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Research

- NLIHC Releases 2021 Edition of *The Gap*, finding Extremely Low-Income Renters Face Shortage of 7 Million Affordable and Available Homes
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- Urban Land Institute Releases 2021 Home Attainability Index

Fact of the Week

- Only 37 Affordable Rental Homes are Available for Every 100 Extremely Low-Income Renter Households

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NLIHC in the News

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Take Action

Join Tomorrow's National Launch of a New Campaign for Long-Term Affordable Housing Solutions: "HoUSed: Universal. Stable. Affordable."

[Join tomorrow's \(March 23\) national call](#) from 3-4:30 pm ET for the launch of NLIHC's new campaign for long-term affordable housing solutions: "HoUSed: Universal. Stable. Affordable." The HoUSed campaign will advance anti-racist policies and the large-scale, sustained investments and reforms necessary to ensure renters with the lowest incomes have an affordable place to call home. We will be joined on the call by **House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA)**, **Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY)**, other national leaders, and state partners.



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

See the full agenda [here](#).

Sign on by April 1 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

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 important 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

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

NLIHC, National Alliance to End Homelessness, and National League of Cities Hold Webinar on FEMA-Reimbursed Non-Congregate Sheltering

NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) hosted a [webinar](#), "Non-Congregate Sheltering During the Pandemic: Using New FEMA Policy to Save Lives," co-sponsored by the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the National League of Cities. Presenters included 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.

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](#) that FEMA will increase the percentage of reimbursements it provides, advocates around the country are working to further non-congregate sheltering programs.

The webinar, held just over one year after the first COVID-19 emergency declaration, covered a wide range of issues in regard to non-congregate sheltering. These included best practices learned when quickly establishing California's Project Roomkey sheltering program, providing access to this important sheltering type for residents of long-term care facilities, and ways to push for the establishment of non-congregate shelters in areas with none. Webinar panelists urged more areas of the country to utilize this program and recommended that officials and advocates not allow outstanding questions on the programs' conclusion prevent these safe shelters from being established in the present.

Watch a recording of the webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3bUW6oa>

Sign up for DHRC disaster recovery updates at: <https://bit.ly/3bQDpCi>

Recording Available of NLIHC's March 15 National Call on "Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness"

During the most recent national call on [coronavirus, disasters, housing, and homelessness](#), we received updates on the eviction moratorium and an overview of the housing and homelessness provisions in the *American Rescue Plan Act*, discussed the potential impact of the expanded Child Tax Credit, heard about resources for mixed-status immigrant families, learned about a report on mortality among people experiencing homelessness who contract COVID-19, and received field updates.

NLIHC's Sarah Saadian gave updates on the eviction moratorium issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and gave an overview of the housing and homelessness provisions in the *American Rescue Plan Act*. Richelle Friedman from the [Coalition on Human Needs](#) discussed the potential impact of the expanded Child Tax Credit included in the *American Rescue Plan Act*, which is [expected to cut child poverty in half](#).

Jackie Vimo from the [National Immigration Law Center](#) provided an update on resources for mixed-status immigrant families in the *American Rescue Plan* and shared [public charge rule](#). Dr. Kathryn Leifheit and Dr. Chelsea Shover of UCLA discussed their study, “[Elevated mortality among people experiencing homelessness with COVID-19](#),” which found people experiencing homelessness who contract coronavirus have an increased risk of severe infection and death. We received field updates from [Housing Action NH](#), [Homes RI](#), the [Housing Network of Rhode Island](#), and the [Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness](#).

NLIHC hosts national calls every week. On tomorrow’s call, we will be joined by House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA) and Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) to announce the launch of NLIHC’s new “HoUSed” campaign for universal housing assistance. Register for tomorrow’s call (Tuesday, March 23 at 3 pm ET) at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Watch a recording of the March 15 call at: tinyurl.com/r5vj5f7j

Access presentation slides at: tinyurl.com/38p7durs

Additional Coronavirus Updates – March 22, 2021

National Updates

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Join SAMHSA’s Homeless and Housing Resource Center on [March 25, 2021 from 3:30-5 pm ET](#) in exploring equitable and culturally appropriate interventions to engage people experiencing homelessness in treatment and deliver services in non-congregate settings. [Learn more](#) and [register](#).

Reporting

[CNBC](#) reports on NLIHC’s [national letter](#), signed by more than 2,200 organizations, urging President Biden to extend the federal eviction moratorium beyond its March 31 expiration and to improve and enforce its protections. “Increased evictions lead to increased spread of, and potentially deaths from, COVID-19,” said NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

The [Associated Press](#) examines how the American Rescue Plan Act could permanently alter the United States’ social safety net. Housing advocates, including NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel, say the relief packages should stave off rental debts for now, but economic hardships and the need for additional housing assistance will extend past the end of the pandemic.

A Government Accounting Office (GAO) [report](#) finds federal, state, and local eviction moratoriums have reduced evictions during the pandemic, but some eligible renters have not been protected by the federal eviction moratorium due to a lack of awareness of the moratorium or its requirements. The report recommends that the CDC, in coordination with other relevant federal entities, develop and implement a communication and outreach plan designed to ensure eligible renters and property owners are aware of and invoke the eviction moratorium. The report cites [NLIHC’s rental assistance database](#) and [research analysis](#).

[MarketWatch](#) discusses the Government Accounting Office (GAO) [report](#), which found that a lack of awareness and enforcement of the CDC eviction moratorium could be contributing to continued evictions despite the ban. Housing advocates continue to urge the Biden administration to extend the moratorium to provide time for federal rental assistance to be distributed and to strengthen and enforce the moratorium. “If the federal eviction moratorium were allowed to expire, many of those tenants would be evicted before the money reaches them,” said NLIHC’s Diane Yentel.

The [GAO Blog](#) discusses the new Government Accounting Office (GAO) [report](#) on eviction moratoriums and what might happen when the federal eviction moratorium ends on March 31. The article provides a link to [NLIHC's emergency rental assistance database](#).

