

**Volume 26, Issue 10
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# Take Action

* Final Day to Sign onto Letter Urging Biden Administration to Extend, Improve, and Enforce the CDC Eviction Moratorium!
* Sign Your Organization TODAY onto Letter Supporting Increased Federal Funding for Housing and Homelessness!

# Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness – Highlights

* President Biden Signs American Rescue Plan Act with Nearly $50 Billion in Housing and Homelessness Assistance
* NLIHC to Testify at Senate Banking Committee Hearing on the State of Housing in America During and After COVID-19
* Join March 16 Webinar on Non-Congregate Sheltering and FEMA Reimbursements
* Disaster Recovery and Disability Rights Advocates Call on FEMA to Expand Access to Non-Congregate Sheltering Reimbursements

# Emergency Rental Assistance

* NLIHC, Furman Center, and Housing Initiative at Penn Release Report on Strategies for Emergency Rental Assistance Programs to Serve Tenants Effectively
* New Case Studies Examine Advancing Racial Equity and Serving Extremely Low-Income Households through Emergency Rental Assistance Programs

# Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness – Other

* Join NLIHC’s National Call on Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness Today at 2:30 pm ET
* Recording Available of NLIHC’s March 8 National Call on Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness
* Additional Coronavirus Updates – March 15, 2021
* Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – March 15, 2021

# Congress

* Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act Introduced in the House with Housing Protections for Survivors of Violence
* House Financial Services Committee Holds Hearing on Achieving Racial Equity through Fair Access to Housing and Financial Services

# Fair Housing

* Public Charge Rule No Longer in Effect after Supreme Court Dismisses Appeal

# HUD

* Senate Confirms Representative Marcia Fudge as HUD Secretary

# NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

* “Achieving Universal Housing Assistance” to be Featured at NLIHC’s 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum, March 30-31!
* Join March 25 Webinar on NLIHC’s 2021 Policy Priorities

# NLIHC Leadership Awards

* Celebrate 2021 Housing Leadership Award Honorees: Sen. Sherrod Brown, Rep. Maxine Waters, Joy Johnson, and the Housing Justice Network

# Opportunity Starts at Home

* Report Reveals COVID-19’s Impact on Race and Housing Insecurity in Philadelphia

# Research

* NLIHC to Release *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2021* on March 18
* Urban Institute Projects American Rescue Plan Act Will Significantly Reduce U.S. Poverty Rates
* Research Identifies Challenges in Comparing Evictions across Jurisdictions

# Resources

* COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index Connects Social Vulnerability Factors to Recent COVID Data

# Fact of the Week

* Urban Institute Finds American Rescue Plan Act Will Significantly Reduce Poverty among Black and Latino Households

# From the Field

* Michigan’s Poverty Task Force Releases Policy Recommendations

# NLIHC News

* NLIHC Seeks Website and Graphic Design Specialist
* NLIHC Seeks Development Specialist

# NLIHC in the News

* NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 7

# Take Action

## ****Final Day to Sign on to Letter Urging Biden Administration to Extend, Improve, and Enforce the CDC Eviction Moratorium!****

Today (March 15) is the final day to [sign your organization](https://nlihc.secure.force.com/actions/CapturePetitionNew?actionId=AR00933) on to [a letter](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Recommended-Eviction-Moratorium-Letter_March2021.pdf), already signed by over 2,200 organizations and elected officials, urging the Biden administration to extend, improve, and enforce the current CDC eviction moratorium until the end of the pandemic. The federal eviction moratorium has kept millions of people who otherwise would have been evicted stably housed, but it has significant shortcomings that undermine its public health impacts. The moratorium must be extended beyond its current expiration on March 31 through the end of the pandemic and be improved and enforced.

The Biden administration should:

1. Improve the moratorium order by making its protections automatic and universal
2. Rescind the [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/eviction-moratoria-order-faqs.pdf) issued last year by the CDC that created loopholes in the moratorium’s protections
3. Empower the Department of Justice to enforce the moratorium
4. Create a renter hotline to report abuses

The failure to address issues with the current moratorium has allowed some landlords to wrongfully evict tens of thousands of renters without consequence.

[Please sign your organization](https://nlihc.secure.force.com/actions/CapturePetitionNew?actionId=AR00933) on to the [letter](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Recommended-Eviction-Moratorium-Letter_March2021.pdf) to President Biden, HUD Secretary Fudge and CDC Director Walensky to extend, improve, and enforce the federal eviction moratorium. Elected officials are also encouraged to sign. If you are unsure whether your organization has already signed on, review a list of current signatories [here](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Recommended-Eviction-Moratorium-Letter_March2021.pdf).

The deadline to sign on is today!

## Sign Your Organization TODAY on to Letter Supporting Increased Federal Funding for Housing and Homelessness!

Advocates for housing, community development, and ending homelessness are working together to urge Congress to provide increased funding for HUD and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) housing and community development programs for fiscal year 2022 (FY22). NLIHC encourages all our member and partner organizations to sign on to the letter by April 1 at: [tinyurl.com/4vq836e6](https://nlihc.secure.force.com/actions/CapturePetitionNew?actionId=AR00936&utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=351a9b79c9-cta_022321&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-351a9b79c9-293290537&ct=t(cta_022321))

Congress will decide in the coming weeks how to divide available funding for FY22 among the 12 appropriations subcommittees. These funding allocations for subcommittees, called 302(b) allocations, will determine how much funding is available for HUD and USDA programs on housing, homelessness, and community development in FY22.

State and local governments and the communities they serve rely on federal resources to meet the infrastructure needs of their communities, including community development and affordable housing. Increased investments are more critical than ever this year as families struggle to make ends meet and our nation's affordable housing crisis worsens due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is critical that the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) and Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittees in both the House and Senate receive the highest possible 302(b) allocations. Adequate 302(b) allocations will help the subcommittees have the resources they need to fund the homeless, affordable housing and community development programs at levels that exceed current spending and meet the level of need caused by the pandemic.

Read the letter and sign your organization on by April 1 at: [tinyurl.com/4vq836e6](https://nlihc.secure.force.com/actions/CapturePetitionNew?actionId=AR00936&utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=351a9b79c9-cta_022321&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-351a9b79c9-293290537&ct=t(cta_022321))

# Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness – Highlights

## President Biden Signs American Rescue Plan Act with Nearly $50 Billion in Housing and Homelessness Assistance

President Biden signed into law on March 11 the [American Rescue Plan Act](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/KIN21160-Senate-text.pdf), a $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package with nearly [$50 billion in essential housing and homelessness assistance](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/COVID-Relief-Budget_Reconciliation.pdf?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=c62cbba4d8-cta_022420&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-c62cbba4d8-292697541&ct=t(cta_022420)), including $27.4 billion for rental assistance and $5 billion to assist people experiencing homelessness. These investments will prevent millions of low-income people from losing their homes during the pandemic and will provide cities and states with the resources they need to help people experiencing homelessness find housing and remain safely housed during the pandemic and beyond.

After passing the Senate on a party line vote on March 6, the bill went back to the House for a final vote on the package amended by the Senate. The House passed the bill by a vote of 220 to 211 on March 10, sending it to President Biden for his signature. The final bill allocates $21.55 billion for emergency rental assistance, including a $2.5 billion set-aside for high-need communities, as well as $5 billion for new emergency housing vouchers for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.

The bill includes an additional $5 billion to assist people experiencing homelessness. These funds can be used to: provide rental assistance and supportive services; develop affordable rental housing; and acquire non-congregate shelters, such as hotel and motel rooms, to be converted into permanent affordable housing.. In addition, the bill provides $10 billion for homeowner assistance, $100 million for housing counseling, $20 million for fair housing, and $5 billion for utility assistance, among other crucial provisions.

Read NLIHC’s analysis of the housing and homelessness provisions in the bill at: <https://tinyurl.com/hh8sdjsy>

View Senate Democrats’ estimate of emergency rental assistance allocations for states and localities at: <https://tinyurl.com/345h9ymh>

View NLIHC’s estimate of homelessness assistance allocations for states and localities at: <https://tinyurl.com/ys59cu82>

## NLIHC to Testify at Senate Banking Committee Hearing on the State of Housing in America During and After COVID-19

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel will testify at a Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs hearing, “Home = Life: The State of Housing in America,” on Tuesday, March 16 at 2 pm. Learn more about the hearing and watch the livestream at: <https://bit.ly/38rAq0L>

The hearing will explore the state of housing in America, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In her testimony, Diane will describe how the coronavirus has exacerbated the impact of the affordable housing crisis on the lowest-income renters, and how meaningful federal investments in affordable housing solutions will not only help the nation recover from the pandemic but become more just and equitable in its aftermath.

The full list of hearing witnesses includes:

* Diane Yentel, NLIHC president and CEO
* Chris Herbert, managing director, Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies
* Nikitra Bailey, executive vice president, Center for Responsible Lending
* Edward Pinto, director, AEI Housing Center
* Ed DeMarco, president, Housing Policy Council

Learn more about the hearing and watch the livestream at: <https://bit.ly/38rAq0L>

## Join March 16 Webinar on Non-Congregate Sheltering and FEMA Reimbursements

NLIHC’s Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and the National League of Cities (NLC) will hold a webinar on the use of FEMA reimbursements to house individuals experiencing homelessness and residents of congregate care facilities in non-congregate shelters such as hotel rooms. The webinar will be held on Tuesday, March 16 at 1:30 pm ET. Register for the free webinar [here](https://bit.ly/2O2sEmP).

