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Coronavirus, Homelessness, and Housing

Take Action: House to Vote Today on Urgently Needed Housing Resources and Protections

The House of Representatives will vote as soon as today, June 29, on a package of critically needed emergency housing resources and protections to help keep renters in their homes and to address the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness! [Contact your representatives and senators today](#) and urge them to vote to approve [H.R. 7301, the “Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act of 2020.”](#) **[Take action!](#)**

Background

The House already approved critically needed housing resources and protections in the [HEROES Act](#) – including all of NLIHC’s top priorities – but Senate leadership continues to delay negotiations over the next coronavirus relief package.

Struggling renters cannot wait! Rent is due on July 1, and millions of the lowest-income renters across the nation cannot afford to pay. Eviction moratoriums are expiring, and local efforts to provide emergency rental assistance are quickly overwhelmed by the need. Without immediate action by Congress, we will see a wave of evictions and a spike in homelessness across the country.

To underscore the urgency and pressure the Senate to act – either on the full HEROES Act or on emergency housing provisions alone – the House will vote as soon as today, June 29 on [H.R. 7301, “the Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act of 2020.”](#) The bill includes the housing and homelessness resources approved by the House in the HEROES Act, including NLIHC’s top priorities: [\\$100 billion in emergency rental assistance](#); a national, uniform moratorium on evictions and foreclosures; \$11.5 billion to prevent and respond to outbreaks among people experiencing homelessness; and additional needed resources to ensure housing stability.

Take Action

Advocates can help ensure housing and homelessness resources in the next coronavirus relief package:

1. **Contact your representative and urge them to vote to approve H.R. 7301, “the Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act of 2020.”** Find the phone numbers of your members of Congress [here](#) or [send an email!](#) Tweet at them using #RentReliefNow!
2. **Contact your senators and urge them to immediately bring the bill up for a vote on the Senate floor.** Send an email from NLIHC’s [Legislative Action Center](#) and tweet at them using #RentReliefNow!
3. [Sign your organization onto national letters](#) in support of vital resources to protect renters and people experiencing homelessness during and after this pandemic. Share the letters with your network and on social media using #RentReliefNow.

Learn more about NLIHC’s priorities for the next coronavirus relief package at: <https://tinyurl.com/y9mmz9hv>

Learn more about the housing provisions in the HEROES Act and H.R. 7301 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8jgv2vl>

Sign onto national support letters: <https://tinyurl.com/y9hc8oj7>

House to Vote This Week on Infrastructure Investments in Affordable Housing

The House of Representatives will vote as soon as this week on H.R. 2, the “Moving Forward Act,” a comprehensive \$1.5 trillion infrastructure spending package. In addition to investing substantially in repairing the nation’s roads and bridges and improving broadband access, the infrastructure bill includes the “Housing is Infrastructure Act” introduced by House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA) and passed out of the Committee in February 2020. The “Housing is Infrastructure Act” proposes \$100 billion to construct and preserve 1.8 million affordable homes, through \$70 billion for public housing capital repairs and \$5 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund, among other things.

In addition to the proposed \$100 billion for affordable housing, the bill would expand the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and create targeted housing incentives to build homes in rural and tribal communities and for people at risk of homelessness. The bill would also establish a Neighborhood Investment Tax Credit to subsidize certain development costs for the construction of new homes or rehabilitation of vacant homes.

The bill also includes provisions to encourage localities to plan for affordable housing around transit corridors and make it easier for local transit agencies to transfer transit-oriented developments to nonprofit organizations.

While the bill is expected to pass in the House, the Senate is unlikely to vote on the infrastructure package.

For more information, read the text of the “Moving Forward Act” at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8gqron4>

See the House Democrat’s factsheet on the “Moving Forward Act” at: <https://tinyurl.com/y7ft3frx>

Learn more about NLIHC priorities in an infrastructure package at: <https://tinyurl.com/yct8oms5>

Eviction Lab Releases Data Tool to Track Evictions

The Eviction Lab at Princeton University recently launched the [Eviction Tracking System \(ETS\)](#), which tracks the number of eviction filings in 11 U.S. cities. The ETS provides weekly updates of eviction filing counts and percent changes from the last week and last four weeks. Detailed reports are available for each city. These reports provide information on local eviction moratoriums, comparisons of eviction filings relative to pre-COVID averages, eviction filings by geography, and eviction filings by demographic.

Preliminary data show that eviction moratoriums have been effective. Cities with eviction moratoriums experienced far fewer eviction filings during months when the moratorium was in place compared to pre-COVID averages. Despite this, the ETS team expects to see a large rise in evictions in the coming weeks as eviction moratoriums expire and assistance funds run out. After Cleveland’s eviction moratorium ended on June 15th, filings the following week were up 38% compared to the average.

The Eviction Lab intends to add more cities to the ETS as the project grows. The lab welcomes individuals who have information on eviction data in their city to reach to info@evictionlab.org.

The Eviction Tracking System can be accessed at: <https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/>

Senator Elizabeth Warren to Join NLIHC’s National Call on Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness Today at 2:30 pm ET

Join today’s (June 29) national call on [Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness](#) at 2:30-4 pm ET to hear from Senator Elizabeth Warren on the necessity of housing security during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.



Senator Elizabeth Warren

In addition, Eric Dunn of the National Housing Law Project will discuss litigation strategies to prevent evictions and Bobby Watts of National Health Care for the Homeless Council will discuss the pandemic’s impact on people experiencing homelessness. We will also hear field updates from advocates across the country, share updates on FEMA and CARES Act implementation, and discuss next steps in achieving robust resources for housing stability in the next coronavirus relief spending bill. Register for the national call at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

See the full agenda [here](#).

Nikole Hannah-Jones to Address “Racial Equity and Housing Justice During and After COVID-19” on July 7

[Join Nikole Hannah-Jones](#), Pulitzer-Prize-winning author and creator of the *New York Times Magazine*’s “The 1619 Project,” and Marla Newman, NLIHC board chair, for a conversation on “Racial Equity and Housing Justice during and after COVID-19” on July 7 at 2 pm ET. Register today for this live-stream event at:

<https://bit.ly/3ew4Znc>. Be sure to submit questions for Nikole through the registration page or via social media using #RacialEquityandCOVID.



“Education and housing are the two most intimate areas of American life, and they’re the areas where we’ve made the least progress.”

