



Volume 28, Issue 8
February 27, 2023

Homelessness and Housing First

- National League of Cities Releases Brief on Housing First
- Recap of 2/21 Homelessness and Housing First Webinar
- Register for Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response Webinar on Reimagining Interim Housing on March 8

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

- Join Today's (February 27) National HoUsed Campaign Call for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes
- Join NLIHC's Next Policy Advisory Committee Meeting on March 1

Budget and Appropriations

- Bipartisan Policy Center Releases Analysis Showing Government Will Likely Default on Loans in Summer or Early Fall

HUD

- HUD Multifamily Office Issues Notice Explaining Uses of Supportive Services for Section 202 Supportive Housing for Low-Income Elderly Projects with PRACs
- HUD Inspector General Finds Office of Multifamily Programs Did Not Identify Properties with Successive Failing Physical Inspection Scores
- Final Rule Implementing HOTMA Sections 102, 103, and 104 Published in *Federal Register*

Disaster Housing Recovery

- NLIHC-Led DHRC Responds to HUD Request for Information about Long-Term Disaster Recovery Program
- Disaster Housing Recovery Update – February 27

Opportunity Starts at Home

- Housing Instability Identified as Social Determinant of Heart Disease in New Study

Research

- Housing Supply Constraints Can Impact Adult Homelessness
- Many Cities Fail to Connect Restrictive Land Use Policies with Homelessness

Fact of the Week

- Adults with HUD Assistance Were More Likely to Have Long COVID Than Adults without HUD Assistance

From the Field

- City of Fort Myers Approves Housing Trust Fund Rental Assistance Program

Housing Policy Forum

- Learn about Housing and Climate Change at NLIHC's 2023 Housing Policy Forum
- NLIHC Encourages Advocates to Participate in Capitol Hill Day

Leadership Awards Ceremony

- NLIHC to Honor Rep. Cori Bush at Housing Leadership Awards Ceremony on March 22

NLIHC in the News

- NLIHC in the News for the Week of February 19

NLIHC News

- NLIHC Welcomes Mackenzie Pish as Research Analyst
- Where to Find Us – February 27

Homelessness and Housing First

National League of Cities Releases Brief on Housing First

The National League of Cities (NLC) released a brief, “[An Overview of the Housing First Approach for City Leaders](#).” The brief provides an overview of Housing First, examines the evidence supporting the approach, and spotlights the ways communities have used Housing First to address homelessness effectively, equitably, and compassionately. In addition to the Housing First brief, NLC released a [tool](#) to help local leaders identify federal funding sources that are available to local governments for addressing homelessness.

The brief highlights the core components of the Housing First approach, including the model’s emphasis on providing stable housing quickly and without prerequisites, consumer choice and self-determination, voluntary supportive services, individualized and client-driven supports, and social and community integration. In the resource, NLC emphasizes that Housing First does not mean “housing only.” By combining an open-door approach to permanent housing with comprehensive wraparound services, communities have been able to help individuals obtain and maintain stable housing and improve their overall health.

NLC’s resource examines the evidence supporting Housing First, highlighting research showing that Housing First programs significantly improve housing stability, reduce homelessness, and have significant positive impacts on health and wellbeing. Housing First can be particularly effective for helping individuals experiencing chronic or unsheltered homelessness; people with mental health or substance use challenges; individuals with prior justice system involvement; Black and Indigenous people and other People of Color; LGBTQIA+ individuals, including youth; individuals with pets; and members of families wishing to be housed together. The brief spotlights how communities – including Rockford, Illinois and Denver, Colorado – have used Housing First to address chronic and veteran homelessness.

The brief outlines recommendations for cities, towns, and villages seeking to comprehensively address homelessness using a Housing First approach and highlights resources to help communities implement each recommendation. NLC encourages communities to evaluate their current approaches to addressing homelessness and create an action plan for adopting Housing First; coordinate closely across local and regional systems and stakeholders; and take an individualized approach that engages clients or individuals experiencing homelessness as decision-makers. Individuals with lived experience should be involved in the planning, design, and implementation of homeless assistance programs. Moreover, NLC recommends that communities prioritize racial equity in local responses and support systems and strive to meet the comprehensive needs of community members by offering high-quality care and integrated supports.

NLC concludes that Housing First is an evidence-based, cost-effective, and equitable approach for cities seeking to reshape their strategies for reducing homelessness and achieving long-term improvements for their residents. By adopting a Housing First approach, cities can meaningfully reduce the experience of homelessness and ensure that all residents have a safe place to call home.

Read NLC's brief, "An Overview of the Housing First Approach for City Leaders," at: <https://bit.ly/3m4Mvmg>

Access the "Federal Funding Sources for Addressing Homelessness Tool" at: <https://bit.ly/3kkg6YG>

Learn more about Housing First at: <https://bit.ly/3vHf8YR>

Recap of 2/21 Homelessness and Housing First Webinar

More than 9,700 people registered for the Homelessness and Housing First webinar hosted by NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) on February 21! The webinar, "Housing First Promotes Health," provided an overview of the research on Housing First and health, the important role state governments can have in bringing housing and supportive services together, and the opportunities and challenges for implementing Housing First for people with significant health challenges. The next webinar will be held on Monday, March 20, from 2:30 to 4 pm ET. Register for the series at: <https://bit.ly/3vIbn5o>

CBPP Vice President for Housing and Income Security Peggy Bailey provided opening remarks, stating that the webinar aims to reset the narrative about housing and health improvements for people who are unhoused. She noted that the webinar will provide advocates with tools to explain how any intervention strategy that perpetuates barriers to housing further harms people physically and mentally, making it even harder for them to exit homelessness. "Housing First, when done properly, which means centering the person who is unhoused and their ability to self-determine their own needs, is a first step towards improving people's health and stabilizing their lives," said Peggy.

Dr. Margot Kushel, director of the University of California San Francisco Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, described how housing is foundational to good health and outlined evidence demonstrating that Housing First effectively keeps people housed. She explained that pushbacks against Housing First tend to blame the approach for the root cause of the homelessness crisis: the extreme shortage of homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes. She urged advocates, providers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to be clear about the comparison between Housing First – an evidence-based approach – and the alternative approach, Treatment First, which provides neither housing nor treatment. Dr. Kushel discussed the substantial evidence base supporting the Housing First approach, highlighting the fact that all rigorous studies favor Housing First over alternative strategies.

Whitney Joy Howard, housing team unit manager with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, spoke about the implementation of the state's Medicaid coverage of supportive housing services. She discussed Washington State's Housing First programs, including the supportive housing services provided by the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA). Whitney shared how AL TSA has developed a collaborative

relationship among community partners, providers, and state funders to administer Housing First programs and support service providers.

