landlords leverage to increase rents and avoid basic maintenance without offering them any recourse. Residents also detailed the ways in which rising housing costs had changed community and family dynamics. Respondents across all focus groups explained that people in their broader networks were exhausted because most were struggling with the same issues afflicting respondents. They also reported that the combined pressures of having to work more hours and cut down on unnecessary transportation costs left them unable to participate in community events. Youth participants emphasized changes in familial dynamics, with many explaining that they had lost opportunities to spend time with parents due to long work hours and that they felt pressure to avoid asking parents for resources in order not to increase financial strain.

The report points to the need to expand housing choice vouchers to increase housing affordability and stability. Efforts to expand vouchers should include culturally and linguistically relevant services to ensure diverse communities can access assistance. The report also confirms the need for renter rights and tenant protections that prevent exploitation and displacement by landlords.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/3t0TMVk>

Report Finds 6.8 Million Households Experience Accessibility Challenges in Their Homes

The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University (JCHS) released a new report, “[How Well Does the Housing Stock Meet Accessibility Needs? An Analysis of the 2019 American Housing Survey](#).” The report finds that approximately 5% of households report difficulty navigating or using their homes and that such difficulties are especially common among older households and people with disabilities. The report uses American Housing Survey data to assess housing fit based on whether respondents report difficulties getting around or using their homes. Across all households, the most common accessibility issues reported included difficulties entering a home, using the bathroom, and using the kitchen. The report finds that in addition to older adults and people with disabilities, Black and Latino households and households with lower incomes are more likely to experience poor housing fit.

The authors used data from the 2019 American Housing Survey’s Accessibility Module to assess common housing fit challenges and trends across demographic groups. Poor housing fit can limit the ways a resident uses and navigates their home. For example, residents with wheelchairs or walkers may not be able to access certain rooms or floors in their homes. These residents may also have to depend on others to complete daily tasks like laundry or food preparation, even when these tasks could be completed independently with appropriate modifications.

The report finds that 6.8 million households report difficulties navigating or using their homes – approximately 5% of all households. The most commonly reported problem was difficulty entering the home, experienced by 4.2 million households. Difficulties using the bathroom and kitchen were the most commonly reported

challenges within the home, with 3.3 and 3.2 million households reporting these problems, respectively. These difficulties are understandable given the limited supply of homes with basic accessibility features, such as no-step entry, single-floor living, grab bars, widened doorways, and levered door handles. Only 42% of homes, for example, have both a no-step entryway and single-floor living.

The report finds that as residents age, their likelihood of reporting a disability also increases, leading to worsened housing fit. Sixty percent of heads of households age 80 or older report a disability, for example, compared to 9% of heads of households under age 50. Difficulty walking or climbing stairs is the primary challenge reported among older adults. Of all households that reported difficulty entering a kitchen, bathroom, or bedroom, half were headed by someone age 65 or over.

