

Volume 26, Issue 13

April 5, 2021

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing

- President Biden Unveils “American Jobs Plan” with Robust Resources for Housing

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

- Tenants Can File Complaints Against Landlords Who Violate CDC Eviction Moratorium
- Additional Coronavirus Updates – April 5, 2021
- Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – April 5, 2021

Emergency Rental Assistance

- NLIHC Sends Letter Urging Biden Administration to Address Critical Issues with Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program

NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

- Over 1,100 Attend NLIHC’s 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum Featuring HUD Secretary Fudge, Members of Congress, and Much More
- NLIHC Announces 2020 and 2021 Housing Organizing Award Honorees

Congress

- Bill Introduced in the House to Increase Investment in the National Housing Trust Fund
- House Financial Services Committee to Hold Hearing on Investments in Housing and Financial Infrastructure

HUD

- HUD Withdraws Proposed Mixed Status Rule
- HUD Releases FY21 Income Limits
- HUD’s RAD Office Issues Brief Section 3 Guidance for PHAs Converting Public Housing under RAD
- HUD Distributes Section 3 FAQs Based on Final Rule

Opportunity Starts at Home

- Campaign Sends Letter to President Biden, HUD Secretary Fudge, and Congressional Leadership Urging Robust Housing Resources in Infrastructure Package

NLIHC Leadership Awards

- Join NLIHC's 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration on April 28 to Honor Housing Justice Network, Sen. Sherrod Brown, Rep. Maxine Waters, and Joy Johnson

Research

- Eviction Moratoriums Improved Food Security and Decreased Mental Stress during Pandemic
- GAO Report Recommends Housing Choice Voucher Program Improve Its Use of Data to Verify Tenant Eligibility
- Higher Housing Cost Burdens Increase Likelihood of Material Hardship

Fact of the Week

- Children in Low-Income Households More Likely than Those in High-Income Households to Have Disabilities

Event

- Tenant Talk Live! Annual Resident Session

NLIHC News

- NLIHC Seeks Website and Graphic Design Specialist

NLIHC in the News

- NLIHC in the News for the Week of March 28

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing

President Biden Unveils “American Jobs Plan” with Robust Resources for Housing

President Joe Biden announced on March 31 his priorities for the “[American Jobs Plan](#),” an approximately \$2 trillion infrastructure and recovery package that includes robust resources for housing. The “American Jobs Plan” includes \$213 billion “to produce, preserve, and retrofit more than two million affordable and sustainable places to live...through grants, formula funding, targeted tax credits and project-based rental assistance.” The proposal includes \$40 billion to make much needed repairs to public housing, resources to support homeownership and weatherize homes, and new incentives to encourage communities to eliminate exclusionary zoning and harmful land-use restrictions.

While details are still vague, the proposal presents a tremendous opportunity to advance many of NLIHC’s [HoUsed campaign’s](#) bold housing solutions to address the urgent housing needs facing extremely low-income households, including Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), people with disabilities and other historically marginalized people.

Congressional leaders will now work to fill in the details, set priorities, draft, and advance legislation to enact the proposal into law. The White House and Democratic leaders have expressed interest in passing an infrastructure bill as early as this summer. NLIHC will work to ensure Congress includes in any infrastructure spending plan comprehensive resources to address homelessness and housing poverty, including these priorities from the NLIHC-led HoUsed campaign: an expansion of rental assistance to every eligible household; \$70 billion to repair public housing and make energy-efficient upgrades to existing public housing stock; and at least \$40 billion annually for the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes.

Take action by signing your organization on to a national letter urging Congress to support robust investments in affordable housing at: <https://tinyurl.com/zbau4kee>

Learn more about the “American Jobs Plan” at: <https://tinyurl.com/4m6a4cxc>

Learn more about NLIHC’s HoUsed Campaign at: <https://nlihc.org/housed>

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

Tenants Can File Complaints Against Landlords Who Violate CDC Eviction Moratorium

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) released a [joint statement](#) on March 29 announcing that the agencies will monitor and investigate eviction practices to ensure landlords and property owners are complying with the federal, state, and local moratoriums. The statement acknowledges that major multistate landlords are evicting tenants despite the federal eviction moratorium or before tenants are aware of their rights. The CFPB and FTC will enforce penalties against landlords who violate the order.

The Biden administration [announced](#) on March 29 an [extension of the federal eviction moratorium](#) through June 30, 2021, and greater enforcement of the moratorium’s protections – two measures that will help keep millions of renters stably housed during the pandemic and prevent further spread of and deaths from COVID-19. Unfortunately, the administration did not strengthen the order to address the flaws that undermine its public health purpose. The Biden administration must strengthen the order and close the loopholes that some landlords

have exploited to continue evicting renters from their homes and must ensure the moratorium's protections are automatic and universal throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Renters can file complaints with the CFPB and the FTC against landlords who violate the eviction moratorium.

Access the CFPB complaint database at: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint/>

Access the FTC complaint database at: <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/?pid=B>

Additional Coronavirus Updates – April 5, 2021

Updated NLIHC Resources

- [Economic Impact Payments: Frequently Asked Questions](#) [and a version in [Español](#)]
- [Guidance for Helping People Experiencing Homelessness Access their Economic Impact Payments](#) [and a version in [Español](#)]

National Updates

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky on March 29 announced a [90-day extension](#) of the federal eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) will launch a [new effort](#) to increase awareness of the federal eviction moratorium's protections. The CFPB and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) will enforce penalties against landlords who violate the order. Read the [joint statement](#) of CFPB Acting Director Dave Uejio and FTC Acting Chairwoman Rebecca Slaughter on preventing illegal evictions.

Renters can file complaints against their landlords if they violate the CDC moratorium with the CFPB at <http://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint/> or with the FTC at: <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/?pid=A>

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The [USDA announced](#) that the Biden-Harris administration extended the eviction moratorium to affected multifamily housing residents through June 30, 2021, providing relief to the hundreds-of-thousands of Americans who rely on USDA-supported multifamily housing communities.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge on March 25 [announced \\$5 million](#) in Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant (NHHBG) funding under the American Rescue Plan to support the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic (see *Memo*, [3/29](#)). Secretary Fudge also [announced \\$450 million](#) in Indian Housing Block Grants to Indian tribes across the country to respond to COVID-19.

FEMA

FEMA [announced](#) on March 25 that it has amended major disaster declarations for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, five territories, and two tribes to provide 100% federal funding for the costs of eligible expenses under the Public Assistance program, including approved non-congregate sheltering costs. [President Biden](#)

[authorized the increase](#) in the level of federal funds for eligible expenses performed from January 20, 2020, through September 30, 2021.

Internal Revenue Service

The Internal Revenue Service and Treasury Department [announced](#) on March 30 that they anticipate economic impact payments will begin to be issued this weekend to Social Security recipients and other federal beneficiaries who do not normally file a tax return, with the projection that most of these payments would be sent electronically and received on April 7.

Advocacy

The National Homelessness Law Center (NHLHC) created a [fact sheet](#) on taking advantage of FEMA's 100% reimbursement for housing people experiencing homelessness in hotels. NHLHC recommends that states and localities house people experiencing homelessness in hotels, motels, and/or RVs for the duration of the pandemic, and they provide examples of state and local efforts to do so on their [COVID-19 protections for homeless populations](#) webpage.

The National Consumer Law Center released a [Guide for Advocates to Recent Federal COVID-19 Relief to Help Consumers Pay for Essential Energy, Water, and Broadband Service](#).