— Nikole Hannah-Jones

Nikole Hannah-Jones covers racial injustice for *The New York Times Magazine* and has spent years chronicling how official policy has created—and maintains—racial segregation in housing and schools. Her deeply personal reports on the black experience in America offer a compelling case for greater equity. Ms. Hannah-Jones is creator and lead writer of the *New York Times*' multimedia initiative, “The 1619 Project.” Named for the year the first enslaved Africans arrived in America, the project features an ongoing series of essays and art on the relationship between slavery and everything from social infrastructure to segregation, music to sugar—all by Black American authors, activists, and journalists. Hannah-Jones wrote the project’s introductory essay under the powerful headline, “Our Democracy’s Founding Ideals Were False When They Were Written. Black Americans Have Fought to Make Them True.” The essay earned her a Pulitzer Prize for commentary.

Nikole was named a MacArthur Genius for “reshaping national conversations around education reform,” and has won a Peabody Award, a Polk Award, and, for her story on choosing a school for her daughter in a segregated city, a National Magazine Award. NLIHC bestowed its 2013 Media Award to Ms. Hannah-Jones and Jeff Larson of *ProPublica* for their series, “Living Apart: Fair Housing in America.” The NLIHC Media Award recognizes journalists who have made a dedicated effort to inform the public about the inequities in housing and to add to the understanding of the disparities between the well-housed and the poorly or un-housed. “Living Apart” was an investigation into housing discrimination and housing segregation in the U.S., as well as into the shortcomings of fair housing laws.

Nikole Hannah-Jones’s perspective is critically important today, as police brutality towards Black Americans and the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people of color reveal in stark relief our nation’s historical and ongoing systemic racism. Her deep understanding of how our country’s housing injustice is driven by and fuels structural racism makes hers an essential voice during this critical moment.

Join us for a conversation with Nikole Hannah-Jones on “Racial Equity and Housing Justice During and After COVID-19” on July 7 at 2 pm ET. Register at: <https://bit.ly/3ew4Znc>

(Please note: No video recording of this live-stream event will be available for viewing after the event.)

Coronavirus – New Resources

New Guidance Published for Housing Providers on Protecting Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Domestic Violence During COVID-19

The National Housing Law Project (NHLP) and National Alliance on Safe Housing (NASH) published last week [guidance for housing providers](#) on protecting survivors of domestic and sexual violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders are crucial to curb the spread of coronavirus, these orders also place individuals cohabitating with an abusive partner at increased risk of violence. Housing providers can play a critical role in helping tenants who are experiencing sexual or domestic violence access safe housing and supportive services. NHLP and NASH’s guidance, [Protecting Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence during COVID-19: A Q&A for Housing Providers](#), offers important information for property owners and landlords on how to respond to tenants experiencing violence during the pandemic.

Read the guidance at: <https://tinyurl.com/y7w47kz8>

Coronavirus – HUD

HUD’s CPD Posts Collection of Previously Announced Waivers and Guidance for ESG, HOPWA, HOME, and CDBG

HUD’s Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) posted “[Flexibilities/Waivers Granted by the CARES Act + Mega Waivers and Guidance](#)” on June 22. The 48-page document collects under one cover all regulatory waivers and other policy guidance CPD has previously issued for its various programs in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. The compendium covers Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), and Continuum of Care (CoC) programs. CARES Act self-implementing provisions for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program are included. To date, long-awaited CDBG guidance has not been issued, causing many jurisdictions to hesitate to move forward with implementing CDBG-CV activities such as desperately needed rental assistance. Also included are Consolidated Plan waivers and environmental review policies.

“Flexibilities/Waivers Granted by the CARES Act + Mega Waivers and Guidance” is at: <https://bit.ly/2B8b9LF>

More information about all of these CPD programs is available in NLIHC’s [2020 Advocates’ Guide](#).

HUD’s CPD Posts Guidance on Using FEMA, CDBG-CV, and ESG-CV for Non-Congregate Sheltering

HUD’s Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) posted “[Federal Funding Priority Order for Non-Congregate Shelter During COVID-19](#)” on June 23. The document provides information to recipients of federal funds on how best to use specific federal resources for the operation of non-congregate sheltering (NCS) projects. Guidance focuses on funds from the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Category B Emergency Protective Measures, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG-CV), and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) programs.

NCS includes general services such as food, security, and other basic needs, which are eligible for reimbursement with FEMA PA Category B assistance. More specific wraparound services such as case management and housing navigation assistance are not eligible for FEMA reimbursement but may be funded with CDBG-CV or ESG-CV. Food, security, and other basic needs may be funded under CDBG-CV or ESG-CV once FEMA NCS assistance ends.

The document outlines a suggested order of assistance based on four stages of an NCS project. At the first stage, an initial request for and implementation of an NCS project, the document suggests tapping FEMA Public Assistance Category B, followed by CDBG-CV or ESG-CV. States and localities that need NCS to serve people experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are exhibiting symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19, or who have a high risk of poor outcomes should work with their FEMA region to obtain approval to use FEMA PA assistance for NCS.

FEMA recommends provider organizations work closely with local and state partners to develop a project worksheet that meets the FEMA PA criteria for the initial 30 days of eligible non-congregate sheltering activities. This assistance is subject to the prevailing FEMA cost share of 75% FEMA/25% non-federal assistance. Communities may use CDBG-CV for cost share for an initial request or extensions.

The length of time FEMA non-congregate sheltering is needed will depend on local circumstances and will be decided in accordance with direction from appropriate health officials.

NCS supported with FEMA PA may not extend beyond a state or local public health order or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Public Health Emergency for COVID-19. HHS declared a Public Health Emergency and renewed it on April 20 for an additional 90 days. FEMA may approve non-congregate sheltering in 30-day increments.

The second stage occurs when a FEMA-approved non-congregate shelter project ends. At this stage, a state or locality may continue funding NCS using ESG-CV or CDBG-CV.

The third stage entails transitioning people from NCS because those served only needed NCS for a brief period of time. At this stage, states and localities should transition people to another housing option rather than allow them to return to high-risk situations. States and localities may use ESG-CV funds for other forms of housing assistance, or if ESG-CV is not available (not all localities automatically receive ESG) they may use CDBG-CV.

The fourth stage begins as FEMA PA ends. Once the FEMA PA emergency declaration and subsequent major declarations for COVID-19 incident periods ends, FEMA funding for NCS will cease. States and localities should transition people to other forms of housing assistance rather than allow them to return to high-risk locations. This transition may include continuing to support NCS or supporting congregate shelter using ESG-CV or CDBG-CV.

The document includes links to many FEMA and HUD resources.

“Federal Funding Priority Order for Non-Congregate Shelter During COVID-19” is at: <https://bit.ly/3g78pgL>

More information about using FEMA is on NLIHC’s COVID-19 & Housing/Homelessness website: <https://nlihc.org/coronavirus-and-housing-homelessness> and on page [6-44](#) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide*.