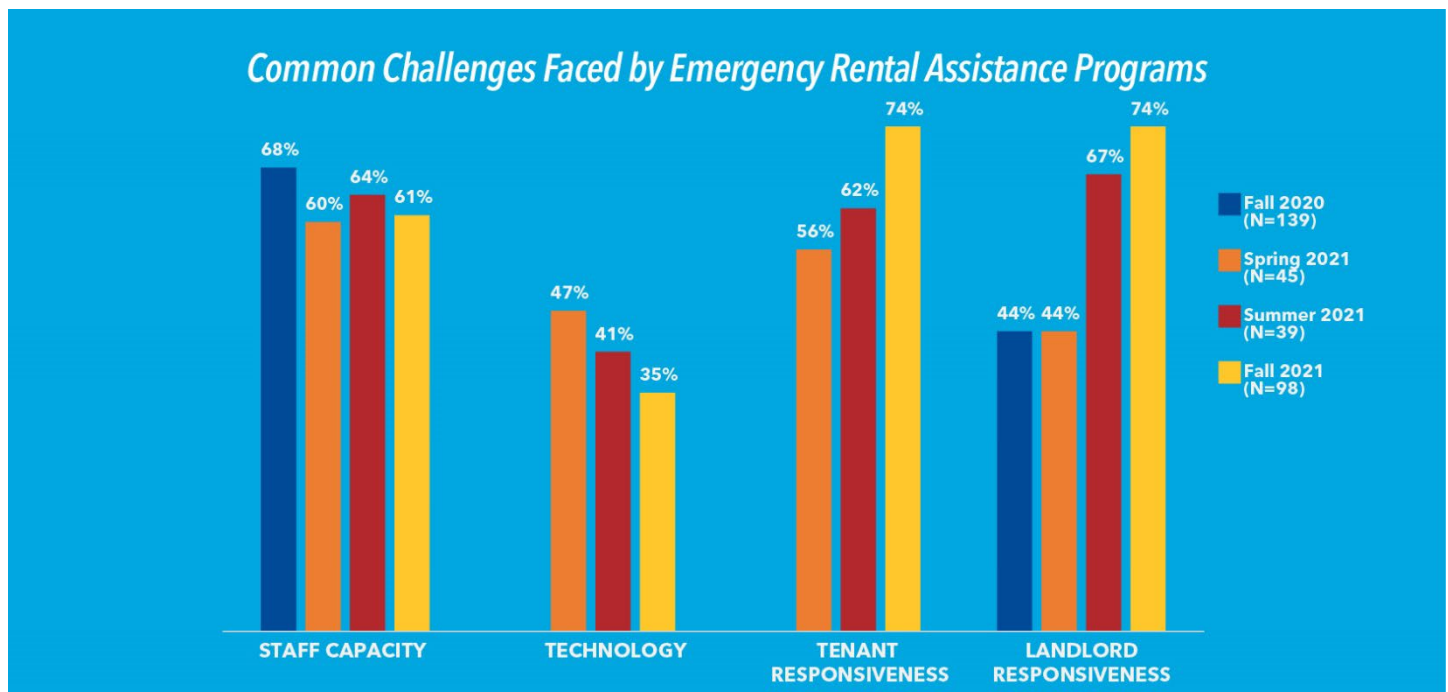
Older renters were more likely than homeowners to experience poor housing fit, with renters aged 65 or older six percentage points more likely to experience poor housing fit than homeowners of the same age.

The report also finds that poor housing fit is more common among Black and Latino households and households with lower incomes. Ten percent of households with incomes under \$30,000 experienced poor housing fit, while 3% of households with incomes over \$75,000 reported the same. Older Black and Latino households also reported greater difficulties using and navigating their homes compared to white households. Among households headed by someone age 80 or older, 28% of Black and 24% of Latino households reported poor housing fit compared to 16% of white households in the same age group.

Read the report at: <https://bit.ly/3HY6mJ4>

Fact of the Week

Common Challenges Faced by Emergency Rental Assistance Programs



Source: Housing Initiative at Penn and National Low Income Housing Coalition. Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) During the Pandemic: Implications for the Design of Permanent ERA Programs. March 2022.

THE HOUSING
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From the Field

Boulder Establishes Eviction Prevention Program through Ballot Initiative

Residents of Boulder, Colorado, established an [Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Service](#) (EPRAS) program – implemented in January 2021 – as a result of an ordinance passed in November 2020. The ordinance, “Ordinance 8412: Legal Representation Provided in Cases of Eviction,” was born out of the [No Eviction Without Representation ballot initiative](#), which sought to fund eviction prevention efforts. EPRAS is funded through an annual \$75 excise tax for landlords on any of their properties operated on long-term rental licenses. Because taxes for 2021 are still being filed, the funds raised by the program in 2021 have not yet been determined. But Boulder officials expect the tax to have raised roughly \$1.9 million over the course of the program’s first year.