Christy Respress, president and CEO of Pathways to Housing DC, shared how her organization leverages Housing First to provide housing and services to people with significant health challenges. Sharing her critical perspective as a provider, Christy emphasized that Housing First without services is not Housing First. Christy discussed how Pathways to Housing DC provides customized services based on what people need and what they are asking for, and she described how Pathways layers primary physical health and mental health care into their services.

During a discussion following the presentations, the panelists elaborated on the importance of collaboration among the healthcare, homeless services, and housing systems. Whitney shared how Washington State officials have broken down silos among these systems by building relationships and working together more intentionally to identify how to “consciously couple” resources. She stressed the need to work across federal, state, and local partners and funding resources to ensure there are robust funding streams for housing and services. Whitney added that systems must ensure that the people who are providing services – the people who are making Housing First a reality – are compensated fairly and supported by their supervisors.

Dr. Kushel emphasized earlier points that Housing First is not housing only, and she urged providers to leverage all resources, including Medicaid and other sources of funding, to provide personalized services that match an individual’s needs. She further addressed critiques against Housing First, explaining that while we desperately need to increase the supply of affordable housing for the lowest-income renters, our failure to do so does not suggest that we should revert to ineffective, high-barrier strategies. “Housing First is the best way to use the units that we have while we fight to increase the availability of those units to decrease the insidious effects of racism, income inequality, and the lack of planning and building of affordable housing,” said Dr. Kushel.

Christy acknowledged that services are not funded in many communities, and while this is a challenge, it does not mean that these communities cannot implement Housing First. Instead, they must work harder and more closely with their cross-sector partners to develop creative solutions to serve people who are unhoused. She emphasized the importance of working for long-term policy change to ensure that every community has access to resources while ensuring that every available resource is leveraged to support individuals in need of housing and services. She added that a focus on prevention is key to stopping the pipeline of people entering the homeless system.

Peggy shared how state and local officials, providers, and advocates can make the case for Medicaid expansion by highlighting how Medicaid can cover housing-related services to support people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. She encouraged advocates to educate stakeholders about how Housing First supports health, including by building alliances with state and local health care providers and leaders, advocating for and helping implement Medicaid coverage of housing-related services, and educating local officials on homelessness and Housing First.

Peggy wrapped up the webinar by inviting attendees to share stories they have collected about how Housing First is benefiting the people they serve. We are hearing more and more from policymakers about the importance of uplifting positive stories about how Housing First is helping people obtain and maintain housing. Please share these stories with NLIHC Senior Policy Analyst Alayna Calabro by emailing acalabro@nlihc.org!

We have uploaded a [recording](#) of the call, as well as the [presentation slides](#).

Did you miss the previous webinars on homelessness and Housing First? Check out the [webinar recaps](#), including links to the recordings and presentation slides.

The next webinar will be held on Monday, March 20, from 2:30 to 4:00 pm ET. Register for the series at: <https://bit.ly/3vIbn5o>

Read more about Housing First at: <https://bit.ly/3vHf8YR>

Register for Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response Webinar on Reimagining Interim Housing on March 8

The [Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response](#) (Framework) will host a webinar, “Reimagining Interim Housing: Transforming Our Approaches to Sheltering People,” on Wednesday, March 8, from 3 to 4:30 pm ET. Register [here](#) to join the webinar.

Guidance and recommendations provided by people with lived experience of homelessness make clear the necessity of transforming our approaches to sheltering people with homes. Throughout 2022, Framework partners hosted focus groups of people with lived experience of homelessness and interviewed people from across the country to assess gaps in existing tools and materials. In late 2022, the Framework released two new documents based on its findings:

- [“Reimagining Interim Housing: Stages and Action Areas for Transforming Approaches to Sheltering People Experiencing Homelessness”](#) recommends new approaches to help communities improve their programs, focusing on racial justice and equity and following guidance by people with lived expertise and people in direct service roles.
- [“Tools for Strengthening Current Interim Housing Programs and Services”](#) compiles documents, guidance, and tools that can be used by people and organizations to strengthen critical elements of interim housing programs.

The upcoming webinar will feature Framework consultants Claudine Sipili, Rashema Melson, Shaundell Diaz, and Matthew Doherty and explore ideas about how communities can strengthen their current programs and services and work to transform their approaches to sheltering people experiencing homelessness.

Register for the webinar at: bit.ly/3KxuDLh

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

Join Today's (February 27) National HoUsed Campaign Call for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

[Join](#) today's (February 27) national HoUsed campaign call from 2:30 to 4 pm ET. Jennifer Sullivan of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities will join the call to discuss the implications of the planned "unwinding" of Medicaid benefits for renters. Jerry Jones of the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) will present his organization's recent [statement of values](#) against the criminalization of homelessness. We will also hear from Andrew Haughwout of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, who will share findings from a report, "[Eviction Expectations in the Post-Pandemic Housing Market](#)." We will receive updates from the field and more!

Join NLIHC's Next Policy Advisory Committee Meeting on March 1

NLIHC members are invited to [join us](#) on March 1 from 4 to 5 pm ET for NLIHC's quarterly Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, a virtual listening session during which NLIHC members can weigh in on issues related to NLIHC's policy priorities.

The PAC offers a space for NLIHC members to provide input about the formation, direction, and implementation of NLIHC's policy priorities. The voices and perspectives offered during PAC meetings are taken into consideration as we formulate and work towards achieving our policy priorities in the upcoming congressional session.

During our last (December 6, 2022) PAC meeting, we discussed the policies and proposals that should be included in a federal Tenants' Bill of Rights to keep tenants safely and affordably housed and ensure long-term housing stability for renters with the lowest incomes. During our March 1 meeting, we will receive an update concerning work on the bill and a prospective timeline for congressional action. We will also discuss the fights ahead for staving off cuts in the fiscal year (FY) 2024 budget, and we look forward to hearing participants' ideas about strategies for messaging and advocacy with Congress.

Held quarterly, PAC meetings will occur on the following dates in 2023:

- Wednesday, June 7, 4-5 pm ET
- Wednesday, September 6, 4-5 pm ET
- Wednesday, December 6, 4-5 pm ET

*Please note that **PAC meetings are only open to NLIHC members**. If you are not already a member, you can [join online](#).*

Register for the Policy Advisory Committee meetings at: tinyurl.com/mvb9t2hu

Budget and Appropriations

Bipartisan Policy Center Releases Analysis Showing Government Will Likely Default on Loans in Summer or Early Fall

The Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) released an [analysis](#) on February 22 finding that, absent congressional action, the federal government will likely default on its loans during the summer or early fall of 2023. In January, U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) Secretary Janet Yellen announced that the federal government had reached its \$31.4 trillion debt limit and that the department would begin deploying “extraordinary measures” to continue funding the federal government (see *Memo*, [1/23](#)).

The BPC report notes that the exact timing of a potential default will depend on 2022 tax collections but that the BPC “is providing estimates...roughly five months from the start of the [date range] to maximize the time policymakers have to act.” A default by the federal government on its debts would be unprecedented and would likely bring about financial chaos in the U.S. and the rest of the world.