Reporting

While large landlords have been critical of the federal eviction moratorium, arguing the ban is putting their finances in jeopardy, a [CBS Money Watch](#) review of the financial statements and loan records of the nation's largest landlords indicates large property owners have predominantly been profitable during the pandemic. The argument that landlords need the eviction moratorium to end because of financial hardship is "very hard to make," says NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

[Common Dreams](#) reports on the [CBS analysis](#) that revealed major property owners have seen profits, some very large, during the coronavirus pandemic. The article links to a [Twitter thread](#) from NLIHC's Diane Yentel on the extension of the CDC eviction moratorium.

[NPR](#) reports the CDC extended the federal eviction moratorium through June, but it did not address the moratorium's shortcomings. "It's disappointing that the administration didn't act on the clear evidence and need to also strengthen the order to address the flaws that undermine its public health purpose," says NLIHC's Diane Yentel. "That will result in some continued harmful evictions during the pandemic."

The [Associated Press](#) reports on the extension of the federal eviction moratorium through June, highlighting housing advocates' disappointment that the Biden administration merely extended the ban without addressing its shortcomings. "The CDC simply extended President Trump's original order, leaving the loopholes and flaws in place, a disappointing decision that will result in more harmful evictions during the pandemic," said NLIHC's Diane Yentel.

[Politico](#) reports that the CDC extended the federal eviction moratorium without making substantive changes to the order, despite housing advocates urging the Biden administration to strengthen and enforce the ban. "While the Biden administration is well aware of the shortcomings in the moratorium order that allow some evictions to proceed during the pandemic, the CDC director did not correct them," said NLIHC's Diane Yentel. The heads of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission [issued a joint statement](#) announcing they will monitor and investigate eviction processes to ensure they are complying with the law, pointing to reports that major multistate landlords are violating the moratorium.

[CNN](#) reports the CDC extended the federal eviction moratorium through June, but it did not improve and strengthen the moratorium, as [housing advocates have urged](#) the Biden administration to do.

[The Hill](#) reported on efforts by Democratic lawmakers and housing advocates to urge the Biden administration to extend the federal eviction moratorium. “The historic levels of emergency rental assistance underscore how important it is for the Biden administration to extend, strengthen, and enforce the moratorium,” said NLIHC’s Diane Yentel. “Without this protection, renters will be at risk of losing their homes at the very same time that billions of dollars are on the way to help stabilize them.”

An op-ed in [The Hill](#) urges Congress and the White House to take bold action to reverse the rising trend of homelessness in the United States. Extending the CDC eviction moratorium is needed to prevent a tsunami of evictions, but we also need a national plan to address the root causes of homelessness.

State and Local News

Alabama

[NPR](#) shares the story of an Alabama resident who was evicted during the pandemic, highlighting that his experience is a window into what potentially millions more American may face if they cannot catch up on back rent by the end of June when the federal eviction moratorium expires. Felicia Jackson, the executive director of the Alabama Rural Coalition for the Homeless, says the organization is seeing many evictions despite the CDC eviction moratorium.

Arizona

The [AZEviictionHelp](#) website, published by the Arizona Bar Foundation, lists agencies and programs that can help those facing eviction navigate the legal system, find financial assistance, and match them with support services.

Renters and landlords in [12 Arizona counties](#) may now apply for rent and utility assistance through the [DES Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#). Maricopa, Pima, and Yuma counties are administering their own programs, along with several municipalities throughout the state.

California

The [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) editorial board questions why Mayor Todd Gloria and other city officials delayed pursuing FEMA reimbursement after President Biden announced FEMA will fully cover the costs of eligible non-congregate sheltering. An aide to Mayor Gloria wrote that FEMA funding does not address the need for supportive services and mentioned that the mayor directed the Housing Commission to seek out local service providers on March 12.

Louisiana

The Louisiana Housing Corporation and Louisiana’s Office of Community Development will co-host a series of [virtual information sessions](#) to provide landlords and renters with information about Louisiana’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The next session is Tuesday, April 6, at 9:00 am. Information regarding how to join a virtual session can be found at: www.LAStateRent.com

Mississippi

The [Mississippi Home Corporation](#) announced that the application portal has opened to apply for the [Rental Assistance for Mississippians Program](#).

Nevada

Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak on March 30 [announced a two-month extension](#) of the state's eviction moratorium, which was initially set to expire on March 31. The moratorium will not be extended past the end of May. Governor Sisolak extended the current moratorium to allow time for counties, courts, and other stakeholders to distribute rental assistance and ramp up eviction mediation programs.

The Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada is [concerned about a wave of evictions](#) when the state and federal eviction moratorium expires. Thousands of tenants are still waiting for assistance through [Clark County's CARES Housing Assistance Program](#), and the state and Clark County are dealing with a backlog of rental assistance applications.

New York

The [Gothamist](#) reports that despite efforts to make rental assistance more accessible to applicants, the second round of New York's rent relief program has reached fewer people than the first. Nearly eight weeks after the February 1 deadline, New York had distributed just \$7 million out of [\\$60 million](#) available for struggling tenants.

North Carolina

Governor Roy Cooper on March 30 [extended North Carolina's](#) statewide eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021. See this [fact sheet](#) for more information on North Carolina's eviction moratorium.

David Bartholomew, co-director of the homeless prevention program for [Pisgah Legal Services](#) in Brevard, says North Carolina courts are not prepared for the avalanche of eviction cases that have been postponed for months. [Up to 36% of renter households](#) in North Carolina were at high risk of eviction at the beginning of the year.

Tennessee

With FEMA offering to provide full reimbursement for non-congregate sheltering, the city of [Chattanooga is seeking to extend and expand](#) its non-congregate sheltering program for people experiencing homelessness. The city is looking to spend up to \$400,000 to rent as many as 100 hotel rooms. This is separate from the [city's ongoing efforts](#) to use \$1 million in federal COVID relief funds to purchase a hotel to use as a low-barrier shelter.

Texas

Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Travis County Judge Andy Brown on March 30 issued orders [extending eviction moratoriums in the city and county](#) through May 1. Previously, those protections were set to expire on April 1. Earlier in March, Austin opened applications for a revamped [rental assistance program](#).

Vermont

[Over 2,700 individuals](#) experiencing homelessness are being housed in hotels and motels across Vermont, and state officials say this will continue for the duration of the public health emergency.

Washington

[After weeks of disputes](#) between Mayor Jenny Durkan and members of the Seattle City Council over whether the city would expand non-congregate shelter and rely on FEMA reimbursement to cover the costs, the city council unanimously [approved \\$12 million](#) to lease 200 hotel rooms and build some tiny homes to provide shelter to people experiencing homelessness. Seattle will seek reimbursement from FEMA for eligible costs and will pay for the remaining costs using funds from the American Rescue Plan or 2022 budget process. King County officials are also hoping FEMA will reimburse the more than 400 hotel rooms they have been operating during the pandemic.

Washington, DC

[DCist](#) reports that Washington D.C. officials have not made plans to expand its Pandemic Emergency Program for Medically Vulnerable Individuals (PEP-V) into a fourth hotel – despite widespread support for the program, the hundreds of unhoused individuals on a waiting list for the program, and FEMA offering to provide 100% cost reimbursement. D.C. has requested a federal reimbursement of \$17 million for the PEP-V and quarantine housing programs. FEMA has approved nearly \$12 million of that request, and the city expects to receive another \$11 million from FEMA.

