

**ADVANCING
HOMELESSNESS
SOLUTIONS**
NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION
NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS
CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES

Learning From and Protecting Emergency Housing Vouchers

July 23, 2025

Welcome & Housekeeping



Sonya Acosta

Senior Policy Analyst

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Agenda



- The Importance of Emergency Housing Vouchers — Sonya Acosta, CBPP
- Overview of Case Study Findings — Pear Moraras, Urban Institute
- Learning from Emergency Housing Vouchers
 - Noelle Muñoz, All Chicago Making Homelessness History
 - Charles Parks, Oklahoma City Housing Authority
 - Lisa Hohenstein, Dakota County Community Development Agency
 - Pear Moraras, Urban Institute
 - Moderator: Ken Williamson, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Take Action to Protect EHV's — Sonya Acosta and Ken Williamson

The Emergency Housing Voucher Program proved we can quickly and successfully house people at risk of or experiencing homelessness



Created as a response to the pandemic but addressing a pre-existing and ongoing emergency



Lessons learned should be applied moving forward

- Make the program permanent / expand similar programs
- Incorporate helpful flexibilities to other rental assistance programs



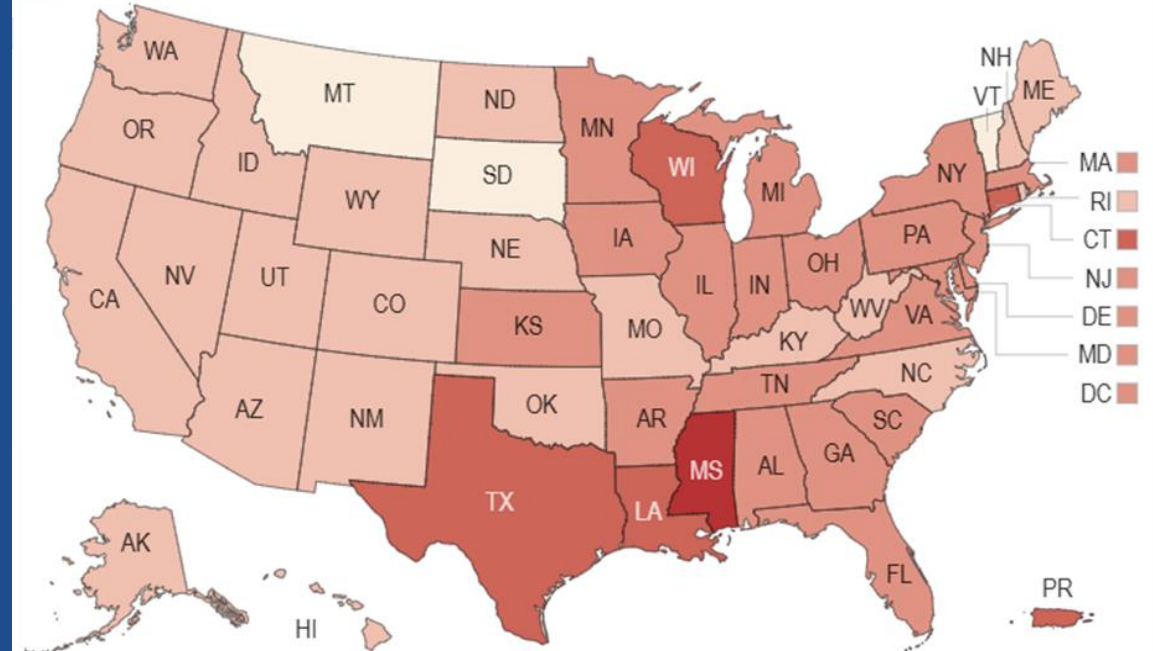
Helps us imagine a rental assistance guarantee

Additional Funding Needed for EHVs

- Funding projected to run out mid-way through 2026 or sooner
 - Rapid rent increases in 2021 and 2022 led to high program costs
- Nearly 58,000 households still rely on EHVs to pay rent every month
- Communities lack resources to transition them to other programs
 - Upcoming and proposed cuts will further reduce resources

As Emergency Housing Vouchers Funding Nears Expiration, Thousands Face the Risk of Losing Their Homes

Percent increase in homelessness if all EHV households lost their homes



Note: Total homeless households include people living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Source: 2024 Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports and HUD's Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Data Dashboard. EHV data current as of 5/26/2025.

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EHV Case Studies



Pear Moraras

Senior Research Associate

Urban Institute

Emergency Housing Vouchers

Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response: Case Study Findings

About Urban



The Urban Institute is a research-to-impact institution founded on one simple idea: To improve lives and strengthen communities, we need practices and policies that work.