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) has repeatedly called for steep budget cuts as a prerequisite for raising the country’s debt limit, proposing to cap fiscal year (FY) 2024 spending at FY22 levels. However, the House Speaker has also pledged not to cut defense spending, or funding for Medicare and Social Security, leaving non-defense discretionary spending – including funding for vital affordable housing and homelessness programs – squarely on the chopping block. House Republicans are expected to release a topline preview of proposed budget cuts in April, after the President releases his FY24 budget request on March 9.

According to a [report](#) from the Senate Democratic Policy and Communications Committee (DPCC), capping FY24 spending at FY22 levels would result in a funding decrease of between 12% and 30%, depending on how cuts are distributed. A [recent analysis](#) from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) estimates that capping spending at FY22 levels could result in an average cut of 24% across non-defense programs, depending on which programs are prioritized.

The DPCC report notes that spending cuts would further exacerbate the nation’s already critical affordable housing crisis and reduce vital assistance to households that would struggle to keep roofs over their heads without assistance. For example, the proposed cuts would:

- **Reduce HUD rental assistance and homelessness assistance by \$6.6 billion**, putting the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on this assistance at risk of housing instability, eviction, and in the worst cases, homelessness. Public housing authorities (PHAs), which are charged with administering housing vouchers, would be forced to “pull existing vouchers from families searching for units or sever assistance altogether.”
- Reduce funding to programs like the HOME Investment Partnership Program, resulting in **1,700 fewer affordable housing units constructed and 1,300 households losing rental assistance.**

- **Increase children’s risk of lead-based paint exposure** by cutting \$48 million in funding to address lead and other health hazards in low-income housing, impacting an estimated 3,000 households.
- **Exacerbate the affordable housing shortage in native territories by cutting \$120 million** from Native American housing programs.
- **Reduce funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) by \$472 million**, leaving many families with low incomes unable to heat or cool their homes, even in dangerous weather conditions.

Take Action!

It is unacceptable to balance the federal budget by demanding cuts to programs that help the lowest-income households survive. There is a national shortage of approximately 7 million affordable, available homes for people with the lowest incomes, and only one in four households who qualify for federal housing assistance receives the help it needs. Without adequate funding for vital federal affordable housing and homeless assistance programs, households with the lowest incomes will continue to live precariously, only one missed paycheck or unexpected emergency away from housing instability, eviction, and, in the worst cases, homelessness.

- [Sign your organization on](#) to the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding’s (CHCDF’s) annual budget letter, calling on Congress to reject spending cuts and instead provide the highest possible allocation for HUD’s and USDA’s affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs in FY24.
- [Email your members of Congress today](#) and urge them to increase – not cut – resources for affordable housing and homelessness in FY24 and to support NLIHC’s top appropriations priorities:
 - Full funding for the TBRA program to renew existing vouchers and to expand the program to an additional 200,000 households.
 - Full funding for public housing operations and repairs.
 - Full funding for HUD’s Homeless Assistance Grants program.
 - \$100 million for legal assistance to prevent evictions.
 - \$3 billion for a permanent Emergency Rental Assistance program.
 - Increased funding for the competitive tribal housing grants, targeted to tribes with the greatest needs.
- [Check out NLIHC’s advocacy toolkit](#), “Oppose Dramatic Cuts to Federal Investments in Affordable Housing,” for talking points, sample social media messages, and more!

Visit our [Take Action](#) page to learn about more ways you can get involved!

HUD

HUD Multifamily Office Issues Notice Explaining Uses of Supportive Services for Section 202 Supportive Housing for Low-Income Elderly Projects with PRACs

HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs (Multifamily) issued [Notice H-2023-02](#) on February 9, explaining the purpose and allowable uses of supportive services funds and the requirements for requesting Multifamily approval to include those funds in the annual operating budget for Section 202 PRAC projects (formerly known as Section 202 Supportive Housing for Low-Income Elderly Capital Advance properties with Project Rental Assistance Contracts (PRACs)). The Notice also reiterates that Section 202 PRAC properties must have a Supportive Services Plan in place that is updated every three years.

Background

Section 202 PRAC properties provide affordable supportive housing for very low-income elderly households. Rental subsidies for these properties are based on their operating budget, which may include the costs for a full- or part-time Service Coordinator position and up to \$15 per unit per month for direct provision of supportive services. To ensure supportive service needs are adequately addressed, properties are expected to coordinate with community service providers and to access other funding streams consistent with a property's Supportive Services Plan.

Property sponsors were required to prepare a Supportive Services Plan as part of the original Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) requirements for Section 202 Capital Advances. Sponsors submitted Supportive Services Plans with their initial applications for funding, which must be updated by a property's Service Coordinator based on the original NOFO. The Supportive Services Plan must address how Section 202 PRAC subsidies support service provision and coordination, as well as how other funding streams are used to address additional resident needs. Multifamily has determined that many Section 202 PRAC owners have not updated their Supportive Services Plans.

Service coordination activities are subject to additional budgetary planning and performance requirements. A Service Coordinator is a social service staff person/contractor responsible for ensuring that the elderly residents of a project, especially those who are frail and disabled, are linked to the supportive services they need to continue living independently in a project. [Handbook 4381.5, REV-2, Chapter 8](#), provides the requirements for implementing and maintaining a Service Coordinator Program. Additional guidance is also available on the HUD Exchange website under [Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing Programs](#). HUD funding for service coordination activities is approved and monitored separately from the \$15-per-unit funding available for direct provision of supportive services.

Funding for 202 PRACs that include supportive services and Service Coordinators is provided through the annual appropriations acts. The HUD funding amounts, up to \$15 per unit per month, are not expected to cover all the supportive services needs of residents; therefore, properties are expected to provide necessary services and access to services using other non-project sources.

Guidance Sections of the Notice

Section IV, "Uses of Supportive Services Funds," summarizes (1) Requirements, (2) Goals of Service Provisions, (3) Eligible Uses of Supportive Services Funds, and (4) Ineligible Uses.

Regarding Requirements: The \$15 per unit per month provided by Multifamily for supportive services comprise just one component of a property's comprehensive Supportive Services Plan to

ensure that residents live independently and avoid unnecessary institutionalization. The balance of service costs must be provided from other sources.

Supportive services funds must be used to provide a range of services determined through a resident assessment. Supportive services funds may be used to provide services to all elderly residents of a property, addressing the needs of the general resident population (e.g., fall prevention programs), or they may address subgroups with specific needs (e.g., housekeeping for frail elderly people). Owners must not require residents to accept any supportive services as a condition of admission or occupancy or limit resident choice of providers.

HUD may approve use of supportive services funds for services that support elderly people living in a property who are not Multifamily-assisted, or who do not live in a project, if this will not significantly add to a property's operating budget.