Guidance

Biden Administration

[Fact Sheet: The Biden-Harris Administration’s Multi-Agency Effort to Support Renters and Landlords](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[Temporary Halt in Residential Evictions to Prevent the Further Spread of COVID-19](#) – March 29, 2021

[CDC Eviction Protection Declaration](#) – Updated March 2021

Department of Housing and Urban Development

[American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Brief Summary of HUD PIH Provisions](#) – March 23, 2021

Department of the Treasury

[Emergency Rental Assistance: Frequently Asked Questions](#) – Revised March 26, 2021

[Emergency Rental Assistance: Grantee Award Terms](#) – Revised March 26, 2021

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

[IRS: Emergency Rental Assistance Frequently Asked Questions](#) – March 25, 2021

Additional Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – April 5, 2021

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition convenes and supports 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](#).

Resources

The Urban Institute and Enterprise Community Partners released a [federal policy and climate migration briefing for federal executive and legislative officials](#) that outlines key insights gained from a “Stakeholders Summit on Federal Policy for Climate Displacement, Relocation, and Migration” held in November 2020. Participants addressed gaps in the federal response to displacement and migration within climate adaptation, with the goal of envisioning a new framework as climate policy evolves under a new presidential administration. The report cites the NLIHC-led DHRC’s [report](#), “Fixing America’s Broken Disaster Housing Recovery System Part One: Barriers to a Complete and Equitable Recovery.” Read the “[Federal Policy and Climate Migration Briefing for Federal Executive and Legislative Officials](#)” and four accompanying briefs for [national advocacy organizations](#)

[and philanthropy](#); [state, tribal, and local governments](#); [local community groups and justice organizers](#); and [environmental, community, and climate scholars](#).

Winter Storms

FEMA is conducting [virtual home inspections](#) for Louisiana survivors in designated counties who sustained damage from the winter storms in February.

Hurricanes Laura & Delta

[Texas Housers released a report](#) on the failed Hurricane Laura evacuation of a HUD-contracted property in Galveston known as Sandpiper Cove. Failures in communication between local and state emergency management agencies to low-income housing residents, in flood-prone Galveston, led to confusion and failure to evacuate by some of the most vulnerable residents, including older adults, people with disabilities, and mothers with young children, most of whom are Black. Texas Housers' report describes the evacuation as experienced by residents of Sandpiper Cove Apartments and provides recommendations for improvement in future storm evacuations. Read the report: "[Close Call with Disaster: Lessons from the Hurricane Laura Evacuation of a HUD-subsidized Apartment in Galveston](#)"

Damage from Hurricane Laura was of such severity that it crossed the threshold of FEMA's typical Public Assistance cost-share rate of 75% and allowed Louisiana to receive a [cost-share rate of 90%](#) for eligible damages. The cost-share adjustment resulted in nearly \$22 million more for applicants to fund projects, such as restoring a children's hospital, repairing sewer systems, and rebuilding parish buildings.

Emergency Rental Assistance

NLIHC Sends Letter Urging Biden Administration to Address Critical Issues with Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel sent a [letter](#) on behalf of NLIHC and its Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) on March 31 to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, and Domestic Policy Council Director Susan Rice requesting a meeting to share issues with the [Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\) program](#) in need of immediate resolution. The letter expresses concerns about obstacles that will prevent vital ERA resources from reaching households with the greatest needs and urges the Departments of Treasury and HUD to take immediate action to remove these barriers and ensure that the lowest-income and most marginalized renters can remain stably housed during the pandemic.

NLIHC is tracking more than [700 state and local rental assistance programs](#) created or expanded during the pandemic, [analyzing](#) key features of these programs, and sharing [best practices](#) for ensuring ERA is distributed to households most in need and is used to advance racial equity. The more than \$46 billion in ERA funds provided by Congress in the [American Rescue Plan Act](#) and the December 2020 COVID-19 [relief package](#) can prevent millions of low-income people from losing their homes during the pandemic, but only if distributed swiftly and with careful attention to reaching people with the lowest incomes and other marginalized households in need.

The letter expresses appreciation for the diligent efforts by Treasury and HUD to assist states and localities with the distribution of these historic resources, but urges that more must be done to address several developing trends in ERA programs and to provide [further needed guidance](#) to ensure resources reach those households most at risk of eviction.

NLIHC Housing Policy Forum

Over 1,100 Attend NLIHC's 2021 Virtual Housing Policy Forum Featuring HUD Secretary Fudge, Members of Congress, and Much More

More than 1,100 housing advocates from around the country participated in [NLIHC's Virtual Housing Policy Forum 2021: A New Day](#) on March 30-31. The Forum featured a conversation with HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, her first at a housing conference in her new role, and special presentations from Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Rob Portman (R-OH), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Brian Schatz (D-HI), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Representatives Joyce Beatty (D-OH), Jesús “Chuy” García (D-IL), and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL). There were also speakers and panels on Racial Equity and Housing Justice; Best Practices in Organizing; Legislative Opportunities to Advance Housing in 2021; State and Local Emergency Rental Assistance Programs; Achieving Universal Housing Assistance; Lessons Learned from COVID-19 and the Need for Structural Reform; and Sharing Stories of Lived-Experience to Bring About Change.



A highlight of the Forum was a live conversation between **HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge** and NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel. Secretary Fudge noted that following the CDC's pandemic prescription of "staying home" was not a possibility for many Americans - those without homes - and she said her vision for HUD is to create an environment in which all people have a place to call home. She called the unprecedented housing and homelessness resources provided through the American Rescue Plan, the December COVID-19 relief bill, the CARES Act, and the Biden administration's new infrastructure bill provide an opportunity to achieve "generational change."



Secretary Fudge emphasized that HUD and other stakeholders such as NLIHC will play a critical role in ensuring that COVID-19 housing rescue funds are distributed effectively to those most in need. While the Department of Treasury will provide vital emergency rental assistance money, she said, HUD will provide much-needed guidance. Secretary Fudge said that racial equity will always be at the top of her agenda, that “fair housing is the law of the land. I have sworn to uphold the law, and I intend to do that.” She said that she and the administration are looking at how to reverse decades of racial inequities from U.S. housing policies that were “designed to keep certain people poor.” The administration, she said, is committed to leveling the playing field and centering equity in all their efforts. Diane asked the secretary what opportunities she sees to improve and expand programs and to achieve universal housing assistance. Secretary Fudge commented briefly on the president’s “American Jobs Plan,” released the morning of her appearance at the Forum, and the approximately 2 million new housing units it would produce and the many existing homes it would rehabilitate. She cited the president’s commitment to pursuing universal housing assistance for all eligible households and emphasized her commitment to involve those with lived experiences in informing policy decisions. Secretary Fudge ended by acknowledging the moment: “[This is] a critical place in time in this country’s history – where we can tip the scales toward justice and equality.”



NLIHC Board Chair Marla Newman

After welcoming remarks from NLIHC’s Board Chair Marla Newman, Diane opened the Virtual Policy Forum with an “**Overview of 2020 and Prospects for 2021 and Beyond.**” She congratulated and thanked the advocates attending and called for continued action to build off the policy successes of the last year. “During a time of tremendous change, fear, loss, struggle – personally and professionally – each of you rose to the challenge of working to keep unhoused people and low-income and marginalized renters safe, healthy and

housed during this unprecedented global health crisis,” Diane said. “We must build off our successful advocacy to achieve the anti-racist policies and significant, sustained investments to end homelessness and housing poverty, and achieve housing justice.” Diane emphasized the four pillars of NLIHC’s new [HoUSed campaign](#):

1. [Universal rental assistance](#) for all income-eligible households
2. Investments in the [construction and preservation of deeply affordable homes](#)
3. Permanent [emergency rental assistance](#) for households in crisis
4. Advancing robust [renter protections](#)

“This is a New Day, a once-in-a-generation opportunity, and we are powerfully positioned to seize it,” she said. “2020 was the year that changed us all; 2021 will be the year we begin to end homelessness and housing poverty, once and for all.”



