



Volume 25, Issue 20
May 18, 2020

In This Issue:

Coronavirus, Homelessness, and Housing

- House Passes “HEROES Act” with Key Housing Resources and Protections
- Join NLIHC’s Weekly “Coronavirus, Housing and Homelessness” Call Today at 2:30 pm ET!
- Ibram Kendi to Address “Racial Equity During the COVID-19 Pandemic” on May 21

Coronavirus – HUD

- HUD CPD Distributes \$1 Billion Second-Round CDBG-CV Funds
- HUD Eviction Moratorium Flyers Available in Multiple Languages
- HUD PIH Establishes Process for CARES Act Mainstream Voucher Allocation
- HUD HOPWA Program Posts Fact Sheet on CARES Act Eviction Moratorium
- HUD HOPWA Program Issues Notice Implementing CARES Act Supplemental Funding Provisions

Coronavirus – New Resources

- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Provides Guidance on CARES Act Eviction Moratoriums

Coronavirus – Other

- Recording Now Available of NLIHC’s May 11 National Call on “Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness”
- Additional Coronavirus Updates - Monday, May 18, 2020

Opportunity Starts at Home

- Campaign Launches Take-Action Letter in Support of Housing Resources and Protections in “HEROES Act”

HUD

- Senate Confirms Brian Montgomery as HUD Deputy Secretary

Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020

- “Getting Housing Issues and Ballot Initiatives into the Elections” Webinar on May 21
- Nebraska’s In-Person Election Foreshadows How Voting May Look in the Future

Research

- Report Finds HUD-Assisted Renters are Poorer, Older, and More Likely to Have Disabilities than Eligible Unassisted Renters

Fact of the Week

- Assisted Renters Likelier than Unassisted Renters to Receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income

From the Field

- Advocates Rally to Stop Cuts to Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act Funds

NLIHC News

- NLIHC Seeks Housing Policy Analyst/Senior Housing Policy Analyst

NLIHC in the News

- NLIHC in the News for the Week of May 10

Coronavirus, Homelessness, and Housing

House Passes “HEROES Act” with Key Housing Resources and Protections

The House passed the “[Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions \(HEROES\) Act](#)” by a vote of 208-199 on the night of May 15. Introduced by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) on May 12, the “HEROES Act” is a \$3 trillion relief bill to help the nation respond to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The bill proposes almost \$200 billion in additional funding for housing and homelessness programs to help communities address the needs of low-income renters, homeowners, and people experiencing homelessness.

Thanks to the powerful and effective work of advocates across the country and the support of congressional champions, the proposal includes NLIHC’s [top priorities](#), including \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance through the “Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act” ([H.R. 6820/S. 3685](#)); \$11.5 billion in additional funding to prevent and respond to coronavirus outbreaks among people experiencing homelessness; and a national, uniform moratorium on evictions and foreclosures.

The bill includes \$1 billion for the first year of funding for 100,000 new emergency housing vouchers targeted to people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and people attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In addition, the bill includes \$5 billion for Community Development Block Grants, appropriates \$300 million for rural rental assistance, and provides additional funding for public housing and other HUD housing providers to help cover increased rental costs and expenses incurred in responding to coronavirus.

This proposal is an important step forward, but more work lies ahead. NLIHC urges advocates to continue contacting their members of Congress and asking them to support the inclusion of these vital resources in a final relief package.

Read the press statement on the passage of the “HEROES Act” from NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel at: <https://bit.ly/2WYpOA1>

Read NLIHC’s full analysis of the “HEROES Act” at: <https://bit.ly/3dOOzFx>

Urge your senators and representative to cosponsor the “Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act” at: <https://sforce.co/2Z2SzOO>

Show your organization’s support for the “Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act” at: <https://sforce.co/3bzMiwu>

View the full text of the “HEROES Act” at: <https://bit.ly/2yW3Khy>

Join NLIHC’s National Call on Coronavirus, Housing & Homelessness Today at 2:30 pm ET

[Join](#) today’s (May 18) national call on coronavirus, housing and homelessness at 2:30-4:00 pm ET to discuss the House-passed “HEROES Act” and needed advocacy actions to ensure its housing and homelessness resources and provisions make it into final law, as well as other developments and proposals on Capitol Hill. We will also hear from leaders of state housing finance agencies on using Coronavirus Relief Funds and other CARES Act funding to address rental assistance needs, local elected officials about their eviction moratoriums, state leaders with updates from the field, and more. Register for the call [here](#).

Register for the national call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Ibram Kendi to Address “Racial Equity During the COVID-19 Pandemic” on May 21

Join Ibram X. Kendi, National Book Award-winning author of *How to Be an Antiracist* and *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, and Diane Yentel, NLIHC president and CEO, for a conversation on “Racial Equity during the COVID-19 Pandemic” on May 21 at 2:30 pm ET. Register today at: <https://bit.ly/2WxbQWI>. When you register, be sure to submit questions for Dr. Kendi!

Ibram X. Kendi is one of America’s foremost historians and leading antiracist voices. He is a *New York Times* bestselling author and the founding director of the [Antiracist Research & Policy Center at American University](#) in Washington, DC. A professor of history and international relations, Dr. Kendi is a contributor to *The Atlantic* and *CBS News*. He is author of *The Black Campus Movement*, which won the W.E.B. Du Bois Book Prize, and *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, which won the National Book Award for Nonfiction. His most recent book, *How to Be an Antiracist*, reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America and points toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other. Instead of working with the policies and system we have in place, Dr. Kendi asks us to think about what an antiracist society might look like and how we can play an active role in building it.



Never has Dr. Kendi’s perspective been more important than it is today. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately afflicts people of color and illustrates in stark relief the historical and systemic racism and discrimination that puts them at risk. While Black Americans make up 13% of the U.S. population, they represent 40% of people experiencing homelessness – and are at grave risk of COVID-19, sleeping in congregate settings, suffering from underlying medical conditions, and unable to isolate, quarantine, and recover. People of color are also more likely to experience poverty. While approximately 10% of white people live in poverty in the U.S., the rates are 25% for Native Americans, 21% for Black people, and 18% for Latinos. These extremely low-income people invariably experience housing poverty, spending more than 50% of their incomes on housing with insufficient resources for other basic necessities like food and medicines. They are seniors, people with disabilities, and low-wage workers disproportionately losing jobs and wages during the pandemic and one missed rent payment from eviction and possible homelessness.

Our national response to COVID-19 must, as a moral imperative and a healthcare necessity, address systemic inequities, discrimination, and racism.

Join us for a conversation with Ibram X. Kendi on “Racial Equity during the COVID-19 Pandemic” on May 21 at 2:30 pm ET. Register today at: <https://bit.ly/2WxbQWI>

Coronavirus – HUD

HUD CPD Distributes \$1 Billion Second-Round CDBG-CV Funds

HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) posted the [second round](#) of CARES Act CDBG supplemental funding, CDBG-CV, on May 11. The [methodology](#) for distributing the \$1 billion second round was posted on May 12.

The CARES Act requires the second round of funding to be allocated to states and insular areas "to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus within the state or insular area, including activities within entitlement and non-entitlement communities. This \$1 billion is to be distributed based on public health needs, risk of transmission of coronavirus, number of coronavirus cases compared to the national average, economic and housing market disruptions, and other factors as determined by HUD using the best available data." HUD had 45 days (from March 27) to allocate this \$1 billion.

CPD established a method for distributing funding to states based on the three factors in the CARES Act. For public health needs, the count of low-income elderly people receives 50% of the weight in the formula, and the count of children in poverty receives 10%. For economic and housing market disruptions, 40% of the weight goes to the aggregate count of unemployment insurance claims over the six-week period ending April 25, minus the count during the same period last year. For risk of transmission and number of coronavirus cases compared to the national average, CPD uses the per capita rate of confirmed cases as of May 3, adjusted by up to 15% more for places with rates of cases above the national average. The methodology also lists the amount each state is set to receive.

The CARES Act provides up to \$5 billion in CDBG supplemental funding. Of that amount, the first allocations of \$2 billion were announced on April 1 (see *Memo*, [4/6](#)) and were distributed to states and entitlement jurisdictions using the same statutory formula used to distribute the regular annual FY20 CDBG allocations.