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, homelessness and housing advocates have pushed for the use of FEMA-reimbursed government funds to shelter unhoused individuals and residents of congregate living facilities in hotel rooms and other non-congregate shelter. Unhoused individuals and individuals with disabilities are at particular risk from the virus and many reside in facilities that make stopping infection difficult. With recent [news](https://nlihc.org/resource/confirmed-fema-change-100-reimbursement-non-congregate-shelter-applies-retroactively) that FEMA will increase the percentage of reimbursements it provides, advocates around the country are working to further non-congregate sheltering programs

The March 16 webinar will focus on this life saving program, including how the program has operated, opportunities for further expansion, and how the program can interface with permanent housing solutions as the pandemic subsides.

Webinar presenters will be Ann Oliva, visiting fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Jason Elliott, senior advisor to California Governor Gavin Newsom, Joy Moses, director of the Homeless Research Institute at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Germán Parodi and Shaylin Sluzalis, co-executive directors of the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies, and Andreanecia Morris, executive director of Housing NOLA.

Register for the free webinar at: <https://bit.ly/2O2sEmP>

## Disaster Recovery and Disability Rights Advocates Call on FEMA to Expand Access to Non-congregate Sheltering Reimbursements

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) and a group of disability rights advocates sent a [letter](https://bit.ly/2OLBzto) to FEMA Acting Administrator Robert Fenton calling on the agency to issue guidance expanding access to Public Assistance (PA)-funded reimbursements for non-congregate sheltering in hotel rooms, ensuring that all individuals experiencing homelessness and residents of congregate care facilities can access safe shelter as the coronavirus pandemic continues.

Specifically, the letter requests that FEMA clarify how organizations can access the up-front funding for non-congregate sheltering approved by President Biden’s January 21 [Executive Order](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/21/extend-federal-support-to-governors-use-of-national-guard-to-respond-to-covid-19-and-to-increase-reimbursement-and-other-assistance-provided-to-states/), issue guidance stating that all residents of congregate care facilities and individuals experiencing homelessness can have their hotel stays reimbursed, ensure that supportive services and case management needed for individuals with disabilities to fully access non-congregate sheltering are reimbursable, and allow homeless service providers and centers for independent living to be directly reimbursed by FEMA through the PA program.

The Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition includes more than 850 local, state, and national organizations, including many organizations with first-hand experience recovering after disasters. The DHRC works to ensure a complete and equitable disaster housing recovery for all survivors of disasters, including those with the lowest incomes who are often the hardest hit by disasters and have the fewest resources to recover. The DHRC was joined on the letter by the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), Alliance for Community Services, Atlantis Community, Inc., IMPACT Center for Independent Living, International Rescue Committee and Recovery Coalition (IRRC), Roads to Freedom Center for Independent Living, and the World Institute on Disability.

Non-congregate sheltering has the potential to save the lives of many congregate care facility residents, who account for 40% of all reported COVID-19-related deaths. This benefit is particularly important for facilities in communities of color, where systemic racism and discrimination have led to disproportionate impacts. People experiencing homelessness suffer from high rates of chronic diseases, mental health conditions, and other health conditions that place them at unique risk of death due to the virus. People experiencing homeless that contract coronavirus are twice as likely to be hospitalized, two to four times as likely to require critical care, and two to three times as likely to die than others in the general public.

While FEMA PA funds have been used to move some individuals experiencing homelessness to hotels and motels during the pandemic, unclear eligibility rules exclude many, leaving them at increased risk of illness and death. As stated in the letter’s conclusion, “ensuring that people experiencing homelessness and individuals with disabilities, whether they are institutionalized or are unhoused, can access these important assistance programs is a legal and ethical imperative.”

Read the letter to FEMA at: <https://bit.ly/2OLBzto>

Learn more about federal assistance during the pandemic at: <https://bit.ly/3qGiu95>

# Emergency Rental Assistance

## NLIHC, Furman Center, and Housing Initiative at Penn Release Report on Strategies for Emergency Rental Assistance Programs to Serve Tenants Effectively

NLIHC, the NYU Furman Center, and the University of Pennsylvania’s Housing Initiative at Penn released [*Learning from Emergency Rental Assistance Programs: Lessons from Fifteen Case Studies*](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/ERA-Programs-Case-Study.pdf) on March 9. The report examines 15 emergency rental assistance programs and how they serve renters, especially those with the lowest incomes and greatest vulnerabilities. The report identifies more than 30 specific strategies in six key areas.

NLIHC and its research partners interviewed administrators of 15 emergency rental assistance programs that represented rural, urban, pre-existing (i.e., those that existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic), and new programs (i.e., those begun during the pandemic). The interviews focused on the key challenges program administrators faced, the strategies they used to address these challenges, and the lessons current and future program administrators can take away. The interviews expanded upon findings from our previous survey of 220 emergency rental assistance programs (See *Memo* [2/01](https://nlihc.org/resource/study-emergency-rental-assistance-programs-identifies-barriers-and-best-practices)).

The report identifies six key lesson areas with multiple strategies learned in each. The first five lesson areas are increasing tenant take-up, targeting vulnerable groups, engaging landlords, boosting efficiency, and effectively partnering with nonprofits. The sixth lesson area is not limited to program administrators, but also relevant for funders, including the federal government and state or local legislatures: the necessity of clear and consistently flexible guidelines that programs are expected to meet for their funding. The report provides more than 30 specific strategies across all six lesson areas to improve program efficacy.

*Learning from Emergency Rental Assistance Programs: Lessons from Fifteen Case Studies* is available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/ERA-Programs-Case-Study.pdf>

## New Case Studies Examine Advancing Racial Equity and Serving Extremely Low-Income Households through Emergency Rental Assistance Programs

NLIHC released two study briefs on March 12 illustrating how emergency rental assistance programs incorporate racial equity in their program design to effectively serve extremely low-income households. The case studies feature the Santa Clara County (CA) Homelessness Prevention System, led by Destination: Home and Sacred Heart Community Service, and the State of Washington's Eviction Rent Assistance program.

NLIHC interviewed administrators from the two programs representing two distinct structures: one community-based program and one statewide program. Each case study provides a quick overview of the program and key strategies adopted by program administrators to prioritize the most vulnerable tenants. They highlight how critical partnerships with community organizations, flexible program design, and above all an intent to address inequities in housing services provided to marginalized populations guided administrators as they developed their program. The case studies illustrate how administrators intend to modify and improve their programs for the next round of emergency rental assistance. Administrators from both programs discussed their strategies on a recent NLIHC webinar.

The case of the Santa Clara County Homelessness Prevention System is available at: <https://bit.ly/3qFq8Ar>

The case of the State of Washington's Eviction Rent Assistance program is available at: <https://bit.ly/3tedpqm>

# Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness – Other

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

Join today’s (March 15) national call on coronavirus, housing, and homelessness at 2:30-4 pm ET. We will provide details of the American Rescue Plan, including the housing and homelessness provisions and expansion of the Child Tax Credit. Kathryn Leifheit and Dr. Chelsea Shover from UCLA will share insights from their research on COVID-19 mortality among people experiencing homelessness and Jackie Vimo from the National Immigration Law Center will discuss American Rescue Plan resources available to mixed-status immigrant families. We will also receive field updates from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Minnesota; learn the latest on the CDC eviction moratorium; and more.

Register for the national call at: [https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan](https://nlihc.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e702259618becdc3f0451bd5d&id=caa293d514&e=e814653c2a)

See the full agenda [here](https://nlihc.org/covid-19-working-groupcalls).

## Recording Available of NLIHC’s March 8 National Call on Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

During the most recent national call on [coronavirus, disasters, housing, and homelessness](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKNlaMiqa3c), we discussed renters’ experiences during COVID-19, learned about a new resource as part of the “Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homelessness Response,” heard about the disproportionate impact of eviction filings on women of color, and received updates from the field and Capitol Hill.

Eileen Divringi from the [Federal Reserve Board of Philadelphia](https://www.philadelphiafed.org/) discussed [renters’ experiences during COVID-19](https://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/housing-and-neighborhoods/renters-experiences-during-covid-19). Since the beginning of the pandemic, 24 percent of renter households have experienced some level of housing insecurity because they were unable to pay rent. The report found Black and Latino renters are more likely than other households to have missed rent payments at some point since the beginning of the pandemic.

Former Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Matthew Doherty shared a new [resource](https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2-24-21_TargetingEmergencyRentalAssistance.pdf?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=d8ba93335c-DHRC-Update-3.8.2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-d8ba93335c-291742445&ct=t(DHRC-Update-3.8.2021)) from the “[Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homelessness Response](https://housingequityframework.org/?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=d8ba93335c-DHRC-Update-3.8.2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-d8ba93335c-291742445&ct=t(DHRC-Update-3.8.2021)).” The resource describes how emergency rental assistance program administrators can center programs on preventing homelessness and addressing racial inequities.

Claire Ewing-Nelson from the [National Women’s Law Center](https://nwlc.org/) (NWLC) shared findings from a recent [analysis of U.S. Census Bureau COVID-19 Household Pulse Surveys](https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-analysis-of-u-s-census-bureau-covid-19-household-pulse-surveys/?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=d8ba93335c-DHRC-Update-3.8.2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-d8ba93335c-291742445&ct=t(DHRC-Update-3.8.2021)). The analysis indicated one in three Black women and nearly three in ten Latina renters reported their household is not caught up on rent, compared to about 12 percent of white, non-Hispanic women.

We received field updates from [Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing](https://www.archacadiana.org/) in Louisiana, [Prosperity Indiana](https://www.prosperityindiana.org/), and [EAH Housing](https://www.eahhousing.org/) in California. NLIHC’s Sarah Saadian provided updates on the [American Rescue Plan Act](https://nlihc.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e702259618becdc3f0451bd5d&id=97ba2dfa01&e=ea65f33f49), Department of Treasury [ERA program](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/FAQs_Emergency-Rental-Assistance.pdf?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=d8ba93335c-DHRC-Update-3.8.2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-d8ba93335c-291742445&ct=t(DHRC-Update-3.8.2021)), and [federal eviction moratorium](https://nlihc.secure.force.com/actions/CapturePetitionNew?actionId=AR00933&utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=d8ba93335c-DHRC-Update-3.8.2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e090383b5e-d8ba93335c-291742445&ct=t(DHRC-Update-3.8.2021)).