Regarding Eligible Uses: Notice H-2023-02 discusses services provided to individuals and to the entire community. Examples of services for individuals, include meal services, housekeeping assistance, and personal assistance, as well as "activities of daily living" (ADLs), such as basic self-care tasks including bathing, dressing, and eating. Personal assistance can also include "instrumental activities of daily living" (IADLs), such as skills related to independent living, including meal planning, grocery shopping, and financial management. Examples of services provided to the entire community, if part of a Supportive Services Plan, include transportation, health-related programs, activities to reduce social isolation, and materials, supplies, and limited physical modifications to common areas to support health and wellness programs.

Section V, "Supportive Services Plans," describes Supportive Services Plan components and requirements pertaining to them. Regarding the requirements, owners must maintain and update Supportive Services Plans every three years for the entire useful life of the property. The Plan must describe how a range of services will be provided that are tailored to residents' needs and essential for maintaining independent living.

Notice H-2023-02 is available at: <https://bit.ly/3SITV0y>

Read more about the Section 202 program on [page 4-73](#) of NLIHC's *2022 Advocates' Guide*.

HUD Inspector General Finds Office of Multifamily Programs Did Not Identify Properties with Successive Failing Physical Inspection Scores

HUD's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued "[Previous Participation Flags in Multifamily's Active Partner Performance System](#)," an audit of the Office of Multifamily Programs (Multifamily). The audit is meant to determine whether Multifamily properly "flagged" Project-Based Section 8 Rental Assistance (PBRA) properties that received unacceptable physical inspection scores. The OIG audit, dated February 14, found that 13 of 21 reviewed properties with consecutive Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) scores of less than 60 were missing the required "flags" for unacceptable physical conditions in Multifamily's

Active Partners Performance System (APPS). In six of those 13 instances, the property had more than one missing flag. Flags are considered risk factors that require appropriate mitigation.

According to OIG, the reasons for the shortcoming are (1) that Multifamily does not have a quality control program to ensure that Field Office-based Multifamily account executives manually enter flags in APPS and (2) that Multifamily does not have an automated process for flagging a property once it has received a second, consecutive REAC score of less than 60. Consequently, the health and safety of residents can be impacted. Senior Multifamily officials indicated that for several years the office had included modernizing APPS as an information technology (IT) business need; however, HUD determined that other departmental IT needs were higher priorities.

Within Multifamily, the [Office of Asset Management and Portfolio Oversight](#) (OAMPO) is responsible for overseeing Multifamily properties and coordinating with HUD's [Real Estate Assessment Center](#) (REAC). OAMPO uses three flag tiers in APPS to identify risks:

- Tier 1: Flags are considered an elevated risk.
- Tier 2: Flags are considered an ongoing risk.
- Tier 3: Flags are considered a single risk and a flag is removed when the reason for assigning the flag is resolved.

Properties that should receive a Tier 2 flag include those that:

- Have received a REAC score of less than 30.
- Have received two consecutive REAC scores of less than 60.
- Have a history of receiving REAC scores of less than 60.
- Have been found to have other repeated failures maintaining decent, safe, and sanitary conditions.

A property with a Tier 2 flag requires attention from two Multifamily officials in order to appropriately mitigate the substandard conditions. A Tier 2 flag can be removed when a property has not received a REAC score of less than 60 for five years.

Read the OIG audit report, "Previous Participation Flags in Multifamily's Active Partner Performance System" (2023-KC-0002), February 14, 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3kjCi53>

More information about Multifamily's PBRA program is available on [page 4-67](#) of NLIHC's *2022 Advocates' Guide*.

Final Rule Implementing HOTMA Sections 102, 103, and 104 Published in *Federal Register*

The [final rule](#) implementing all but one of the remaining provisions of the "Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016" (HOTMA) was published in the *Federal Register* on February 14. The publication follows the posting by HUD of a preview version on January 31

(see *Memo*, [2/6](#)). While other HOTMA provisions had previously been implemented (see *Memo*, [10/13/20](#)), Sections 102, 103, and 104 still required formal public review and comment prior to implementation. A [proposed rule](#) to implement these provisions was published on September 17, 2019 (see *Memo*, [9/23/19](#)). Most of the provisions will not take effect until January 1, 2024.

Section 102 applies to public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) administered by HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH). Section 102 also applies to programs administered by HUD's Office of Multifamily Programs (Multifamily): Section Eight Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), Section 202 Housing for Low-Income Elderly Persons, and Section 811 Housing for Low-Income Persons with Disabilities. Some of the Section 202 provisions also apply to the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), national Housing Trust Fund (HTF), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) programs. In short, Section 102 reduces the frequency of income reviews and modifies the definition of income and assets. For example, the HOTMA statute:

- Created a 10% adjusted income increase or decrease threshold for conducting interim income reexaminations. In most situations, increases in earned income (e.g., wages) will not be processed until a resident's next annual income reexamination.
- Increased the standard deduction for households with a head, co-head, or spouse who is elderly or is a person with a disability.
- Excluded income received from Medicaid or other state or local programs designed to keep at home a household member who has a disability.
- Increased the allowance for unreimbursed health and medical care expenses from 3% to 10% of annual income (phased in over two years).
- Provided hardship relief for expense deductions, lessening the impact of the above increased threshold for medical expenses. Public housing agencies (PHAs) may grant hardships for households unable to pay rent due to unanticipated medical or disability expenses, as well as for households no longer eligible for the childcare expense deduction.

Section 104, which applies to public housing, HCV, PBRA, HOME, HTF, and HOPWA, sets maximum asset limits for eligibility and continued occupancy and implements deductions and exceptions for certain investments, such as retirement savings. Retirement accounts and educational savings accounts will not be considered "net family assets."

Section 103 only applies to public housing, modifying the continued occupancy standards for public housing households whose income exceeds the statutory limit (known as the "over-income" provision). (See *Memo*, [2/8/16](#) and [NLIHC's 2016 comment letter](#).) Section 103 becomes effective on March 16, 2023.

PIH will be hosting a webinar regarding Section 103 on March 2 from 2 to 3:30 pm ET. Webinars covering Sections 102 and 104 will be held on April 6 and April 13. Register for the Section 103 webinar at the [HOTMA Income and Assets Training Series page](#). Multifamily has an [Introduction to HOTMA for Multifamily Programs](#). In addition, Multifamily is developing a series of webinars. Multifamily and PIH will publish comprehensive Section 102 and 104 implementation guidance in late spring.

Read the formal *Federal Register* version of the final HOTMA rule at: <https://bit.ly/3IvkcGG>

Read the HUD preview version of the final HOTMA rule at: <https://bit.ly/3WZjK7k>

PIH's HOTMA webpage is accessible at: <https://bit.ly/3XTanHy>

Multifamily's HOTMA webpage is accessible at: <https://bit.ly/3wJI9Dp>

More information about HUD programs affected by the proposed rule is available in [Chapter 4](#) of NLIHC's *2022 Advocates' Guide*.