The remaining portion of the \$5 billion is to be distributed directly to a state or unit of local government, at HUD's discretion, according to a formula based on factors to be determined by HUD. These allocations can be made on a rolling basis based on available data.

The list of all CARES Act supplemental fund allocations, including the second round of CDBG-CV is at: <https://bit.ly/3fKDK9k>

The methodology for amounts distributed to states is at: <https://bit.ly/363pEf2>

More information about the regular CDBG program is on [page 8-3](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*.

HUD Eviction Moratorium Flyers Available in Multiple Languages

HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) and Office of Multifamily Housing Programs (Multifamily) have each made resident-oriented flyers explaining the CARES Act eviction moratorium. PIH's one-page flyer is available in [20 languages](#) on the PIH [COVID-19 Resources](#) webpage. The two-page Multifamily flyer is available in [ten languages](#). That Multifamily link is to HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) Limited English Proficiency [webpage](#). Multifamily posted the two-page flyer in English on April 26 (see *Memo*, [4/27](#)). PIH posted the one-page flyer in English on April 28 (see *Memo*, [5/4](#)).

A two-page summary in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) had been prepared previously by the National Housing Law Project (NHLP), Alliance for Housing Justice (AHJ), and NLIHC (see *Memo*, [4/27](#)).

The Multifamily flyer, “Addressing Tenant Concerns During the COVID-19 National Emergency” in English at <https://bit.ly/3ctOwPp> and in multiple languages is at: <https://bit.ly/3bpNSkJ>

The PIH flyer, “Addressing Tenant Concerns Regarding Rent and the Temporary Suspension of Evictions for Nonpayment of Rent” in English at <https://bit.ly/2AjNpU8> and in multiple languages is at: <https://bit.ly/35T3dcn>

HUD PIH Establishes Process for CARES Act Mainstream Voucher Allocation

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) posted [Notice PIH 2020-09](#) on May 12. The notice describes the process for allocating unobligated Mainstream Voucher Program funding for incremental tenant-based rental assistance for public housing agencies (PHAs) that were previously awarded funding in the 2017 and 2019 competitions. This additional funding will enable PHAs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus.

According to the notice, the CARES Act allows HUD to award without competition any remaining unobligated balances of prior Mainstream Voucher appropriations to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, and to pay for extraordinary administrative fees. The CARES Act provides that no less than 25% of these funds are to be allocated proportionally within 60 days to PHAs that received awards in the 2017 and 2019 competitions.

Eligible PHAs will receive a 30% increase in Mainstream Voucher units. The amounts awarded to PHAs under the notice are housing assistance payment (HAP) funds and do not include any extraordinary administrative fees. Information on extraordinary administrative fees specifically for the Mainstream Voucher Program under the CARES Act will be provided in separate guidance.

Mainstream Voucher Programs are also eligible for additional funding under the \$400 million in supplemental renewal funding set aside for voucher renewals for PHAs encountering significant increases in voucher per-unit costs or that would otherwise have to terminate vouchers for households as a result of insufficient funding. HUD will issue a notice addressing how PHAs can use this \$400 million set-aside.

Waivers provided in PIH Notice 2020-05 (see *Memo*, [4/13](#)) may be applied to Mainstream Vouchers according to the terms of that notice.

Notice PIH 2020-09 is at: <https://bit.ly/2T1oPOz>

More information about Mainstream Vouchers is on [page 4-23](#) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide*.

HUD HOPWA Program Posts Fact Sheet on CARES Act Eviction Moratorium

HUD’s Office of HIV/AIDS Housing in the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) posted a fact sheet, “[Overview of CARES Act Moratorium on Evictions and Effect on the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS \(HOPWA\) Program](#),” on May 8. The fact sheet uses a Q&A format to provide guidance about the CARES Act eviction moratorium provisions (see *Memo*, [4/13](#)) as they apply to properties assisted with HOPWA funds. Most of the information is the same as that in previously issued flyers from HUD’s Office of Multifamily Housing Programs and Office of Public and Indian Housing (see article in this issue of *Memo*).

The fact sheet states that the moratorium applies to properties occupied by households that receive ongoing rental assistance in HOPWA's Tenant/Project-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA/PBRA), Transitional Housing (TH), and Short-Term Rental Assistance under STRMU (Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance). However, properties occupied by households that receive only utility and mortgage assistance under STRMU as a one-time non-recurring payment are not covered by the moratorium, unless the property has a federally backed mortgage loan, which makes it subject to a 60-day moratorium on evictions.

The fact sheet notes that a household must repay the landlord or sign a repayment agreement to pay any amount owed after the moratorium has ended. Although a landlord may evict a household for criminal activity or other lease violations, HUD encourages HOPWA grantees and project sponsors to do all they can to keep people from being evicted. Grantees and project sponsors should also be mindful of other restrictions that apply to evictions, such as the tenant protections provided in HUD's Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) final rule.

If a household receives an eviction notice for nonpayment of rent, they should reach out to their case manager as soon as possible. The grantee/project sponsor or household member can then inform the landlord that the eviction is against the law if it applies to nonpayment of rent between March 27 and July 25, and that no fees or penalties related to nonpayment of rent can be charged.

Additional guidance will be provided regarding:

- Notification information for new/current landlords and HOPWA-assisted households about the moratorium;
- Interim rent calculation processes for households experiencing income changes due to coronavirus; and
- Actions local jurisdictions can take to ensure mass evictions do not occur for HUD-assisted households after the 120-day eviction moratorium has passed.

The HOPWA fact sheet is at: <https://bit.ly/3fIkFES>

More about HOPWA is on [page 4-79](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*.

HUD HOPWA Program Issues Notice Implementing CARES Act Supplemental Funding Provisions

HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing in the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) issued [Notice CPD-20-05](#) on May 8. The Notice provides instructions for implementing CARES Act provisions pertaining to the \$65 million supplemental funding appropriated for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program. These funds are to be used to maintain operations and provide rental assistance, supportive services, and other necessary activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

Congress appropriated \$65 million through the CARES Act for HOPWA supplemental funding. Of that amount, at least \$50 million is to be allocated using the same formula used to distribute the pre-existing annual FY20 HOPWA allocations. CPD announced allocation of \$53.7 million on April 1 (see *Memo*, [4/6](#)). The CARES Act also requires that up to \$10 million be provided as additional one-time, non-renewable awards to grantees administering existing contracts for permanent supportive housing. CPD announced the HOPWA competitive awards amounting to \$10 million on April 1. Notice CPD-20-05 indicates that \$1.3 million will be awarded to increase amounts previously awarded to existing HOPWA technical assistance providers.

Grantees may use supplemental funds for:

- Stays at hotels, motels, or other locations to allow for self-isolation, quarantine, or other infection control for individuals or their family members;
- Transportation services to access medical care, supplies, and food, or to commute to places of employment;
- Essential services and supplies such as food, medications, medical care, personal protective equipment (PPE), and information;
- Nutrition services in the form of food banks, groceries, and meal deliveries;
- Education on ways to reduce risk of contracting or spreading coronavirus to others; and
- Costs related to infection control, such as cleaning and disinfectant supplies, gloves, PPE, and other safety-related supplies for staff and assisted households.

These supplemental funds may be used to cover or reimburse costs as of the date a grantee or project sponsor began preparing for coronavirus, which HUD presumes to be no earlier than January 21, 2020, the date the first confirmed case.

The Notice provides the first mention yet of any guidance from CPD regarding duplication of benefits:

“The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act prohibits the duplication of benefits for programs that provide financial assistance to people or entities suffering losses as a result of a federally-declared disaster or emergency. The duplication of benefits occurs when federal financial assistance is provided to a person or entity through a program to address losses resulting from a federally-declared emergency or disaster, and the person or entity has received (or would receive, by acting reasonably to obtain available assistance) **financial assistance for the same costs** from any other source (including insurance), **and the total amount received exceeds the total need for those costs** (emphasis added).”

HUD plans to issue additional guidance to promote compliance with this requirement.