NLIHC hosts national calls on coronavirus, disasters, housing, and homelessness every week. On today’s call, we’ll have updates on the resources in the recently enacted American Rescue Plan, insights from a new report on COVID-19 mortality rates among people experiencing homelessness, get updates from the field, and more. Register for today’s call (Monday, March 15 at 2:30 pm ET) at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Watch a recording of the March 8 call at: [tinyurl.com/ut86kd2j](http://tinyurl.com/ut86kd2j)

Access presentation slides at: [tinyurl.com/358zv92d](http://tinyurl.com/358zv92d)

## Additional Coronavirus Updates – March 15, 2021

**National Updates**

*Department of Housing and Urban Development*

A [HUD factsheet](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Eligible-ESG-Program-Costs-for-Infectious-Disease-Preparedness.pdf) on eligible ESG program costs for infectious disease preparedness has been updated to include costs specific to supporting COVID-19 vaccine distribution efforts for people experiencing homelessness.

*Advocacy*

The DHRC sent a [letter](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/NCS-Letter_03082021.pdf) on March 8 to Acting FEMA Director Robert Fenton to express concern over issues with FEMA reimbursed non-congregate sheltering that have prevented many individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals with disabilities, and residents of congregate care facilities from utilizing this solution.

*Research*

A [pre-print research study](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.03.05.21253019v1.full.pdf) that reviewed public COVID-19 data from U.S. cities found that people experiencing homelessness had 30% higher case fatality rates than the general population, suggesting that they should be prioritized for vaccines. The increased risk was especially pronounced in younger age groups, suggesting that age-based vaccine eligibility criteria may be inappropriate for people experiencing homelessness.

The Eviction Lab conducted a [preliminary analysis](https://evictionlab.org/six-months-cdc/) of the effectiveness of the CDC eviction moratorium. The data indicate that where someone lives plays a major role in determining how well the CDC moratorium protects them.

*Reporting*

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel spoke live on [*MSNBC*](https://twitter.com/RuhleOnMSNBC/status/1369694358740602880)with Stephanie Ruhle about the unprecedented $50 billion in housing and homelessness resources included in the American Rescue Plan Act, why it is urgently needed, and why President Biden must use executive authority to extend the federal eviction moratorium.

An op-ed in the [*New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/opinion/covid-eviction-prison-internet-policy.html)examines how emergency interventions established during the pandemic have provided a glimpse into what is possible: “The public has a genuine but brief window over the next few months to make America a fairer, more just and more humane place.” NLIHC’s Diane Yentel discusses how this moment offers an “extraordinary opportunity” to work with President Biden and Congress to expand tenant protections, invest in public housing, and achieve universal housing vouchers. “Our job now is to build off this broad recognition that housing is health care,” said Diane Yentel.

[*The Intercept*](https://theintercept.com/2021/03/05/covid-rent-government-assistance-landlords/)examines shortcomings of the federal government’s efforts to protect renters during the pandemic. “There’s been a patchwork of resources and protections at the federal, state, and local level that has kept most renters stably housed, but there’s been an alarming number of evictions that have proceeded despite the protections,” said NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

The [*Wall Street Journal*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/behind-on-rent-you-may-qualify-for-federal-assistance-11615472482)discusses the emergency rental assistance included in the American Rescue Plan Act, linking to NLIHC’s database of state and local emergency rental assistance programs.

[*CNBC*](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/03/06/what-to-do-with-aid-from-third-stimulus.html)reports on the provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act, including the additional funding for emergency rental assistance. The article points readers to NLIHC’s COVID-19 rental assistance program [database](https://nlihc.org/rental-assistance).

The [*New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/03/06/business/stimulus-check-plan-details)discusses the provisions in the latest COVID-19 relief package, including the approximately $27 billion for emergency rental and utility assistance. The article links to NLIHC’s [fact sheet](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/COVID-Relief-Budget_Reconciliation.pdf) on the housing provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act.

[*NBC News*](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/among-homeless-populations-deep-mistrust-vaccines-here-s-how-cities-n1259761)reports that across the country, many cities have begun vaccinating individuals housed within their shelter systems, but few municipalities have gone into the streets where the issue is compounded by mistrust, logistical hurdles, and limited resources.

[Pew Trusts](https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2021/03/01/states-fail-to-prioritize-homeless-people-for-vaccines) reports that few states have prioritized people experiencing homelessness for COVID-19 vaccines. According to the [National Academy for State Health Policy](https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2021/03/01/states-fail-to-prioritize-homeless-people-for-vaccines), at least 20 states do not include people living in homeless shelters in their vaccine distribution plans. Few states even mention unsheltered individuals.

**State and Local News**

*Alabama*

While [Alabama renters](https://whnt.com/news/huntsville-madison-county-emergency-rental-assistance-programs-lag-behind-statewide-assistance/) began applying for the statewide emergency rental assistance program on March 1, residents of [Huntsville](https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/covid-19-emergency-rental-assistance/) and Madison County have been unable to apply for their local rental assistance programs. [Emergency Rental Assistance Alabama](https://www.ahfa.com/renters/emergency-rental-assistance-alabama) says that if local rent relief programs are not operating yet, ERA Alabama might accept their application.

*Arizona*

During the first round of CARES Act funding, [Pima County and Tucson](https://tucson.com/news/local/tucsons-housing-crisis-compounded-by-months-without-relief-funds-skyrocketing-rents/article_95485f20-9720-5f05-bf2a-83559af32c0b.html) had two separate rental assistance programs with different eligibility requirements. The two entities are consolidating their efforts into one system, but they must vote on the contracts that will make the funds available. More than 4,000 applications for emergency rental assistance are pending, and while $31 million is currently available, it will not be dispersed until the city and county approve the new contracts.

*California*

[About 700 individuals](https://apnews.com/article/homeless-shelters-california-coronavirus-pandemic-san-diego-a503ec890b2ffd509122710f53af7941) who have been sheltered for months at the San Diego Convention Center are scheduled to move into smaller shelters starting March 22. Preliminary planning is underway to convert the convention center into a mass vaccination site.

The [*San Francisco Chronicle*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/local/article/S-F-pays-61-000-a-year-for-one-tent-to-house-16001074.php)reports that the city is paying $16.1 million to shelter individuals in over 260 tents placed in empty lots around the city – a price tag that amounts to more than $61,000 per tent annually. While FEMA will provide 100% reimbursement to state and local governments for housing individuals in hotels and motels, tent sites are not eligible for FEMA reimbursement.

Tenants in Sacramento are calling attention to a [loophole](https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/sacramento/tenants-claim-landlord-loophole-california-eviction-ban/103-0e3dac53-ad36-4161-b89a-4d1b4715e978) in the COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act (SB91) that allows landlords to evict tenants for “just cause.” A citywide measure on November’s ballot that failed last year would have protected these tenants.

*Colorado*

[Eviction filings in Colorado](https://gazette.com/premium/with-state-aid-trickling-out-colorado-eviction-filings-jump-in-wake-of-moratorium-expiration/article_fbfbaeb6-7ea5-11eb-b30d-4358ffe8dadc.html) have grown since January 1, an increase advocates and lawyers attribute to Governor Jared Polis’ decision not to renew the statewide eviction moratorium. The situation has been exacerbated by the slow distribution of aid from Colorado’s Emergency Housing Assistance Program. By the end of February, the program had received more than 13,000 applications.

*Connecticut*

Carabetta Management Company [filed 10 eviction lawsuits](https://www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/bella_vista_evictions/) between February 17 and February 28 against senior tenants and tenants with disabilities at a New Haven apartment complex. According to the New Haven Independent’s review of court records, New Haven landlords have filed 161 eviction lawsuits since last October.

A landmark bill that would [make housing a human right](https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2021-03-08/housing-homelessness/ct-lawmakers-consider-bill-to-end-homelessness/a73447-1) for all Connecticut residents is making its way through the General Assembly. The “[Act Establishing a Right to Housing](https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/TOB/S/PDF/2021SB-00194-R01-SB.PDF)” (SB 194) aims to address housing and homelessness issues exacerbated by COVID-19. The bill would reduce the impact of criminal and eviction history on housing access, increase access to legal counsel for evictions and foreclosures, and more.

An op-ed in the [*CT Mirror*](https://ctmirror.org/category/ct-viewpoints/right-to-counsel-is-just-as-much-a-racial-justice-as-a-housing-policy/)discusses why right to counsel is just as much a racial justice issue as a housing policy issue. Despite state and federal eviction moratoriums, nearly 3,000 Connecticut families have faced eviction in the past 10 months, and over half of these families were Black or Latino, even though these groups combined comprise less than a quarter of the overall population.

*Florida*

The [*Sun Sentinel*](https://www.sun-sentinel.com/business/fl-bz-south-florida-rental-assistance-20210306-la3tewytsvdr7dh2oslqpwtmna-story.html)reports that while thousands of South Florida tenants fall further into debt, millions of dollars in federal rental assistance remain in county bank accounts as officials develop plans to distribute the aid. Broward County, which received its $59 million allocation in late January, is far behind Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties in determining how to disburse the federal rent relief funds.

As [evictions in Florida](https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/florida-evictions-reaching-pre-pandemic-levels/67-4eda67ee-615e-4312-aab3-e210b0175736) reach pre-pandemic levels, lawyers and experts caution that the state is heading toward a major eviction crisis. Many Floridians have fallen through the cracks of the federal eviction moratorium. In Hillsborough County, nearly 1,700 evictions were filed between December 28 and February 21.