[Shelterforce](#) explores state and local efforts to expand or revive non-congregate sheltering programs and purchase hotels as long-term housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness. NLIHC's Diane Yentel describes FEMA's decision to provide full reimbursement for non-congregate sheltering costs as a "game changer" and discusses the need for states and cities to plan exit strategies for people in hotels and motels. "The next step can't be to send people back to the sidewalk they were sleeping on before the pandemic. That's immoral and unacceptable," said Diane Yentel.

[CNBC](#) reports that a federal judge in Ohio has ruled that the CDC exceeded its authority when it enacted the federal eviction moratorium. "This order could immediately result in a flood of evictions of struggling renters resulting in [increased spread of, and potentially deaths from, COVID-19](#)," said NLIHC's Diane Yentel.

The Department of Justice released a [statement](#) stating that the decision in *Skyworks v. CDC*, which concluded that the federal eviction moratorium exceeds CDC's statutory authority, only applies to the particular plaintiffs in that case.

"Now that Congress has appropriated \$46 billion to address rent arrears, these lawsuits to overturn the moratorium are frivolous," [said NLIHC's Diane Yentel](#). "These landlords will be made whole, but it will take time to get the money into their hands. Their eagerness to overturn the moratorium, despite unprecedented resources to pay rent arrears, only underscores the need to be sure the moratorium is extended at least until resources are expended. For some of these landlords, it appears it was never really about the money."

[MSNBC's Joy Reid](#) began her interview with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Marcia Fudge on March 18 by citing statistics from NLIHC. When asked what HUD can do about the housing crisis, Secretary Fudge responded, "as a result of the American Rescue Plan, HUD can do an awful lot."

[NPR's Morning Edition](#) reports that landlords struggling to stay afloat see a lifeline in federal rent relief funds. A Houston landlord is going door to door offering to help residents apply for the federal emergency rental assistance dollars that are starting to flow to landlords and tenants.

[People](#) reports on the COVID-19 housing and eviction crisis, highlighting how millions of renters are behind on their rent payments and at risk of eviction when the federal eviction moratorium ends on March 31. The article discusses our country's pre-existing affordable housing crisis, noting that people of color are disproportionately impacted by housing instability and eviction.

The [New Republic](#) reports that mothers, particularly women of color, experience evictions at higher rates. The author discusses immediate and long-term solutions to addressing our country's affordable housing crisis.

State and Local News

Alabama

The Emergency Rental Assistance Alabama program is now taking applications. Landlords and tenants can apply at <https://eraalabama.com/>. Learn more about the ERA Alabama program at a [webinar](#) on March 18 at 3 pm CT.

Arizona

Pima County supervisors voted on March 16 to direct up to [\\$2 million to support legal defense](#) costs for residents facing eviction. The eviction defense motion, proposed by Supervisor Matt Heinz, will create a

program funded by federal COVID-19 relief money to provide legal counsel for tenants while increasing marketing and outreach for eviction prevention clinics. In Pima County, there are 4,376 outstanding eviction cases dating back to last March, and a tsunami of eviction cases is expected in early April.

California

After California expanded its vaccine guidelines, making all people experiencing homelessness eligible, Bay Area counties are [increasing efforts to vaccinate unhoused residents](#) by visiting homeless shelters and Project Roomkey hotels or by setting up mobile vaccination clinics.

A [hybrid of state and local programs](#) established to distribute \$2.6 billion in federal rent relief to California landlords and low-income renters are now accepting applications. Partnerships between the state, counties, large cities, and social service agencies in the Bay Area will help distribute roughly \$500 million in rent relief funds.

A [California COVID-19 Rent Relief call center](#) is now available to answer eligibility questions, provide information on local assistance, and help with applications. Call 1-833-430-2122 between 7am-7pm PT.

Florida

The [Tampa Bay Times](#) reports on the housing resources in the recently passed COVID-19 relief package. The emergency rental assistance funds passed by Congress in December 2020 have started trickling down to Florida and local governments in the Tampa Bay area. However, neither the state nor many of those local governments have started distributing it.

Georgia

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) reports that coronavirus relief funds have helped move 450 formerly homeless individuals into apartments, many with one-year leases. Another 190 people are set to move into homes within the next several weeks.

The [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#) reports that Georgia tenants can use an [online portal](#) to determine if they are eligible for the state's \$522 million emergency rental assistance program and apply to have up to one year of their rent covered.

Despite the federal eviction moratorium, tenants in [Richmond County](#) have continued to be evicted from their homes during the pandemic.

The [Newnan Times-Herald](#) reports that despite the federal eviction moratorium, some landlords continue to move forward with evictions. Chief Constable J.T. Moore created an affidavit that landlords must sign before the eviction takes place. By signing the affidavit, the landlords state that they are aware of the federal eviction moratorium and that violations of it can be punished by heavy fines. For many of the "writs of possession" scheduled with a CDC affidavit, tenants move before the physical eviction takes place.

There are [8,000 eviction cases](#) pending before the DeKalb magistrate's court, and untold numbers of tenants have been forced from their housing because landlords refused to renew their leases or because they were unaware of the CDC eviction protections. DeKalb received \$21 million in federal rent relief funds, and two days after opening applications, at least 7,000 people had applied for aid.

Illinois

Advocates are encouraging Illinois residents to [urge their legislators](#) to support the [COVID-19 Emergency Housing Act](#). The bill would help ensure that people with the most severe needs can access federal emergency rental assistance, seal eviction cases filed during the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery period, expand access to sealing prior eviction records, and temporarily halt certain foreclosure proceedings.

A [bill](#) that would have made exceptions to Illinois' eviction moratorium failed to pass out of committee on March 10. State Representative Charlie Meier, who introduced the bill, [told the House committee](#) he wants to go after so-called “bad actors” who receive federal rental assistance but do not pay their rent. State Representative Will Guzzardi took issue with the bill, noting that federal rental assistance funds were sent to landlords and not to the tenants. “I believe that this bill may be attempting to solve a problem that is not, in fact, happening,” said Representative Guzzardi.

Iowa

[Iowa Legal Aid](#) is seeing an influx in calls for assistance as the federal eviction moratorium is set to expire on March 31, 2021. There have been 11,000 eviction filings in Iowa since the start of the pandemic, and Iowa Legal Aid has seen a 140% increase in calls for eviction assistance compared to the last six years.