The CARES Act provides that the supplemental grant funding may be used to cover short-term rent, mortgage, and utility (STRMU) assistance payments to prevent homelessness of a tenant or mortgagor for a period of up to 24 months. The 24-month limit is only applicable to the supplemental grant funds received under the CARES Act and any portion of a grantee’s FY 20 formula funds used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the pandemic. STRMU assistance provided under all other HOPWA awards remains subject to statutory limits of STRMU assistance to a period of no more than 21 weeks of any 52-week period.

The supplemental funding and any amounts from a grantee’s FY20 formula funds may be used to pay for relocation services including lodging at hotels, motels, or other locations for persons living with HIV/AIDS as well as household members who are not living with HIV/AIDS. This funding may also be used to lodge one or more household members who need to isolate temporarily from other members of the household.

The Notice reiterates the streamlined public participation provisions of a CPD Memorandum dated March 31 (see *Memo*, [4/6](#)). CPD waived the 30-day minimum requirement for the public comment period for substantial amendments, provided that no less than five days are provided for public comments on each substantial amendment. The Notice states that grantees should post an approved substantial amendment on its official website, along with a summary of public comments.

Notice CPD-20-05 is at: <https://bit.ly/2LuAuRy>

More about HOPWA is on [page 4-79](#) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide*.

Coronavirus – New Resource

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Provides Guidance on CARES Act Eviction Moratoriums

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) posted a blog on May 11, “[Protections for Renters During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#).” This easy-to-read guide explains CARES Act eviction moratoriums and includes links to help renters find out if the building they live in is covered by the moratorium. After explaining the moratorium, the post lists types of properties subject to the moratorium, including Section 8 project-based housing and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit properties. NLIHC’s [multifamily housing search tool](#) is prominently listed twice. CFPB indicates that renters can call HUD at 800-955-2232 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET to learn if their home is covered.

To learn whether a home in a property with five or more units has a federally backed mortgage and is therefore covered by the eviction moratorium, the blog lists the Fannie Mae [look up tool](#) and Freddie Mac [look up tool](#) (see *Memo*, [5/11](#)). Renters may also call Fannie Mae’s Helpline at 877-542-9723 and Freddie Mac’s Helpline at 800-404-3097.

The blog states that renters may be protected from eviction for longer than 120 days if their landlord is getting mortgage relief. The CARES Act gives landlords the right to temporary relief (forbearance) from making mortgage payments if they have a federally backed mortgage. The blog advises renters to ask their landlord if there is mortgage relief, and if necessary, confirm using the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac look up tools.

During the mortgage relief period, a landlord cannot:

- Evict a tenant or start an eviction solely for nonpayment of rent or other fees or charges
- Charge any late fees or penalties for late payments of rent
- Give a renter a 30-day notice to vacate

The blog adds that many state and local governments have stopped evictions because of the coronavirus pandemic. The details of how renters are protected and for how long depend on where they live. Some states have prohibited any eviction notices or action, stopped all court eviction hearings, or stopped enforcing eviction orders or judgments. Renters can go to the Eviction Lab’s [list of state and local eviction and foreclosure limits](#) to find out if their state or local community has eviction protections in place during this time.

Protections from utility and phone disconnections may also exist. Many states have suspended public utility disconnections. Tenants can check with their state utility commission to learn if there are protections. The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) developed a [tool for tracking state responses](#) to the pandemic. Renters can also contact local utilities.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has temporarily waived Lifeline usage requirements and general de-enrollment procedures until May 29. An FCC order released on March 30 ensures that no current Lifeline subscribers are involuntarily removed from the Lifeline program during this time of national crisis.

The CFPB blog is at: <https://bit.ly/3fE0ec6>

Coronavirus – Other

Recording Now Available of NLIHC’s May 11 National Call on “Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness”

More than 1,000 organizers, advocates, reporters, and legislative staff attended the weekly “Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness” national call hosted by NLIHC and our Disaster Recovery Housing Coalition (DHRC) on May 11. The call featured updates from national, state, and local advocates and service providers assisting people experiencing homelessness, low-income households, and members of marginalized communities, all of whom are disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Register for today’s (May 18) 2:30 pm ET call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

On the May 11 call, Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Representative Denny Heck (D-WA) spoke about their proposed bill, the “[Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act](#),” which would provide \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance to prevent evictions and keep people stably housed during the coronavirus crisis. (Their bill was subsequently included in the HEROES Act that passed in the House on May 15 - see the article in this *Memo*.) NLIHC’s Vice President of Research Andrew Aurand discussed NLIHC’s research note, “[Emergency Rental Assistance Needs for Struggling Workers due to COVID-19](#),” which outlines the need for emergency rental assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis (see, *Memo* [5/11](#)).

Lisa Sloan of the [Technical Assistance Collaborative](#) spoke about how the pandemic is impacting people with disabilities, and Marie Claire Tran-Leung from the [Shriver Center on Poverty Law](#) discussed the needs of people exiting the criminal justice system. Elissa Margolin of Housing Action New Hampshire, Bob Palmer of Housing Action Illinois, and Andrew Bradley of Prosperity Indiana provided field updates.

NLIHC hosts national calls on the Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness every week on Mondays at 2:30 pm ET. Register for today’s (May 18) call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Watch a recording of the May 11 call at: tinyurl.com/y7ju4mgu

View the May 11 presentation slides at: tinyurl.com/yd6zh2x8

Stay up to date on COVID news and housing resources at: <https://bit.ly/3dwCSEm>

Additional Coronavirus Updates - Monday, May 18, 2020

NLIHC maintains a [COVID-19/Housing and Homelessness News and Resource page](#) with policy recommendations, factsheets, frequently asked questions, research notes, and additional resources.

National Updates

Congress

The House voted to approve the “HEROES Act” on May 15. The HEROES Act provides \$200 billion in housing and homelessness resources, including NLIHC’s top priorities to ensure housing stability during and after the pandemic for America’s lowest-income people and those experiencing homelessness. For details on the HEROES Act, see NLIHC’s [analysis](#).

[Representatives David Price \(D-NC\) and Nita Lowey \(D-NY\)](#) discussed in an op-ed how the coronavirus crisis is exacerbating America's preexisting housing crisis. The piece urges Congress to provide significant housing resources, including additional rental assistance, funding for public housing, assistance for people experiencing homelessness, and funds for Native American tribes.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Federal Housing Administration [announced](#) on May 14 an [extension of its foreclosure and eviction moratorium](#) through June 30, 2020 for homeowners with FHA-insured single family mortgages. The FHA also announced an [extension of work flexibilities](#) for lenders and appraisers.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The [Veterans Employment Rideshare Initiative](#) (Rideshare), launched in 2018, helps veterans experiencing homelessness get to job interviews, attend medical appointments, and search for housing. The Rideshare program has been adapted to help veterans experiencing homelessness during COVID-19 by providing transportation to hotel shelters and delivering food.

Federal Housing Finance Administration

FHFA [announced](#) on May 14 that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are extending their moratorium on foreclosures and evictions until at least June 30, 2020. The foreclosure moratorium applies to single-family, Enterprise-backed mortgages only.

[FHFA](#) announced on May 13 that [Fannie Mae](#) and [Freddie Mac](#) are offering payment deferral as a new repayment option for homeowners in COVID-19 forbearance plans.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), FHFA, and HUD [launched](#) on May 12 a [joint mortgage and housing assistance website](#) for Americans impacted by COVID-19. The website consolidates CARES Act mortgage relief, renters' protections, and resources for additional help.

Reporting

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and Utah Housing Coalition Executive Director Tara Rollins penned an [op-ed](#) in the *Deseret News* urging Congress to take bold action to protect renters by including emergency rental assistance in the next coronavirus relief package.

An article in [Mother Jones](#) examines whether COVID-19 will compel San Francisco to confront the issue of homelessness. Asked if the coronavirus could at last force a reckoning with homelessness, NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel responded, "If this moment doesn't, I'm not sure what would."

[Shelterforce](#) examines the need for emergency rental assistance, citing NLIHC Vice President of Public Policy Sarah Saadian and including data from [NLIHC's research note](#). The article also provides an overview of the "[Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act](#)."