*Idaho*

Jesse Tree, a local nonprofit, is partnering with the University of Idaho College of Law to provide [legal aid and rental assistance](https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/local-nonprofit-partners-with-university-of-idaho-college-of-law-to-prevent-evictions/277-501eb5a8-b9f8-445b-b3c9-1f4374f163a2) for renters facing eviction. Despite the federal eviction moratorium, over 300 evictions were filed in Ada and Canyon County courts from September to December 2020. In 2021, there have been over 200 eviction hearings in the Treasure Valley.

*Illinois*

Governor J.B. Pritzker’s latest executive order extending the eviction moratorium [adds a new legal protection](https://www.northernpublicradio.org/post/governor-s-eviction-moratorium-extension-expands-tenant-protections) for tenants. [Executive Order 2021-05](https://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/Executive-Orders/ExecutiveOrder2021-05.aspx) prevents landlords from pursuing legal action in court against a tenant as long as the tenants give notice of their inability to pay and the tenant is not a “direct threat to the health and safety of other tenants or an immediate and severe risk to property.”

*Indiana*

The pandemic has [exacerbated housing insecurity and homelessness](https://thestatehousefile.com/44601/covid-19-increases-need-for-homeless-shelters-as-more-hoosiers-experience-eviction-and-unemployment/) in Indianapolis. Indianapolis ranks sixth in the country for eviction filings during the pandemic, and the pandemic has made it more difficult for homeless shelters to provide services.

Indiana’s Rental Assistance Portal is now accepting applications for the Indiana Emergency Rental Assistance (IERA) program. A link to apply along with a series of informational resources in English and Spanish can be found on the top banner of [www.indianahousingnow.org](http://www.indianahousingnow.org). Renters living in Elkhart, Hamilton, Lake, Marion, and St. Joseph counties, along with the city of Fort Wayne, cannot apply to the IERA because these municipalities have their own programs. None of the local programs are accepting applications yet, but they plan to do so later this month.

*Kansas*

The Wichita Workforce Center and the city of Wichita have partnered to offer in-person appointments to [assist people](https://www.kfdi.com/2021/03/07/wichita-workforce-centers-providing-in-person-help-for-rent-assistance-applications/) applying for the [Wichita Emergency Rental Assistance Program](https://www.wichita.gov/Housing/Pages/WERAP.aspx). Residents can schedule an appointment [online](https://workforce-ks.com/book-an-appointment/) or by calling 316-771-6800.

*Kentucky*

Kentucky’s $297 million [Healthy at Home Eviction Relief Program](https://www.messenger-inquirer.com/news/local/dame-encourages-home-eviction-relief-program-for-mclean-countians-needing-aid/article_3fe68f42-e6c1-5d58-9fbd-99577f9ef2fb.html) reopened on February 15. As of March 1, the program has received 8,000 applicants requesting $12.6 million.

*Louisiana*

Governor John Bel Edwards [announced](https://mailchi.mp/2a8a2bd4e6ec/louisianas-us-treasury-emergency-rental-assistance-program) on March 5 the launch of [Louisiana’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program](https://www.lastaterent.com/). The Louisiana Housing Corporation, in partnership with the Louisiana Office of Community Development, will administer the $308 million program.

[East Baton Rouge](https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/article_002cdd24-8032-11eb-83a1-7f69bc61d62a.html) has launched a [new website](http://www.ebremergencysolutions.com/) to assess the needs of struggling tenants as it prepares to receive additional federal rental assistance funds. Through its new website, the city-parish says it will “rapidly and efficiently” prioritize how it will distribute rental assistance.

*Maine*

COVID-19 is exacerbating the many challenges faced by [Mainers experiencing homelessness](https://www.centralmaine.com/2021/03/06/central-mainers-who-are-homeless-feel-so-stuck-in-gripping-pandemic-winter/). NLIHC estimates Maine has a shortage of more than 21,000 affordable, available rental units for extremely low-income renters. “There’s clearly a significant shortage in Maine. It’s a bit less severe than in other areas of the country, but there’s still a significant shortage,” said NLIHC Vice President of Research Andrew Aurand.

*Michigan*

People who are homeless are [eligible for COVID-19 vaccines in Michigan](https://apnews.com/article/health-michigan-coronavirus-pandemic-gretchen-whitmer-ede5644a129aabd664cda21e48f6dadf) starting Monday, March 8. “Our vulnerable populations are high priority for us right now,” said Ingham County Health Officer Linda Vail, according to the [*Lansing State Journal*](https://www.lansingstatejournal.com/story/news/2021/03/05/michigan-vaccinate-homeless-population/4580481001/). “This opens the door to make sure that population is also vaccinated and we don’t continue to have outbreaks in shelters.”

*Minnesota*

Minnesota state officials are working to [prevent an avalanche of evictions](https://www.twincities.com/2021/03/08/minnesota-prepares-for-glut-of-evictions-once-pandemic-ban-ends/) when Governor Tim Walz’s emergency order is lifted, ending the statewide eviction moratorium. A Senate housing committee passed an “off-ramp” bill that would provide a 60-day phase-out period during which landlords would have to provide notices to tenants before filing evictions.

*Missouri*

St. Louis Circuit Judge Michael Stelzer on March 1 [extended](https://news.stlpublicradio.org/government-politics-issues/2021-03-02/st-louis-judge-extends-eviction-moratorium-through-april-5-to-help-families) the city’s eviction moratorium through April 5. The city has not yet distributed the $9 million in rental assistance funds it received from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

*Nebraska*

This week, Douglas County courts are scheduled to hear [nearly 70 eviction cases](https://www.wowt.com/2021/03/08/millions-in-rental-assistance-to-be-doled-out-as-eviction-cases-rise-in-douglas-county/), nearing pre-pandemic numbers. Douglas County has made $2 million in leftover CARES Act funds available for rental assistance.

The [Omaha City Council](https://www.ketv.com/article/omaha-city-council-unanimously-passes-resolution-to-provide-dollar222-million-in-rental-assistance/35701421) voted unanimously to approve $22.2 million of federal rental assistance. According to Legal Aid of Nebraska, eviction filings started to rise at the end of last year as landlords found ways to circumvent the federal eviction moratorium.

*Nevada*

[Nevada state legislators](https://thisisreno.com/2021/03/legislation-would-automatically-seal-records-for-pandemic-related-evictions/) are considering a bill ([AB 141](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021/Bill/7469/Overview)) that would automatically seal records for pandemic-related evictions. Despite federal and state moratoriums, [thousands of people](https://www.nevadacurrent.com/2020/11/27/federal-protection-state-rental-assistance-not-preventing-all-evictions/) have been evicted in Nevada. [Landlord groups](https://pvtimes.com/news/landlords-oppose-proposed-eviction-reforms-96578/) are opposing the proposed eviction reforms.

*North Carolina*

The [North Carolina General Assembly passed](https://nchousing.org/legislative-alert-hb-196-passes/) on March 4 the [2021 COVID-19 Response and Relief Bill](https://www.ncleg.gov/BillLookUp/2021/H196) (HB 196/SB 172). The housing provisions in the bill impact the administration of new rental assistance funding administered by the NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency. The North Carolina Housing Coalition is concerned that the provisions will [greatly delay and frustrate the state’s efforts](https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/article249697408.html) to ensure that rental assistance reaches those most in need of assistance in a timely manner.

A diverse group of stakeholders in North Carolina, known as the Eviction Prevention Working Group, formed last December to brainstorm policy interventions to prevent the state’s looming eviction tsunami. Several members of the group penned an op-ed in [*NC Policy Watch*](http://www.ncpolicywatch.com/2021/03/08/nc-must-act-with-speed-and-transparency-to-distribute-rental-utility-relief/)outlining several principles that should guide the state’s approach to distributing federal rent relief to the estimated 435,000 North Carolinians behind on their rent.

*Oregon*

The [*Portland Tribune*](https://pamplinmedia.com/pt/266-politics/500448-401136-oregon-legislative-leaders-announce-plan-for-housing-spending)reports that Oregon lawmakers are ready to invest $500 million in state funds, along with an even larger amount of federal funds, to keep people housed, find them temporary shelters, and expand options for future homeownership.

The [*Corvallis Gazette-Times*](https://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/south-corvallis-motel-to-be-repurposed-for-homeless/article_0e6c9888-0253-5df2-a34c-9727058eb74f.html)reports that Corvallis Housing First received just under $2.5 million to purchase the Corvallis Budget Inn and turn the 24-room hotel into housing for people experiencing homelessness. The funds are part of [Project Turnkey](https://oregoncf.org/grants-and-scholarships/grants/project-turnkey/), an initiative that is using $65 million in state funding for acquiring motels and hotels to house individuals experiencing homelessness and those displaced by last year’s wildfires.

*Pennsylvania*

The Pittsburgh City Council on March 2 unanimously approved a [citywide eviction moratorium](https://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2021/03/02/Pittsburgh-City-Council-gives-green-light-to-citywide-eviction-moratorium-covid-19/stories/202103020132) that will remain in effect until a local health emergency order is lifted. The measure prohibits landlords from evicting tenants, or from refusing to renew lease agreements, for unpaid rent due to COVID-related income loss or increased medical expenses.

A local [landlord group is suing the Pittsburgh City Council](https://triblive.com/local/landlord-group-sues-pittsburgh-city-council-over-eviction-moratorium/) over the city’s eviction moratorium. The lawsuit claims the ordinance goes beyond the powers granted to the city by state law, and it seeks to declare the moratorium illegal and unconstitutional.