The EPRAS program is operated by the [Community Mediation and Resolution Center](#) in Boulder, which partners with community organizations to connect tenants and landlords to resources. The program also contracted with Bridge to Justice, a local non-profit legal services agency, to provide support for the program. Bridge to Justice provided the EPRAS program with six attorneys, though more are necessary to serve the needs of tenants in Boulder.

Over the course of its first year, EPRAS distributed \$168,536 to 82 households and prevented 63% of cases at eviction court, according to a report released by the City of Boulder. Before the pandemic, city data indicated that around 1,000 evictions were filed per year. With the help of state and federal protections, eviction filings fell to 392 in 2020 and 557 in 2021. However, Boulder has reported a steady increase in eviction filings, and officials believe that filings are now likely to match the level of evictions reported pre-pandemic. It is hoped that EPRAS will reach tenants before eviction judgments and connect them to necessary resources before eviction hearings take place.

EPRAS staff expect to strengthen the program in the coming year by partnering with the Housing Solutions Lab at the New York University Furman Center for help with data collection. The program will launch a new intake form to gather information from tenants and provide better data on outcomes of interactions with the program. EPRAS also plans to publish a dashboard on evictions on [Boulder’s website](#).

During the first year of its operation, EPRAS received some criticism. Some worried that the program would raise rental prices in Boulder if landlords passed on the new tax fees to tenants through legal proceedings. However, [Colorado law](#) states that landlords are not able to pass legal expenses on to tenants unless this is explicitly permitted by the lease signed by the tenant.

Like Boulder, other municipalities in Colorado also took major strides towards enacting stronger tenant protections and increasing housing stock during the 2021 local elections (See *Memo*, [11/15/2021](#)). In February 2022, the State of Colorado adapted the policy language in its Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program to reflect a federal statute stating that the second round of ERA funding could be used to address financial hardships not related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This change in language will be helpful to Boulder tenants, especially those impacted by the Marshall Fire, which destroyed 1,000 homes in December 2021.

Through such initiatives and other [tenant protections](#) implemented at the local and state levels, Colorado expects to increase access to affordable housing in the state. According to Dave Heisterkamp, a Colorado attorney, “these new laws at both the state and local levels are the most significant tenant protections to be

implemented in my thirty years of representing public housing agencies and processing evictions all around the state. There are so many more options to get landlord/tenant issues, non-payment or otherwise, resolved when the tenant has access to legal representation – beginning with the improved communication between the parties. Many things that we used to work out in front of a judge are now taken care of out-of-court and even before a formal case is filed.”

NLIHC is working to identify tenant protections passed after January 2021 to add to our [Tenant Protections Database](#). If you are aware of any tenant protections passed after January 2021 that are not already in the database, please contact NLIHC’s ERASE Project Coordinator Jade Vasquez at jvasquez@nlihc.org or the ERASE team at erasureproject@nlihc.org.

For more information about the “No Eviction Without Representation” ballot initiative or EPRAS, contact Dave Heisterkamp, an attorney with Wagenlander & Heisterkamp, LLC, at: davidvh@wagenlander.com.

Leadership Awards Celebration

Ann O’Hara, Congressional Progressive Caucus, & Rep. Ritchie Torres Are 2022 Housing Leadership Awards Honorees

Celebrate **Ann O’Hara, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY)**, NLIHC’s 2022 Housing Leadership Awards honorees! These exceptional leaders will be recognized at NLIHC’s 40th Annual Housing Leadership Awards Celebration – held virtually on Thursday, April 28 – for their outstanding contributions to affordable housing for those most in need. Donate to NLIHC in these leaders’ honor as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#).



The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named for NLIHC’s founder Cushing Niles Dolbeare, a pioneer of the affordable housing movement, will be awarded to **Ann O’Hara** for her decades of advocacy for quality, accessible, affordable homes for extremely low-income households as a public housing authority director,

Section 8 administrator, state housing official, founder and associate director of the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC), and NLIHC board member.