A session on “**Racial Equity and Housing Justice**” focused on ways advocates can leverage their power to dismantle systems creating profound racial disparities in housing. Panelists were Dr. Tiffany Manuel, president & CEO, The Case Made; Rasheedah Phillips, managing attorney for housing policy, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia; and Susan Thomas, president, Melville Charitable Trust. They shared how advocates can explicitly advance racial equity. Dr. Manuel shared how to advocates can make the case for affordable housing while at the same time centering racial equity and advised organizations to “do the internal work first.” Rasheedah Phillips discussed a recent report produced by the Community Legal Services of Philadelphia analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on race and housing security across the city. She described the current eviction crisis in Philadelphia as a “collision of disastrous forces.” Ms. Phillips said that truly transformational housing justice work builds power, skills, and knowledge in our communities. “Building Black futures requires an end to racist housing policies,” she said. Susan Thomas referred to theme of the Forum “A New Day,” noting it is indeed a new day of opportunities, but “it won’t be a new day if we do things in the same way.” She called on the audience to expressly target and dismantle structures and systems that have oppressed Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities throughout our history. Ms. Thomas implored organizations to “stop thinking about racial equity as a project or initiative, it is the ongoing work.”



A panel on “**Lessons Learned: COVID-19 and the Need for Structural Reform**” discussed the ways the pandemic exposed significant gaps in our housing and homelessness safety net, exacerbated racial inequities, and underscored long-overdue and needed structural reforms. Moderator and NLIHC Vice President Sarah Saadian spoke of the need for universal housing assistance, which could have prevented tens of millions of the lowest-income and most marginalized renters from being at risk of losing their homes. Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, made the connection between health and housing, and shared ways that congressional resources provided in the American Rescue Plan Act could be transformational. Dianne Enriquez, co-director of Community Dignity Campaigns with the Center for Popular Democracy, called for robust renter protections and the need to prevent large corporate landlords from buying distressed properties. Marc Dones, executive director at the National Innovation Service, shared how the pandemic and economic fallout disproportionately harmed Black and Indigenous communities, widening racial inequity.



During a session on “**State and Local Emergency Rental Assistance Programs,**” Xochitl Maykovich (from the King County Department of Community and Human Services), Hugo Ramirez (from the San Francisco’s Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development), and Verónica Soto (from the San Antonio Neighborhood and Housing Services Department) discussed key lessons learned and current challenges. In San Antonio, the program hired benefits navigators to connect tenant-applicants with other resources to boost their stability. In San Francisco, the program worked with embedded community partners to reach their most vulnerable tenants and kept the application simple. King County identified and leveraged a unique feature in their housing market: most tenants who were impacted by the economic fallout of COVID-19 rented from large landlords, and King County created a component of the program for landlords to apply in bulk on behalf of all

tenants in their properties. All three program administrators shared similar frustrations with the constraints the Treasury Department places on self-attestation and the excessive length of time required, and thus additional administrative capacity and resources required by the programs, to give landlords a chance to participate. All three program administrators carefully considered how to boost housing stability through their programs. San Antonio and San Francisco are both using some of their Treasury emergency rental assistance towards housing relocation or paying future rent, but all three administrators noted that further resources and policies are needed to address the pre-existing housing crisis.



A session titled **“Members of Congress Address Affordable Housing”** began with a discussion between Diane and Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), who serves on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Diane thanked Senator Van Hollen his leadership on affordable housing and for pushing for robust emergency rental assistance during the pandemic. Senator Van Hollen said the \$50 billion dollars Congress has approved for emergency rental assistance is critically important but the current housing issues are “part of a much larger problem and broken system.” The senator said increasing funding for the national Housing Trust Fund and improving the Housing Choice Voucher program to eliminate large waiting lists are actions this current Congress can take to better address the housing crisis during and after the pandemic. He reiterated his intention to push for his [“Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act,”](#) introduced with Senator Todd Young (R-IN), which creates 500,000 housing mobility vouchers.



After this conversation with Senator Van Hollen, Representative Joyce Beatty (D-OH) spoke about her 30 years of work in affordable housing before coming to Congress and about her [“GROW Affordable Housing Act,”](#)

which would increase funding for the national Housing Trust Fund to build more affordable housing across the country. Senate Finance Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR) spoke about the committee’s efforts to include robust assistance for homeowners and individuals experiencing homelessness in the American Rescue Plan Act and committed to continuing to push for greater housing assistance in the future. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) spoke about his efforts to prevent evictions through his and Senator Michael Bennett’s (D-CO) “[Eviction Crisis Act](#)” which establishes funding for emergency eviction-prevention assistance. Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) spoke about the impact of the pandemic on families already struggling to stay stably housed and promised to push for strong affordable housing and resources going forward.



Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) spoke about the problem of exclusionary zoning, which he said is “at least classist, and often racist,” calling for housing advocates to work nationally and locally to remove these harmful laws. Congressman Jesus “Chuy” Garcia (D-IL) spoke about how renters and tenants should be driving housing policy and must be “given a seat at the table” in policy discussions about how best to address the ongoing housing crisis. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) concluded the session saying she was “grateful down to my toes” to NLIHC for its work protecting renters and securing groundbreaking aid for households with low incomes. She spoke about her “[American Housing and Economic Mobility Act](#),” which would invest in the national Housing Trust Fund. She also discussed her introduction, with Congresswoman Lydia Velazquez (D-NY), of the “[Public Housing Emergency Response Act](#),” which would provide \$70 billion to wipe out backlog of public housing maintenance and repairs. Senator Warren concluded by reiterating her intent to continue pushing for affordable housing for people with low incomes, saying, “We need to confront the affordable housing crisis head on. We’ve got to keep putting everything we’ve got into making sure that everyone has safe, affordable, housing.”





A session titled **“Achieving Universal Housing Assistance”** emphasized the importance of rental assistance for helping the lowest-income people afford decent, stable, accessible housing, reducing homelessness and housing poverty, and advancing housing and racial justice. The session featured a panel discussion with Dr. Kamillah Wood, deputy chief executive officer and chief medical officer at Children’s Health Fund; Harry Lawson, director of human and civil rights in the Center for Social Justice at the National Education Association; and Richard Cho, senior advisor for housing and services in the Office of HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge. Dr. Wood opened the session by describing the impact of housing on children’s health and connecting the racist roots of federal housing policy to the racial disparities in housing stability and health outcomes we see today. Next, Harry Lawson provided insights on how achieving universal housing assistance would improve educational outcomes, address racial equity, and impact economic stability for families more broadly. Finally, Richard Cho used his expertise on HUD programs and experience working at the local, state, and federal levels to describe the programs that could be expanded and policies enacted to achieve the goal of universal housing assistance.



Forum attendees heard directly from Capitol Hill insiders on a panel titled **“Legislative Opportunities to Advance Housing In 2021.”** Beth Cooper, who works with Senate Banking Committee Chairman Brown (D-OH), and Elayne Weiss, who works with House Financial Services Committee Chairwoman Waters (D-CA), shared their priorities for a large-scale infrastructure package that could provide billions of dollars to address housing needs. Christina Monroe, who works with House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Chairman Price (D-NC), spoke about this year’s appropriations process and what it could mean for investments in housing. Avery Pierson from the office of Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) urged advocates to support the “Eviction Crisis Act,” a bill supported by NLIHC that would create a national housing stabilization fund to provide emergency rental assistance to households in crisis.