The Urban Institute drives impact by equipping changemakers with evidence and solutions.

Study Overview

Goal: Develop 6 case studies/profiles that include examples of how communities:

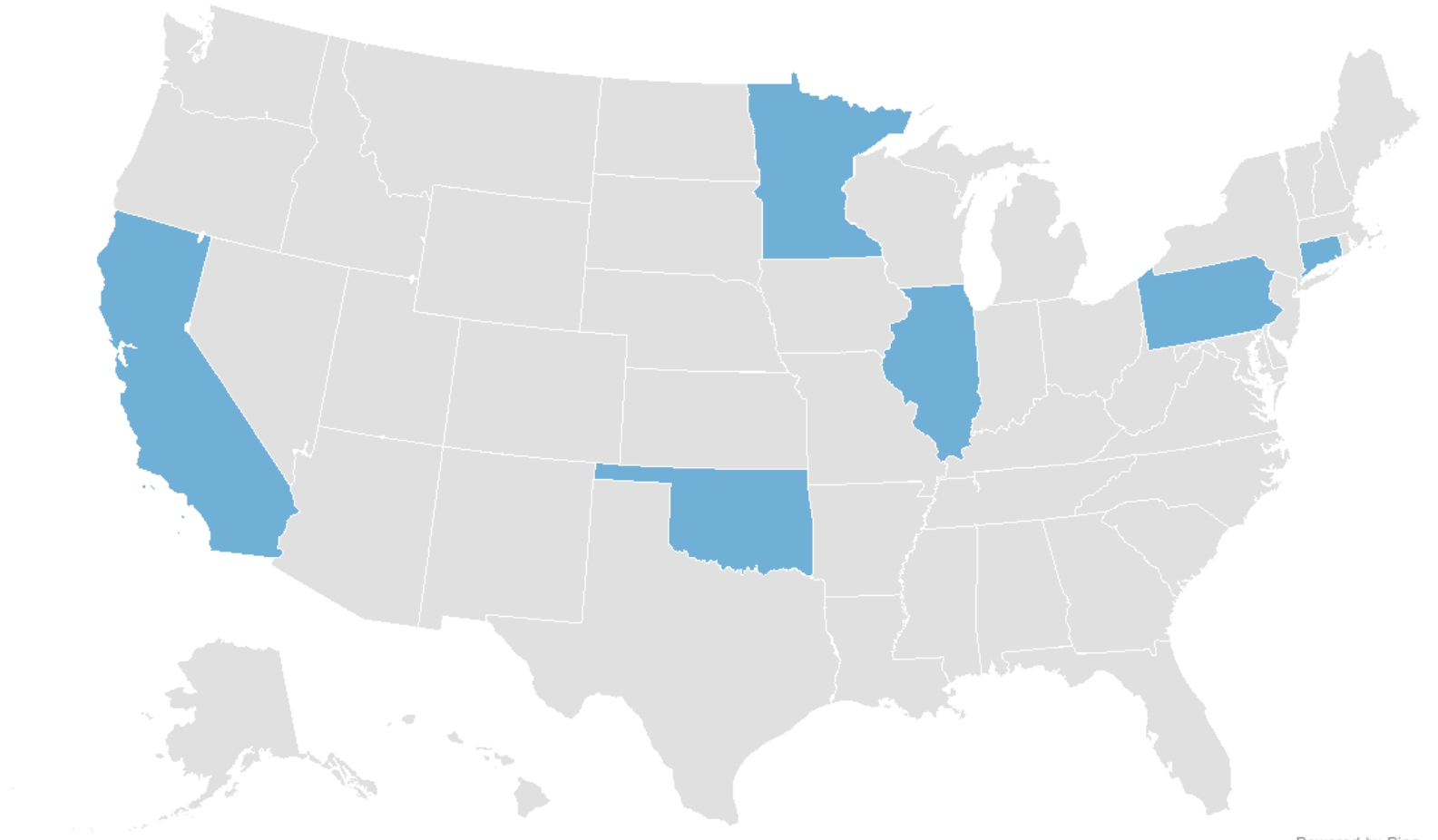
1. Leveraged EHV administrative fees and other **funding sources to provide services** for EHV recipients, such as housing navigation, tenancy support, and health care services, and the challenges and successes associated with those efforts.
2. Utilized **waivers and alternative requirements** available through the EHV program to improve access to EHV and success in leasing up with EHV.
3. Utilized and funded **landlord incentives** to support EHV recipients in using their vouchers.
4. How successes and challenges associated with these examples can **inform future Housing Choice Voucher** and homelessness services policies.