[Lancaster County](https://lancasteronline.com/news/politics/lancaster-county-housing-authority-looking-to-double-amount-of-rental-assistance-available-to-residents/article_6e9ff6e4-7c66-11eb-ba29-bf514c1535c2.html) commissioners approved a request by the Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authority to apply for an additional $19.6 million from Pennsylvania’s share of federal rental assistance. If the state approves the request, these funds would add to the $16.2 million the county received directly from the federal government through Treasury’s Emergency Rental Assistance program.

*Tennessee*

Judge Rachel Bell of the General Sessions Court of Nashville-Davidson County launched the [L.E.G.A.C.Y. Housing Resource Diversionary Court Program](https://gscourt.nashville.gov/about-us/judges/division-viii-judge-rachel-l-bell/l-e-g-a-c-y-housing-resource-diversionary-court-and-program/) to help tenants avoid eviction through settlements with their landlords. The program uses CARES Act funds to provide rental assistance. [Over 1,800 pending eviction cases](https://www.wsmv.com/news/new-court-program-protects-renters-from-eviction/article_3813cdf8-7d4c-11eb-be7f-8b43792418de.html) are pending in the Nashville area.

*Texas*

[Texas Housers](https://texashousers.org/2021/03/10/grace-ordinance-houston-evictions/) discusses Houston’s grace period eviction ordinance, explaining why it was enacted too late for many renters and how it should be improved.

*Utah*

[Utahns in need of rental assistance](https://www.ksl.com/article/50117078/rent-assistance-on-hold-as-utah-prepares-to-launch-new-application) will have to wait until the state launches its new application process. Applications have been on hold to ensure that new federal guidelines for the rental relief funds are met. Beginning March 15, Utahns can apply through a single, centralized [online application](https://rentrelief.utah.gov/). Applicants must request funds from local community action agencies.

*Virginia*

Family Crisis Support Services (FCSS) in Southwest Virginia has been awarded [$200,000 from the $2.6 million Virginia Eviction Reduction Program](https://www.timesnews.net/news/family-crisis-support-services-one-of-four-virginia-agencies-to-get-eviction-reduction-grants/article_4e3c3644-8056-11eb-ab6c-db8bc3740ce2.html). While FCSS has provided eviction prevention and homelessness services long before the pandemic, COVID-19 has exacerbated the area’s housing crisis. “The affordable housing crisis predates the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have to address the underlying causes of evictions if we want to emerge stronger and continue moving Virginia forward,” said Governor Ralph Northam during the grant announcement.

*Washington*

The [*Seattle Times*](https://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/state-lawmakers-advance-eviction-protections-as-end-of-moratorium-approaches/)reports that state lawmakers on March 4 advanced a proposal requiring payment plans and other protections for tenants who have fallen behind on rent. The legislation, which must still pass the state House of Representatives, comes as the statewide eviction moratorium is set to expire on March 31 and [more than 134,000 Washington households](https://www.theolympian.com/news/politics-government/article249736778.html) are behind on rent.

## Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – March 15, 2021

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition is convening and supporting disaster-impacted communities to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts reach all impacted households, including the lowest-income and most marginalized people who are often the hardest-hit by disasters and have the fewest resources to recover.

Learn more about the DHRC’s policy recommendations [here](https://nlihc.org/explore-issues/projects-campaigns/disaster-housing-recovery/policy).

**Reporting**

An op-ed in the [*Quad-City Times*](https://qctimes.com/opinion/columnists/column-climate-policy-should-not-forget-the-homeless/article_0aa2c450-7e32-56fd-ab79-3b91c445aa9f.html)urges federal and state investments in climate solutions to include funding for placement services that protect and house those in need – especially unsheltered individuals. As natural disasters increase in frequency and intensity, more residents throughout the south are becoming displaced.

**Winter Storms**

[FEMA Resource: Navigating Recovery for Texans After Severe Winter Storms](https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/navigating-recovery-texans-after-severe-winter-storms)

President Biden on March 9 approved a Major Disaster Declaration for [Louisiana](https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210309/president-joseph-r-biden-jr-approves-major-disaster-declaration-louisiana) to supplement recovery efforts in the areas affected by the severe winter storms. The declaration makes FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) available to 23 parishes.

Louisiana residents who have received disaster assistance after they suffered hurricane damage [must re-register](https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210311/fema-registration-required-winter-storm-damage-even-if-you-registered) for assistance if they incurred damage from February’s winter storms.

[Renters in the 16 counties](https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210308/renters-may-be-eligible-fema-disaster-assistance) designated for FEMA individual assistance who sustained damage or losses from the Oklahoma severe winter storms may be eligible for federal disaster assistance. Renters who face eviction or have been evicted from their storm-damaged apartment complex – whether their unit had damage or not – may be eligible for disaster assistance.

The [*Austin American-Statesman*](https://www.statesman.com/story/news/2021/03/10/austin-aid-groups-stepped-up-shelter-homeless-during-texas-freeze/6886608002/)reports Austin Mutual Aid sheltered nearly 500 people in hotels during the severe winter storms. The last people moved out of those hotel rooms on March 8, having stayed for several weeks while the group worked to see them off into more permanent housing or back onto the streets. The founder of Austin Mutual Aid said groups like his had to step up after the city failed to adequately help its estimated 2,500 unsheltered residents.

**Wildfires in the West**

Lane County Human Services of Eugene received $5.6 million in Project Turnkey funds for a 50-room hotel and Northwest Coastal Housing of Lincoln City is receiving $3.3 million for a 42-room hotel. Priority for the Eugene and Lincoln City project will be given to those displaced by the wildfires. A [Douglas County agency](https://www.kezi.com/content/news/Douglas-County-could-win-grant-to-use-hotels-to-house-homeless-573927311.html) could be receiving millions of dollars to buy a hotel that could be used to shelter displaced wildfire survivors or people experiencing homelessness.

[Hundreds of Oregon families](https://www.thecentersquare.com/oregon/its-like-detroit-has-disappeared-oregon-wildfire-survivors-look-back-on-help-that-never-came/article_4dffd8a8-64f3-11eb-8239-0ba643758307.html) are still waiting for public assistance after losing homes and possessions to last year’s devastating wildfires. The FEMA application process and onerous documentation requirements are a significant barrier for families in need, particularly since many households lost the required documents in the fires.

# Congress

## Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act Introduced in the House with Housing Protections for Survivors of Violence

Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) and 170 of her colleagues in the House introduced on March 8 the “Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021” ([H.R. 1620](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Violence+Against+Women+Reauthorization%22%5D%7D&s=1&r=1)). The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is landmark legislation that provides protections and support to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Originally enacted in 1994, VAWA is reauthorized periodically to update provisions and programs. The “Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021” builds upon the housing protections that were expanded when VAWA was last reauthorized in 2013.

The bill protects survivors from evictions based on criminal actions of perpetrators, enhances the emergency-transfer process, and addresses the need for consistent implementation, compliance and accountability regarding VAWA’s housing protections. The bill also makes clear that crime victims have the right to seek law enforcement or emergency assistance on behalf of themselves or others and must not be penalized for doing so by being evicted. Instead of punishing survivors and their landlords, states and localities are permitted to use existing federal grant programs to identify more effective means of combating crime.

Learn more about the “Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021” at: <https://tinyurl.com/2an5934t>

Information about the needs of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking is on [page 6-6](https://nlihc.org/explore-issues/publications-research/advocates-guide) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide*.

## House Financial Services Committee Holds Hearing on Achieving Racial Equity through Fair Access to Housing and Financial Services

The House Financial Services Committee held a [remote hearing](https://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=406264) on March 10 titled “Justice for All: Achieving Racial Equity through Fair Access to Housing and Financial Services.” The hearing addressed the need to address systemic racism and inequalities in our housing and financial services system. Witnesses included Paulina Gonzalez-Brito, executive director of the California Reinvestment Coalition; Rashad Robinson, president of Color of Change; Nikitra Bailey, executive vice president of the Center for Responsible Lending; John Yang, president and executive director of the Asian Americans Advancing Justice; and Ian Rowe, president and co-founder of Vertex Partnership Academies.

The witnesses offered testimony and answered questions about barriers and biases faced by people of color in accessing capital credit and financial services and access to fair housing and homeownership. The panel also discussed the need for diversity in executive ranks and boards of lending institutions, financial services, and America’s top companies.

In Rashad Johnson's opening testimony, he recommended that Congress adopt a racially just policymaking approach when evaluating and determining which laws and regulations to enact, implement, or revoke, stating:

“[A] component need for racially just policymaking is a strong commitment to enforcement. The inclusion of civil rights protections in many of our financial services laws are of little consequence if federal regulators do not have the tools and resources to hold violators accountable. Having nondiscrimination laws in lending on the books is meaningless when there’s no one to stop banks from engaging in modern day redlining to deny Black people homeownership.”

When asked about the what the House Financial Services Committee should consider as key elements of a next COVID relief package to address systemic racism and inequities in the national housing and financial system, Nikitra Bailey replied, “We need to see this targeted down payment assistance program…[to] help first-generation homebuyers get into the marketplace, which will help them build long term and sustainable wealth.” She also noted the need to fully enforce our nation’s fair lending laws.

Paulina Gonzalez-Brito added, “[W]e need to be able to remove barriers – and that there is a real responsibility for the financial systems to remove those barriers rather than just a personal responsibility to overcome those barriers.” She continued, “[T]his committee really has a responsibility to think about things like enforcement…and disparate impact.” She noted that the CFPB has been “gutted” and needs to be returned to its full strength so that it can enforce fair lending laws.

In the hearing, Representative Ritchie Torres (NY-15) emphasized the need for expanding the supply of affordable housing and resources to address homelessness: “For me, the simple solution to homelessness is affordable housing. More affordable housing units would mean less homelessness. More housing vouchers would mean less homelessness."