A [New York Times](#) opinion piece explores the notion that our housing crisis is a symptom of our country's wealth and indifference. As the article states, Congress could choose to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring, and our country has the resources to address a major root cause of homelessness: the shortage of affordable housing.

[Community Solutions](#) explores a recent analysis conducted by Dr. Brendan O’Flaherty, an economics professor at Columbia University, which projects an increase in homelessness by 40-45% this year over January 2019. The analysis predicts the devastating impact that the pandemic will have on rates of homelessness. [CNN](#) also discussed the analysis.

In a [New York Times op-ed](#), Carol Galante, faculty director of the Turner Center for Housing Innovation, discusses how restrictive zoning blocks less-affluent families from opportunities offered by cities such as Seattle, San Francisco, Boston, and New York.

[Roll Call](#) explores housing provisions in the House Democrats’ proposal for the next coronavirus economic relief, including nearly \$200 billion in affordable housing and rental assistance funding.

An article in the [Washington Post](#) unpacks why the \$100 billion for rental assistance that House Democrats included in their \$3 trillion coronavirus relief bill might not be enough to address the country’s rental crisis.

A piece in the [New Yorker](#) examines how inaction by local and federal officials could result in a surge of evictions and foreclosures, triggering a new wave of infection and illness. The inadequate federal response does not mean that the federal government is unable to take action.

[Bloomberg Businessweek](#) published a piece examining how both renters and property owners will suffer without a national rental market bailout. Across the country, landlords and tenants are struggling to cover next month’s rent, and an approaching wave of evictions threatens them both.

A [Kaiser Health News analysis](#) found that inadequate housing in the United States puts people at risk during the pandemic. Public health experts are concerned that people living in substandard housing will continue to suffer as the coronavirus and its accompanying economic crisis continue.

Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, discusses the need for Congress to include critical housing and homelessness resources in the next coronavirus relief package in an [op-ed in The Hill](#). She urges Congress to include \$11.5 billion for homeless assistance, \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance, long-term rental vouchers for elderly and severely disabled people experiencing homelessness, and significant investments in the national Housing Trust Fund.

[Doctors Without Borders](#) dispatched a team of doctors, nurses, logisticians, and water and sanitation experts to the Navajo Nation to help with the coronavirus crisis that is unfolding on the reservation. The high rates of infection and the fact that these communities suffer from chronic federal underfunding drove the decision to send a team to the Navajo Nation.

The *Hill* released a list of [eight key provisions](#) expected in the Democrats’ next coronavirus relief package, including emergency rent and mortgage assistance.

The *Washington Post* published an [FAQ on rent strikes](#) during the pandemic.

The [Columbus Dispatch editorial board](#) published a piece urging Congress to include emergency rental assistance in the next coronavirus relief package. Since eviction moratoriums are a short-term fix and rent deferment is not rent forgiveness, rental assistance is needed to keep tenants stably housed.

The [Washington Post](#) examines how job losses due to COVID-19 have fallen unequally on Americans according to age, race, gender, and educational attainment. Undocumented immigrants face significant

challenges, including tremendous job loss and lack of access to the federal safety net, especially housing and food assistance.

[HuffPost](#) reports that the Navajo Nation now has more known COVID-19 cases per capita than any state. At least 3,122 cases have been reported on Navajo Nation, which is the most populous American Indian reservation in the United States. Indigenous populations are particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus given their high rates of underlying conditions, poor housing conditions, and other significant risk factors.

[CityLab](#) examines why data released by the [National Multifamily Housing Council](#) does not provide the full story about housing stability in the United States. While the data revealed that four out of five renters were able to pay their May rent, the data excludes tens of millions of renters who live in subsidized rentals or single-family homes.

State and Local News

A list of local eviction and foreclosure moratoriums from NLIHC is available [here](#).

A list of state and local emergency rental assistance programs from NLIHC is available [here](#).

A list of local shelter closings is from NLIHC available [here](#).

Alabama

Some [Mobile County residents](#), including Elizabeth Chiepalich, who runs the Facebook group “Homeless in Mobile,” continue to distribute nutritious food, tents, mats, and other necessities to help people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic.

Alaska

An Alaska legislative committee approved Governor Mike Dunleavy’s plan to spend federal coronavirus relief aid, which includes [\\$10 million for rental and mortgage assistance](#) to be administered by the Alaska Housing Finance corporation.

In Anchorage, officers with the Community Action Planning Team and Parks and Recreation workers [removed a homelessness encampment](#) on May 11.

Arkansas

The [University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences \(UAMS\) Mobile Testing Unit](#) has partnered with local advocates to expand coronavirus testing for people experiencing homelessness. UAMS held an event on May 11 in Hot Springs that included testing and distribution of tents, blankets, and sanitary supplies.

California

Governor Gavin Newsom [released his revised budget proposal](#) on May 14. While the [new budget](#) eliminates the ambitious \$750 million state fund for housing and homeless services, Governor Newsom intends to use \$750 million in federal funds to purchase hotels and motels across the state.

The [California Rental Housing Association](#) is urging cities and counties to dedicate millions of dollars in federal grants to rental assistance. The association, composed of more than 20,000 rental housing owners, has proposed

a statewide rental assistance program, which could provide up to three months of assistance to renters experiencing financial loss due to COVID-19.

Approximately [100 San Dimas residents and city officials](#) protested a plan to provide temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness at a Motel 6. The CEO of the company that owns the hotel announced at the protest that it would pull out of the statewide effort called Project Roomkey. San Dimas Mayor Emmett Badar supported the protest, saying that the city is concerned that the hotel program would bring more people experiencing homelessness to the area.

A [hotel in downtown Los Angeles](#) has been converted into a 460-room temporary homeless shelter for 90 days. The Salvation Army will provide mental health and substance abuse services at the hotel.

Marin County legislators have expressed frustration that the Newsom administration has not moved quickly enough to [share federal coronavirus relief funds with smaller counties and cities](#). The CARES Act allocated \$9.8 billion directly to California, and jurisdictions with more than 500,000 residents received approximately \$5.8 billion. Jurisdictions like Marin County, with smaller populations, are still waiting on California to allocate a portion of its federal funds.

An article in the [Los Angeles Times](#) examines the logistical challenges of testing people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County.

Orange County has witnessed a [significant increase in deaths](#) of people experiencing homelessness, with deaths in April reaching their highest level in at least five years. Health officials state that they are unsure how many people experiencing homelessness have been tested for coronavirus.

Nearly two months after San Jose received more than [100 trailers](#) from the state to provide housing for people experiencing homelessness, the city is expected to use some of the trailers. The San Jose City Council unanimously approved the allocation of nearly \$730,000 to operate 90 trailers.

Colorado

[Colorado community health centers](#) are going mobile and expanding telehealth services to support people experiencing homelessness. Peak Vista Community Health Centers established a new specialty clinic in Colorado Springs, making it easier to provide medical and behavioral care services to people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic.

The [Colorado Coalition for the Homeless \(CCH\)](#), an NLIHC state partner, has provided most of the coronavirus testing for people experiencing homelessness in Denver. The coalition screened 52 men and women experiencing homelessness. Of the 45 who showed no symptoms, 12, or 26%, tested positive for the virus. Two of the seven people who showed symptoms tested positive. CCH used the results of its pilot study to ask the state for additional resources.

Florida

Purpose Built Families Foundation's Operation Sacred Trust is providing [rapid assistance to very low-income veterans facing housing crises](#) as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Using CARES Act money to expand services, the Broward County nonprofit identifies priority neighborhoods each week to deliver services to veterans at risk of homelessness.

Hawaii

An editorial in the [Star Advertiser](#) discusses why the state needs to focus on solutions that address long-standing affordable housing issues rather than attending only short-term relief solutions. James Koshiba, co-founder of Hui Aloha, an advocacy group working to end homelessness, argues that Hawaii should broaden its focus from emergency relief to prevention and permanent solutions.

Idaho

[Boise State Public Radio](#) aired an interview about local nonprofit organizations' efforts to support people facing housing instability and those experiencing homelessness.

Illinois

A [Chicago hotel](#) has been converted into temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness and currently houses 163 people. The medical director of mobile health for Lawndale Christian Health Center said that the biggest challenge is finding permanent housing for the guests.