Ann O'Hara

The 2022 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award will be presented to the **Congressional Progressive Caucus** for its exceptional commitment to advancing historic affordable housing investments to address homelessness and housing poverty in the U.S. This award is named for Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA), who as a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors championed low-income housing. Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), chair of the caucus, is invited to accept the award on behalf of the entire caucus.



The Congressional Progressive Caucus

Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) will receive the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award for his outstanding leadership in elevating the need for historic affordable housing investments for people with the lowest incomes in 2021. This award is named after former NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley, who led NLIHC for more than 17 years.



Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY)

Recognize these outstanding leaders by donating to NLIHC in their honor!

Donate and learn more about the event at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS22>

Or text LEADERSHIP to 41444 to donate in honor of the awardees.

Your donation will be recognized in the Leadership Awards Celebration program, and your contribution will support NLIHC's mission to achieve racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice. Information about registering for the Housing Leadership Awards Celebration will be forthcoming.

Updates will be posted on the event page at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS22>

Events

Register for NLIHC's "Policy Priorities" Webinar ahead of Virtual Capitol Hill Day on March 24!

NLIHC encourages advocates from across the country to register for our upcoming March 16 webinar, "[NLIHC's Policy Priorities for 2022](#)," in preparation for Virtual Capitol Hill Day on March 24. Virtual Capitol Hill Day allows advocates to meet with members of Congress and their staff to urge them to fund affordable housing programs at the highest levels possible, advance anti-racist policies, and support legislation that will improve the lives of the lowest-income people. The March 16 webinar will help advocates prepare for Capitol Hill Day by familiarizing attendees with NLIHC's policy priorities. Capitol Hill Day is part of our annual Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2022. Register for the Forum [here](#). Register for the webinar [here](#).

The upcoming webinar, "NLIHC's Policy Priorities for 2022," will take place on March 16 at 12:00 pm ET. NLIHC's policy team will discuss our policy priorities for Capitol Hill Day, and the field team will provide an overview addressing how housing providers, tenant associations, and homeless service agencies can connect their work to our policy priorities and providing access to resources to share during Hill meetings. [Register here](#).

NLIHC hosted another webinar, “Advocacy 101: Meetings with Elected Officials and the Legislative Process,” on March 9. During the webinar, NLIHC’s field team discussed the basics of the legislative and budget processes, offered tips for effective advocacy meetings, and held a practice Capitol Hill meeting. View a recording of the webinar [here](#).

In addition to the webinars, NLIHC will offer other sessions and resources in anticipation of Capitol Hill Day. On March 23, we will host a brief session giving an overview of factsheets and resources available to advocates making essential legislative asks. We will also provide advocates with a comprehensive virtual Advocacy Day Toolkit to guide Hill meetings. The toolkit contains information on our policy priorities, suggestions about how to manage advocacy meetings, talking points, data sheets on housing needs, and state-specific information.

To set up an appointment for Virtual Capitol Hill Day, please contact Joey Lindstrom at jlindstrom@nlihc.org. Most likely, meetings for your state and district have already been set up.

Register for the webinar, “NLIHC’s Policy Priorities for 2022,” [here](#).

Register for Capitol Hill Day by registering for NLIHC’s Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2022 [here](#).