Kentucky

Join the Kentucky Housing Corporation for a [brief virtual training](#) on Monday, March 29 at 2 pm ET to learn how the [Healthy at Home Eviction Relief Fund](#) works for property managers and landlords.

Louisiana

[The Lens](#) reports that despite the Biden administration’s decision to fully cover the costs of non-congregate sheltering, New Orleans has not moved to restart its [hotel housing program](#). When asked why, officials provide different explanations. “I personally spoke to hotel owners and operators who wanted to participate in this program to expand the number of rooms,” said Andreanecia Morris, executive director of HousingNOLA. “This is not a resource issue, this is not a money issue. It’s a will issue.” Unsheltered individuals are at extremely high risk for severe illness and death from coronavirus. “If you look at what the cost of inaction is, there really isn’t a good reason for why states and cities aren’t using this more broadly,” said NLIHC Vice President of Public Policy Sarah Saadian.

Maryland

The Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis has stated that [more than 300 public housing tenants](#) will be at risk for eviction for nonpayment of rent when federal and local moratoriums end. Arundel Community Development Services is contracted with Civil Justice Inc. to provide legal assistance and financial counseling, among other resources, to those residents.

Michigan

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority launched the [COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(CERA\)](#) on March 15. CERA is a \$282 million program, with an additional \$340 million appropriated by the state legislature.

Nevada

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) reports Nevada’s CARES Housing Assistance Program, which exhausted its funds in December 2020, has received an additional \$161 million in federal funding. The program had a waitlist of 12,000 applicants in December 2020, and an additional 9,000 applications have been submitted this year.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Housing launched the [New Hampshire Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) on March 15. Like the prior housing stability programs, rental assistance will be administered by the state’s five regional [Community Action Partnership agencies](#).

New Jersey

The application period for a [second phase](#) of New Jersey’s COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program opened on March 22, 2021. The program will provide approximately \$353 million in emergency rental assistance. More than 15,000 households received aid from the first phase of the rental assistance program.

Despite state and federal eviction protections, [New Jersey landlords](#) continue to illegally evict tenants. Housing advocates have urged state officials to punish landlords who defy Governor Murphy’s executive order and the CDC order. The Volunteer Lawyers for Justice and a group of housing advocates sent a [letter](#) in November to Attorney General Gurbir Grewal and the head of the State Police to urge them to address the growing issue of illegal lockouts.

New York

The [New York Times](#) reports that an analysis of court data shows that New York City renters in COVID hot spots are four times more likely to face eviction. The areas hit hardest by the coronavirus, largely Black and Latino neighborhoods, have seen the most eviction cases.

North Carolina

Housing advocates estimate at least [400,000 renters in North and South Carolina](#) will be evicted when the federal eviction moratorium expires on March 31.

Pennsylvania

[Philadelphia landlords can pre-register](#) for Phase 4 of the [PHLRentAssistProgram](#). Pre-registering will speed up the process once the program starts accepting applications. Philadelphia received approximately \$97 million for emergency rental and utility assistance.

[WESA](#) investigates eviction actions taken by The Alden – a complex run by Philadelphia-based multi-state landlord Aion Management and Allegheny County’s eviction hotspot. While the suburban complex makes up .5% of the county’s rental units, The Alden accounts for nearly 4% of the pandemic-era eviction cases in Allegheny County.

South Carolina

Within one week of launching the S.C. Stay rental and mortgage assistance program, [more than 7,000 people](#) had applied for aid. Nearly 5,000 of those applicants were deemed eligible, and housing officials think those 5,000 will exhaust the existing federal rent relief funds. The [SC Stay program](#) was funded through \$25 million in CDBG-CV funds. South Carolina will receive \$340 million in rent relief from the most recent COVID-19 relief legislation. Up to [180,000 renters](#) in South Carolina are at risk for eviction when the moratorium is lifted on March 31.

Texas

The Texas Rent Relief Program has launched a new application system, making it easier to complete and submit an application, add missing documentation, and track the status of payment requests. Access the application at <https://texasrentrelief.com/>.

[TexasMonthly](#) reports that Harris County Justice of the Peace Lincoln Goodwin’s court has one of the highest eviction caseloads in the country. In his court, only 15% of tenants challenging their evictions have claimed protection under the CDC order, and lawyers with Lone Star Legal Aid have seen landlords circumvent the CDC order.

Washington

[Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan](#) on March 15 extended the city’s eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021. Extending the eviction moratorium provides housing stability for residents as new federal rent relief funds are distributed. In addition to the current proposal for \$23 million for rental assistance, the City of Seattle has committed [\\$18 million to rental assistance](#) in addition to [state and King County resources](#) for landlords and tenants.

Guidance

Department of Agriculture

[USDA Fact Sheet: Update on USDA Activities to Contain the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – Updated March 17, 2021

Department of Treasury

[Emergency Rental Assistance Frequently Asked Questions](#) – Revised March 16, 2021

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

[More Details About the Third Round of Economic Impact Payments](#) – March 2021

Emergency Rental Assistance

Treasury Releases Revised Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Guidance

The U.S. Department of the Treasury released on March 16 a revised [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) document regarding its \$25 billion [emergency rental assistance](#) (ERA) program approved by Congress at the end of 2020. These changes align with [recommendations](#) made by NLIHC and the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) to ensure critical rent relief resources reach households with the greatest needs (see *Memo*, [3/8](#)). NLIHC expects Treasury to release further guidance in the coming weeks.

Rental Security Deposits

FAQ 7 has been revised to include rental security deposits as a permissible relocation expense and to clarify that application or screening fees are permissible rental fees, as recommended by NLIHC.

Hotel and Motel Stays

Treasury added FAQ 26 to clarify that rental assistance may be provided to temporarily displaced households living in hotels or motels, as recommended by NLIHC.

According to the revised document, these expenses fall within the category of “other expenses related to housing incurred due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak,” provided that: the household has been temporarily or permanently displaced from its primary resident or does not have a permanent residence elsewhere; the total months of assistance provided to the household do not exceed 12 months (plus an additional three months if necessary to ensure housing stability); and documentation of the hotel or motel stay is provided and the other applicable requirements provided in the statute and FAQs are met.