[Edgewater's Broadway Armory](#) has been converted into a temporary shelter as city officials work to alleviate crowding at existing shelters. The facility is one of five emergency shelters that have opened in Chicago to protect people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic.

Indiana

A [spokeswoman for the City of Indianapolis](#) told the *Indianapolis Star* that the city is in the process of establishing a contract with a local hotel to house people experiencing homelessness who are older or have underlying medical conditions.

[Prosperity Indiana](#), an NLIHC state partner, is providing resources, including legal guidance and webinars, for tenants to help low-income renters during the pandemic. "Housing security has been something that's been on our minds since before the pandemic began, and it's taken on new urgency and a new light in the face of that pandemic," said Andrew Bradley, policy director for Prosperity Indiana.

Kansas

A [coalition of social service organizations in Lawrence](#) are leading efforts to house people experiencing homelessness amid the coronavirus pandemic. These organizations, however, do not have the resources to shelter everyone who is experiencing homelessness.

Maine

A commentary in the [Portland Press Herald](#) discusses Maine's shortage of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing units. The Maine Statewide Homeless Council and the Maine Continuum of Care sent a letter to Governor Janet Mills suggesting that a portion of the state's Coronavirus Relief Fund be used to create permanent supportive housing.

Maryland

Baltimore Mayor Bernard "Jack" Young will use [\\$13 million in federal coronavirus relief funding](#) to establish a rental assistance program. Housing Commissioner Michael Braverman stated this the agency is still determining how the money will be distributed.

The Baltimore City Council approved legislation on May 11 that would [prohibit landlords from increasing rent](#) during the current state of emergency and for three months after it is lifted. The “[Baltimore City COVID-19 Renter Relief Act](#)” would also ban landlords from charging late fees during this period.

[Howard County Executive](#) Calvin Ball announced allocation of \$800,000 in county funds for emergency rental assistance and eviction relief. Of the total amount, \$300,000 will come from the Disaster Relief and Recovery Initiative in the proposed operating budget, and the other \$500,000 will come from Moderate Income Housing Unit fee-in-lieu revenue sources. The rental relief program is extended to families earning up to \$92,000, the county’s median income.

Landlords and housing advocates debated legislation to prohibit rent increases and late fees in Baltimore during the coronavirus pandemic. The Land Use and Transportation Committee voted unanimously on May 7 to advance the “[Baltimore COVID-19 Renter Relief Act](#)” (Bill 20-0526).

Massachusetts

Over [900 beds across Boston](#) have been added to reduce density in the city’s homeless shelters and to treat people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. Boston Hope is a temporary shelter opened at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center that has 500 bed dedicated to people experiencing homelessness. Boston has also built quarantine and treatment centers next to its largest shelters.

WBUR released a segment on [Boston Hope](#), a respite shelter for people experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for the coronavirus. Approximately 300 people experiencing homelessness have stayed at the shelter since it opened almost a month ago.

Michigan

Eric Hufnagel, executive director of the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness, an NLIHC state partner, told the *Detroit Free Press* that the [shelter system across Michigan](#) was at or near capacity before the pandemic. The influx of people needing shelter due to the coronavirus pandemic is forcing providers to be innovative in accommodating more people while also maintaining social distancing guidelines.

[SOS Community Services](#), an organization focused on ending family homelessness in Washtenaw County, is providing pre-bagged groceries and has installed portable toilets outside its two locations in Ypsilanti. The organization continues to help families experiencing homelessness obtain housing during the pandemic.

Governor Gretchen Whitmer asked Vice President Mike Pence to [discourage protests](#) due to concerns of the coronavirus spreading to rural parts of Michigan.

New Jersey

[Newark created a \\$1 million Emergency Housing Assistance Fund](#) to provide low-income residents up to \$1,000 each to help pay rent or utilities. The program will be funded through federal HOME grants and potentially some funds from the city’s housing trust fund. Applications will be available on the [city’s website](#) beginning May 18.

In the New Jersey Legislature, [Bill A. 3956](#) would create the [New Jersey Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) to help tenants remain stably housed. The emergency assistance program would first tap unused federal funds (specifically, Community Development Block Grant) sent to the state to support Hurricane Sandy Recovery. The State Assembly will vote on the bill on May 14.

New York

[ABC News](#) reported that more than 325,000 of New York City's lowest-income households, nearly 1 million people, are at risk of severe income loss and being unable to pay rent. Christine Quinn, president and CEO of the nonprofit Win, implored that without interventions such as housing vouchers and additional hotel rooms, millions of people will become homeless after the eviction moratorium is lifted.

New York City's largest provider of shelter and services for mothers experiencing homelessness and their children, Win, released a housing stability and recovery plan: [The Aftermath Plan: Responding to Homelessness in the Wake of COVID-19](#). The plan consists of five policy priorities to prevent housing instability for the most vulnerable families.

Advocates are [criticizing the de Blasio administration's decision](#) to transport people experiencing homelessness who were staying on the subway trains to congregate shelters. The Department of Homeless Services chose to move people experiencing homelessness to one of the city's most crowded shelters. Giselle Routhier, policy director for the Coalition for the Homeless, an NLIHC state partner, said that her organization is urging Mayor de Blasio to move these individuals to vacant hotel rooms across the city.

New York housing advocates are concerned that the state's share of [HUD relief funds falls short](#) of its share of national coronavirus cases, 7% of relief funds compared to 25% of the nation's COVID-19 cases. Rachel Fee, executive director of the New York Housing Conference, an NLIHC state partner, noted that Florida received nearly the same amount of block grant funding while having just 12% of coronavirus cases.

The [Washington Post](#) published an article discussing [New York City's COVID-19 Hotel Program](#), which provides free hotel rooms to eligible New Yorkers with mild COVID-19 cases. It mentions that the hotel program includes protections and accommodations for people experiencing homelessness.

Oklahoma

Social service agencies in [Oklahoma City](#) are concerned about a flood of evictions that will come when Oklahoma County's district court reopens on May 18. Nearly 400 eviction cases have been filed in Oklahoma County according to a report from the Oklahoma Policy Institute. Given the limited resources housing providers had before the pandemic, they are concerned about their ability to house more individuals who have been impacted by COVID-19.

Oregon

Clastop County officials developed a plan to [provide temporary housing people experiencing homelessness](#) in a local hotel after Providence Seaside Hospital reached out to the county's public health department. County officials are partnering with the hospital and other organizations to arrange rooms for people experiencing who test positive for the coronavirus or are awaiting test results.

The Oregon Legislature's Emergency Board approved [\\$12 million in housing assistance](#), with more than half going to residents at imminent of homelessness. The state allocated \$8.5 million to provide rental assistance for people who have lost income due to the pandemic. Oregon also set aside \$3.5 million for shelters and motel vouchers.

The Housing Authority of Jackson County will receive [\\$375,002 in federal coronavirus aid](#) to help keep residents stably housed. The funds are a portion of \$5.7 million in grants allocated to housing authorities across Oregon.

Pennsylvania

[Philadelphia](#) established a COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program, which aims to provide rental assistance to 3,000 families in the city. The program will be funded by \$10 million in federal relief funding.

Rhode Island

[Housing advocates in Rhode Island](#) urged state legislators to include affordable housing in their recovery plans. Advocates also urged Governor Gina Raimondo to protect a dedicated revenue stream to produce affordable housing that she pledged to include in her budget earlier this year.

Texas

The [Texas Supreme Court](#) ordered that eviction proceedings can resume on May 26. This does not apply to tenants protected under the federal CARES Act, including renters in homes covered by federally backed mortgages. Christina Rosales of Texas Housers, an NLIHC state partner, expressed concern about low-income Texans and the rise in homelessness that may occur as a result of the coronavirus.

Texas Housers, NLIHC state partners and DHRC partners, drafted a white paper urging local officials to prioritize keeping Texans stably housed by adopting policies and practices that provide resources for low-income renters. Learn more [here](#).

[Fort Worth allocated \\$15.4 million in CARES Act funds to housing-related activities](#), including funds from the Community Services Block Grant, the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the Community Development Block Grant, the Emergency Solutions Grant, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. The Fort Worth Neighborhood Services Department began accepting applications for several programs designed to help residents with housing and other household expenses, including emergency rental assistance.