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

More information about ESG is on page [4-82](#) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide*.

Coronavirus – Treasury

Treasury Department Updates Coronavirus Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions

The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) updated its “[Coronavirus Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions](#)” on June 24. These frequently asked questions (FAQs) supplement Treasury’s Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) [Guidance](#) dated April 22. Both documents provide guidance to states, cities, territories, and Tribal governments receiving allocations from the \$150 billion provided by the CARES Act.

Of the six new entries since the May 28 updated FAQ, two will be of primary interest to advocates. The two new FAQs, found on page 8, are summarized here.

May CRF payments be provided to non-profits for distribution to individuals in need of financial assistance, such as rent relief?

Yes, non-profits may be used to distribute assistance. Regardless of how the assistance is structured, the financial assistance would have to be related to COVID-19.

May CRF funds be used to satisfy non-federal matching requirements under the Stafford Act?

Yes, payments from the fund may be used to meet the non-federal matching requirements for Stafford Act assistance to the extent such matching requirements entail COVID-19-related costs that otherwise satisfy the Fund’s eligibility criteria and the Stafford Act. Regardless of the use of fund payments for such purposes, FEMA funding is still dependent on FEMA’s determination of eligibility under the Stafford Act.

The June 24 update of the “Coronavirus Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions” is at: <https://bit.ly/3fYAFlr>

“Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments” is at: <https://bit.ly/3eyKwOp>

NLIHC has a Coronavirus Relief Fund fact sheet at: <https://bit.ly/3i3eVqw>

Coronavirus – Other

Recording Available of June 22 NLIHC National Call on Coronavirus, Housing, and Homelessness

NLIHC’s most recent national call on coronavirus, housing, and homelessness took place on June 22. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel announced a new partnership among several national organizations and leaders to help communities navigate their response to COVID-19 with a racial justice and equity lens. Matthew Desmond, author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* and principal investigator at Princeton University’s Eviction Lab, introduced a [new tool](#) to track evictions during the pandemic.

Other speakers included Roxy Caines from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, who discussed the importance of outreach to help people access economic impact payments, and Dylan Waguespack of True Colors United, who addressed HUD’s effort to allow shelter providers to discriminate against transgender people. Cathy Alderman of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless discussed a pilot program on coronavirus testing for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and Gary Blasi of the UCLA Luskin Institute on

Inequality and Democracy addressed the impending eviction and homelessness crisis in Los Angeles. Molly Jacobson of the Virginia Housing Alliance provided the week's field update. NLIHC Vice President of Public Policy Sarah Saadian and Field Director Joey Lindstrom gave updates from Capitol Hill and outlined needed advocacy actions. Register for today's call (June 29 at 2:30 pm ET) at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

NLIHC hosts national calls on the coronavirus, housing, and homelessness every week. On today's call, we will be joined by Senator Elizabeth Warren. Register for today's call (Monday, June 29 at 2:30 pm ET) at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Listen to a recording of the June 22 call at: tinyurl.com/y7cpzm75

View June 22 presentation slides at: tinyurl.com/ybmr87h4

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

Additional Coronavirus Updates - Monday, June 29, 2020

Keywords: Covid-19, coronavirus, updates, state, local, news

National Updates

Department of Agriculture

[USDA announced](#) on June 19 that it has extended the foreclosure and eviction moratorium for all Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program loans through August 31, 2020.

Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Children and Families [released strategies](#) to support families experiencing homelessness and housing instability during the pandemic.

Advocacy

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition continues to advocate a broad array of resources and protections, including: emergency rental assistance and eviction prevention assistance; a national moratorium on evictions and foreclosures; and emergency funds for homelessness service providers, housing authorities, and housing providers. For more information, see DHRC's [full list of recommendations](#).

The National Housing Law Project and the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials issued a [two-page flyer](#) for public housing and voucher residents to explain the CARES Act eviction moratorium.

The [Urban Institute](#) outlines policies and strategies to address material vulnerabilities faced by the Black LGBTQ community during COVID-19. The pandemic has had a marked impact on economic wellbeing, housing stability, homelessness rates, and shelter access for LGBTQ people of color.

Reporting

[National Journal](#) examines advocates' concerns that homelessness will surge across the country unless Congress takes immediate action. "What we're seeing now is a crisis on top of a crisis. We had an affordable

housing crisis in our country before COVID-19, and we will have it after COVID-19,” said NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

[USA Today](#) reports that although near-record unemployment rates and deep financial hardship persist, CARES Act relief funding is set to expire soon. “Back rent is coming due, and renters are no more able to pay it now than they were at the beginning of the crisis,” says NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

In an interview with [Politico](#), former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julián Castro addresses the need for additional relief money: “Now the federal protection on some evictions runs out in late July. And unemployment benefits are going to run out. What we have to do about it is, number one, pass the HEROES Act, which has \$100 billion in direct rental assistance.”

Emily Benfer, director of the Health Justice Advocacy Clinic at Columbia Law School, wrote an [op-ed for NBC News](#) about the wave of evictions that will sweep the country as the patchwork of temporary eviction moratoriums quickly expire.

The [New York Times](#) reports that nursing homes across the country are evicting vulnerable residents and directing them to homeless shelters, motels, and unsafe situations.

The [COVID-19 Eviction Defense Project](#) estimates that between 19 million and 23 million (one in five) of the 110 million Americans who rent are at risk of eviction by the end of September. Data indicate that geography and discrimination play significant roles in eviction rates.

[BBC News](#) examines why advocates and experts are expecting an unprecedented crush of evictions that will place millions of Americans at risk of homelessness.

[NPR](#) shines a light on eviction hearings taking place via Zoom. At a remote eviction hearing this week in Collin County, Texas, the court granted landlords the right to evict five people who did not or were unable to dial into the Zoom call.

[Bloomberg CityLab](#) explores how the Franklin County Municipal Court has converted the empty Columbus Convention Center into a housing court. The housing court now occupies a space that is at least four times as large as its space in the courthouse. The Greater Columbus Convention Center can also accommodate housing and legal aid organizations.

The [New York Times](#) examines the predicted surge of eviction cases in New York City as housing courts reopen. Housing advocates estimate that 50,000 to 60,000 cases could be filed in New York City’s housing courts in the coming days.

An op-ed in the [Hill](#) by Samantha Batko and Mychal Cohen of the Urban Institute warns of a looming eviction crisis as eviction moratoriums and supplemental unemployment benefits come to an end.

[NPR](#) reports that at least a dozen cities have ignored recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in recent months by continuing to sweep homeless encampments, risking further spread of the coronavirus.