Disaster Housing Recovery

NLIHC-Led DHRC Responds to HUD Request for Information about Long-Term Disaster Recovery Program

HUD issued a historic [Request for Information](#) (RFI) regarding both the allocation formula and rules of the agency's Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program in late 2022. The agency is seeking to create a universal allocation notice to better standardize program requirements, which have become more confusing and complicated with every subsequent allocation of funds due to the CDBG-DR program's [lack of permanent authorization](#). On February 21, NLIHC filed comments on behalf of its Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) requesting that HUD ensure that disaster assistance can effectively reach those most impacted by disasters in an equitable, transparent, and efficient manner. The comment addressing the specific RFI related to program rules was drafted collaboratively and cosigned by 18 local, state, and national members of the DHRC.

NLIHC leads the DHRC, a coalition of more than 890 national, state, tribal, and local organizations, including many working directly with disaster-impacted communities and with first-hand experience recovering after disasters. The DHRC strives to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts prioritize the housing needs of the lowest-income and most marginalized people in impacted areas.

Questions provided by HUD covered a wide range of topics, from modifications needed to ensure that tribal organizations have access to long-term disaster recovery funding, to needed technical assistance for select disaster recovery contractors, to how program rules can prevent distributions of disaster recovery funds that are discriminatory. Comments reflected the wide range of experiences and knowledge of DHRC members and NLIHC's history of working on disaster housing recovery issues since 2017.

Disaster recovery "is a system designed for middle-class people and communities – a system that does not address the unique needs of the lowest-income and most marginalized people and the communities in which they live," reads the comment regarding program rules. "As a result, these households are consistently left behind in recovery and rebuilding efforts, and their communities are made less resilient to future disasters. The federal disaster recovery system exacerbates many

of the challenges these communities faced prior to disasters, worsening the housing crisis, solidifying segregation, and deepening inequality.”

Read the Collaborative Comment on the HUD RFI on CDBG-DR Rules, Waivers, and Alternative Requirements at: <https://bit.ly/3IoVN4i>

Read the DHRC Comment on the HUD RFI on the CDBG-DR Allocation Formula at: <https://bit.ly/3KvU7IE>

Disaster Housing Recovery Update – February 27

Congressional and National Updates

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) has a history of pushing for urgent action related to climate change. As the new chair of the powerful Senate Budget Committee, he is [expected](#) to continue that focus through a series of hearings.

Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett (D-VI) [announced](#) plans to reintroduce the “Resiliency Enhancement Act,” a bill to extend provisions of disaster assistance for critical services such as public housing, transportation infrastructure, and medical care infrastructure to cover areas still dealing with the impact of disasters dating back to 2017.

Congressman Buddy Carter (R-GA) is planning to [reintroduce](#) the “Disaster Reforestation Act.” The bill would allow the owners of working forests to claim the loss of uncut timber as a disaster impact on tax filings.

A census poll [found](#) that over 3 million adults in the U.S. were forced to evacuate their homes in the past year due to a disaster – far exceeding previous estimates. The census data – part of its Household Pulse survey that is continuing to collect information – also reflect that those earning less than \$25,000 a year had the highest evacuation rate of any economic group.

Agency Updates

President Biden [appointed](#) Xochitl Torres Small, who had previously assisted with the Hermit’s Peak/Calf Canyon disasters as an undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), as a deputy secretary at the agency. Torres represented New Mexico in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2018 to 2020.

After being on the receiving end of several accusations of inaction by media, FEMA – which is not tasked with responding to incidents such as the East Palestine Train Derailment and does not operate programs that would offer assistance to either victims or first responders – [announced](#) a partnership with Ohio Governor Mike DeWine that would involve “deploying a Senior Response Official and a Regional Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) to support ongoing operations, including incident coordination and ongoing assessments of potential long-term recovery needs.”

FEMA is [requesting](#) feedback on a new guidance document, “Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post-Disaster Guide for Local Officials.” Comments on the guide are due by March 15, 2023.

State and Local Updates

California

In Northern California, communities [impacted](#) by the Tubbs Fire five years ago continue to make strides to improve community resilience while progressing through the disaster recovery process.

Colorado

An [analysis](#) of watersheds impacted by wildfires in Colorado found that funding for well-water systems and water infrastructure damaged by fire was slow to appear, hampering recovery efforts.

Florida

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity [announced](#) that \$63.5 million in HUD disaster recovery funds is now available for Hurricane Sally recovery to local governments in Bay, Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties.

Kentucky

Local groups in Eastern Kentucky – hit hard by flooding in 2022 – are [hoping](#) to tackle housing recovery in the region in a way that is justice-focused, culturally appropriate, environmentally sound, and that recognizes that many impacted families have generational ties to the areas where they live and hope to continue living.

New Mexico

A [bill](#) introduced in the New Mexico Senate would provide \$100 million in zero-interest loans to local counties and municipalities via a bridge fund, as federal funding works its way towards the state. Governments that take the loan would subsequently repay the funds when they receive federal funding.

North Carolina

Although highly touted, ReBuild NC’s modular home program is failing to [quickly deploy](#) the manufactured housing solutions it promised. Instead, the majority of Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Florence survivors in need of housing have been housed through stick-built homes.

Oregon

A [bill](#) currently in the Oregon House of Representatives would allow fire and disaster survivors to get a 70% buyout from their insurance company instead of having to file inventory claims to submit to insurance companies.

Louisiana

Local disaster recovery advocates – including members of NLIHC’s Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) – [learned](#) that FEMA plans to stop accepting appeals concerning denials of assistance after Hurricane Ida by the end of February. While disaster assistance does typically cease 18 months after a disaster, the agency typically extends provision of assistance past that date and also allow for denials of assistance to be appealed.

The editorial board at *NOLA.com* published a [piece](#) on the long wait for recovery aid programs in Lake Charles, which was hard-hit by Hurricanes Laura and Delta. Of issue is a requirement that applicants for HUD-funded long-term recovery assistance be rated as having received major damage by FEMA via an assessment process biased against lower-income residents.

West Virginia

With an additional flood emergency declared in the state earlier in February, a state-level bill on flooding resiliency continues to [work its way through](#) the legislative process. Senate Bill 677 would clarify the role and responsibilities of the State Resiliency Officer, a position created through numerous hearings of the Joint Legislative Committee on Flooding formed in the wake of devastating 2016 floods that hit regions of the state.

Opportunity Starts at Home

Housing Instability Identified as Social Determinant of Heart Disease in New Study

A new [study](#) published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* identifies housing instability as a risk factor for heart disease. The study examined 3,100 counties across the U.S. using data released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. In addition to finding that residents in rural counties and those with predominately Black residents experience higher rates of cardiovascular disease than residents in urban and predominantly white counties, the study found that housing instability was consistently associated with cardiovascular disease and death. Read the article [here](#).