The [San Antonio Housing Authority](#) (SAHA) announced that it will contribute \$350,000 to the city's COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Program. SAHA also announced a 25% rent forgiveness program for the month of June.

Utah

The Utah Housing and Community Development Division launched a new [Rental Assistance Program](#) on May 11, with more than \$4 million available through several programs, including existing federal HOME funds and CARES Act funding. The program is designed to help those whose income has been impacted by the pandemic but who are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

Housing advocates, faith leaders, and civic groups are urging [Utah Governor Gary Herbert](#) to extend the COVID-19-related rent deferral and eviction moratorium for two more months.

Vermont

[Burlington](#) is looking to establish a low-barrier site for people experiencing homelessness this summer as temporary sites established during the pandemic begin to close. The North Beach Campground site will close this week, and Vermont shut down a Holiday Inn site last week.

In an [op-ed in the Vermont Digger](#), Vermont Representatives Tom Stevens and John Killacky outlined policy solutions to establish an integrated housing system in the state. They argue that pandemic demonstrated that

Vermont can provide housing for people experiencing homelessness, now there is a need to build upon that recent success.

Virginia

The [Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless](#) is providing shelter for approximately 87 people experiencing homelessness. The organization noted that while homelessness has long been an issue in the community, the pandemic calls attention to the fact that homelessness is a community health issue.

Washington

Bremerton Mayor Greg Wheeler announced that additional federal funds have been made available for the [Bremerton COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program](#). An additional \$268,383 from the CARES Act was allocated to the city, and the council approved spending the funds on a rental assistance program.

Wyoming

In a letter to the editor of the [Wyoming Tribune Eagle](#), a resident of Cheyenne asked her community to contact their members of Congress and urge them to include \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance and eviction prevention.

Guidance

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Interim Guidance for Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 among People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness](#) - Updated May 10

Department of Housing and Urban Development

[COVID-19 Landlord Engagement: Reset your Community's Critical Partnerships During COVID Response](#) - May 15

[COVID-19 Homeless Systems Response: Landlord Engagement](#)

[HUD Community and Planning Development Methodology for Round 2 Allocations of CDBG-CV CARES Act Funds](#) - May 12

HUD SNAPS - Upcoming Webinars:

- [Engaging Persons with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Your COVID-19 Response](#) - May 14, 2020 at 2:30 pm EDT
- [How to Make a CARES Act Grant Submission to HUD: Webinar for Entitlement Grantees](#) - May 14, 2020 at 12:30 pm EDT

The Office of Block Grant Assistance (OBGA) Disaster Recovery and Special Issues Division (DRSI) is hosting a [webinar series](#) for Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) grantees.

[Homeless System Response: Changes to Coordinated Entry Prioritization to Support and Respond to COVID-19 - May 7](#)

HUD's Community Planning and Development [announced allocations](#) of the second tranche of \$1 billion CDBG-CV to states:

- [All Grants - Excel Spreadsheet](#)
- [All CARES Act Grants - Excel Spreadsheet](#)

[HUD's Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#) has been translated into several languages, including Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, Arabic, Vietnamese, and Russian. Note: as of now, the translated versions are not available on [HUD's Multifamily website](#).

- [Spanish: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)
- [Chinese: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)
- [Farsi: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)
- [Arabic: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)
- [Vietnamese: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)
- [Russian: HUD Multifamily Tenant COVID-19 Brochure](#)

HUD's PIH Tenant Flyer on the Eviction Moratorium has been [translated into 20 languages](#).

Department of Treasury

[Payments to States and Eligible Units of Local Government - May 11](#)

FEMA

[Federal Programs that Support Individuals Experiencing Homelessness](#)

Federal Housing Finance Agency

[Fannie Mae Lender Letter \(LL-2020-07\): COVID-19 Payment Deferral - May 14](#)

[Freddie Mac Bulletin 2020-10: Temporary Servicing Guidance Related to COVID-19 - May 14](#)

National Alliance to End Homelessness

[COVID-19 Online Learning Series](#)

National Alliance of HUD Tenants

[HUD Tenants' Rights Under COVID-19 Webinar - Tuesday, May 12 at 2:00pm ET](#)

National Health Care for the Homeless Council

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

[Operating Isolation and Quarantine Facilities and Providing Medical, Behavioral Health, and Substance Use Treatment: Lessons Learned from King County](#) - Upcoming Webinar, May 12 at 2 pm ET.

Opportunity Starts at Home

Campaign Launches Take-Action Letter in Support of Housing Resources and Protections in “HEROES Act”

Advocates have sent nearly 1,300 letters to members of Congress through the [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multi-sector affordable homes campaign over the past six weeks. The letters advocate inclusion of vital housing and homelessness resources in the next COVID-19 relief package. Last week, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) unveiled a [Democratic proposal](#) for the next relief package, called the “HEROES Act,” which passed in the House of Representatives on May 15. The bill includes the campaign's most urgent priorities: \$100 billion for emergency rental assistance; a uniform evictions moratorium; \$11.5 billion for homeless assistance; and \$4 billion for Housing Choice Vouchers. These priorities have been [endorsed](#) by leading national organizations in the areas of health, education, civil rights, environmental protection, hunger, faith, and domestic violence.

The “HEROES Act” is an important step forward, but we must keep the momentum going to ensure these housing resources are included in any final negotiated package. **To act now, please send this [letter](#) to your senators and representative.** Simply type in your street address, click submit, and the letter automatically goes to your senators and representative.

Follow the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

Be sure to [sign up](#) for our e-newsletter to get the latest updates about the campaign, including new multi-sector partners, [calls to action](#), events, and [research](#).

HUD

Senate Confirms Brian Montgomery as HUD Deputy Secretary

The Senate confirmed Brian Montgomery as deputy secretary of HUD on May 11. In this role, Mr. Montgomery manages the day-to-day operations of HUD and assists the HUD secretary. He has been serving as acting deputy secretary, as well as assistant secretary for housing and federal housing commissioner. President Donald Trump nominated him to serve as deputy secretary, the second most senior official at HUD, in October (see *Memo*, [10/11/19](#)). Previously, Mr. Montgomery served as head of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

As assistant secretary for housing, he has overseen HUD's Project-Based Section 8 rental assistance program, the Office of Housing Counseling, and HUD's Manufactured Housing Program. As federal housing

commissioner, Mr. Montgomery has been responsible for managing FHA’s mortgage insurance portfolio, which includes its Single Family, Multifamily, and Health Care programs.

Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020

“Getting Housing Issues and Ballot Initiatives into the Elections” Webinar on May 21

Join an NLIHC *Our Homes, Our Votes 2020* webinar on advancing housing issues and ballot initiatives in the upcoming elections. The webinar will take place on May 21 at 3 pm ET. Register for this webinar and NLIHC’s entire 15-month “[Third Thursdays at Three](#)” webinar and podcast series on nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement, free to the public, at: <https://bit.ly/2Luj0F3>

The May 21 webinar will share how, in communities throughout the U.S., voters are taking the lead on affordable housing issues and how you can as well. Twenty-two ballot initiatives on housing affordability issues passed in 2018, and more are expected in 2020. While taking issues directly to the voters can be a challenging endeavor, it can also produce powerful results. This Third Thursday at Three session will address strategies for placing items on the ballot through the legislative process or through signature gathering. Presenters will discuss effective approaches to ballot initiative campaigns and how to build broad support prior to an election.

NLIHC provides [an array of nonpartisan resources, tools, and training](#) on engaging candidates and increasing voter registration and turnout among low-income renters leading up to the 2020 elections, including these webinars and podcasts, which cover many facets of voter and candidate engagement through discussions with experts and advocates with frontline experience.