The guidance states that the cost of the hotel stay does not include expenses incidental to the charge for the room. Grantees covering the costs of hotel and motel stays must develop policies and procedures outlining under what circumstances they would provide such assistance. The FAQ also states that if a household is

eligible for an existing program with narrower eligibility criteria that provides similar assistance for hotel or motel stays, such as HUD’s Emergency Solutions Grant program or FEMA Public Assistance, grantees should use those programs before providing aid under the ERA program.

Rent-to-Own Agreements

FAQ 27 states that grantees may provide ERA to households renting their residence under a “rent-to-own” agreement, under which the renter has the option or obligation to purchase the property at the end of the lease time, as long as a member of their household is not a signor or co-signor to the mortgage on the property, does not hold the deed or title to the property, and has not exercised the option to purchase.

Manufactured Housing

FAQ 28 states that rental payments for either a manufactured home and/or the parcel of land a manufactured home occupies are eligible for assistance under the ERA program, as recommended by NLIHC. Households renting manufactured homes and/or the parcel of land may also receive assistance for utilities and other expenses related to housing.

Treasury says it will continue to work with stakeholders to provide additional guidance and technical assistance, and NLIHC will continue to advocate for improvements to ensure ERA reaches the lowest-income and most marginalized renters.

Read Treasury’s new ERA guidance at: <https://bit.ly/3ttue0l>

Read NLIHC’s letter to Treasury at: <https://bit.ly/30RNfgS>

Congress

House Passes Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization

The House of Representatives passed on March 17 a reauthorization of the [Violence Against Women Act](#) (VAWA) by a vote of 244-172. Last reauthorized in 2013, VAWA provides critical protections and resources for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. While the protections in VAWA do not expire and Congress typically chooses to continue funding VAWA programs regardless of authorization, reauthorization provides advocates the opportunity to update VAWA’s provisions and expand the law’s protections.

The bill now moves to the Senate, where it is expected to face challenges to final passage. Provisions in the House-passed bill, which mirror those in the reauthorization bill introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) in the 116th Congress, have drawn criticism from Republicans for enhancing protections for LGBTQ survivors seeking emergency shelter, expanding tribal sovereignty in the prosecution of domestic and sexual violence cases, and extending a ban on the purchase of firearms to dating partners convicted of abuse or subject to a restraining order. In the previous Congress, NLIHC’s President and CEO Diane Yentel [wrote a letter](#) supporting Senator Feinstein’s VAWA reauthorization, highlighting the bill’s enhanced housing protections for survivors of violence.

Learn more about the bill at: <https://tinyurl.com/ntfnrwvd>

Representatives Bowman and Cleaver Introduce Bill to Expand Affordable Broadband Access for Low-Income Tenants

Representatives Jamaal Bowman (D-NY) and Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) introduced on March 16 a [bill](#) to expand affordable broadband access to 8 million families living in federally subsidized housing. If enacted, the bill would pave the way for low-income Americans to access high-quality internet that would otherwise be unaffordable.

The legislation would update HUD, Treasury, and U.S. Department of Agriculture utility allowance definitions to include broadband as a subsidized utility. The bill would also update subsidized housing infrastructure by retrofitting units with wiring necessary for high-quality broadband.

Learn more about the bill [here](#).

Fair Housing

Senator Cortez Masto Reintroduces Bill to Combat Housing Discrimination

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) on March 17 introduced [S.769](#), the “Housing Fairness Act of 2021.” This bill, first introduced on December 3 (see *Memo*, [12/14/2020](#)), would strengthen fair housing enforcement at HUD. The bill is cosponsored by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Bernie Sanders (D-VT), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Bob Menendez (D-NY). S.769 is the Senate counterpart to [H. 68](#) the “Housing Fairness Act of 2021,” reintroduced by Representative Al Green on January 4.

The Housing Fairness Act of 2021 would authorize \$58 million annually from 2022 through 2026 and \$70 million annually from 2027 through 2032 for HUD to make grants to states, localities, and nonprofit organizations to prevent discriminatory housing practices through the Fair Housing Initiatives Program. The bill would also authorize annual appropriations of \$5 million from 2021 to 2025 for a competitive grant program for nonprofits to study the causes and effects of housing discrimination and to implement pilot projects to test approaches to preventing discrimination. Finally, the bill would require HUD to study the feasibility and effectiveness of converting the Fair Housing Initiatives Program into a non-competitive, entitlement program.

The bill would reaffirm HUD’s commitment to fair housing by increasing funding for fair housing programs, making improvements to the Fair Housing Initiatives Program, reinstating the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule (see *Memo*, [07/27/2020](#)), and providing additional funds for research into housing discrimination.

NLIHC supports this bill, and when it was introduced on December 3, NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel wrote:

“For four years, the Trump administration used every opportunity to gut our nation’s critical civil rights and fair housing laws, undermining efforts to undo historic and ongoing, government-driven patterns of housing discrimination and segregation throughout the U.S. Congress should immediately pass the Housing Fairness Act to rebuild HUD’s commitment to fair housing and civil rights and to take long-overdue steps towards racial equity.”

Read the Senate bill at: <http://bit.ly/38Tpjhl>

Read the House version of the bill introduced by Representative Green, H. 68: <http://bit.ly/3cNSUdu>

Press Release from Senator Cortez Masto: <http://bit.ly/3vGWXAM>

More information about Fair Housing Programs can be found is on page [7-5](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*

More information about AFFH is on pages [7-14](#), [7-21](#), [7-27](#), and [7-35](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*.

Immigration

DHS Publishes Final Rule Vacating Harmful 2019 Public Charge Rule

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), a division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), published the final rule, "[Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds; Implementation of Vacatur](#)," to the *Federal Register* on March 15, removing regulatory language from the harmful 2019 Public Charge Rule from the previous administration. This comes shortly after the Supreme Court agreed to dismiss litigation on the 2019 Public Charge Rule and DHS/USCIS announced that they would follow the 1999 Interim Field Guidance, the policy in place before the 2019 rule (see *Memo*, [03/15](#)).