NLIHC Careers

NLIHC Seeks Development Coordinator

NLIHC seeks a development coordinator who will have prime responsibility for a portfolio of development/fundraising activities for the Coalition. The activities, along with those of a second development coordinator with a separate portfolio, will ensure the Coalition secures the necessary resources to support its mission of achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice. The individual will also support NLIHC with other key operational and event-management needs. The coordinator will report to the NLIHC chief operating officer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate/manage reports, proposals, relationship management, and research/prospect development for corporate and non-corporate foundations (divvied up between the two coordinators).
- Track progress on current grants and reports due, as well as other requirements for each funder. Draft reports and proposals; coordinate calls and meetings with current and new funders.
- Lead on all activities connected to the Leadership Awards event. Manage development of and mailing to outreach lists for LR/LAC, tracking progress on incoming pledges, etc. Identify new potential sponsors; submit applications for sponsorship online where necessary.
- Act as lead contact on LR/LAC sponsorships; collect supplemental LR/LAC program materials (quotes on honorees, bios, photos, etc.). Ensure all sponsors are recognized in the program and all sponsorship benefits reach the sponsor.
- Develop and maintain registration pages for LR/LAC.
- Lead on program tracking and compilation of Program Summary Report.
- Keep Major Donors spreadsheet sheet up to date (in coordination with second development coordinator and COO).
- Provide monthly and year-end summary of incoming grants and their allocations to auditor.
- Along with second development coordinator, produce a list of previous year donors and their giving levels for *Annual Report*.

- Prepare all fund development reports for board meetings (with assistance from second development coordinator).
- Monitor NLIHC's various webpages that recognize donors for any missing non-corporate logos and ensure updates are made.
- Prepare acknowledgement letters for non-corporate grant payments as they are received by NLIHC (in coordination with senior executive assistant). Update acknowledgement letter language as necessary for general contributions, LR/LAC sponsorships, grants, special memberships, etc.
- Maintain files of copies of all grant acknowledgement letters and grant agreements.
- Assist in the coordination of other events and activities for which fundraising is involved, such as NLIHC's anniversary events.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

- Develop and maintain other donation forms in MobileCause (donations, sponsorships, publication purchases, etc.) and ensure these forms are landing in Salesforce.
- Be an expert administrator of, and make ongoing improvements to, Salesforce infrastructure for all aspects of the development team. Examples include moving LR/LAC solicitation tracking to Salesforce, finding better ways to track pledged vs. received contributions, finding ways to replicate the Major Donors spreadsheet via reports, ensuring that MailChimp and Salesforce are communicating to each other, and exploring other applications within Salesforce that could streamline our work.
- Work with Salesforce Premier Success support team for troubleshooting issues as they arise; reevaluate Salesforce license usage and adjust as needed.
- Coordinate uploading of new lists secured from partners into Salesforce/Mailchimp.
- Monitor incoming data to Salesforce for any irregularities.
- Ensure all grant agreement and follow-up information for foundation and corporate funders is up to date and accurate in Salesforce database.

Organizational/Operations Support

- Support COO with various operations activities.
- Ensure successful NLIHC business licenses and Good Standing reports with DC government.
- Attend all meetings of the NLIHC Board of Directors and Board committees, as needed. Participate in staff meetings, retreats, trainings, and all Coalition events.
- Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

To receive serious consideration for this position, an applicant should have the following attributes and background:

- A bachelor's degree.
- A strong commitment to the alleviation of poverty and to social justice (affordable housing knowledge/experience a plus).
- Demonstrated strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Excellent communications skills, both orally and in writing.
- Experience successfully building and maintaining professional partnerships and relationships.
- Experience in funder/donor research and cultivation, proposal- and report-writing, and fundraising appeals.
- Experience in event coordination.
- Experience using Salesforce CRM; strong Salesforce-administrator experience highly desired.

- An ability to work in a diverse, fast-paced environment.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC, though candidates residing outside the DC area may be considered and telework is being implemented during the pandemic.

Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and two writing samples to: Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 at bdiakite@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate's interest in and relevant experiences for the position and include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references, at least two of whom should be current or former supervisors. (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate.)