NLIHC’s 2020 and 2021 Housing Organizing Awards honorees shared strategies in a session on **“Best Practices in Organizing.”** The annual organizing awards celebrate important organizing achievements to advance housing policy solutions. The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDNNJ) was honored with the 2020 Statewide Organizing Award; Just Housing Initiative of Cook County, IL, was honored with the 2020 Local Organizing Award; Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing (OCAH) was honored with the 2021 State and Local Organizing Award; and Housing Justice League in Atlanta was honored with the 2021 Renter Organizing Award. The session began with videos describing each of the winning campaign and then transition to a panel discussion among the honorees, moderated by Kalila Jackson, senior staff attorney at the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity Council and previous organizing award honoree. Staci Berger, president and CEO of HCDNNJ; Maria Moon, housing justice organizer for the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance; Alison Johnson, executive director of Housing Justice League; and Andrea Frymire, board member and inaugural president of the OCAH, shared key strategies they employed to successfully secure affordable housing resources, expand renter protections, prevent evictions, and support tenant organizing. They also discussed the importance of centering people with lived experience in advocacy efforts, using data for persuasive messaging, and building advocacy infrastructure for campaigns to build on successes and increase political momentum.



Pamela Covington and Kali Daugherty, experts on poverty with RESULTS, a movement of passionate, committed everyday people who use their voices to influence political decisions to end poverty, led a session titled **“Sharing Stories of Lived-Experience to Bring About Change.”** Pamela and Kali emphasize the importance of using stories to help shape socially just public policy. They guided session attendees through the process of crafting impactful personal stories for sharing in advocacy settings, such as when communicating with elected officials on Capitol Hill and in their states and communities. The presentation included tips and

strategies on how to select a relevant story topic, develop a story, deliver it effectively, and incorporate a call to action. They also addressed how to ask permission to share a story, what to do if the person you are sharing the story with does not share your views, and how to shorten a story to fit the timeframe available with busy policy makers.



The Forum concluded with an overview of Virtual Capitol Hill Day on April 1 by NLIHC Vice President for Field and Communications Renee Wills and closing remarks from NLIHC Board 1st Vice Chair Dora Leong Gallo.



NLIHC Announces 2020 and 2021 Housing Organizing Award Honorees

NLIHC awarded four campaigns and organizations with Housing Organizing Awards to honor their achievements in expanding affordable housing options for renters with the lowest incomes in 2020 and 2021. The honorees were the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDNNJ), Just Housing Initiative, Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing (OCAH), and Housing Justice League. Because the coronavirus pandemic delayed the announcement and presentation of the 2020 awards, winners from both 2020 and 2021 were recognized on March 31 at NLIHC's 2021 Housing Policy Forum: A New Day.

The NLIHC Housing Organizing Awards recognize outstanding achievements in statewide, regional, citywide, neighborhood, or renter organizing that furthers NLIHC's mission of achieving socially just public policy to ensure people with the lowest incomes in the U.S. have affordable and decent homes.

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel emphasized the importance of state and local organizing efforts to expand renter protections and affordable housing resources and expressed her appreciation for the extraordinary work of this year's honorees. "As we have seen throughout the pandemic, it is critical that advocates push at all levels of government for the expansion of renter protections and additional resources for affordable, accessible, and decent housing for those with the fewest resources," said Diane. "NLIHC is honored to present the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, Just Housing Initiative, Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing, and Housing Justice League with these awards to recognize their outstanding organizing achievements. All four organizations and campaigns show the power of local organizing to address past inequities and to push for a more just housing policy."

[The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey](#) received the 2020 Statewide Organizing Award for their "[Build a Thriving NJ](#)" Campaign that won significant new sources for affordable housing development. As part of the campaign, HCDNNJ organized and mobilized 300 community leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders to win three significant outcomes: restoring the New Jersey Affordable Housing Trust Fund to full funding in the budget, addressing the needs of people experiencing homelessness, and increasing the Neighborhood Revitalization Trust Fund.

"Thank you NLIHC for this recognition and support of our efforts to get New Jersey's leaders to preserve and protect state funding to 'build a thriving New Jersey,'" said Staci Berger, president and CEO of the Network. "These investments are economic revitalization tools that help create jobs and affordable, healthy homes and communities as well as strengthen our neighborhoods. We are finally on the right path, but our work will continue until we make New Jersey a place everyone can afford to call home."

[Just Housing Initiative](#) in Cook County, Illinois received the 2020 Local Organizing Award for their success in amending the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance to create fair housing protections for people with arrest and conviction records. The Just Housing Initiative, co-chaired by the [Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance](#) and [Housing Action Illinois](#), spent four years mobilizing nearly 120 organizations to join the effort to dismantle barriers to housing for people with records through the enactment of the Just Housing Amendment, requiring that housing providers and housing authorities do not consider certain aspects of prior justice involvement when making housing determinations. For applicants with conviction records from the last three years, housing providers must conduct an individualized assessment to consider multiple factors such as evidence of rehabilitation, whether the conviction is related to a disability, and whether a reasonable accommodation could be provided. Because of the amendment, more than one million residents of Cook County—and their families—have a fairer chance at renting or buying a home.

"We are honored to be recognized by NLIHC with this Organizing Award," stated Maria Moon, housing justice organizer at the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance. "Passing the Just Housing Amendment in Cook County was a critical win for the more than one million people with records in our community, and this step forward for housing justice and racial equity was made possible because of the leaders who shared their own experiences and demonstrated that 'we are not our records.'"

For their successful organizing to block House Bill 2760, [Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing](#) received the 2021 State and Local Organizing Award. The legislation would have cut in half the funding for the Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act retroactive to January 2020, leaving hundreds of people living in sub-standard housing or being severely housing cost burdened. Because of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, OCAH pivoted from in-person advocacy to producing materials for their members to use in outreach to

legislators and on social media. Because of OCAH’s successful advocacy, Governor Kevin Stitt vetoed the legislation, preserving funding for state affordable housing tax credits.

“From 2015-2020, the Oklahoma Affordable Housing Act has produced or preserved 3,184 housing units with a \$1.1 billion economic impact,” said Lisa Albers, president of the OCAH Board of Directors. “We are honored to advocate for access to safe and affordable housing for all Oklahomans and are especially grateful for the tireless efforts of our members and all that they do to promote affordable housing in Oklahoma.”

[Housing Justice League](#) in Atlanta, Georgia received the 2021 Renter Organizing Award for their eviction defense work and provision of emergency housing resources to support renters and tenant organizing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the organization ran a COVID-19 hotline for renters, canvassed neighborhoods with the highest eviction rates, assisted with rent payments, organized phone zaps, and held socially distanced rallies like car parades. As part of their effort, they created an *Eviction Defense Manual* to educate tenants about their rights in the eviction process to reduce displacement and debt caused by evictions. The manual breaks down the complicated legal process of evictions to help tenants understand necessary defense strategies.

"Understanding the law will never be enough to abolish eviction, but it can help people feel less powerless and more connected to a community organization," said Natalie McLaughlin, Housing Justice League organizer and co-author of the *Eviction Defense Manual*. "We hope the eviction defense manuals can serve as a first step on the way to organizing mass tenant power and winning housing for everyone, regardless of ability to pay."

To learn more about the Organizing Awards and see past winners, visit: <https://nlihc.org/organizing-awards>

Congress

Bill Introduced in the House to Increase Investment in the National Housing Trust Fund

Representative Norma Torres (D-CA) led 15 of her House colleagues in re-introducing on March 29 the “Keep Your Home and Prevent Homelessness Act” ([H.R. 2292](#)). If enacted, the bill would amend the “Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008” to authorize the use of funding for the Troubled Assets Relief Program for assistance under the national [Housing Trust Fund \(HTF\)](#), resulting in an investment of at least \$500 million – and potentially billions of dollars – into the HTF.