[Shelterforce](#) examines how housing advocates and tenant organizing groups are preparing for the surge of evictions as moratoriums expire and housing court processes resume.

[Next City](#) discusses the Eviction Lab’s new eviction tracking system.

State and Local News

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

Alaska

On June 23, the [Anchorage Assembly](#) approved a \$21.5 million COVID-19-related economic relief package that put an additional \$2 million into the city's rental and mortgage relief program launched last week. The city's rental program is funded through the CARES Act. It was launched on the same day that the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) opened a [two-week lottery for rental and mortgage aid](#). As of June 23, the AHFC [received 5,083 applications](#) for its \$10 million rental and mortgage relief lottery program.

Anchorage officials have [proposed spending up to \\$22.5 million](#) in federal coronavirus relief funds to purchase four properties and convert them into homeless shelters and service sites.

Arizona

[Democratic lawmakers in Arizona](#) are urging Governor Doug Ducey to extend the statewide eviction moratorium set to expire July 22. Lawmakers are concerned that rates of eviction and homelessness will surge, given that unemployment claims continue to increase, and state rental assistance has failed to arrive.

Since evictions resumed in Pima County June 1, [783 cases have been processed](#). According to a memorandum by a county administrator, an eviction order has been issued in approximately 75% of the cases.

California

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority on June 23 released its full [COVID-19 Recovery Plan for people experiencing homelessness](#). The plan outlines an ambitious goal to move 15,000 high-risk people experiencing homelessness quickly into permanent housing. The effort will include the 4,000 people who were provided temporary shelter through Project Roomkey. The program will cost \$800 million, which includes approximately \$600 million in new funding over the next three years and \$200 million in costs that were already budgeted for the homeless service system.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) reports that Los Angeles County's plan to lease hotel and motel rooms for 15,000 people experiencing homelessness is falling short of its goal. Officials have secured only 3,601 rooms, one-fourth of the number needed to shelter all who are eligible.

The Los Angeles City Council on June 23 approved a [\\$100 million rent relief program](#). The program, funded through California's allocation of federal CARES Act dollars, is expected to help nearly 50,000 families who have been impacted by COVID-19.

An [editorial in the Los Angeles Times](#) argues that while Los Angeles County's \$100 million rental assistance fund is an important first step, state legislators should take action on a [proposed statewide rent relief plan](#) and Congress must invest significant resources to ensure economic fallout from the pandemic does not devastate landlords, renters, and the housing market.

The [Mercury News](#) reports on how the coronavirus pandemic could exacerbate Black Californians' housing crisis. Black households are disproportionately more likely to be cost burdened, and tenants' rights groups fear that a wave of evictions is on the horizon.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) reports that some landlords are still trying to evict tenants by cutting off their utilities, locking them out of their homes, and deploying other illegal tactics.

Housing advocates are concerned that without rent relief, [Oakland will experience a post-pandemic homelessness boom](#) after the eviction moratorium expires on August 31.

The [Santa Barbara City Council](#) unanimously approved a plan to allocate 70% of its CARES Act funding for emergency rental assistance and 30% to provide social services. The city plans to distribute funds through a community organization.

A federal judge approved an agreement in which the city and county of Los Angeles will provide housing for [nearly 7,000 people experiencing homelessness](#) who live near freeways and those over 65 or vulnerable to the coronavirus. Los Angeles County will spend \$300 million over five years to provide services, and the city will provide 6,000 new beds within ten months and an additional 700 beds over 18 months.

The city of [Santa Rosa's plans to remove up to 60 people](#) living in encampments on underpasses of Highway 101 will begin only after Sonoma County health officials conduct coronavirus testing after the virus recently infiltrated the encampments.

[Long Beach](#) will begin accepting applications for its \$5 million rental assistance program on July 13. The Long Beach Emergency Rental Assistance (LB CARES) program is funded through federal Community Development Block Grants.

Colorado

The [Greeley Tribune](#) discusses disagreements between tenant and landlord groups about the best way to move forward after Governor Jared Polis' most recent [limited order to delay evictions](#) expires July 13. "Right now, we are thinking 300,000 to 400,000 people face eviction risk in Colorado," said Executive Director and Co-Founder of the COVID Eviction Defense Project Zach Neumann.

Connecticut

A [\\$14 million statewide campaign](#) to move approximately 1,800 people experiencing homelessness currently living in hotels and shelters into apartments by September is one of Connecticut's biggest emergency housing initiatives. Connecticut will use federal funds to sign leases and move people into apartments. The Connecticut Department of Housing is also considering purchasing three or four hotels in foreclosure as emergency housing. After the COVID-19 pandemic ends, the properties could then be converted into permanent housing.

Florida

Governor Ron DeSantis announced on June 25 that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation will receive [\\$250 million in CARES Act funding](#) to help keep families stably housed. Of the total amount, \$120 million will be used for rental and mortgage assistance, an additional \$120 million will be used for rental assistance for residents in Florida Housing-funded developments, and \$2 million will be used to assist with past and future costs in serving residents in supportive housing development.

Idaho

On June 18, the [Boise Rescue Mission](#) homeless shelter went from no positive cases of the coronavirus to nine. The Interfaith Sanctuary shelter is seeing a similar trend.

Illinois

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) reported that despite the eviction ban, some Chicago landlords are using illegal lockouts and other threats to push tenants out of their homes. Advocates are concerned this is a sign that legal eviction filings will surge once Chicago's housing court reopens.

A [Chicago Sun-Times editorial](#) urges federal intervention to prevent a tsunami of evictions, given the national scope of the issue and the limited ability of local governments to assist.

Indiana

Governor Eric Holcomb [announced](#) on June 24 the creation of the [Indiana COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program](#), a \$25 million program funded through the CARES Act. Households impacted by the pandemic may receive rental assistance up to \$500 per month for four months. Marion County has its own allocation of \$15 million for rental assistance. Governor Holcomb also extended Indiana's eviction moratorium through July.

[The Hoosier Housing Needs Coalition](#) applauded the eviction moratorium extension and the creation of the Indiana COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program. Advocates are urging Governor Eric Holcomb to establish a Rental Housing Stability Task Force to ensure that the assistance reaches people with the greatest needs.

Kentucky

The Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky, an NLIHC state partner, estimates that [more than 340,000 people in the state are at risk of eviction](#). The coalition sent a [letter](#) to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell urging him to support emergency rental assistance and extend the federal eviction moratorium.

Most of the people experiencing homelessness who were temporarily housed at the [Northern Kentucky Convention Center](#) have moved back to other shelters or are now unsheltered.