Research

Housing Supply Constraints Can Impact Adult Homelessness

An article published in *Urban Studies* by Casey Dawkins, “[Homelessness and Housing Supply](#),” assesses the relationship between housing supply constraints, especially land use regulations, and rates of homelessness among adults. Contrary to previous studies that assumed housing supply constraints only impacted homelessness through higher rents, Dawkins’s study finds that housing supply constraints appear to impact adult homelessness primarily through their influence on eviction rates, while also being associated with unobserved local policies. Dawkins argues that the reformation of land use policies that constrain housing supply could complement other

efforts to address homelessness, such as welfare and federal homelessness assistance funding. He also calls for more coordination between homeless services providers and land use planners.

Existing research has tended to focus on how geographic constraints and local policies that bar the construction of new housing contribute to homelessness by inflating rent prices, displacing low-income renters, and making it difficult for people experiencing homelessness to find a unit they can afford. Dawkins argues that past studies have focused too narrowly on this rent effect and have ignored other ways housing supply constraints can directly impact homelessness. Dawkins posits that housing supply constraints could influence rates of homelessness through an “eviction effect,” according to which landlords evict tenants to renovate, sell, or convert existing units into condos in anticipation of a rise in rent resulting from supply constraints. Since the eviction of current tenants takes place before new rental prices are established, the eviction effect could occur even if there is no immediate rise in rental housing costs. Dawkins also identifies an “unobserved policy effect,” wherein restrictive land use regulations correlate with local policy preferences that might impact homelessness, such as policies that criminalize homelessness or policies that expand services for people experiencing homelessness.

Dawkins finds that greater constraints on housing supply appear to directly increase rates of adult homelessness. Higher rates of adult homelessness are associated with the existence of fewer new housing units relative to new jobs, lower housing supply elasticity, less available land to develop, more restrictive zoning and land use policies, and the presence of urban growth boundaries. Dawkins also finds that housing supply dynamics might impact rates of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in different ways. For example, while new housing construction is associated with a net reduction in adult homelessness, it is correlated with both a small increase in the sheltered homeless population and a much larger decrease in unsheltered homelessness. This correlation could be due to new construction including transitional housing or expanded shelter space. Increases in land available for development and greater housing supply elasticity, meanwhile, are associated with reductions in both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. Dawkins’s statistical modeling further suggests these housing supply factors primarily impact homelessness not through rent increases but rather through their influence on eviction rates and unobserved local policies.

Dawkins suggests that his findings indicate a need for less restrictive land use regulations. However, he acknowledges that removing regulations will not eliminate adult homelessness entirely. Therefore, this strategy would be most effective when paired with anti-homelessness and anti-poverty initiatives, such as increased welfare assistance and greater resources for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/3YUZN3k>

Many Cities Fail to Connect Restrictive Land Use Policies with Homelessness

A brief published by researchers from Boston University, Cornell University, and Community Solutions, “[Cities, Zoning, and the Fragmented Response to Homelessness](#),” explores the extent

to which cities address underlying housing and land use issues in their approaches to solving homelessness. Many cities have in place restrictive zoning policies that hinder or prohibit the development of multifamily housing, including subsidized housing and housing designed for individuals experiencing homelessness. The authors of the brief argue that such policies cause housing shortages that lift rent prices, spurring increases in homelessness. Thus, cities can address homelessness by reforming land use and zoning policies. Yet many municipal governments do not understand the links between homelessness and zoning policies, stymying their efforts to end homelessness.

The authors analyzed the homelessness plans of the 100 largest cities, as well as a nationally representative survey of mayors. Of the 100 cities, only 54 had homelessness plans. Most homelessness plans discussed eviction (61%) and housing affordability (87%) at least once, indicating some degree of recognition that broader housing market conditions contribute to homelessness. However, the plans largely failed to draw connections between land use and homelessness policies, with only 30% of the plans mentioning land use. The survey of mayors yielded similar results, with only 32% of mayors indicating that they believed zoning and land use policies were a significant barrier to addressing homelessness in their cities.

Cities were much more likely to have housing plans than homelessness plans, since many states require localities to develop housing plans. Ninety-nine of the 100 cities in the study had some form of a housing plan. Seventy-six percent of the housing plans mentioned homelessness. Yet only 18 of the cities, and 24% of cities with housing plans, explicitly linked land use and homelessness in their housing plans.

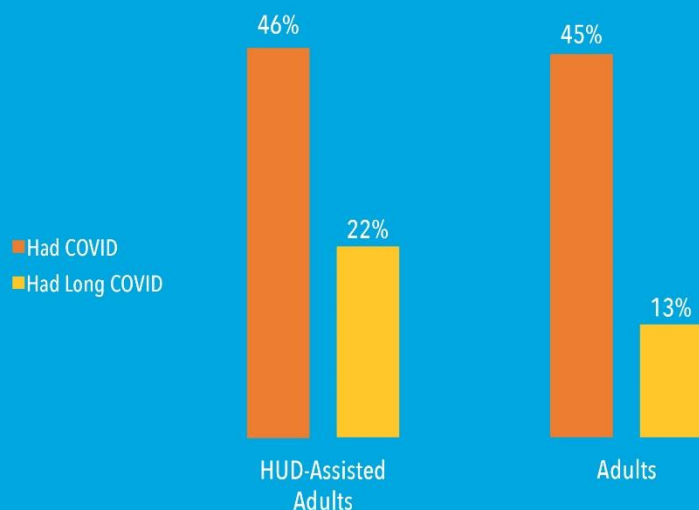
The authors encourage local policymakers to integrate housing and land use planning into their homelessness policies. Further, they call for the federal government to offer additional incentives – like those provided in the Biden-Harris administration’s recently released *Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* – to state and local governments to reform their zoning policies.

Read the brief at: <http://bit.ly/3IKYe2y>

Fact of the Week

Adults with HUD Assistance Were More Likely to Have Long COVID Than Adults without HUD Assistance

SHARE OF HUD-ASSISTED ADULTS WITH COVID AND LONG COVID



SOURCES: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, "SELF-REPORTED LONG COVID-19 AMONG HUD-ASSISTED ADULTS: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY (HPS) LINKED WITH HUD ADMINISTRATIVE DATA," FEBRUARY 2023, [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/4H567NAP](https://tinyurl.com/4h567nap); NLIHC TABULATIONS OF HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY WEEKS 46-52: JUNE 2022 TO DECEMBER 2022, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



Sources: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Self-Reported Long COVID-19 among HUD-Assisted Adults: Preliminary Findings from the Household Pulse Survey (HPS) Linked with HUD Administrative Data," February 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4h567nap>; NLIHC tabulations of Household Pulse Survey Weeks 46-52: June 2022 to December 2022, U.S. Census Bureau.