Along with removing the 2019 Public Charge Rule language, immigrant families applying for admission to the country, Lawful Permanent Resident, or for extension of nonimmigrant stay or change no longer need to provide information or evidence that is solely related to the 2019 Public Charge Rule. This includes information provided on Form I-944 (Declaration of Self-Sufficiency), which has also been [discontinued](#) in the final rule. The final rule was the last step in implementing the vacatur made by the Supreme Court and DHS/USCIS stopped applying the 2019 Public Chare Rule on March 9.

"Today, DHS closed the book on the public charge rule and is doing the same with respect to a proposed rule regarding the affidavit of support that would have placed undue burdens on American families wishing to sponsor individuals lawfully immigrating to the U.S.," said DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. "In the weeks ahead, we will work with our federal agency partners and community leaders to ensure immigrants and their families have accurate information about our public charge policies. DHS is committed to implementing reforms that improve our immigration system and reduce unnecessary barriers to legal immigration."

Read the updated fact sheet "[Public Charge: What Advocates Need to Know Now](#)" for more information and key messages to share.

The final rule, "Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds; Implementation of Vacatur," is at: <http://bit.ly/3bSvKtW>

A statement from DHS on the final rule is at: <http://bit.ly/3cx6IbW>

A USCIS Public Charge Fact Sheet is at: <http://bit.ly/2OWCbwd>

[Protecting Immigrant Families'](#) updated version of "Public Charge: What Advocates Need to Know Now" is at: <http://bit.ly/3jj6FDF>

HUD

NLIHC Submits Comments about Proposed REAC/NSPIRE Regulations

NLIHC submitted [comments](#) regarding HUD's proposed regulations intended to align and consolidate the various physical inspection requirements of most of HUD's housing programs (see *Memo*, [1/19](#) and [NLIHC's summary of the proposed rule](#)). HUD's goal is to create a unified physical housing quality assessment system that has a new approach to defining and assessing housing quality. The proposed rule would establish the method HUD will use to implement National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) standards, scoring, and processes through future *Federal Register* notices.

NSPIRE is a two-year pilot program started in August 2019 (see *Memo*, [8/26/19](#)) that sought 4,500 public housing agencies (PHAs) and owners of private HUD-assisted multifamily properties to volunteer to adopt the NSPIRE physical inspection model. According to an October 29, 2018 email, HUD intends to change the 20-year-old Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) physical inspection system to better reflect the physical condition HUD-subsidized housing (see *Memo*, [10/29/18](#)).

HUD has identified a disproportionate emphasis in physical inspections around the appearance of items that are otherwise safe and functional, while inadequate attention is paid to health and safety conditions. HUD concluded that existing housing standards should focus on habitability, residential use of structures, and most importantly, the health and safety of residents.

Housing quality regulations across HUD programs would be consolidated into one location at 24 CFR part 5. However, where different statutory requirements or public policy considerations prevent alignment with 24 CFR part 5, those program-specific requirements would be maintained in their respective program regulations and would supersede or supplement 24 CFR part 5. Most of the alignment of inspection protocols, processes, and procedures HUD proposes involve the public housing and multifamily programs (including project-based Section 8, Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities).

The proposed rule aligns the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program (including the Project Based Voucher (PBV) and Tenant Based Voucher (TBV) programs) with other HUD programs, particularly those administered by HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) to the maximum extent possible. Those CPD programs include the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), Housing for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), and Continuum of Care (CoC) programs.

NLIHC welcomed the proposed rule changes overall but offered comments to enhance protections for residents of all HUD-assisted housing and to prevent PHAs and owners/managers from evading their obligations to provide safe, habitable housing. In particular, NLIHC pointed to the need for the final rule to provide better notice to residents at various stages; means for residents to challenge a PHA's or owner's claims; and far greater engagement of residents throughout the physical inspection process.

NLIHC strongly opposed a new option that would allow an extended inspection cycle beyond three years to five years.

NLIHC strongly endorsed suggestions made by the resident leaders of the National Alliance of HUD Tenants (NAHT), initially offered to HUD in the late 1990s and more recently augmented in comments specifically about the NSPIRE demonstration.

NLIHC's comment letter is at: <https://bit.ly/3IIZqvM>

NLIHC's summary of the proposed rule is at: <https://bit.ly/3tlpIks>

The *Federal Register* version of the proposed rule is at: <https://bit.ly/3nI3dmJ>

An easier to read version of the proposed rule is at: <https://bit.ly/39pzYQw>

HUD's NSPIRE webpage is at: <https://bit.ly/2MQ9Lmr>

More about public housing is on [page 4-30](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*.

More about Multifamily, project-based rental assistance is on [page 4-61](#) of NLIHC's *2020 Advocates' Guide*.

NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

“Sharing Stories of Lived-Experience to Bring About Change” to be Featured at NLIHC’s 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum, March 30-31!

[NLIHC’s Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2021: A New Day](#) will take place on March 30-31 from 12-5:30 pm ET. The forum will feature a special presentation guiding attendees through the process of crafting impactful personal stories for sharing in advocacy settings, such as when communicating with elected officials and other decision makers. This expert-led conversation with Pamela Covington and Kali Daugherty from RESULTS will cover such topics as how to select a relevant story topic, develop a story, effectively deliver it, and incorporate a call to action. [Register for the Forum here.](#)



Pamela Covington, RESULTS



Kali Daugherty, RESULTS

The Forum will also feature a conversation with **HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge** and 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)**. There will also be keynote speakers and panels on Racial Equity and Housing Justice; Best Practices in Organizing; Legislative Opportunities to Advance Housing in 2021/Capitol Hill Insiders Panel; State and Local Emergency Rental Assistance Programs; Achieving Universal Housing Assistance; Lessons Learned: COVID-19 and the Need for Structural Reform; and more.

Register to attend at: <https://bit.ly/3eT15aQ>

Join NLIHC for Webinar on 2021 Policy Priorities on March 25

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

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 free March 25 webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3rGPsHk>

Register for NLIHC's 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum: A New Day, March 30-31, at: <https://bit.ly/3eWxnBO>

NLIHC Leadership Awards

Attend 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration Honoring Joy Johnson, the Housing Justice Network, Sen. Sherrod Brown, & Rep. Maxine Waters

[Register to attend NLIHC's 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration](#), to be held virtually on Wednesday, April 28, 4-5 pm ET, to celebrate the 2021 Housing Leadership Awards honorees: **Joy Johnson**, long-time resident leader of the Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR) and former NLIHC board member; the **Housing Justice Network** of the National Housing Law Project; **Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH)**, chair of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs committee; and **Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA)**, chair of the House Financial Services Committee. Donate to NLIHC in these leaders' honor as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#). Register to attend the event, free to the public, at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS21>



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.