Louisiana

[Fair housing advocates in Louisiana](#) fear there will be an avalanche of evictions, placing people at increased risk of contracting the coronavirus. "It is likely that we will be sending people into crowded courtrooms for eviction procedures, putting people at risk of going into crowded homeless shelters, which really could spark a second way of infections," said Cashuana Hill, executive director of the Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center.

Maryland

The [Fair Action Housing Center of Maryland](#) has seen a 400% increase in clients compared to last year, and advocates warn that high unemployment rates will almost certainly lead to a significant increase in eviction filings.

Governor Larry Hogan announced [\\$30 million in federal CARES Act funding for eviction prevention](#). Maryland will allocate \$20 million in expected federal Community Development Block Grant funding for rent relief. The additional \$10 million will fund the Assisted Housing Relief Program, which will provide rent relief for units in multi-family projects financed by the DHCD's Community Development Administration.

The first in a [three-part series in Maryland Matters](#) on life in Langley Park examines how the pandemic is exacerbating the area's pre-existing housing crisis, and vice versa. Langley Park's 19,517 residents live primarily in 13 apartment complexes that have long been considered overcrowded, substandard, and neglected.

Massachusetts

An article in [Banker and Tradesman](#) argues that if federal coronavirus relief benefits are not extended, more tenants will be unable to pay rent, and owners of multifamily housing may lack the resources to operate housing. If these owners are unable to pay mortgages and operating costs, the financial health of these affordable housing properties and their ability to house residents is at risk.

In Brockton, large tents that were placed in Perkins Park in early April were removed, and [approximately 60 individuals](#) who were sheltered there were moved to the Rodeway Inn. The motel was rented by Father Bill's and MainSpring and is being used as a shelter.

Michigan

Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued [Executive Order 2020-134](#) on June 26, extending Michigan's eviction moratorium until July 15 and funding the Eviction Diversion Program. Under the executive order, \$50 million of rental assistance will be made in lump-sum payments to landlords who forgive late fees and up to 10% of the amount due and allow tenants to remain in their homes. Tenants whose back rent is not completely covered by the Eviction Diversion Program will enter into manageable payment plans.

Mississippi

The Mississippi Home Corporation launched the [Rental Assistance for Mississippians Program](#) (RAMP), which will partner with several organizations to administer nearly \$8 million in Emergency Solutions Grants - CV (ESG-CV). RAMP will provide homeless prevention services, including short-term rental assistance, rental arrears, and housing stability case management.

Nevada

Governor Steve Sisolak signed [Emergency Directive 025](#) on June 25, which will gradually lift the eviction moratorium. The directive allows residential evictions and foreclosures to resume on September 1 for non-payment of rents and no-cause evictions. The [governor also announced](#) a new \$50 million rental assistance program funded through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, with \$30 million for residential rental assistance and \$20 million for commercial rental relief.

New Jersey

A [Star-Ledger editorial](#) addresses the urgent need for federal relief, including \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance, to prevent a surge of evictions. The editorial calls attention to Republican leaders' refusal to vote on the HEROES Act.

[New Jersey advocates](#) are concerned that business interests are being prioritized for pandemic relief over low- and middle-income residents. Advocates highlight ongoing concerns about housing, health care, and the urgent need to mitigate the pandemic's disproportionate impact on Black and Latino communities.

New York

An op-ed in the [New York Daily News](#) urges New York City to keep housing courts closed to prevent a surge in new nonpayment eviction cases. Instead, the authors urge federal and state lawmakers to establish a rental assistance program outside the court system to assist tenants facing income losses pay arrears.

A [report from the Community Service Society](#) found that in New York, Black renter households face the greatest eviction risk as the moratorium expires. The group also found that Latinx tenants are at risk of increased eviction-related housing insecurity.

According to a [report from the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York](#), New York City neighborhoods with the highest rates of COVID-19 are expected to experience the highest levels of evictions and homelessness once the eviction moratorium expires in August.

Nearly [20% of New York City's hotels](#) are operating as temporary shelters for people experiencing homelessness. Of the more than 17,000 adults experiencing homelessness in the city's shelter system, 13,000 currently reside in hotels.

North Carolina

Using a \$500,000 grant from the Charlotte COVID-19 Response Fund, the non-profit Socialserve has distributed critical rental assistance to low-income households impacted by the pandemic. Socialserve collaborated with Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership to [distribute \\$429,000 in rental assistance](#) for 330 renter households. They also helped 30 individuals experiencing homelessness secure housing by paying a total \$45,000 in upfront housing costs.

Ohio

The [Daily Record](#) examines the added difficulties that the pandemic has created for people experiencing homelessness. Advocates, including the Coalition on Housing and Homelessness in Ohio (COHHIO), an NLIHC state partner, are urging federal and state officials to prioritize rental assistance.

Advocates and tenants are concerned about a potential rise in eviction filings in [Portage County](#). The county's eviction court never closed during the pandemic, and both tenants and landlords are concerned about an increase in evictions when federal supplemental unemployment insurance benefits expire at the end of July.

Oklahoma

[Marketplace](#) examines Tulsa's eviction crisis, which existed even before the pandemic. The Tulsa County courthouse reopened on June 1 with more than 1,200 eviction cases pending.

On June 19, Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt announced that the state is allocating [\\$10 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds](#) toward an eviction mitigation grant program. The program will reimburse organizations paying landlords for rental assistance to households impacted by COVID-19. The program will be administered through local non-profits.

Oregon

The [city of Eugene](#) is considering locating a new homeless shelter in a facility that Lane County purchased for \$1.8 million. The site will house people experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for or are suspected of having the coronavirus. The city council and county board of commissioners will meet within the next month to discuss the plan.

Eugene is considering "[microsites](#)" as a new means to provide temporary shelter during the pandemic. The first microsite is underway at Skinner City Farm and is managed by [Community Supported Shelters](#).

South Carolina

With the unemployment rate in [North Charleston](#) now five times greater than pre-COVID levels and no eviction moratorium in place, advocates and tenants are concerned about a surge in evictions that could overwhelm the court system. The Charleston County Magistrate courts received 120 new eviction filings in the first two days after the moratorium was lifted.

Texas

Since Harris County's ban on evictions ended on May 18, Harris County judges have awarded [\\$637,500 in judgments to landlords](#) in 387 cases filed during the eviction ban. An additional 2,188 hearings are scheduled in the coming weeks.

The [Dallas City Council](#) on June 24 approved an additional \$10 million in federal funds to expand its rental and mortgage assistance program. The council also approved a \$7.1 million program to help people experiencing homelessness find permanent housing.