The presentations take place at 3 pm ET on the third Thursday of each month. All sessions are recorded and posted to the *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* website for those who cannot attend the live broadcasts. The full list of webinar topics:

- Session 1: Legal Considerations for Election Engagement for 501 (c3) organizations, September 19. (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 2: Developing an Effective Plan for Voter Engagement Work, October 17. (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 3: Helpful Tools and Partners for Election Engagement, November 21 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 4: Voter Registration Part 1 – Messaging, Events, and Canvassing, December 19 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 5: Voter Registration Part 2 – Finding and Registering Residents of Subsidized Housing, January 16 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 6: The Role of Housing Providers in Registering and Mobilizing Voters, February 20 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 7: Getting Candidates on the Record, March 19 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- Session 8: Educating Voters, April 16 (Watch recording at: <https://bit.ly/338Ydho>)
- [Session 9: Housing Issues and Ballot Initiatives, May 21](#)
- Session 10: Overcoming Common Obstacles to Voting, June 18
- Session 11: The Challenge of Voting While Homeless, July 16
- Session 12: Voter Mobilization Part 1 – Early Voting and Vote-by-Mail, August 20

- Session 13: Voter Mobilization Part 2 – Protecting Low Income People from Voter Intimidation and Voter Caging Tactics, September 17
- Session 14: Election Day! Getting Out the Vote, October 15
- Session 15: After the Vote – Holding Candidates to their Promises, November 19

Register once for all webinars/podcasts and receive reminders at: <https://bit.ly/2Luj0F3>

[Watch recordings of previous webinars at: https://bit.ly/338Ydho](https://bit.ly/338Ydho)

Nebraska’s In-person Election Foreshadows How Voting May Look in the Future

Elections officials across the nation are examining voting procedures to ensure that all voters can exercise their civil responsibility and do so safely. The Nebraska statewide election on Tuesday, May 12, offered hints of what voting could look like in the future.

Nebraska is one of just eight states not to issue a stay-at-home order during the coronavirus pandemic. As such, polling stations were open and staffed similar to a normal election day. [Voters](#) were not required to wear masks, although state and local election officials recommended it, and polling stations offered masks to voters who showed up without them. Voters were also encouraged to wash hands, use the hand sanitizer provided, and remain six feet apart. The state provided poll workers safety kits, including an N95 mask, gloves, sanitizer, wipes, and face shields, and instructed them to set up polling places to maximize social distancing of at least six feet.

Two hundred of the usual [222 polling places](#) were open, and none reported significant lines. The state chose to close polling stations located in locations such as retirement communities that it deemed high risk for coronavirus transmission.

In-person turnout was relatively light because a large percentage of Nebraskans requested mail-in ballots. According to a [news report](#), 493,393 of Nebraska’s 1,216,431 registered voters (41%) requested an absentee ballot. [Nebraska’s](#) Secretary of State office promoted mail-in ballots by mailing every voter a form to request an absentee ballot. While the expansion of absentee balloting by mail expanded access for many voters, results may have been offset by Governor Pete Ricketts’s (R) decision to cancel in-person early voting as a result of Nebraska’s COVID-19 state of emergency and the closure of many municipal offices where early voting takes place.

[These factors](#) contributed to a surprising result: despite the pandemic, the May 12 election witnessed the most votes ever cast for a Nebraska primary, with about 34% turnout of eligible voters.

[Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020](#), NLIHC’s nonpartisan candidate and voter engagement project, continues to monitor the 2020 elections. State-by-state resources are available to support voter engagement.

Research

Report Finds HUD-Assisted Renters are Poorer, Older, and More Likely to Have Disabilities than Eligible Unassisted Renters

HUD’s Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) released “[Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units in 2017](#),” a report that compares characteristics of HUD-assisted tenants with all renters and with all very low-income (VLI) renters (i.e., those who make 50% or less of area median income and are eligible for aid). The report finds that HUD-assisted renters are poorer and older than all VLI renters, more likely to be Black, less likely to be Hispanic, and more likely to have lower levels of educational attainment. The report finds that HUD-assisted tenants are likely to have longer tenures than all VLI renters or renters generally.

The report draws information from the 2017 American Housing Survey (AHS) on 4,728 HUD-assisted rental units, including public housing, homes rented with Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, and privately owned subsidized multifamily housing. These homes and their tenants are compared with all rental units occupied by VLI households and all rental units generally. This report is the tenth in a series of reports dating back to 1989 on HUD-assisted housing, and the authors use prior reports to track changes in assisted housing. Since 1989, the number of HUD-assisted units increased by 500,000 units but changed considerably in program mix. In 1989, 26% of HUD-assisted tenants were voucher recipients, 33.4% were in public housing, and 40.5% were in project-based, privately owned multifamily units. In 2017, 47.8% of tenants were voucher recipients, 21.3% were in public housing, and 30.9% were in project-based assistance.

The report finds that the stock of HUD-assisted housing, particularly public housing, is more concentrated in the Northeast and less concentrated in the West. The Northeast has 19% of all renters but 36.5% of all public housing; the West has 25% of all renters but 8.8% of all public housing. The authors attribute this difference to the age of the communities; communities in the Northeast were more likely to have active public housing authorities when the public housing program was most active. Renters in HUD-assisted homes are more likely than all VLI renters or renters generally to live in housing built before 1984. A greater proportion of HUD-assisted homes are efficiencies or two-bedroom units, while a greater proportion of the total rental stock are units with three or more bedrooms. The authors note that a large percentage of privately-owned multifamily projects were built to serve seniors, which may explain the larger share of efficiency apartments in these projects.

The report describes characteristics of householders in HUD-assisted housing. The table below summarizes comparisons of all renters, all VLI renters (including assisted and unassisted households), and HUD-assisted renters.

Table 1: Householder and Household Characteristics			
	All renters	All VLI renters	HUD-assisted renters
Percent Black	21.4%	27.9%	45.5%
Percent Hispanic	19.9%	22.6%	18.4%
Percent 65 or older	15.2%	22.7%	27.5%
Household member has a disability	22.3%	33%	43.6%
High school graduation rates	84.3%	74.7%	69.8%
Receive wage or salary income	73.2%	53.3%	41.8%
Spend more than 40% of income on housing	32.6%	62.7%	39.7%

The geographic distribution of public housing (less concentrated in the West) may explain the larger share of Black HUD-assisted renters and smaller share of Hispanic HUD-assisted renters. The larger share of senior households and households in which a member has a disability partly explains why HUD-assisted renters are more likely to receive public assistance, Social Security, or Supplemental Security Income than all VLI renters.

HUD-assisted renters generally have lower household incomes than unassisted VLI renters. The median income of public housing residents is \$10,800, compared to \$11,160 for tenants in privately owned multifamily projects, \$12,500 for voucher recipients, \$16,000 for unassisted VLI renters, and \$36,100 for all renters.

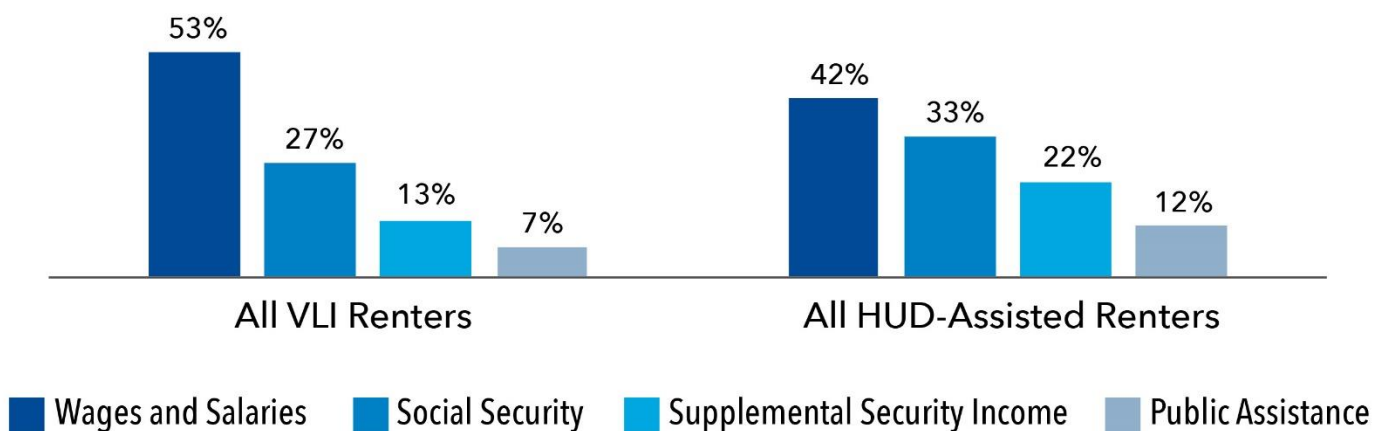
The report includes data on housing quality and tenant satisfaction in HUD-assisted units. HUD-assisted buildings are more likely than rental housing for all VLI renters or all renters to be buildings with 50 or more units. Among HUD-assisted units, 92.3% are adequate (with plumbing, heating, electricity, and not requiring major maintenance). Among homes occupied by all VLI renters, 90% are adequate, and 92.5% of homes occupied by all renters are adequate. When asked how satisfied they were with their buildings and neighborhoods, tenants in HUD-assisted housing were more likely than all renters generally to give their buildings the highest possible ratings and slightly less likely than all renters to give their neighborhoods the highest possible ratings. Public housing tenants gave their buildings and neighborhoods slightly lower ratings than did voucher recipients and tenants in privately owned multifamily buildings.