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 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.

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/2LpBbzy>

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/LEADERS21>

Opportunity Starts at Home

New Study Finds Historically Redlined Communities at a Higher Risk of Flooding

A new study released by [Redfin](#) finds that historically redlined communities face a greater risk of flooding compared to non-redlined communities. The study found that across 38 metro areas in the nation more than \$107 billion worth of homes at a high risk for flooding were found in redlined communities. This amount is 25% more than in non-redlined communities. People of color are more likely to live in historically redlined

communities. In fact, 58% of households in formerly redlined communities are nonwhite, compared to 40.4% of households in neighborhoods that were labeled “desirable” during the New Deal era. The study further highlights the impact that past discriminatory housing policies continue to have on communities of color today and how housing justice is deeply connected to climate justice.

“Decades of segregation and economic inequality shoehorned many people of color—especially Black Americans—into living in neighborhoods that are more vulnerable to climate change,” writes the study’s author, Lily Katz. “Redlining kept home values in Black neighborhoods depressed, which in turn meant there was less money invested and reinvested in those neighborhoods for decades to come.”

Read the study [here](#).

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

Research

NLIHC Releases 2021 Edition of *The Gap*, finding Extremely Low-Income Renters Face Shortage of 7 Million Affordable and Available Homes

NLIHC released its annual report, [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#), which finds that extremely low-income renters in the U.S. face a shortage of nearly 7 million affordable and available rental homes. Only 37 affordable and available homes existed for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in 2019. Even before the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis began, low-income households struggled to find decent, affordable homes. The report calls for policies that would ensure everyone has access to affordable, stable housing: significant and sustained investment in the national Housing Trust Fund, public housing, and the preservation of the affordable housing stock; expansion of the Housing Choice Voucher program to all eligible households; a National Housing Stabilization Fund to prevent evictions and homelessness; and stronger renter protections to help families stay stably housed.

Each year, NLIHC examines American Community Survey (ACS) data to determine the availability of rental homes affordable to extremely low-income households—households with incomes at or below the poverty line or 30% of the area median income, whichever is greater—and other groups. This year, the analysis found that 10.8 million renter households with extremely low incomes account for 25% of all renter households and 9% of all U.S. households. Seventy percent of those extremely low-income renters—7.6 million households—are severely housing cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their incomes on rent and utilities. No state has an adequate supply of affordable and available homes for extremely low-income renters, ranging from 20 affordable and available homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in Nevada to 61 in Mississippi and Wyoming. The report also explains why the shortage of affordable homes for households with higher incomes is driven by the shortage for the lowest-income renters who are forced to rent apartments they cannot afford, making those apartments unavailable to other income groups.

People of color are more likely than white people to be extremely low-income renters. Twenty percent of Black households, 18% of American Indian or Alaska Native households, 14% of Latino households, and 10% of Asian households are extremely low-income renters. By comparison, 6% of white non-Latino households are extremely low-income renters. Unsurprisingly, renters of color are much more likely to be housing cost-burdened. While 42% of white renters are cost-burdened, 52% of Latino renters and 54% of Black renters are cost-burdened. These patterns reflect the continuing impacts of historical and ongoing discrimination.

While the data under analysis reflect conditions in 2019, the report points to other evidence that the public health and economic crisis created by COVID-19 has made the situation even worse for low-income renters. Survey results from the Household Pulse Survey suggest that in January of 2021, 21% of all renters were behind on rent payments, and rates were even higher for low-income renters and renters of color. The report explains why an economic downturn is not likely to generate lower rents for the lowest-income renters. During periods of crisis, rents in the most expensive rental homes may fall, but competition for less expensive homes can increase as higher-income renters or distressed homeowners seek cheaper alternatives.

The report lays out both the short-term federal policies needed to respond to the pandemic and the longer-term policies needed to fix the long-term affordability crisis. In the short-term, a strengthened eviction moratorium that lasts until renters are again able to pay rents must be in place, and easily accessible emergency rental assistance is urgently needed. In the long-term, Congress must create and fund a permanent housing safety net, by investing in the production and preservation of the affordable housing stock, providing rental assistance to all renters who are eligible, creating a permanent housing stabilization fund to prevent evictions, and strengthening legal protections for renters.

The Gap report and interactive website can be accessed at: <https://nlihc.org/gap>

Survey Finds Small Landlords Deferred Maintenance Due to Financial Strains during COVID-19 Pandemic

The Joint Center for Housing Studies released a report highlighting the impact of COVID-19 on small landlords. The report, “[The Impact of COVID-19 on Small Landlords: Survey Evidence from Albany and Rochester, New York](#),” finds that small landlords in lower-income neighborhoods have experienced a longer duration of non-rent payment than those in higher-income neighborhoods. The most common response to address these shortfalls was to defer maintenance and set up payment plans with tenants.

Surveys were sent to landlords who owned three or fewer properties in Albany and Rochester, New York. For each individual property, the survey asked questions about rental arrears and landlord actions in response to late rent. Surveys were distributed in June and again in October 2020 using contact information from the cities’ rental registries. Surveys were completed by 287 landlords in June and 201 landlords in October.

By mid-June 2020, rents were fully paid in just 59.6% of small landlords’ properties. This reflects a significant decrease from June 2019, when 76.9% of properties generated their full rental revenue by mid-month. In October 2020, rents were fully paid in only 53.8% of properties by mid-month. This decrease in payment rates was largely in communities with an above-median share of renter households with incomes less than \$35,000 who spent more than 50% of their income on rent. In these communities, the share of properties that paid in full fell 39.6 percentage points between October 2019 and 2020, compared to 14.9 percentage points in higher income communities.

Landlords deferred maintenance on three in ten properties, the most prevalent response to decreased rent payments and financial strain. Landlords also reported 21.1% of properties had payment plans with tenants in place. Other responses to decreased rent payments included missing property tax payments (8.2%), loan modification (7.3%), initiating eviction proceedings (4.8%), and missed mortgage payments (2.6%).