From the Field

City of Fort Myers Approves Housing Trust Fund Rental Assistance Program

The City Council of Fort Myers, Florida, approved an ordinance in January to create an [Affordable Housing Trust Fund Rental Assistance program](#) that will provide monthly assistance to households with incomes at or below 100% of area median income (AMI). In addition to rental assistance, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund program will provide the city with the means to create homes affordable for renters. Community leaders have noted that the program is only one of many approaches that the municipal government can take in addressing housing affordability challenges in Fort Myers. However, as many [emergency rental assistance programs across the country close due to insufficient federal funding](#), Fort Myers has sought to replace federal dollars with local funds to address the need for affordable housing in the community.

The new program will provide the residents of Fort Meyers with a means of achieving housing stability. Eligible residents will receive one-time payments, based on a sliding scale formula, to help them attain stable housing. To be eligible for rental assistance, a household must have an income at or below 100% of AMI. It is not yet known how the program will target the families

most in need of assistance – those families and individuals with extremely low incomes (at or below 30% of AMI). City staff will accept up to 150 applications every year and expect to budget around \$400,000 annually to meet demand. The program will be run on a first-come, first-served basis instead of utilizing processes like categorical eligibility, which provide a more equitable distribution of funds to households most in need. NLIHC’s ERASE project recommends that rental assistance programs use processes like categorical eligibility or fact-specific proxy (i.e., verifying an individual’s eligibility by determining whether they receive assistance via another government assistance program, or by using census tract information) to target funds to households most in need.

Even so, the program offers hope to many low-income families and households in Fort Myers. NLIHC’s [Out of Reach data](#) indicate that Lee County, where Fort Myers is located, has an estimated median renter household income of \$48,530, while the average family in the county needs an estimated income of \$49,240 to afford a two-bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent (FMR) and \$64,120 to afford a three-bedroom rental home.

Housing advocates in Florida are eager to see how the program helps households in the state. “Given the state of Florida’s affordable housing crisis, it is incredibly encouraging to see Fort Myers join the cadre of local governments using their own locally sourced funds on affordable housing initiatives rather than rely solely on state and federal dollars,” said Kody Glazer, legal and policy director of the [Florida Housing Coalition](#). “Fort Myers has stepped up in a great way with this tenant stabilization measure, and we are thrilled for the renters that will be aided through this effort.”

City staff are in the process of creating the online application and the rental assistance program agreement for apartment operators. As of the time of writing, the program has not officially opened, but the city’s Community Development Department anticipates that program applications will become available in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, feedback received by city employees suggests strong interest in the program among community members.

Renters interested in Fort Myers’s rental assistance program can find more information [here](#). Eligible tenants will have to enter an agreement with city, and the agreement will be provided to apartment operators. The city urges interested parties to reach out with questions to Steven Belden, community development director for Fort Myers, at sbelden@cityftmyers.com.

Housing Policy Forum

Learn about Housing and Climate Change at NLIHC’s 2023 Housing Policy Forum

NLIHC’s Housing Policy Forum 2023: Onward to Housing Justice, taking place on March 21-23 at the Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill Hotel in Washington, D.C., will feature a number of breakout sessions, including a session led by NLIHC Senior Policy Analyst Noah Patton on housing and climate change. [Learn more about this session and the other panels and speakers at](#)

[the 2023 Forum by exploring the agenda](#), and then [register to attend the 2023 Housing Policy Forum!](#)

As climate change increases the frequency and exacerbates the intensity of disasters, communities across the country are grappling with a fundamental question about our new climate future: is our right to choose where and how we live compatible with our community's continued survival?

“Housing and Climate Change – Equitable Disaster Housing Recovery,” a Forum breakout session that will take place on Wednesday, March 22, from 3:45 to 5 pm ET, will draw together speakers from the fields of civil and human rights law, legislative advocacy, community organizing, disability justice, and emergency management to investigate this fundamental question. Attendees will hear about real-world examples of disaster response and recovery, learn about reform efforts, and deepen their understanding of how communities can prepare for and respond to disasters while protecting the rights of those who experience the worst impacts of climate change-related disasters.

“Housing and Climate Change – Equitable Disaster Housing Recovery” will be moderated by Noah Patton and will feature the following speakers:

- Ariadna Michelle Godreau Aubert, Founder and Executive Director, Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico
- Chrishelle Palay, Director, HOME Coalition
- Hannah Perls, Staff Attorney, Harvard Law School Environmental and Energy Law Program
- David Wheaton, Economic Justice Policy Fellow, NAACP LDF

In addition to breakout sessions like “Housing and Climate Change,” the 2023 Forum will feature discussions with Congresswoman and Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus **Pramila Jayapal** (D-WA), U.S. Department of the Treasury Deputy Secretary **Wally Adeyemo**, and Federal Housing Finance Agency Director **Sandra Thompson** about the path forward for ensuring tenant protections and affordable housing for those most in need in America. The Forum will also feature two keynote addresses: one by renowned scholar and social activist **Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II**, and the other by acclaimed sociologist and author **Matthew Desmond**, who will also celebrate the launch of his new book *Poverty, by America* at this year's Forum. [Register to attend NLIHC's 2023 Housing Policy Forum!](#)

NLIHC Encourages Advocates to Participate in Capitol Hill Day

NLIHC invites advocates to participate in our hybrid Capitol Hill Day on Thursday, March 23. Participants will have the opportunity to meet with their members of Congress to urge them to oppose funding cuts to affordable housing and homelessness programs, expand resources for these vital programs, advance anti-racist policies, and support legislation that would improve the lives of millions of low-income people. Advocates can register to attend a February 28 webinar that will help prepare for Capitol Hill Day advocacy [here](#). Capitol Hill Day is part of

NLIHC's *Housing Policy Forum 2023: Onward to Housing Justice*, which will take place on March 21-23 at the Hilton Capitol Hill Hotel in Washington, D.C. Register for the Forum at: bit.ly/3Yfba5R

In preparation for Capitol Hill Day, NLIHC will be hosting a webinar on February 28 from 4 to 5 pm ET that will cover our [policy priorities](#) and provide an overview of what to expect when meeting with members of Congress during Hill Day meetings. Staff from Housing Narrative Lab will also join this year's webinar to share how advocates can incorporate their own stories and experiences into their advocacy to create powerful narratives that make the case for federal resources for affordable housing and homelessness programs. Register for the webinar [here](#).

If you would like to set up appointments for Capitol Hill Day, please contact your state's NLIHC housing advocacy organizer, whose contact information can be found [here](#). Meetings focused on your state and district are in the process of being arranged and scheduled. NLIHC will also offer additional resources for participants in anticipation for Capitol Hill Day.

Register for the preparatory Capitol Hill Day webinar [here](#).

Register for Housing Policy Forum 2023 [here](#).