Watch the full hearing and read witness testimonies and related legislation at: <http://bit.ly/3tdRIGD>

# Fair Housing

## Public Charge Rule No Longer in Effect after Supreme Court Dismisses Appeal

The Supreme Court on March 9 agreed to dismiss litigation on the previous administration’s Public Charge Rule at the request of the Biden administration. The Court had announced on February 22 that it agreed to hear the appeal filed by the previous administration (see *Memo,* [03/01](https://nlihc.org/resource/supreme-court-review-trump-administrations-public-charge-rule)). However, shortly after Acting Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar told justices on March 9 that the defendants and plaintiffs of the relevant cases had agreed that the challenge should be dismissed, the justices agreed, ending a nearly four-year legal battle against this harmful rule (see *Memo*, [08/19/2019](https://nlihc.org/resource/final-public-charge-rule-published-impacting-immigrants-use-public-housing-vouchers-and)).

The decision allowed the Seventh Circuit to dismiss the appeal of the lower court’s final order. Therefore, the Northern District of Illinois’s final judgment entered on Nov 2, 2020, which vacated the public charge rule nationwide is now in effect (see *Memo* [11/09/2020](https://nlihc.org/resource/dhs-public-charge-rule-effect-nationwide-after-appellate-court-halts-effort-stop-case)).

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced in a [statement](https://www.dhs.gov/news/2021/03/09/dhs-statement-litigation-related-public-charge-ground-inadmissibility) that DHS and USCIS will follow the policy in the [1999 Interim Field Guidance](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/1999/05/26/99-13202/field-guidance-on-deportability-and-inadmissibility-on-public-charge-grounds), the policy in place before the 2019 rule. Under this policy, DHS will not consider a person’s receipt of Medicaid, public housing, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as part of the public charge inadmissibility determination. This means it will be safe for immigrants and their families to access health, nutrition, and housing programs that they are eligible for without fear of being considered a “public charge”. USCIS recently updated its [website](https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/public-charge) also stating that it will no longer be applying the August 2019 Public Charge Final Rule. Readers are encouraged to access an updated fact sheet “[Public Charge: What Advocates Need to Know Now](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fbPuxkyf3oV5Zphor_uEyFunG_MOVjQ2vfuxzSWX13Q/edit)” for more information and key messages to share.

The announcement came just weeks after 500 nonprofit organizations affiliated with the [*Protecting Immigrant Families*](https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/) campaign sent a [letter](https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/DOJ-Drops-Defense-Statement.pdf) urging President Biden to act quickly. President Biden signed an Executive Order on February 2 directing agencies to identify appropriate actions to address concerns about the public charge policy’s effect on the integrity of the nation’s immigration system and public health, along with recommended steps agencies can take to communicate current public charge policies and proposed changes to reduce fear and confusion among impacted communities.

“Today’s actions by the Biden administration pave the way for ending Trump’s dangerous and racist public charge wealth test,” said Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center in response to the administration’s request to the dismiss litigation. “For the last four years, the National Immigration Law Center and diverse allies across the nation in the *Protecting Immigrant Families* coalition have fought back against this cruel policy that threatened the health, nutrition, and housing of millions of families. It is dangerous to the health and well-being of our nation, and has impeded our ability to fully recover from the pandemic.”

The preliminary injunction on the DOS Public Charge Rule remains in effect nationwide (see *Memo,*[08/03](https://nlihc.org/resource/district-court-issues-two-temporary-injunctions-against-public-charge-rule)).

NLIHC will continue to inform readers of updates to the Public Charge Rule and further actions by the administration to rescind this rule.

DHS “Statement on Litigation Related to the Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility”: <http://bit.ly/3cn2fc6>

Read the Joint Stipulation to dismiss filed by the [Second](https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-449/171281/20210309101553454_20-0449%20-%20DHS%20v%20New%20York%20Dismissal%20Stipulation.pdf), [Seventh](https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-450/171284/20210309102918713_20-450%20-%20Mayorkas%20v%20Cook%20County%20Dismissal.pdf), and [Ninth](https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-962/171278/20210309095806348_20-962%20-%20USCIS%20v%20City%20and%20County%20of%20San%20Francisco%20Dismissal%20Stipulation.pdf) Circuit Courts of Appeals.

Read the “Executive Order on Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems and Strengthening Integration and Inclusion Efforts for New Americans” at: <http://bit.ly/3rkGdfW>

Read the Executive Order in the *Federal Register* at: <http://bit.ly/3aArR4i>

[Protecting Immigrant Families](https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/) updated “Public Charge: What Advocates Need to Know Now” can be found at: <http://bit.ly/3jj6FDF>

# HUD

## Senate Confirms Representative Marcia Fudge as HUD Secretary

The Senate confirmed Representative Marcia Fudge (D-OH) as HUD secretary by a bipartisan vote of 66-34 on March 10. As the 18th secretary of HUD since its inception in 1965, Secretary Fudge will be the first woman in 40 years and the second Black woman ever to lead HUD. Secretary Fudge served as the representative of Ohio’s 11th Congressional District for over 12 years, and prior to that, as a mayor of Warrensville Heights, Ohio.

In her confirmation hearing, Secretary Fudge committed to undo the previous administration’s harmful actions against the Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH) and Disparate Impact Rules; fully enforce fair housing law; expand affordable housing programs and resources; and permanently authorize the CDBG-Disaster Recovery program, among other priorities. She also expressed a commitment to work with all members of Congress and to address HUD’s largest challenges, including the current pandemic-related crises (see *Memo,* [02/01](https://nlihc.org/resource/senate-committee-holds-confirmation-hearing-hud-secretary-designate-marcia-fudge)).

NLIHC congratulates Marica Fudge on her confirmation as secretary as she leads HUD during a time of extraordinary challenges and hardship for our nation’s lowest-income renters and people experiencing homelessness. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel wrote in a [statement](https://nlihc.org/news/statement-nlihc-president-and-ceo-diane-yentel-congratulating-marcia-fudge-her-confirmation):

“Secretary Fudge has a demonstrated record as a leader who values expertise and the importance of building collaborative partnerships, a record she clearly intends to continue through her and President Biden’s assembling of an outstanding team of seasoned experts to navigate the critical work ahead. Her decision to surround herself with experts and champions for affordable housing, together with her leadership, vision, and commitment to the lowest-income and most marginalized people, will propel HUD to achieve its critical mission and revitalize the department’s depleted and demoralized workforce.”

NLIHC looks forward to working closely with Secretary Fudge to end homelessness and housing poverty in America.

Read HUD’s announcement at: <http://bit.ly/3vakf1M>

Read Secretary Fudge’s introductory message at: <https://bit.ly/2PRAJvE>

Read NLIHC’s statement at: <http://bit.ly/3qv73Ry>

# NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

## “Achieving Universal Housing Assistance” to be Featured at NLIHC’s 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum, March 30-31!

[**NLIHC’s Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2021: A New Day**](https://app.mobilecause.com/e/llBafQ?vid=ggotm) taking place March 30-31, 12-5:30 pm ET, will feature a special panel discussion on achieving universal housing assistance in the U.S., including how advocates can realize President Biden’s campaign promise of making housing assistance an entitlement for all income-eligible households. Dr. Kamilah Wood from Children’s Health Fund, Harry Lawson from the National Education Association, and Alex Beaton from the Senate Majority Budget Committee will join NLIHC to explore the impact of housing instability on children’s health, the role historic and ongoing housing discrimination has played in creating disproportionate housing instability for communities of color, and potential legislative vehicles and strategies for getting universal housing assistance enacted, among other topics. [Register for the Forum](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cmlouis-juste%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5C1711W0EO%5CRegister%20for%20the%20Forum) today at: <http://bit.ly/NLIHCForum21>



Dr. Kamilah Wood, Children’s Health Fund



Harry Lawson, National Education Association



Alex Beaton, Senate Majority Budget Committee

The Forum will also include special presentations from key leaders in Congress, including **Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA),** **Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA), Senator Rob Portman (R-OH)**, **Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)**, **Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI)**, **Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)**, **Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH)**, **and Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL)**,as well as keynote speakers and panels on Racial Equity and Housing Justice; State and Local Emergency Rental Assistance Programs; Best Practices in Organizing; Legislative Opportunities to Advance Housing in 2021/Capitol Hill Insiders Panel; Lessons Learned: COVID-19 and the Need for Structural Reform; Sharing Stories of Lived-Experience to Bring About Change; and more.

Register to attend at: <http://bit.ly/NLIHCForum21>

## Join March 25 Webinar on NLIHC’s 2021 Policy Priorities

In preparation for NLIHC’s Virtual Capitol Hill Day on April 1, NLIHC will host a [webinar](https://bit.ly/3rGPsHk) on March 25 at 3 pm ET to equip participants and other advocates with information regarding NLIHC’s policy priorities. NLIHC’s Capitol Hill Day is part of [NLIHC’s 2021 Housing Policy Forum: A New Day](http://www.nlihcforum.org), March 30-31. Register for the free webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3rGPsHk>

The 2021 Policy Priorities webinar provide an overview of NLIHC’s policy priorities and talking points. The NLIHC policy team will cover key legislative requests, and the field team will share resources advocates can use during their legislative visits. There will also be a panel discussion on how advocates can connect their work and experiences to these policy priorities during their legislative “visits.”