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 6

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of March 6:

- “Rural Western KY already needed more affordable housing. Then the tornadoes hit,” *Yahoo*, March 6, at: <https://yhoo.it/3w09KR1>
- “More States Consider Tax Breaks for Low-Income Housing Developers,” *Planetizen*, March 7, at: <https://bit.ly/3CBmNKu>
- “Expected rent spike adds to record inflation,” *The Hill*, March 9, at: <https://bit.ly/3tPNoiT>

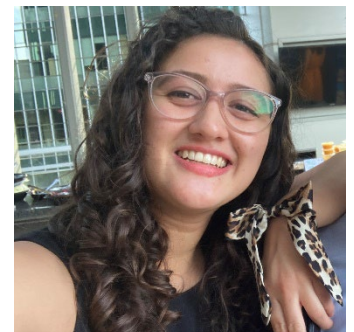
NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Kayla Laywell as Housing Policy Analyst!

NLIHC welcomes Kayla Laywell to the policy team as a housing policy analyst. Kayla joins NLIHC from the office of Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-NM), where she covered housing and homelessness. Prior to working for Senator Luján, Kayla was a field representative in the office of former Congresswoman Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM), where she advocated for the needs of rural communities and Tribal governments at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kayla's legislative career started in the Texas Capitol as a health policy fellow in Representative Garnet Coleman's office.

Previously, Kayla was a case manager in a Rapid Re-Housing program in Houston, Texas. She worked with the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County throughout Hurricane Harvey and assessed political engagement efforts among the Coalition's direct service providers. Kayla's interest in serving marginalized communities began at a federally qualified health center (FQHC) along the U.S.-Mexico border, where she assisted uninsured people experiencing homelessness.

Kayla holds a master's degree in social work with a specialization in political social work from the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work. She holds a bachelor's degree in social work from New Mexico State University.



Please join us in welcoming Kayla to the NLIHC team!

Where to Find Us – March 14, 2022

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and other NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- Nevada Housing Coalition, “[Affordable Housing in Nevada: Research, Data, and Analysis...Oh my!](#),” Virtual, March 23
- [Housing California’s 2022 Conference, “A Roadmap to A Better California,”](#) Sacramento, CA, April 4-6
- [USC Price Center Social Innovation Summit: Housing Stability,](#) Virtual, April 13
- [Urban Affairs Association Conference, “Lessons Learned from Emergency Rental Assistance Programs Responding to COVID-19,”](#) Washington, DC, April 14
- [Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, 19th Annual Training Institute,](#) keynote speaker, Hartford, CT, May 11
- [St. Ambrose University School of Social Work 24th Annual Social Justice Conference,](#) keynote speaker, Davenport, IA, May 19
- [Princeton Community Housing Gala,](#) Virtual, July 21
- [Idaho Housing and Finance Association Annual Housing Conference,](#) keynote speaker, Boise, ID, August 22-23

NLIHC Staff

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245
Sidney Betancourt, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x200
Jordan Brown, Research Intern
Victoria Bourret, ERASE Project Coordinator x244
Jen Butler, Senior Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239
Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252
Josephine Clarke, Senior Executive Assistant, x226
Matthew Clarke, Writer/Editor
Courtney Cooperman, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x263
Bairy Diakite, Director of Operations, x254
Lindsay Duvall, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy
Emma Foley, Research Analyst, x249
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, ERASE, x220
Sydnee Graves, Field Intern
Kim Johnson, Senior Policy Analyst, x243
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317
Kayla Laywell, Housing Policy Analyst
Joseph Lindstrom, Director, Field Organizing, x222
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Senior Communications Specialist, x201
Steve Moore Sanchez, Development Coordinator
Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242
Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291

Brenna Olson, Policy Intern
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Manager, x246
Betty Ramirez, Research Analyst, x202
Gabrielle Ross, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Sarah Saadian, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, x228
Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
Sophie Siebach-Glover, Research Specialist, x205
Kennedy Sims, Communications and Graphic Design Intern
Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246
Jade Vasquez, ERASE Project Coordinator, x264
Maya Ward-Caldwell, Fund Development Intern
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Manager, x230
Renee Willis, SVP for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247
Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x256
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225