Methods

- Conducted **23 key respondent interviews with 33 stakeholders** from CoCs, PHAs, service providers, and other planning and implementation representatives in 6 communities
- **Document review** (MOU, public dashboards, planning documents)

Selected communities

- 1. Connecticut**
- 2. Oklahoma City, OK**
- 3. Pittsburg/Allegheny
County, PA**
- 4. Chicago, IL**
- 4. Dakota County, MN**
- 5. Santa Barbara, CA**



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Cross-Site Key Themes

- **Strong partnerships and communication between PHAs and CoCs played a pivotal role in managing the influx of vouchers into communities.**
 - Oklahoma City – built on an existing strong foundation, developed from work on Community Solutions' 100,000 homes campaign, used EHV to fill service gaps
 - Chicago – CoC and PHA had to build a new partnership, but housing assistance programs will benefit from the formal relationship established through the EHV program.
 - Santa Barbara – Project management viewed as a key facilitator to program success
- **Optional and mandatory waivers offered needed flexibility.**
 - Most cited: separate waiting lists, increasing FMR, extending the initial search term, self-certification of identity and income, pre-inspections
 - Key to overcoming barriers in rental market and streamlining voucher issuance and lease-ups

Cross-Site Key Themes

- **Landlord incentives were an essential tool for engaging and recruiting landlords in competitive rental markets.**
 - Flexibility in service fee allowed for tailoring to meet community needs
 - Some communities supplemented funding to support incentive structures
 - Some communities feared incentives would create competition
- **Funding for supportive services helped communities target their services.**
 - Santa Barbara, Connecticut, and Dakota County braided funding to provide supportive services to higher acuity households
 - Oklahoma City, Chicago, and Pittsburgh/Allegheny County targeted households with less need for case management and leveraged existing resources

Recommendations

Key features of the EHV program worked as intended to reduce barriers to the private rental market for EHV holders and expedite the voucher issuance and lease up process. Stakeholders commented that the EHV program was well-designed, and many would have appreciated more time to carefully plan their individual programs.

- **Keep:** optional and mandatory waivers like increasing FMR, extending the initial search term, self-certification of identity and income, pre-inspection
- **Keep:** flexible uses of the service fee (incentives, furniture, housing navigation)
- **Keep:** formalized partnerships
- **Need:** guidelines or requirements around housing navigation, case management and housing stability services

Thank you!

EHV Study Project Page: <https://www.urban.org/projects/how-have-communities-used-emergency-housing-vouchers-prevent-and-end-homelessness>

Moderated Panel



- Pear Moranas – Urban Institute
- Noelle Muñoz – All Chicago
- Charles Parks – Oklahoma City Housing Authority
- Lisa Hohenstein – Dakota County CDA
- Ken Williamson - National Alliance to End Homelessness

Take Action!



- **Extend & Expand Emergency Housing Vouchers**

- Incorporate lessons learned into larger voucher program
- Expand EHV program to help more people and maintain important partnerships
- Ensure current EHV households don't lose assistance because of funding cliff
- Engage state & local officials to mitigate harm

- **Support Robust Housing & Homelessness Funding in 2026**

- Provide **\$4.922 billion** for Homeless Assistance Grants
- Full Funding for Housing Choice Vouchers
- Reject policies that take assistance away from people
- **Create a rental assistance guarantee and expand services**

Actions for August Recess



As an Individual



Contact your members of Congress



Attend town halls

As an Organization



Set up tours and meetings



Coordinate with other organizations and agencies



Collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders

Resources



- Urban Institute EHV Case Studies: <https://www.urban.org/projects/how-have-communities-used-emergency-housing-vouchers-prevent-and-end-homelessness>
- National Alliance to End Homelessness Federal Budget Resources: <https://endhomelessness.org/increase-federal-funding-for-homelessness-programs/fy2026-resource-series/>
- National Low Income Housing Coalition FY 2026 Advocacy Toolkit: https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Oppose-Dramatic-Cuts-to-Federal-Investments-in-Affordable-Housing-Toolkit_052725.pdf
- NAEH, NLIHC, NHLP, and CBPP Emergency Housing Voucher Advocacy Toolkit: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zJIhoWIIzvKFiOcKhilykAE_ukCZn6ivnganNa2cnLI/edit?usp=sharing

Keep in Touch

endhomelessness.org

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