Sign up for the March 25 webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3rGPsHk>

Register of NLIHC’s 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum: A New Day, March 30-31, at: <https://www.nlihcforum.org/>

# NLIHC Leadership Awards

## Celebrate 2021 Housing Leadership Award Honorees: Sen. Sherrod Brown, Rep. Maxine Waters, Joy Johnson, and the Housing Justice Network

Join NLIHC in celebrating the 2021 Housing Leadership Awards honorees: **Senator Sherrod Brown** (D-OH), chair of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs committee; **Representative Maxine Waters** (D-CA), chair of the House Financial Services Committee; **Joy Johnson**, long-time resident leader of the Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR) and former NLIHC board member; and the **Housing Justice Network** of the National Housing Law Project. These exceptional leaders will be recognized at NLIHC’s 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration held virtually on Wednesday April 28, 4-5 pm ET. Donate to NLIHC in these leaders’ honor as an [individual](https://bit.ly/2Kd9oRZ) or as an [organization](https://bit.ly/2LpBbzv). Register to attend the event, free to the public, at: <https://bit.ly/3quNxWb>



Sen. Sherrod Brown

**Senator Sherrod Brown** will receive a 2021 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award for his many years of fighting for racial and social justice, voting rights, and affordable housing, and for his exceptional leadership in Congress to address to the housing and homelessness crisis during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. This award is named for Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA), who championed low-income housing as a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors.



Rep. Maxine Waters

A 2021 Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award will also be presented to **Representative Maxine Waters** for her indispensable leadership fighting for equity and justice, combatting racism, championing the housing needs of the lowest-income people, and achieving critical housing and homelessness resources and protections during the 2020 pandemic.



Joy Johnson

The Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named for NLIHC’s founder Cushing Niles Dolbeare, a pioneer of the affordable housing movement, will be awarded to **Joy Johnson** for serving her community and the nation for decades as a public housing advocate, organizer, and activist-leader, improving the lives of low-income residents in Charlottesville and across the United States.



The National Housing Law Project’s **Housing Justice Network** will receive the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award for the Network’s outstanding efforts for over forty years serving on the front lines to advance housing rights and over past year to keep families safely housed during the pandemic. This award is named after 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 as an individual at: <https://bit.ly/2Kd9oRZ>

Donate as an organization at: <https://bit.ly/2LpBbzv>

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

Your donation will be recognized in the Leadership Awards Celebration program. The contribution will support NLIHC’s mission to achieve socially just public policy to ensure the lowest-income people have decent, accessible, and affordable homes.

Register to attend the event at: <https://bit.ly/3quNxWb>

# Opportunity Starts at Home

## Report Reveals COVID-19’s Impact on Race and Housing Insecurity in Philadelphia

[Community Legal Services of Philadelphia](https://clsphila.org/) recently released a [report](https://clsphila.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/20210222-Philadelphia-Renters-Report.pdf) analyzing COVID-19’s impact on Philadelphia’s historically Black neighborhoods and other communities of color and to what extent these communities are experiencing housing instability or evictions. The report finds that many areas with the highest rates of COVID-19 are also majority Black communities experiencing high eviction rates. The authors report that landlords have filed to evict more than 2,760 families—especially those in Black neighborhoods—since the beginning of the pandemic. The report also finds that Black Philadelphians are more susceptible to contracting COVID-19 due to a history of systemic racism that impacts access to healthcare and housing.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated the difficulties facing Black women, seniors, people with disabilities, queer and transgender people, and others who routinely face housing instability due to systemic oppression and racism,” write the study’s authors, “demonstrat[ing] the need for a tailored approach that takes into account the disease’s disproportionate impact on Black communities in particular.”

Read the report [here](https://clsphila.org/housing/report-philadelphia-renters/).

# Research

## NLIHC to Release *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2021* on March 18

NLIHC will release on March 18 its annual study of the supply of rental homes affordable and available to households at different income levels in the U.S., ***The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2021.*** The report provides estimates of affordable housing needs for each state, the District of Columbia, and the largest metropolitan areas in the U.S., as well as the racial disparities in affordable housing. *The Gap* report has consistently shown the stark shortage of homes affordable and available to America’s extremely low-income households. The report also documents the number of households at different income levels experiencing housing cost burdens, spending more than 30% of their incomes on their housing, and those suffering severe housing cost burdens, spending more than half of their incomes on their housing. Severely housing cost-burdened extremely low-income households are at extreme risk of housing instability, eviction, and homelessness. The 2021 edition of *The Gap* will be available on March 18 at: [www.nlihc.org/gap](http://www.nlihc.org/gap)

## Urban Institute Projects American Rescue Plan Act Will Significantly Reduce U.S. Poverty Rates

The Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute has released an [estimate of the extent to which key provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act will affect the poverty rate](https://urbn.is/38warWg) in 2021. The report estimates that expanded unemployment insurance benefits, SNAP benefits, child tax credits, and additional stimulus checks will reduce poverty by more than one third. The provisions could reduce poverty by as much as 42% for Black households and 39% for Latino households and have pronounced benefits for households with children or households who have experienced job loss.

The authors used the Urban Institute’s Analysis of Transfers, Taxes, and Income Security (ATTIS) model to create these projections. The ATTIS model takes into account expected levels of employment and income in 2021, as well as anticipated benefits and taxes. The model was designed to estimate the effect of changes to eligibility, enrollment, and benefits for important programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The authors use this model to project changes in the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) poverty rates after passage of the American Rescue Plan Act. SPM poverty rates include consideration of family income, tax payments, tax credits, in-kind benefits, and rebate checks (see [*Memo*, 9/21/2020](https://nlihc.org/resource/despite-record-low-poverty-rate-2019-inequalities-persist) on the Supplemental Poverty Measure).

To estimate the impact of the American Rescue Plan Act, the authors first project a “baseline” scenario without passage of the Act, drawing on 2018 *American Community Survey* data. Under the baseline scenario, the 2021 annual SPM poverty rate would be 13.1%. The authors then model the effects of four provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act:

* $300 supplement to unemployment insurance benefits through September 2021
* Extension of higher SNAP benefits through September 2021
* Stimulus check or recovery rebate payments of up to $1,400 per person
* One-year expansion of the child tax credit up to $3,000 or $3,600 per child

In the aggregate, these four provisions are projected to reduce the SPM poverty rate in 2021 from 13.1% to 8.7%, reducing the projected number of people in poverty by about 16 million. The projected SPM poverty rate among white households falls from 9.6% to 6.4%. For Black households, it falls from 18.1% to 10.5%. For Latino households, it falls from 21.9% to 13.3%.

The American Rescue Plan Act provisions are projected to have a significant effect on child poverty. The child poverty rate is projected to be cut in half, falling from 13.7% to 6.5%. The authors also estimate the Act will have a deep impact on poverty among households that have lost jobs due to the pandemic. In their model, the authors project the SPM poverty rate for such households to be 29.9% in 2021 before the American Rescue Plan Act, and just 13% after the plan is enacted.

The brief can be accessed at: <https://urbn.is/38warWg>

## Research Identifies Challenges in Comparing Evictions across Jurisdictions

An article in *Housing Policy Debate,* “[Evictions: The Comparative Analysis Problem](https://bit.ly/3t7DbMR),” identifies ways in which contextual details matter when comparing eviction rates across jurisdictions. Drawing on extensive fieldwork, interviews, and study of administrative data, the authors identify institutional features that impact the eviction process and that should be taken into account when comparing filing rates or eviction rates across the country.

The study is based on the authors’ fieldwork and ethnographic study of local eviction laws, procedures, and records. The authors conducted interviews with 188 landlords, tenants, and attorneys across Baltimore, Dallas, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. They examined available eviction records in all cities but Dallas.

Differences in the rules and procedures can change the significance of filing rates, which need to be accounted for when comparing data from one city to another. For example, the high volume of eviction cases in Baltimore is partly due to a city requirement that landlords file with the court as soon as the tenant is in arrears. In other jurisdictions, the landlord serves a tenant with a prefiling notice, and the tenant has a certain number of days to pay or vacate. Since courts are involved as soon as renters become delinquent, though, fewer than 5% of initial filings in Baltimore result in a family being evicted.

The authors identify several ways in which state laws, local ordinances, and court regulations can affect the number of eviction filings and evictions in a jurisdiction. Higher filing fees are associated with lower filing rates across the U.S. The filing fee was $15 in Washington, DC, but $385 in Los Angeles. Longer waiting times between steps in the eviction process may encourage landlords to preemptively file evictions, but longer timelines also give tenants more time to pay their rent and avoid the execution of an eviction. “Just cause” eviction ordinances can inflate eviction filing rates, to the extent that lease non-renewals are counted as evictions. In jurisdictions without such protections, some landlords may choose to wait out a soon-to-expire lease rather than file. Informal courtroom procedures not documented by administrative records can shape outcomes. For example, in Los Angeles judges begin by suggesting that litigants settle cases, which may lead to a higher rate of negotiated settlements. The geographic location of the court can also influence outcomes: when eviction cases are held in a building far from the neighborhoods where tenants are evicted, tenants will struggle to attend, and defaults may rise.

The authors offer suggestions for making thoughtful comparisons of evictions across jurisdictions. Gathering data on tenant demographics, housing market dynamics, and landlord characteristics can help explain differences across jurisdictions. They recommend looking to tools that summarize eviction regulations in cities across the country, like the one created by the Center for Public Health Law Research (see [Memo, 2/20/18](https://nlihc.org/resource/maps-state-fair-housing-laws-state-landlord-tenant-laws-and-city-nuisance-property-laws)), to better understand variation in policies. Finally, they recommend looking to how administrative data are created—when data points are created, how serial evictions are treated, or which data are sealed—to understand why eviction filings or rates may vary from one jurisdiction to another.

The paper can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3t7DbMR>

# Resources

## COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index Connects Social Vulnerability Factors to Recent COVID Data

Covid Act Now, a nonprofit focused on providing timely data about COVID-19, released a [COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index (CCVI)](https://precisionforcovid.org/ccvi). The CCVI combines data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) with COVID-specific vulnerability indicators, including epidemiological factors and health system strength, to help identify communities that might be at greater risk.