Landlords were more likely to defer maintenance and initiate evictions when their property was in a lower income, cost-burdened neighborhood, or a neighborhood with higher concentrations of people of color. Among properties behind on rent, 53.3% of properties in lower-income neighborhoods experienced deferred maintenance, compared to 26.9% in higher-income neighborhoods. Further, 12.2% of households behind on

rent and in neighborhoods with higher shares of residents of color faced eviction, more than double the rate in neighborhoods with lower shares of residents of color.

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

Average Rental Arrears in NYC Affordable Properties Increased 43% between 2019 and 2020

The NYU Furman Center released “[Rent Payments in a Pandemic: Analysis of Affordable Housing in New York City](#),” a policy brief examining how rent payments and rental arrears changed for tenants residing in affordable housing properties in New York City. The analysis focuses primarily on renters in below-market-rate units in buildings financed with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), about half (56%) of whom receive subsidies that further lower their portion of the rent. The authors found that while monthly payment rates after March 2020 remained at or above 90%, the number of households in extreme debt more than doubled. The average rental arrears for tenants that owed rent increased by 43% between September 2019 and September 2020, to \$2,871.

The New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAFH) provided the authors with rent ledger data, which tracks tenant payments and charges, on 18,632 units in New York City. Seventy-two percent of the homes in this sample are in the Bronx or Brooklyn, and 77% are in buildings with at least 50 units. The affordable housing developments include projects built using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) as well as some rent-regulated buildings. The LIHTC program finances the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing by providing a tax credit to investors. Rent-restricted units in LIHTC properties have fixed maximum gross rents and are available to low-income households (see the [Advocates’ Guide, p. 5-17](#), for more information on LIHTC).

Rent payment rates were lower in 2020 than in 2019, resulting in a larger accumulation of rental arrears in 2020. Between March and September 2019, 98% of the total rent charged across all units was paid, while during the same period in 2020, 95% of the total rent charged was paid. The authors stress that any decline in payment rates contributes to increasing rental debt.

Despite high monthly payment rates, the authors found a large share of tenants had some rent debt. Before the crisis, in 2019, the share of tenant households with some amount of rental arrears hovered around 50%. This might suggest low-income renters are unable to pay off lingering debts that result from previous emergencies, even when their situations stabilize. The share of households with rental arrears increased from 52% to 55% between September 2019 and September 2020. Total rent arrears increased after the beginning of the crisis in March and again in August, after the expiration of extended federal unemployment benefits. Most renters in arrears in 2019 and 2020 owed between \$100 and \$2,000. The average rental arrears for tenants who owed rent increased in 2020 by 43%, to \$2,871. The number of households who owed more than \$10,000 in rent, which the authors label “extreme rental arrears,” increased by 108% between September 2019 and September 2020. The 650 households with extreme rental arrears accounted for half of the total rent owed by September 2020.

Approximately 56% of the households in this sample received further subsidies that lower their portion of the rent—for example, Housing Choice Vouchers. Those additional subsidies depend on tenant income, unlike fixed LIHTC rents, and so they may provide an additional buffer in a crisis. The authors found that the decline in payment rates after March 2020 was much smaller for these subsidized households than for those who did not receive further subsidies.

The policy brief is available at: <https://bit.ly/3bV9AAD>

HUD 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Finds Increase in Homelessness for Fourth Consecutive Year

HUD released the [2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report \(AHAR\), Part 1](#), which provides estimates of homelessness in the U.S. The 2020 report estimates 580,466 people were experiencing homelessness in January 2020, which reflects a 2% increase from 2019. This is the fourth consecutive year in which homelessness increased nationwide, and the overall increase was driven by an increase in the unsheltered homeless population. For the first time since data collection began, the count found more individuals (people not in families with children) experiencing unsheltered homelessness than sheltered homelessness. It is important to note that the report is based on data collected prior to the coronavirus pandemic. The report shows that homelessness was increasing even before the onset of the pandemic and its economic fallout.

The AHAR summarizes estimates of homelessness at the national, state, and Continuum of Care (CoC) levels based on data from the annual point-in-time (PIT) counts of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. Continuums of Care are local planning bodies responsible for coordinating homelessness services. The PIT counts, conducted by local volunteers, are a “snapshot” of homelessness.

Sixty-one percent of all people experiencing homelessness were staying in sheltered locations, such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, or safe havens. Thirty-nine percent were unsheltered, living in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, vehicles, or abandoned buildings. California accounted for more than half of all unsheltered people in the country. In Arizona, Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and Oregon, more than half of all people experiencing homelessness were found in unsheltered locations. By contrast, in New York, Nebraska, North Dakota, Maine, and Massachusetts, at least 92% of people experiencing homelessness were sheltered. New York has the lowest rate of people experiencing homelessness who were unsheltered in the country, despite having the highest rate of homelessness (47 out of every 10,000 people).

Roughly 70% (408,891) of the homeless population in January 2020 were individuals—that is, people in households not composed of both adults and children. In 2020, for the first time, there were more unsheltered individuals (209,413) than sheltered individuals (199,478). Between 2019 and 2020, the population of individuals experiencing homelessness increased by 3%.

Roughly 30% (171,575) of the homeless population in January 2020 were in families with children. The average homeless family household consisted of three people, and just under 54,000 families were experiencing homelessness. There was essentially no change in family homelessness between 2019 and 2020, though compared to 2007, there has been a 27% decline in the number of people in families experiencing homelessness. Nine in ten people experiencing homelessness in families with children were sheltered. For the first time since data collection began, though, the number of unsheltered people in families with children increased in 2020.

Twenty-six percent (151,607) of the homeless population were youths under the age of 25. The PIT count found 34,210 unaccompanied youths under the age of 25, which represented 6% of the total population experiencing homelessness. Slightly more than half of unaccompanied homeless youths were staying in sheltered locations. There were also 7,335 homeless parenting youths under the age of 25.