[Harris County](#) distributed the first half of its \$30 million Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars to 44 community-based organizations. These organizations will disperse the money for housing, utility, food, and childcare assistance to Harris County residents.

According to [Texas Housers](#), Harris County has proceeded with eviction hearings behind closed doors during the pandemic. While some cities and counties in Texas issued eviction protections, Harris County did not issue a long-term eviction moratorium. Of the [3,652 evictions filed in Harris County](#) between March 27 and June 22, at least 368 (approximately 10%) appear to be in violation of the CARES Act.

The [Dallas Observer](#) reported that 44% of the \$13.7 million Dallas has distributed through its COVID-19 rental assistance program has gone to residents in the city's wealthiest districts.

Vermont

The [Vermont House](#) advanced the Broadband, Connectivity, and Housing Bill ([H. 966](#)) on June 19, bringing the total amount of Coronavirus Relief Funds appropriated by the House in the past week to nearly \$1 billion. Combined with [Senate Bill 350](#), which was signed by Governor Phil Scott on June 19, the Vermont Legislature has approved \$91 million in federal coronavirus relief funds to address housing and homelessness.

A new report from the Center for Global Health Equity at Dartmouth, "[COVID-19 and Rural Health Equity in Northern New England: Impacts on Health Equity](#)," revealed key strengths in the rural region's response to the coronavirus. In a [New Hampshire Public Radio interview](#), the authors discussed why the report focused on housing and what the study found concerning housing and homelessness. "We heard reports of the tremendous effort that was put into play to identify and also to house individuals who became homeless within the context of the pandemic, particularly in Vermont," said Elizabeth Carpenter-Song, one of the report's authors.

Virginia

The [Virginia Supreme Court](#) issued an [order](#) on June 22, allowing courts to resume eviction hearings on June 29, the day after the state's eviction ban expires. An [additional order](#) issued on June 22 permits courts immediately to resume eviction hearings unrelated to nonpayment of rent.

The executive director of the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless hopes that the new funding sources created in response to COVID-19 will create opportunities for [Charlottesville nonprofits](#) to address the underlying causes of homelessness. The organization is considering purchasing a hotel to temporarily house people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic and then transition the property into permanent housing.

Washington

Pierce County granted the city of Puyallup and local nonprofits [\\$461,834 in federal CARES Act funding](#), which will be used to provide sanitation and hygiene supplies for people experiencing homelessness and rental assistance to households on the brink of becoming homeless.

Washington, DC

At least seven people living in an [18-unit public housing development in Washington, DC](#) have tested positive for the coronavirus, and five of those individuals have died. The DC Housing Authority, which owns and manages the property, did not notify tenants.

Guidance

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[COVID-19 Infection Control Inventory and Planning \(ICIP\) Tool for Homeless Service Providers](#) - June 11

[Homeless Shelter Worker Training](#)

Department of Housing and Urban Development

[Federal Funding Priority Order for Non-Congregate Shelter During COVID-19](#) - June 23

[Non-Congregate Sheltering: Recommendations for Requests for Assistance](#) - June 23 (included as a link in the [Federal Funding Priority Order](#))

[Flexibilities/Waivers Granted by the CARES Act + Mega Waiver and Guidance](#) - June 22

[COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Wellness Checklist for Client Engagement](#)

[Prevention to Promote Equity](#)

[Landlord Engagement Spotlight: Miami-Dade County](#)

[Supporting Individuals Exiting Isolation or Quarantine](#) - June 18

[Homeless Prevention: Effective and Efficient Prevention Programs](#) - June 18

Department of Treasury

[Coronavirus Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions](#) - Updated June 24

FEMA

[FEMA Emergency Non-Congregate Sheltering during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(Interim\) Policy](#) - June 17

National Academy for State Health Policy

[States Engage Community Health Workers to Combat COVID-19 and Health Inequities](#) - June 22

Opportunity Starts at Home

Campaign Updates Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements to Amplify Racial Equity

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) multisector affordable homes campaign has updated its vision, mission, and goal statements to explicitly center racial equity. The campaign's Racial Equity Working Group, a subset of the [Steering Committee](#), spearheaded this work over the past several months. The new statements are on the campaign's [homepage](#) and represent the contributions of leading national organizations from housing, health, education, civil rights, criminal justice, food security, social work, and faith communities.

Decades of systemic racism results in race being a major factor in predicting one's likelihood of experiencing rental cost-burdens, homelessness, and living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty. Achieving racial equity in housing means that race no longer predicts these outcomes. While the work of the campaign's Racial Equity Working Group began before the COVID-19 pandemic and recent anti-police brutality protests, these current

events instilled an even greater sense of urgency. It is clear that a direct line connects the nation's history of racist housing policies to today's over-policing of Black and Brown communities and to people of color being disproportionately harmed by disasters like the coronavirus.

Shaped in response to these realities, the new statements are as follows:

- *Campaign Vision:* The nation's historically marginalized households and those with the lowest incomes live in safe, accessible, affordable homes in neighborhoods that are free from discrimination and where everyone has equitable opportunities to thrive.
- *Campaign Mission:* Build a movement with stakeholders from many sectors to generate widespread support for federal policies that correct long-standing racial inequities and economic injustices by ensuring quality housing for people with low incomes.
- *Long-Term Goal:* Through federal housing policies that expand resources and correct long-standing structural and racial inequities, we will ensure that people with the lowest incomes can afford a good home, which adds to their quality of life through better health, greater educational attainment, and stronger earnings.

The new vision, mission, and goal statements will inform all campaign activities from advancing policy solutions to educating elected officials, opinion leaders, and the public. The new statements are an important step in an ongoing effort by the campaign's Racial Equity Working Group to raise awareness of historical and persistent racial discrimination in housing and to elevate solutions that rectify these pernicious inequities.

Follow *Opportunity Starts at Home* on social media: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Be sure to [sign up](#) for our e-newsletter to get campaign updates, including new multi-sector partners, [calls to action](#), events, and [research](#).

Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020

Candidate Questionnaires: A Tool for Educating Voters and Engaging Campaigns

Voters want to know where candidates stand on affordable housing and homelessness. Candidate questionnaires are an effective, nonpartisan way to get information about candidate positions and inform voters on how candidates will address urgent housing issues. Questionnaires can also be used to educate candidates about how the affordable housing crisis is impacting your community

The template includes a cover letter and several questions that affordable housing advocates can modify for use this election season. When developing a candidate questionnaire, use open-ended questions and include a word limit, deadline, and instructions submitting answers. Keep the survey as brief as possible and allow enough time for candidates to reply.