“Even before the pandemic, millions of America’s lowest-income and most marginalized households struggled to pay rent, and now, these same families are at even greater risk of housing instability and, in worst cases, homelessness,” NLIHC’s President and CEO Diane Yentel stated in a [press release](#) about the bill. “I applaud Congresswoman Torres for introducing common-sense legislation to expand the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve stable, affordable homes for renters with the greatest needs.”

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

House Financial Services Committee to Hold Hearing on Investments in Housing and Financial Infrastructure

House Financial Services Committee (HFSC) Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) announced on March 31 several HFSC and subcommittee hearings for the month of April, including a hearing on the need for investments in housing and infrastructure. The full committee is also expected to convene for a hybrid markup.

The hearings include:

- “Building Back Better: Examining the Need for Investments in America’s Housing and Financial Infrastructure” (Full Committee)—[April 14 at 10 am ET](#)
- Hybrid Markup (Full Committee)—[April 20 at 10 am ET](#)

Read Chairwoman Water’s full announcement at: <https://bit.ly/2POPRtq>

Unless otherwise noted, hearing and votes will be broadcast live at: <https://financialservices.house.gov/live/>

For the most up-to-date schedule of HFSC hearings and witnesses list, visit:

<https://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/>

HUD

HUD Withdraws Proposed Mixed Status Rule

HUD published on April 2 in the *Federal Register* a rule withdrawal, “[Housing and Community Development Act of 1980: Verification of Eligible Status; Withdrawal](#),” that will remove the previous administration’s harmful and misguided proposed “mixed-status” rule from HUD’s upcoming Spring 2021 *Unified Agenda of Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions*. The Trump administration’s proposed rule, released on May 10, 2021, would have led to thousands of mixed-status immigrant families that have members who are undocumented or otherwise ineligible for public and other subsidized housing to split up or be evicted, putting them at risk of homelessness. HUD’s withdrawal of that rule puts an end to the proposal, ensuring that these families can still pursue the assistance they are eligible for without fear of being separated or evicted.

The prior administration’s proposed rule would have further restricted eligibility for federal housing assistance based on immigration status by prohibiting mixed-status families from living in Section 214 subsidized homes. The rule would have forced impacted households to choose between separating as a family to keep their subsidy or facing eviction and potentially homelessness. According to HUD’s own analysis, the proposed rule would have resulted in the eviction of 25,000 immigrant families, including 55,000 children eligible for housing assistance. In fact, two-thirds of people in mixed-status families are already U.S. citizens, the majority of them children.

The previous administration claimed the new policy would have addressed the public housing waiting list backlog, but the agency’s own analysis found that the proposed rule would result in *fewer* families receiving housing assistance. Since mixed-status families do not receive housing assistance for ineligible family members, by prorating the amount of support, taking assistance away from these households entirely would have required HUD to provide full subsidies for additional, non-mixed-status families, costing the government at least \$193 million annually. HUD admitted the agency could be forced to reduce the quality and quantity of assisted housing to cover these additional costs.

In response to the proposed rule, NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project (NHLP), and other partners launched the [Keep Families Together](#) campaign to mobilize opposition. During the public comment period, individuals and organizations submitted over 30,450 comments; the previous time a HUD proposal garnered significant public attention resulted in just over 1,000 public comments. An NHLP analysis of these comments found that more than 95% of the comments opposed the rule.

HUD will continue to use the guidance under Section 214 of the “[Housing and Community Development Act of 1980](#).” Mixed-status families, those with include members who are eligible and others who are ineligible for housing assistance based on their immigration status, will continue to be permitted to live together in subsidized housing with prorated assistance. U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, refugees, and asylum seekers are

eligible to receive housing assistance; just because a household member is an “ineligible” immigrant, they are not necessarily undocumented.

The withdrawal of this extremely harmful proposed rule is a win for fair housing – and human decency.

There have been no updates yet on the USDA mixed-status rule after it was cleared by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (see *Memo*, [08/03/2020](#)) but this rule is likely to be withdrawn in accordance with President Biden’s recent executive order’s addressing regulatory issues (see *Memo*, [01/25](#)) and immigration reform (see *Memo*, [02/08](#)).

Read HUD’s rule “Housing and Community Development Act of 1980: Verification of Eligible Status Withdrawal” at: <https://bit.ly/3cGeQs0>

Read S.2719, the “Housing and Community Development Act of 1980” at: <https://bit.ly/3md7xuZ>

For more information about the proposed rules, the latest news and resources, visit: www.keep-families-together.org

HUD Releases FY21 Income Limits

HUD released FY21 Income Limits on April 1. The income limits determine eligibility for assisted housing programs including public housing, Section 8 project-based rental assistance, Housing Choice Vouchers, and other special-needs housing programs. HUD develops income limits from median family income estimates for metropolitan areas, parts of some metropolitan areas, and each non-metropolitan county. HUD provides a query tool for users to obtain the income limits for their area. HUD’s FY21 Income Limits are available at: <https://bit.ly/31DPoNF>

HUD’s RAD Office Issues Brief Section 3 Guidance for PHAs Converting Public Housing under RAD

HUD’s Office of Recapitalization, which oversees the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), posted a two-page document providing [guidance](#) to Section 3 for public housing agencies (PHAs) describing how the new Section 3 regulations (see *Memo*, [10/5/20](#)) apply to RAD conversions of public housing to Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) or Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA). HUD will provide an overview of the new final Section 3 rule and how it applies in RAD conversions on April 20, 2021 at 3:30 pm ET. Register [here](#). HUD indicates that additional Section 3 guidance is forthcoming later this year.

Section 3 applies to public housing converting under RAD when rehabilitation or new construction exceeds \$200,000. Specifically:

Rehabilitation or new construction work referred to in a PHA’s RAD Conversion Commitment is subject to the Section 3 requirements that apply to the “housing and community development assistance” component of the final Section 3 rule.

In response to an inquiry by NLIHC, HUD clarified in an email that Section 3 applies to the entire RAD scope of work. That is, under RAD, related non-housing work such as a parking lot, sidewalks, landscaping, etc., are considered a part of “housing construction” and is covered by Section 3.

(NLIHC NOTE: This means that after RAD Closing, which takes place before final conversion, any rehabilitation or new construction required by the conversion is subject to the Section 3 provisions for housing and community development activities – except that first priority for employment and other economic opportunities must be given to residents of public housing or Section 8-assisted housing. If funding comes from CDBG or HOME, then first priority is to low-income residents in the project’s neighborhood.)

Only pre-development work using pre-conversion public housing Operating Funds or Capital Funds before RAD conversion is subject to the Section 3 requirements that apply under the “public housing assistance” provisions of the new Section 3 rule.

NLIHC reminds readers that after conversion, Section 3 no longer applies to staff who had performed various tasks at the public housing development, such as central office employees, janitors, maintenance crew, painters, grounds crews, etc.

The guidance tells PHAs and their partners engaged in RAD conversions to ensure that they are documenting their Section 3 compliance efforts. It also states that RAD participants are not required to amend contracts executed before November 30, 2020, the effective date of the new regulations. PHAs and their partners engaged in RAD conversions closing on or after November 30, 2020, should review draft contracts to align with the new Section 3 final rule.

The effective date for Section 3 reporting requirements begins for conversions occurring on or after July 1, 2021. RAD conversions with a deadline for work completion before November 30, 2020 must report their Section 3 outcomes as required by the old Section 3 regulations.

Section 3 reporting will continue to be done through the [RAD Resource Desk](#), with each individual transaction submitting a Completion Certification with Section 3 outcome data at the completion of rehabilitation or construction.