The full report can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2SW0IRd>

Fact of the Week

Assisted Renters Likelier than Unassisted Renters to Receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income

Sources of Income of All Very Low-Income Renters and All HUD-Assisted Renters



Source: HUD, Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units in 2017 (2020). "All VLI Renters" includes all renter households with very low incomes, at 50% of area median income or below, whether assisted or unassisted.

Source: HUD, Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units in 2017 (2020).

From the Field

Advocates Rally to Stop Cuts to Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act Funds

The Oklahoma legislature on May 12 passed [H.B. 2760](#), legislation that cuts the Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act's annual funding in half retroactively to January 2020. Legislators pushed this bill quickly through both chambers without providing an opportunity for the affordable housing community to provide input. Housing advocates now turn to the Governor Kevin Stitt, urging him to veto the bill.

The Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act was originally passed in 2014 with broad bipartisan support. It provides \$4 million per year in affordable housing tax credits to support the development of affordable rental homes for low- to moderate-income seniors, veterans, and families. Between 2015 and 2019, \$19.1 million in state affordable housing tax credits have been issued with a positive economic impact of greater than \$839 million. Without a veto from Governor Stitt, H.B. 2760 will cut funding to \$2 million annually, retroactive to January 1, 2020.

The bill is part of an effort to reduce the state budget in light of the current coronavirus pandemic. Advocates, however, say this reduction will not save the state money in the near term because tax credits are redeemed after developments are constructed and fully leased, which generally takes at least two years. They also point out that it will cost the state revenue from a loss of construction wages and materials, the state will lose thousands of construction jobs and hundreds of permanent jobs, and a minimum of seven developments and 562 apartment homes across the state will be at risk if this retroactive bill is signed into law.

The Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing (OCAH), an NLIHC state partner, and its network acted diligently to influence the process of the bill's passage, despite its rapid timeline. On May 6, the House inserted substitute language into the bill just hours before it passed through committee, and false information about the Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act was prominent during a debate on the Senate side. While advocates worked swiftly the next day to address misinformation, the House began whipping votes for the bill and moved it up the agenda by several hours. The bill passed 59-41. On May 12, the Senate agenda – which did not originally include H.B. 2760 – was amended midday to include the bill. Advocates rushed to speak with senators, but once the session started, H.B. 2760 was moved up to the third item on the agenda and passed 25-20.

In a final effort to stop this bill, OCAH and its partners called and emailed Governor Stitt's office urging him to veto the bill. The governor has until May 19 to sign or veto H.B. 2760. If no action is taken before then, it will automatically become law.

“It is unconscionable to lay budget shortfalls on our most vulnerable citizens without proper vetting and discussion, especially when so many are out of work and with an [increase in evictions](#) and foreclosures on the horizon,” said Lance Windel, OCAH board president.

For more information about the Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing and the Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act, visit: <https://affordablehousingcoalition.org/>

NLIHC News

NLIHC Seeks Housing Policy Analyst/Senior Housing Policy Analyst

NLIHC seeks a housing policy analyst/senior housing policy analyst (depending on experience) responsible for identifying, analyzing, advocating, and engaging the Coalition's membership and network in action on federal policy and regulatory activities related to the Coalition's mission and priorities. The policy analyst will report to the NLIHC vice president for public policy. The position is located in Washington, DC, but NLIHC will be flexible about location for the first year.

The policy analyst/senior analyst will:

1. Monitor legislative, regulatory, and administrative developments, as well as other activities or events of interest on Capitol Hill and at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other relevant agencies.
2. Help develop policy strategies and advocate Coalition positions before members of Congress and the Administration by drafting letters, scheduling and participating in meetings, and leading coalitions, and preparing and sending communications to Congress, Administration officials, and their staff.
3. Develop advocacy materials that translate pending proposals and actions into an accessible and understandable format, including factsheets, briefs, white papers, testimony, and other resources.
4. Complete other policy projects, as assigned.
5. Represent the Coalition before selected national partners.
6. Coordinate and facilitate working group and coalition meetings, prepare materials, and make presentations. Attend meetings and events of other coalitions.
7. Work together with NLIHC field staff and NLIHC partners and allies in impacted communities to stay abreast of housing concerns.
8. Research and prepare articles for NLIHC's *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, including updates on Capitol Hill, HUD, and other federal agencies, through web-based and other research and attendance at hearings and briefings.
9. Develop advocacy communications for a wide variety of Coalition members and partners.
10. Plan and implement briefings, dialogues, and other informational forums on issues related to Coalition priorities and initiatives.
11. Monitor and provide updates for the Coalition website.
12. Participate in the planning and implementation of all aspects of Coalition's annual policy conference, including speaker recruitment.
13. Attend and report at all meetings of Board of Directors; participate in staff meetings, trainings, and all Coalition events. Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

A bachelor's degree (master's degree or law degree preferred). A degree in Public Policy, Public Administration, Humanitarian Emergency Management or related area is a plus. Applicants should have at least two years of experience in public policy or legislative affairs for the policy analyst position and at least five years of experience for the senior policy analyst position. Applicants should have a commitment to social justice and knowledge of affordable housing, homelessness, fair housing, or social service delivery. Candidates should be able to work in a diverse, high-paced environment and have strong writing and editing skills, oral and interpersonal communications, organizational skills, and attention to detail. Applicants should also be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite and social media platforms.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC, but NLIHC will be flexible about location for the first year.

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter with salary requirement, and two writing samples to Paul Kealey, chief operating officer, and Sarah Saadian, vice president for public policy, at: pkealey@nlihc.org and ssaadian@nlihc.org

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of May 10

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of May 10:

- “Even As Parts Of Texas Remain Closed, State Supreme Court Orders Debt Collection And Rent Payments To Resume.,” *Newsweek*, May 15 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y7f9t9vs>
 - “If a pandemic can't force San Francisco to reckon with homelessness, nothing can.,” *Mother Jones*, May 14 at: <https://tinyurl.com/yaj9yt6m>
 - “As COVID-19 continues its economic upheaval, affordable housing is becoming scarce,” *Deseret News*, May 14 at: <https://tinyurl.com/ycgtnujv>
 - “Advocates hope safeguards will help SC dodge a wave of new evictions,” *The Post and Courier*, May 14 at: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8sgb8f>
 - “Relief from the Rent,” *Shelterforce*, May 14 at: <https://tinyurl.com/yaxvz4cl>
 - “‘It’s Fairly Merciless’ – Texas to Resume Evictions as San Antonio Renter Protection Ordinance Dies,” *Texas Public Radio*, May 14 at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybpg45dm>
 - “Coronavirus pandemic brings federal funds to Oakland to fight homelessness,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 11 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y75tpknj>
-

NLIHC Staff

Sonya Acosta, Policy Analyst, x231

Kyle Arbuckle, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x227

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244

Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252

Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Kim Johnson, Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317

Joseph Lindstrom, Director, Field Organizing, x222

Mayerline Louis-Juste, Communications Specialist, x201

Lisa Marlow, Manager, Media Relations and Communications, x239

Sarah Saadian, Vice President, Public Policy, x228

Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242

Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227

Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246
Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234
Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
Dan Threet, Research Analyst, x202
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Coordinator, x230
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225