While non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations are permitted to conduct candidate questionnaires and distribute the responses, it is important that all activities remain nonpartisan. For example, candidate questionnaires must be sent to all candidates running for a specific office, and the questionnaire itself must be publicly posted. The questionnaires must be created to obtain answers about candidates' positions on issues important to voters but cannot be created with the intent of swaying voters for or against a specific candidate. When candidates submit responses, a best practice is to post or print the entire response without modifying.

One of the most common obstacles for housing organizations conducting candidate questionnaires is getting the candidates to complete them. When sending out the questionnaire, it is important to inform the campaigns of how their responses will be shared. If you plan to post responses on your blog or through a mailed newsletter, state how many people you reach. Describe your constituency so that campaigns know what types voters they are addressing in their answers. If applicable, discuss how you plan to amplify the responses through social media engagement. During the COVID-19 pandemic, campaigns are less able to interact with voters through rallies, town hall meetings, and parades. Because of these limitations, candidate questionnaires might have better response rates in 2020 than in previous elections.

More information about how nonprofits organizations can use candidate questionnaires can be available from Nonprofit VOTE's [guidelines](#) for candidate questionnaires.

NLIHC's nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement project, *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020*, has additional tools and concrete tips for engaging candidates on affordable housing available on its [website](#).

Remember that five sessions remain in the 15-part "Third Thursdays at Three" webinar series. The July 16 presentation will address voting for people who do not have an address. Register for the webinar series [here](#).

"The Challenge of Voting While Homeless" - Next *Our Homes, Our Votes 2020* Webinar on July 16

The next NLIHC *Our Homes, Our Votes 2020* webinar on July 16 at 3 pm ET will explore "The Challenge of Voting While Homeless" and what advocates, shelter providers, and outreach agencies can do to ensure people experiencing homelessness can and do vote. 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>

NLIHC's *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* provides training and resources to resident leaders, housing providers, social service professionals, community organizers, and others on key aspects of effective voter engagement. The "Third Thursdays at Three" webinar series is a 15-part effort to explore best practices, new ideas, and legal considerations for 501(c)(3) nonpartisan election engagement on issues such as voter registration, candidate engagement, election education, and getting out the vote. Our sessions have involved experts from Nonprofit VOTE, the League of Women Voters, Alliance for Justice, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, Arizona Housing Coalition, Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness, Johnathan Rose Companies, and many others. [View recordings of previous sessions \(1-10\) on our website.](#)

[Register here for the "Third Thursdays at Three" series!](#)

Upcoming topics in the "Third Thursdays at Three" series include:

Session 11

The Challenge of Voting While Homeless

Thursday, July 16 at 3 pm ET

This session explores best practices for homeless shelters and outreach agencies increasing voter registration and mobilization for people who do not have an address. As the National Coalition for the Homeless says, "You don't need a home to vote," but there can be confusion among election officials on how best to register someone with no address and how to assign them to a polling location.

Session 12

Voter Mobilization Part 1 – Early Voting and Vote-by-Mail

Thursday, August 20 at 3 pm ET

More votes each year are cast before Election Day, providing voter engagement campaigns with a longer window to get out the vote (GOTV). This session will review how to best maximize early voting opportunities and increase voter turnout in states with expanded vote-by-mail options.

Session 13

Voter Mobilization Part 2 – Protecting Low-Income People from Voter Intimidation and Voter Caging Tactics

Thursday, September 17 at 3 pm ET

Presenters will explore community efforts to staff polling locations with well-trained volunteers to protect against intimidation efforts. Ultimately, educating voters in advance about going to the polls even if they have been told their registration is not current is the best practice, along with ensuring that everyone casts at least a provisional ballot. The discussion will also highlight the importance of establishing relationships with election officials who monitor polling locations in advance of Election Day.

Session 14

Election Day! Getting Out the Vote

Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 3 pm ET

Presenters will review the most effective Election Day get-out-the-vote practices such as coordinating rides to the polls, hosting “walk to the polls” groups in low-income housing communities with nearby polling locations, using snacks and music to keeping people in line at busy polling locations, and using Election Day visibility volunteers with signs reminding people to vote. The discussion will also explore effective “knock-and-drag” efforts throughout Election Day for identifying who has not yet voted and sending volunteers to their doors.

Session 15

After the Vote—Holding Candidates to their Promises

Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 3 pm ET

Once the election is over, it is important to hold candidates to their promises. Learn how to track the success of your voter turnout efforts to demonstrate to newly elected officials that low-income renters are an important and active constituency. Presenters will discuss the best ways to constructively remind elected officials of their campaign promises while establishing relationships with new legislative staff members.

Don't miss these important training opportunities. Put “Third Thursdays at Three” in your calendar and [register for the presentation series today](#).

Research

Pilot Study Explores Allocating Housing Resources to Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

New research published in *Housing Policy Debate*, “[No Easy Decisions: Developing an Evidence-Informed Process to Allocate Housing Choice Vouchers to Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence](#),” details the development of a pilot program for allocating housing choice vouchers (HCVs) to survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) experiencing housing instability. The authors conducted literature reviews, expert interviews, and stakeholder meetings in a southwestern U.S. city, then developed two screening tools to select survivors for the HCV program. While the study resulted in an innovative and evidence-informed screening process, many barriers remain to providing safe, stable housing for IPV survivors.

Earlier research on best practices for assessing housing needs among IPV survivors, though limited, has suggested that survivors of IPV appear to experience high rates of housing instability and homelessness. Multiple studies have found that women who have experienced IPV are 3-5 times more likely to experience housing instability. IPV survivors may be forced to leave their homes in high-danger situations, may experience increased risk of eviction, or may experience adverse health outcomes that undermine their ability to maintain stable housing.

While housing programs tailored to survivors consist largely of emergency shelter and transitional programs, domestic violence (DV) programs are beginning to adapt Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing models to serve this population. To explore this further, the study included conversations with directors of established DV Housing First Programs to determine how they allocate resources and learn about housing challenges specific to IPV survivors. The directors emphasized common barriers to housing success, including returning to an abusive partner, harmful actions from ex-partners, substance use, and limited income. Finally, the authors gathered input from local social service practitioners to ensure the program was responsive to local needs and policies.

The researchers used data from their literature review and conversations to create two forms to screen IPV survivors for the HCV program. The screeners were intended to identify clients most likely to experience housing success in the HCV program. A self-referral form included questions on demographics, socioeconomic status, housing, family characteristics, social and community support, IPV factors, behavioral health, and service experiences and needs. A second form was completed by a DV advocate to provide more information on the applicant’s likelihood of maintaining a housing voucher, though this form was not used in the selection process.