People of color remain overrepresented among the homeless population compared to the U.S. population. Whereas they represent 12% of the U.S. population, Black people accounted for 39% of all people experiencing homelessness in 2020. People identifying as Latino account for 16% of the total population but 23% of the homeless population. American Indian, Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian people account for 1% of the U.S. population but 5% of the homeless population. White people account for 74% of the total

U.S. population but only 48% of all people experiencing homelessness. Between 2019 and 2020, unsheltered homelessness increased by 8% for white people, 9% for Black people, and 10% for Latino people.

Twenty-one out of every 10,000 veterans in the United States were experiencing homelessness. The 37,252 veterans experiencing homelessness in 2020 accounted for 8% of all homeless adults. Between 2019 and 2020, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness increased slightly, by less than 1%. This increase is driven by an increase in unsheltered homelessness among veterans. Even with that slight increase in 2020, veteran homelessness has declined by almost 50% since 2009.

The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, Part 1 is available at: <https://bit.ly/3txcUrj>

Resources

Urban Land Institute Releases 2021 Home Attainability Index

The Urban Land Institute Terwilliger Center for Housing released the [2021 Home Attainability Index](#). This high-level snapshot documents the extent to which a housing market provides a range of housing choices attainable to the regional workforce, along with an accompanying summary report. The index provides an array of 30 housing-related metrics for 112 metropolitan areas across the country. The measures include the attainability of homeownership for middle-income households, racial and ethnic gaps in homeownership, residential segregation, the quality of regional transit systems, and housing production in the last decade. NLIHC's estimates of the number of affordable and available rental homes per 100 renter households at or below 30% AMI or the poverty level, as well as at or below 80% AMI, are used in conjunction with several other measures of rental attainability to measure how well the rental market serves the lower and middle segments of the market.

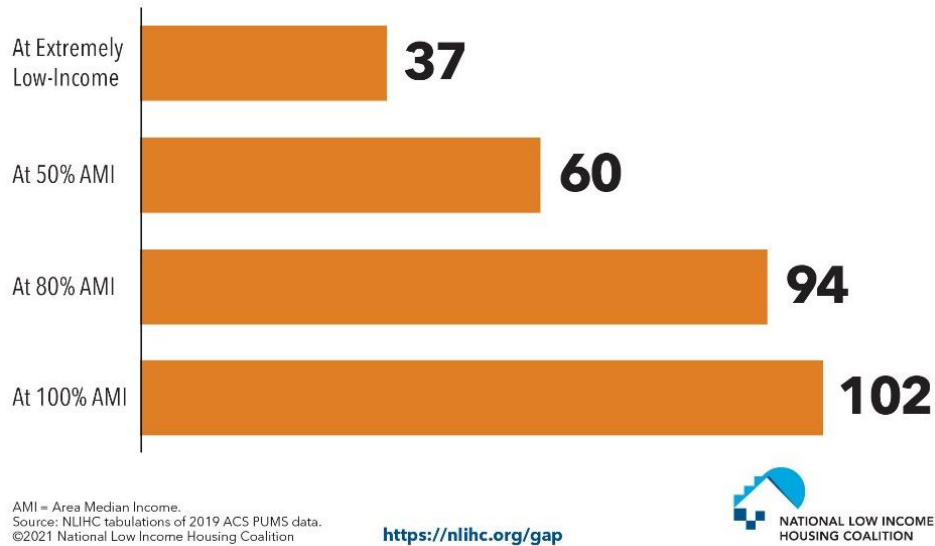
The report and index data can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3tta9HG>

Fact of the Week

Only 37 Affordable Rental Homes are Available for Every 100 Extremely Low-Income Renter Households

THE GAP

AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE RENTAL HOMES
PER 100 RENTER HOUSEHOLDS, 2019



Source: NLIHC, 2021. *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes.*

From the Field

Florida Housing Coalition Launches New Center for Racial Equity

The past year has seen an increasing awareness of racism and white supremacy in the U.S.. The Florida Housing Coalition (FHC), an NLIHC state partner organization, is attempting to address disparities in housing in Florida by creating a Center for Racial Equity. The center serves as a composite platform for the Coalition's efforts focused on race and equity in public and private investments, regulations, and legal and policy frameworks that shape Florida's neighborhoods, cities, and regions.

The Center for Racial Equity is a major initiative for the FHC, growing out of discussions among FHC staff about how to address the racial inequities in housing resulting from a long history of zoning, land development, and housing finance discrimination. The FHC has become increasingly concerned about the substantial and growing disparity between Black and white homeownership, especially after the pandemic's economic impact. FHC will use this center to equip localities, nonprofits, and racial equity advocates with resources, data, support, and technical assistance to address racial disparities in the housing industry.

Closing the Racial Disparity Gap in Homeownership (Closing the Gap) is the first program to launch under the initiative. It is a 3-to-1 matching grant program led by the center's two major underwriters, Bank of America and Wells Fargo. Additional programs include a free "Leading with Equity" course, a "Glossary of Shared Language" for an equity dialogue, a "BIPOC Support and Connect" program, policy work, and a virtual conference in August. The center will also launch a CRE internship program for Florida's historically Black colleges and universities.

"The Florida Housing Coalition has already seen positive results from creating the Center for Racial Equity through our process of enlisting allies," says Jaimie Ross, president and CEO at the Florida Housing Coalition.

“We are using a large tent for this work, so working with allies, organizations with racial equity missions, and organizations who support racial equity, broadens the reach of our coalition’s impact enormously.

NLIHC is currently working to formalize our planning on centering racial equity as well and looks forward to learning about other groups doing this type of work.

Read more about FHC’s racial equity work at: <https://bit.ly/2P6tSOs>

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 in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 14

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of March 14:

- “Still unable to pay your rent or mortgage? Here's how the latest stimulus plan will help,” *CNN*, March 12 at: <http://cnn.it/3tAbwEw>
- “Eviction filings increased after CDC issued nationwide moratorium, government report shows,” *MarketWatch*, March 16 at: <http://on.mktw.net/3c4IBCJ>
- “Where’s my stimulus payment? Maybe in your account (finally!),” *New York Times*, March 17 at: <http://nyti.ms/3tDI4NT>
- “More than 2000 organizations urge Biden to extend national eviction ban,” *CNBC*, March 17 at: <https://cnb.cx/2OJWLQJ>

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