The guidance was announced in an email to stakeholders on a RADblast listserv on March 30. The RADblast indicated that the document was on the [RAD Resource Desk](#). However, at the time it was difficult to find. It was located in the “[Document Library](#)” in two places: in the “Planning the Conversion” section under the “Procurement and Wages” category, and in the “Post-Closing” section under the “Guidance” category. After NLIHC wrote to the RAD office, staff pledged to create a new subcategory so Section 3 guidance can be more visible.

The two-page Section 3 guidance document is at: <https://bit.ly/3wiIwDi>

Information about RAD is on [page 4-39](#) of NLIHC’s *2020 Advocates’ Guide* and on [NLIHC’s public housing webpage](#).

NLIHC has a “[Detailed Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations](#)” and a “[Brief Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations](#).” The former has regulation citations, quotes from the preamble to the final rule, as well as more detailed information. The latter is a more streamlined version.

HUD posted Section 3 FAQs on March 25, 2021, which are at: <https://bit.ly/3tZ9nm2>

NLIHC’s “Detailed Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations” is at: <https://bit.ly/3m3t2OZ>

NLIHC’s “Brief Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations” is at: <https://bit.ly/31z2gEO>

The *Federal Register* version of the final Section 3 rule is at: <https://bit.ly/33e0Vos>

An easier-to-read version of the final rule is at: <https://bit.ly/30mPLf7>

HUD Distributes Section 3 FAQs Based on Final Rule

A new set of [Section 3 Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) based on the new final Section 3 regulations effective November 30, 2020 (see *Memo*, [10/5/20](#)) was posted on the [Section 3 webpage](#) of HUD's [Office of Field Management and Policy \(FMP\)](#). That Section 3 webpage, which will look familiar to Section 3 advocates, was transferred to FMP from the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) which oversaw Section 3 prior to the new final rule. The FAQs, dated March 25, 2021, mostly repackage key provisions of the final rule.

Two FAQs—FAQ6 and FAQ 3—that do not simply repeat the final rule are worth pointing out.

Under the heading “Recipient Responsibilities,” FAQ6 (page 16) suggests Section 3 recipients (public housing agencies (PHAs) and local and state governments directly receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds, among other HUD funds) hire a Section 3 coordinator or assign one individual the responsibility of coordinating all Section 3 activities. NLIHC agrees that this is a good idea but reminds residents and advocates that there is no Congressional appropriation to help implement Section 3. FAQ6 also recommends Section 3 recipient agencies establish procedures to certify Section 3 workers and businesses, maintain a list of eligible workers and businesses by skill, capacity, or interest, and to contact these workers and businesses periodically when employment or contracting opportunities arise.

Under the heading “Numerical Benchmarks,” FAQ 3 (page 21) clarifies that the benchmark requirements do not only count toward new hires. If someone is currently on staff and qualifies as a Section 3 resident under the previous regulations, they will need to re-certify as either a Section 3 worker or a Targeted Section 3 worker under the new regulations.

The purpose of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 is to ensure that when HUD funds are used to assist housing and community development projects, “to the greatest extent feasible,” preference for some of the jobs, training, and contracting opportunities that are created go to low-income people, “particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing.” Another Section 3 obligation is to support businesses owned or controlled by low-income people or businesses that hire them. Public housing agencies (PHAs) and jurisdictions using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships program, and other HUD funds, must comply with Section 3 and ensure that contractors and subcontractors comply.

NLIHC has a “[Detailed Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations](#)” and a “[Brief Summary and Analysis of the Final Section 3 Regulations](#).” The former has regulation citations, quotes from the preamble to the final rule, as well as more detailed information. The latter is a more streamlined version.

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Opportunity Starts at Home

Campaign Sends Letter to President Biden, HUD Secretary Fudge, and Congressional Leadership Urging Robust Housing Resources in Infrastructure Package

[*Opportunity Starts at Home*](#), a multi-sector affordable homes campaign, sent a letter to President Biden and HUD Secretary Fudge on March 30 urging them to prioritize robust housing resources in future infrastructure or recovery packages. Specifically, the letter calls for expanding vouchers to every eligible household, investing \$70 billion to preserve public housing, and providing \$40 billion to build new homes through the national Housing Trust Fund. The letter was signed by 39 leading organizations from an array of sectors, including health, education, food security, civil rights, faith, homelessness, seniors, child well-being, environmental protection, municipal governance, racial and gender equity, disability rights, and more. The campaign sent the same letter to congressional leadership on March 31.



Read the campaign's letter [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](#).

NLIHC Leadership Awards

Join NLIHC's 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration on April 28 to Honor Housing Justice Network, Sen. Sherrod Brown, Rep. Maxine Waters, and Joy Johnson

[Register to attend NLIHC's 2021 Housing Leadership Awards Celebration](#), to be held virtually on Wednesday, April 28, 4-5 pm ET, to honor 2021 Housing Leadership Awards honorees: 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; **Representative Maxine Waters** (D-CA), chair of the House Financial Services Committee; and **Joy Johnson**, long-time resident leader of the Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR) and former NLIHC board member. Donate to NLIHC in their honor as an [individual](#) or as an [organization](#). Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS21>



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.



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.

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 free event at: <https://bit.ly/LEADERS21>

Research

Eviction Moratoriums Improved Food Security and Decreased Mental Stress during Pandemic

A new study, "[COVID-19 Rental Eviction Moratoria and Household Well-Being](#)," investigates the impact of eviction moratoriums on household outcomes including food security, mental health, and spending. The authors find that eviction moratoriums redirected spending to more immediate needs, such as groceries. Moratoriums also reduced food insecurity and mental stress, particularly among Black households. This paper adds to the growing field of research documenting the positive impacts of eviction moratoriums amid COVID-19 (see *Memo*, [12/7](#)).

The researchers use a dataset of state- and county-level eviction moratoriums to compare well-being outcomes for places that had eviction moratoriums and places that did not. The study period lasted from March to August 2020, ending before the CDC's national eviction moratorium provided protections for most renters. The researchers used a Federal Reserve dataset and the Opportunity Insight Economic Tracker to assess consumer spending and consumption. The researchers use the Census Bureau's *Household Pulse Survey* and Google's Search Volume Index to assess food security and mental health outcomes.

Comparing outcomes in places that did and did not have eviction moratoriums, the researchers examined the effects of moratoriums on the share of households that report sometimes or often not having enough food to eat in the prior 7 days. The effect of moratoriums on food insecurity was not significant for all households, but the effect was significant among Black households. Each additional week of eviction moratoriums was associated with a 2% decline in the number of Black households reporting food insecurity. The researchers also examined the number of households that conducted a Google search for "Food Stamps" and "Food Banks Near Me" to corroborate this finding. Moratoriums were associated with a reduction in searches for these specific terms.

The research also examined the effect of moratoriums on mental health outcomes, specifically the share of households who report frequent feelings of being "nervous, anxious, or on edge," "not being able to stop or control worrying," and "feeling down, depressed, or hopeless." Moratoriums reduced overall mental stress among Black households. Each additional week of an eviction moratoriums was associated with a 1.9% decline in feeling anxious and a 1.6% decline in "feeling down".

Finally, this research found that eviction moratoriums were associated with an annual .9% increase in grocery spending and 1% increase in food service spending. These findings suggest that eviction moratoriums may have helped households direct their spending toward more immediate needs, such as groceries, resulting in decreased food insecurity. Despite these positive findings, many renters still owe back-rent and may be at risk of eviction once the federal eviction moratorium ends. While moratoriums provided some relief amid widespread unemployment and financial hardship, this research also underlines the importance of comprehensive rental assistance.