The program received 92 referrals during a week-long application window. The screenings were scored on a scale from 1 to 39, with 39 points indicating the highest likelihood of housing success. Given the limited number of vouchers (25), the authors excluded individuals with the lowest scores, as they faced significant barriers to maintaining stable housing through the voucher program. The authors felt these individuals would best be served in DV residential programs that provided intensive case management services, including services to plan for a transition to long-term housing. Of the remaining 61 applications, 25 were randomly selected to receive HCVs, and others were placed on a waiting list until vouchers became available.

The authors identified various implications for housing IPV survivors. First, the screening tool had some limitations, including its length, the limited accuracy of self-reporting, and the fact that the target population was not involved in designing the forms. Future efforts should include IPV survivors in the development of screening tools and should consider the time and effort required to complete screenings. The authors also identified limitations in working across DV and housing programs, which typically work independently of one another. A primary example of this was the lack of understanding among housing staff about the Violence Against Women Act and its implications for the HCV application process. For example, to confirm that an abusive partner would not live in the unit, the public housing authority required a letter from that partner, an

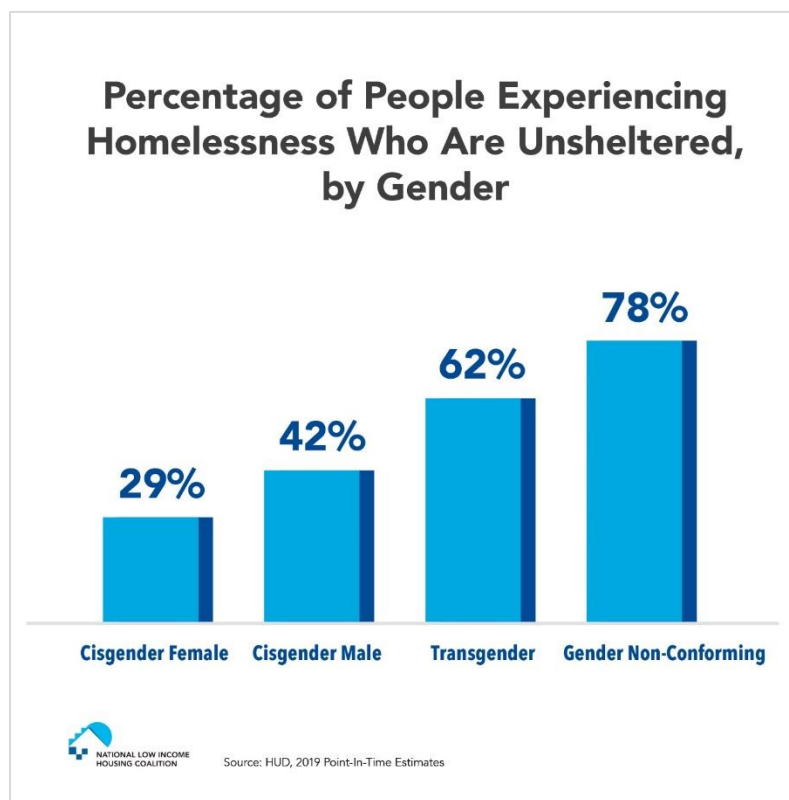
application for formal separation, or a restraining order. These requirements violate VAWA protections, which assert survivors only need to provide a VAWA self-certification.

Finally, the authors encountered a moral dilemma of limited resource allocation in which they attempted to balance applicant needs with other priorities from the city and local DV programs. More robust housing programs and increased housing options for IPV survivors are needed to address this limitation.

The article can be found at: <https://bit.ly/3hQIHZT>

Fact of the Week

Even Before HUD’s Proposed Anti-Trans Rule, 62% of Transgender People Experiencing Homelessness are Unsheltered



From the Field

Michigan Advocates Create Innovative Eviction Prevention Program

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D) signed an executive order on June 26 that extends the state’s eviction moratorium to July 15 and establishes an Eviction Diversion Program that will be available to renters facing nonpayment eviction actions. The rental assistance grants will be made available through federal Coronavirus Relief Funds allocated when the legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 690 (SB690) on June 17. Advocates hope the eviction moratorium extension, combined with the new rent assistance, will provide housing stability for Michigan renters who have lost income due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and recession.

Executive Order 2020-134 provides \$50 million in lump sum payments to landlords who agree to forego evictions in exchange for 90% of the rent they are owed. Advocates are worried that the 90% stipulation as only a partial payment will prevent landlords from participating in the program. Program administrators argue that this provision will allow more households to be served by the \$50 million, and landlords will likely participate because of the difficulty in collecting rent arrears after eviction actions. Renters whose entire owed rent is not covered by their eviction prevention grant will enter into manageable payment plans to address the remaining amount.

The order also provides \$4 million provides to legal aid organizations who can represent renters in court as well as \$4 million to local community action agencies for provide program case management and services.

The \$50 million in eviction prevention grants is only a small portion of the \$880 million appropriated in SB690, and advocates in Michigan argue that more will be needed. Previous efforts to convince state leaders to use CDBG-CV money for rent assistance were unsuccessful, though some localities (such as Detroit) will prioritize housing stability with CDBG-CV funds.

“The formation of the Eviction Diversion Program is extremely important, but the \$50 million will not be nearly enough.” said Jessica AcMoody, policy director for Community Economic Development Associations of Michigan. “This is a first step, and we are hopeful that the U.S. Senate will take action on several proposals for \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance that have recently passed in the House of Representatives. Michigan renters need help now.”

For more information on advocacy efforts to protect renters facing eviction in Michigan, reach out to Jessica AcMoody at acmoody@cedamichigan.org.

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of June 21

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of June 21:

- “End of Dallas' eviction moratorium could mean surge in homelessness, tenants advocates warn,” *Dallas Observer*, June 26 at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybgc9ort>
- “Homelessness could surge this year unless Congress acts,” *National Journal*, June 24 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8cye48h>
- “Affordable housing company to raise rent, just as Orange County shoots down rent freeze,” *Orlando Sentinel*, June 23 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y9e3vx52>
- “What to do right now if you think you might get evicted during the 'housing apocalypse',” *Business Insider*, June 23 at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybvzgot>
- “Bye \$600 jobless benefit, eviction reprieve, cash for small firms. COVID-19 relief ending.,” *USA Today*, June 22 at: <https://tinyurl.com/y7nmdq32>
- “Evictions are on the rise again in South Carolina. Here’s where to go for help,” *The State*, June 22 at: <https://tinyurl.com/yyszuaux>

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