Leadership Awards Ceremony

NLIHC to Honor Rep. Cori Bush at Housing Leadership Awards Ceremony on March 22

NLIHC will honor Congresswoman Cori Bush (D-MO) at our 41st Annual Housing Leadership Awards Celebration on Wednesday, March 22, from 6:30 to 8 pm at the Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill Hotel in Washington, D.C. Congresswoman Bush will receive the 2023 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award for leading a movement to guarantee housing for all. In her first term in Congress, she introduced legislation to end homelessness by 2025, led a demonstration on the steps of the U.S. Capitol that successfully called on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to extend the eviction moratorium, and introduced legislation to permanently implement an eviction moratorium throughout the pandemic. The Brooke award is named for Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA), who as a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors championed low-income housing. The celebration will also honor John Parvensky and the organization Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico. Donate to NLIHC in these leaders' honor as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#).

Congresswoman Cori Bush is the first Black woman elected to the U.S. Congress from Missouri. She is a registered nurse, community activist, organizer, single mother, and ordained pastor representing the people of Missouri's First Congressional District. As a person who has experienced housing insecurity, evictions, and homelessness, her lived expertise is an essential component of her leadership in advancing housing justice. She has championed legislation that puts racial, social, economic, health, and environmental justice front and center, knowing firsthand that our country's housing crisis is a public health crisis we can and must end.

During her first term in Congress, Representative Bush introduced the “Unhoused Bill of Rights” – a framework for the federal government to permanently end the homelessness crisis by 2025 and provide wraparound services for unhoused community members. She also led a five-day demonstration on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, successfully calling on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to extend its eviction moratorium, and she introduced legislation to permanently implement an eviction moratorium during the pandemic.

Congresswoman Bush will continue to conduct oversight, push to advance policies that guarantee affordable housing for all, increase protections for renters, and hold corporate landlords accountable for harmful practices through a variety of legislative solutions in the 118th Congress.

For her leadership and commitment to advocating for the rights of renters during the pandemic, and for her commitment to ending homelessness, NLIHC is honored to present the 2023 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award to Representative Cori Bush!

In addition to recognizing Congresswoman Bush, NLIHC will present John Parvensky with the 2023 Cushing Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award for his longstanding leadership in the fight for housing and health care justice and equity as an advocate, a supportive housing developer, and a provider of health care for the homeless. As CEO of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless for the past 37 years, he led the development of more than 2,000 supportive housing units. The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award is named for NLIHC’s founder, Cushing Niles Dolbeare, a pioneer of the affordable housing movement. Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico will receive the 2023 Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award for its persistent efforts to ensure a just recovery – including access to safe and affordable housing – in the aftermath of numerous disasters. Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico is a non-profit organization that provides free legal education to groups and communities in the defense of fundamental rights – especially the right to housing. The award is named for former NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley, who led NLIHC for more than 17 years.

Recognize these outstanding leaders by making a donation to NLIHC in their honor! Donate to NLIHC in these leaders’ honor as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#).

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

To learn more about the awards and for event updates, please visit: <http://bit.ly/3TR14oN>

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of February 19

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of February 19:

- “Nonprofit Hospitals Can Improve Community Health Through Housing Investments” *American Progress*, February 21 at: <http://bit.ly/3m3WHvy>
- “Vice President Kamala Harris, HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge to Announce Federal Housing Initiative in Bowie on Wednesday” *Baltimore Sun*, February 17 at: <http://bit.ly/3Ijuo3C>
- “NJ Public Housing Secures \$94 million for Fixes. That’s not Nearly Enough, Advocates Say” *USA Today*, February 20 at: <http://bit.ly/3EA94pz>

NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Mackenzie Pish as Research Analyst

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Mackenzie Pish as a research analyst. Mackenzie will help the Coalition document and report the housing needs of low-income community members across the U.S.

Mackenzie comes to NLIHC with a passion for leveraging cross-sector collaboration and research to advance policies and initiatives that promote housing stability. Prior to joining the Coalition, she worked with Innovation for Justice (i4J) – a social justice-focused legal innovation lab jointly housed at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law and the University of Utah David Eccles School of Business. At i4J, she led community-engaged and housing-related research, service design, and policy work, helping organize tenant-education workshops, co-creating i4J’s [Cost of Eviction Calculator](#), and co-designing the [Housing Stability Legal Advocate Pilot](#), which has been [authorized by the Arizona Supreme Court](#) for use in training and licensing non-lawyer, community-based social service providers to provide upstream legal advice and assistance to low-income people experiencing housing instability.



Mackenzie received her JD in 2020 from the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, where she was a Distinguished Scholar, an editor of the *Arizona Law Review*, and a recipient of the S. Thomas Chandler Public Service Award. She received her BA in political science from the State University of New York at Cortland, where she graduated *summa cum laude*.

Please join us in welcoming Mackenzie to the NLIHC team!

Where to Find Us – February 27

- National Alliance to End Homelessness, “[Innovations and Solutions for Ending Unsheltered Homelessness](#)” – March 1-3, Oakland, CA (Diane Yentel)
- National Housing Conference, “[Solutions for Housing Communications](#)” – March 15, Washington, D.C. (Sarah Saadian)
- New Jersey Housing Collaborative Workgroup – Virtual, March 29 (Lindsay Duvall)
- South Dakota Housing for the Homeless Consortium, Annual Homeless Summit – Pierre, South Dakota, June 13-14 (Diane Yentel and Courtney Cooperman)

NLIHC Staff

Lilly Amechi, Policy Intern

Andrew Aurand, Senior Vice President for Research, x245

Sidney Betancourt, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x200

Victoria Bourret, ERASE Senior Project Coordinator x244

Jen Butler, Vice President of Media Relations and Communications, x239

Alayna Calabro, Senior Policy Analyst, x252

Matthew Clarke, Writer/Editor, x207

Courtney Cooperman, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x263

Bairy Diakite, Director of Operations, x254

Lindsay Duvall, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x206

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316

David Foster, Field Intern

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Sarah Gallagher, Senior Director, ERASE Project, x220

Jordan Goldstein, Communications/Graphic Design Intern

Danita Humphries, Senior Executive Assistant, x226

Nada Hussein, ERASE Project Coordinator, x264

Kendra Johnson, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Kim Johnson, Public Policy Manager, x243

Mike Koprowski, OSAH Campaign Director, x317

Kayla Laywell, Housing Policy Analyst, x231

Mayerline Louis-Juste, Senior Communications Specialist, x201

Khulud Mohammed, Communications/Graphic Design Intern

Steve Moore Sanchez, Development Coordinator, x209

Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291

Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242

Noah Patton, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, x227

Mackenzie Pish, Research Analyst

Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Manager, x246

Benja Reilly, Development Specialist, x234

Khari Reynado, Policy Intern

Gabrielle Ross, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x208

Sarah Saadian, Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Field Organizing, x228

Brooke Schipporeit, Manager of Field Organizing x233

Sophie Siebach-Glover, Research Analyst, x205

Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246

Leslie Villegas, ERASE Intern

Chantelle Wilkinson, OSAH Campaign Manager, x230

Renee Willis, Senior Vice President for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247

Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst, x256

Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225

Zak Zethner, Research Intern