The report can be found at: <https://bit.ly/39xbqGd>

GAO Report Recommends Housing Choice Voucher Program Improve Its Use of Data to Verify Tenant Eligibility

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently assessed how federal programs serving low-income households use data to verify applicants' income and assets. GAO's [report](#) examines data use across six programs: Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Making use of available electronic data sources to verify eligibility has many benefits, including decreased documentation requirements for applicants and more efficient program administration. The research finds that both HUD and HHS should provide more information about data sources to state and local administrators to improve eligibility verification.

GAO reviewed federal data use requirements, state plans, and relevant research studies. Researchers also conducted interviews with federal officials, researchers, and association officials working with state or local program administrators.

Three of the selected programs (HCV, SNAP, and Medicaid) have federal requirements for using electronic data sources to verify eligibility, while LIHEAP, EITC, and SSI do not. Nevertheless, each program uses some electronic data to verify income eligibility and assets. The research identified a total of 34 potential data sources used to verify eligibility, including 13 federal, 14 state, and 7 commercial datasets. These include sources such as federal tax data, the National Directory of New Hires, state quarterly wage databases, and state unemployment data.

GAO finds that HUD and HHS have the most potential to improve their electronic data use processes for income verification. Within HUD's HCV program, state and local public housing agencies (PHA) must use several federally required data sources to verify an applicant's eligibility. PHAs also have the flexibility to use other electronic data sources that have the potential to speed up verification processes and the distribution of assistance to tenants. Despite the benefits of using additional sources, HUD has done very little to understand what additional data sources PHAs use. PHAs are not required to report which income verification sources they use to screen HCV applicants. GAO suggests that HUD survey PHAs to assess what sources are being used. HUD should share their finding through existing networks and forums.

The report can be found at: <https://bit.ly/2OaP8Cv>

Higher Housing Cost Burdens Increase Likelihood of Material Hardship

A recent article published by *Housing Policy Debate*, "[Housing Cost Burden, Material Hardship, and Well-Being](#)," finds that a household's likelihood of experiencing food insecurity, difficulty paying bills, and difficulty affording medical care increases as their share of income spent on housing increases. Additional spending on housing above 50% of income, however, does not further increase the likelihood of these hardships, indicating that households spending half of their incomes on housing are already in precarious situations with significant hardship.

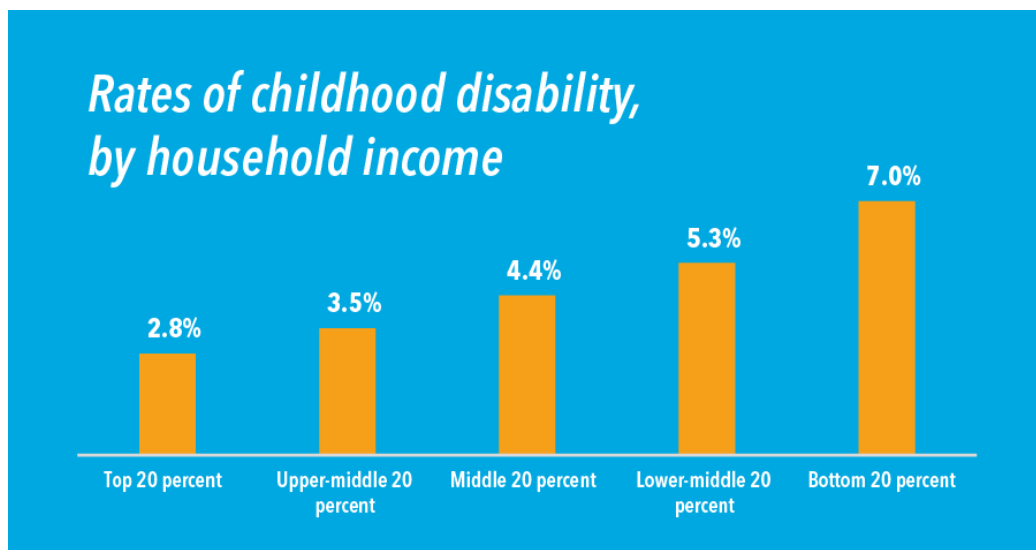
The researchers used data from the 2008 panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), which included more than 42,000 households. The core survey was repeated every four months from 2008 to 2013 and covered subjects such as demographic characteristics, employment, income, and whether households received public assistance. The authors analyzed survey results to determine whether the share of income a household spent on housing affected the likelihood of experiencing material hardship, their housing satisfaction, housing problems, and neighborhood conditions.

To test the idea that households with higher housing cost burdens make trade-offs to obtain better housing quality or better neighborhood conditions, the authors analyzed the relationship between cost burden and housing satisfaction, housing problems, and neighborhood conditions. They found no statistically significant relationship between housing cost burden and home satisfaction, indicating households are not taking-on higher housing cost burdens to live in subjectively better housing. There was no significant relationship between housing cost-burden and general satisfaction with the neighborhood or satisfaction with neighborhood safety. Higher cost-burdens were associated with less satisfaction with neighborhood public services, however. While they find little evidence that households trade higher housing cost burdens for improved neighborhood conditions, other potentially relevant neighborhood characteristics—such as the poverty rate or crime rate—are not reflected in the data.

Read the full paper at: <https://bit.ly/3rDIPVH>

Fact of the Week

Children in Low-Income Households More Likely than Those in High-Income Households to Have Disabilities



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Childhood Disability in the United States: 2019*. Percentages reflect share of all children in households within the income quintile who have a disability.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Childhood Disability in the United States: 2019*.

Event

Tenant Talk Live! Annual Resident Session

[Join](#) resident leaders and NLIHC staff for a new *Tenant Talk Live!* format! In place of a Forum Resident Session, this *Tenant Talk Live!* will move from the webinar format to meeting format, as we will have breakout rooms for more in-depth conversation. This *Tenant Talk Live!* will take place today at 6 pm ET (5 pm CT, 4 pm MT, 3 pm PT). Register at: <https://bit.ly/3dNekGP>

Houston housing advocate Nakia Sims will join us to introduce the discussion questions:

- What would racial equity look like in your community? How do you see inequities appear in housing and homelessness in your community?
- What do you envision as both emergency and long-term solutions to the housing crisis?
- In creating and pushing for this agenda, how can we ensure that people with lived experience are leading in this effort?

The most recent episode of *Tenant Talk Live!* included tenant advocates from Brooklyn, NY to discuss how they took on their landlord's nefarious tech tactics. Watch the recording at: <https://youtu.be/TbBgxtZCHxc>.

Tenant Talk Live! provides opportunities for residents to connect with NLIHC and one another, share best practices, and learn how to be more involved in influencing federal housing policies and to lead in their communities.

NLIHC is committed to connecting and engaging with resident leaders in new, robust ways. If you are a low-income resident and have a topic you would like to propose for peer-sharing or if you want to be a speaker on an upcoming call/webinar, email: karbuckle@nlihc.org

Register for *Tenant Talk Live!* at: <https://bit.ly/3dNekGP>

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 28

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of March 28:

- “CDC extends eviction moratorium until June 30,” *CNN*, March 29 at: <https://cnn.it/3ufYBb9>
- “A federal order aimed at protecting millions from eviction is being extended.” *NPR*, March 29 at: <https://n.pr/3mdLSCU>
- “CDC extends eviction ban through June 30,” *Politico*, March 29 at: <https://politi.co/2OjtVGI>
- “Despite eviction ban complaints, big landlords report record profits,” *CBS News* March 30 at: <https://cbsn.ws/3fDI51x>

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Olivia Arena, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x209
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Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245
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
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Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242
Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291
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Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246
Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234
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Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
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