The index provides a vulnerability score for every state, county, and census tract in the U.S. The scores reflect characteristics of an area that might make it more vulnerable to an outbreak and health-related and economic suffering as a result. The CCVI score is based on 40 variables like the share of the population in poverty, the share who have minority status, and the share of households experiencing overcrowding. It also includes epidemiological factors that might make a population more vulnerable to COVID, including the prevalence of cardiovascular and respiratory conditions and the share of the population over age 65. The CCVI includes healthcare system factors, including the number of intensive care unit beds per 100,000 people, health spending per capita, and the share of the population with a primary care physician. The CCVI includes overall population density and the prevalence of high-risk populations like people living in long-term care facilities, people in correctional facilities, and the share of the population in high-risk industries.

For each state, county, or census tract, users can see which factors make it more or less vulnerable, recent estimates of COVID cases and deaths, and demographic information.

Covid Act Now produced a [report summarizing findings from the CCVI](https://surgoventures.org/resource-library/report-vulnerable-communities-and-covid-19).

The CCVI can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3kXKGmw>

# Fact of the Week

## Urban Institute Finds American Rescue Plan Act Will Significantly Reduce Poverty among Black and Latino Households



Source: Urban Institute, 2021. “2021 Poverty Projections: Assessing Four American Rescue Plan Policies.” Projections of 2021 Supplemental Poverty Measure poverty rates, considering effect of expanded unemployment insurance benefits, SNAP benefits, child tax credit, and stimulus checks.

# From the Field

## Michigan’s Poverty Task Force Releases Policy Recommendations

The State of Michigan’s Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity released its [*2021 Poverty Task Force Report*](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/leo/LEO-Poverty_Task_Force_Report_716585_7.pdf), which outlines more than 30 policy recommendations to strengthen anti-poverty initiatives throughout Michigan. The Poverty Task Force is a coalition of various state departments and community-based organizations, including NLIHC state partner Community Economic Development Association of Michigan. Several of the recommendations outlined in the report focused on housing, community development and economic inclusion.

Some of these policy recommendations include:

* Adopting a TANF Shelter Stipend for families who are not in subsidized housing
* Expanding Housing Choice Vouchers to help lower incarcerations recidivism rates
* Establishing Community Land Trusts to increase homeownership for low-to moderate-income individuals and families
* Fully funding the Michigan’s Housing and Community Development Fund
* Establishing a “Coordinated Strategy to Address the Digital Divide”
* Supporting children’s savings accounts
* Increasing Michigan’s Earned Income Tax Credit

The Poverty Task Force divided its work into four areas: creating and strengthening safety nets; targeting children’s programs; addressing structural barriers; and creating durable pathways to jobs. The Task Force’s organizing principles focused on reducing the state’s “asset limited income constrained employed” (ALICE) population, leveraging broad representation, and focusing on racial equity.

The Poverty Task Force will use these recommendations as a platform for conversations with stakeholders both within and outside of state government about building the state’s commitment to focus on anti-poverty policymaking.

Read the full report [here](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/leo/LEO-Poverty_Task_Force_Report_716585_7.pdf).

# NLIHC News

## NLIHC Seeks Website and Graphic Design Specialist

NLIHC seeks a website and graphic design specialist who will be responsible for managing NLIHC websites and electronic communications, designing print and electronic publications and materials, developing and maintaining the NLIHC brand through all external materials, and assisting with the development and execution of communications and marketing strategies.

**Responsibilities:**

WEBSITE & ELECTRONIC MEDIA

* Manage and maintain NLIHC’s websites, taking into account functionality, appearance, content, and performance.
* Design and post materials, including *Memo to Members and Partners e-newsletter*; design and maintain topical areas of the websites; ensure the accuracy, relevance, and timeliness of all posted materials; make recommendations for revisions and reorganization.
* Work closely with team leads to ensure accuracy and relevance of material on website.
* Assist with design and distribution of mass e-communications. Manage use of Mailchimp, and other mass e-communication platforms.

PUBLICATIONS

* Execute design and production of all print and electronic materials, graphics, and reports; collaborate with other teams in design process.
* Assist with the planning and distribution of publications and materials; manage the process as necessary.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

* Track and analyze communications metrics for website(s), *Memo to Members and Partners*, and webinars; prepare reports as necessary.
* Provide graphic support to comms team lead responsible for managing and expanding the Coalition’s social media platforms and utilizing new social networking tools, including webinars and videos.

EVENT SUPPORT

* Assist in the development and execution of the event marketing assets and strategies.
* Design and produce all print and electronic materials related to events, including awards, giveaways, signage, and any other presentation elements.
* Design and assist with management of online content related to the events and registration.
* Manage the photography for the event and other communications elements as needed.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

* Attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and Board committees, as needed.
* Participate in staff meetings, retreats, trainings, and all Coalition events.
* Other duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements
To perform successfully in this role, incumbent should possess skills identified below:

* At least 2 years of experience with digital strategy and website development.
* At least 1-3 years of experience in creative design.
* Training in communications, marketing, and/or website and graphic design.
* Must be able to organize, multi-task, and prioritize multiple projects at a time.
* A Bachelor's degree is required

To perform successfully in this role, incumbent should possess skills identified below:

* Strong knowledge of graphic designing, layout, and creative visual elements
* Experience working in Drupal and WordPress
* Experience with Google Analytics
* Advanced HTML and CSS skills
* Proficient with the Adobe Creative Suite, specifically Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign
* Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook)

Recommended but not required: Proficient video editing with Premiere Pro and/or After Effects

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

**Job Application Process:** Send a cover letter, resume, and portfolio link or attachments of graphic design samples to: Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 or via email at bdiakite@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate’s interest in and relevant experiences for the position and include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate).

## NLIHC Seeks Development Specialist

NLIHC seeks a development specialist who will support NLIHC fund development activities and events that enable the Coalition to obtain the necessary resources to fulfill its mission. The individual will also support NLIHC with other key operational needs, reporting to the NLIHC chief operating officer, with guidance and oversight from the NLIHC development coordinator.

**Responsibilities:**

* Assist in developing, and mailing to, lists to potential sponsors of the NLIHC Housing Leadership Awards Celebration/Reception (LAC), tracking progress on incoming pledges, and following up with sponsors and potential sponsors and with NLIHC host committee members.
* Assist with moving and maintaining sponsor and prospective sponsor data in Salesforce.
* Collect supplemental LAC program materials (quotes on honorees, bios, photos, etc.)
* Coordinate uploading of new lists from allied organizations into Salesforce/Mailchimp when they are provided.
* Coordinate end-of-year appeals campaign – draft appeals, postcards, emails, e-newletters articles, work with communications team on materials and social media, create outreach lists, mail out solicitations, and other related tasks.
* Handle efficient filing of copies of donor/sponsor letters.
* Monitor NLIHC Special Member dues, send invoices, and follow up regarding payments. Track progress on NLIHC Special Member benefits (ads needed for LAC, publications to be mailed, etc.)
* Monitor incoming data to Salesforce for any irregularities.
* Enter registrations for complimentary Forum attendees where necessary (manually entering Special Members, event sponsors, *Advocates’ Guide* authors, any VIP/invitees of the CEO, etc.)
* Produce list of previous year donors and their giving levels for NLIHC *Annual Report*.
* Serve as back-up to executive assistant for production of acknowledgment letters.
* Monitor NLIHC’s various webpages that recognize donors for any missing logos and ensure updates are made to keep the website current.
* Assist in the preparation of grant applications and proposals for review by the NLIHC president/CEO and chief operating officer (COO), working with program staff and COO to determine proposal elements, and submitting final proposals for consideration. Assist in compiling and drafting funder reports for review and finalization by the COO.
* Assist in ensuring all grant contact and follow-up information is up-to-date and accurate in Salesforce database.
* Assist in the coordination of other events and activities for which fundraising is involved like NLIHC’s anniversary events.

**Organizational/Operations Support**

1. Support COO with operations activities.
2. Coordinate with contracted agency (currently Cogency Global) on state charitable registrations, ensuring annual registrations for all states in which registrations are required. Also ensure successful NLIHC business licenses and Good Standing reports with DC government.
3. Attend all meetings of the NLIHC Board of Directors and before Board committees, as needed. Participate in staff meetings, retreats, trainings, and all Coalition events.
4. Other duties as assigned.

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

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

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

**Job Application Process:** Send a cover letter, resume, and two writing samples to: Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 or via email at bdiakite@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate’s interest in and relevant experiences for the position and include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate).

# NLIHC in the News

## NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 7

The following are someof the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of March 7:

* “With congressional approval imminent, Biden prepares to send checks, but big stimulus challenges loom” *Washington Post*, March 9 at: <http://wapo.st/3ezUNwD>
* “Opinion | The Coronavirus Made the Radical Possible” *The New York Times,* March 11 at: <http://nyti.ms/3vmoxmE>
* “Behind on Rent? You May Qualify for Federal Assistance” *The Wall Street Journal*, March 11 at: <http://on.wsj.com/3eLBp07>
* “COVID relief bill could permanently alter social safety net” *Associated Press*, March 12 at: <http://bit.ly/3cuJFhU>
* “More than $45 billion in rental assistance is now available” *CNBC*, March 12 at: <http://cnb.cx/3evmpDn>

[**NLIHC Staff**](https://nlihc.org/about/staff)

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Victoria Bourret, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x244

Jen Butler, Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239

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

Josephine Clarke, Senior Executive Assistant, x226

Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, x254

Emma Foley, Research Intern, x249

Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Kim Johnson, Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Jameil Johnson, Graphic Design/Communications intern

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317

Joseph Lindstrom, Director, Field Organizing, x222

Mayerline Louis-Juste, Communications Specialist, x201

Sarah Saadian, Vice President, Public Policy, x228

Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242

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Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246

Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234

Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233

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