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May 20, 2024

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Homelessness and Housing First

Advocates Witness Encampment Evictions in D.C. and Urge National Park Service and D.C. Officials to Halt Sweeps

The National Park Service and the administration of D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser began forcibly removing five homeless encampments in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood of Washington, D.C., on May 16. Staff members and advocates from NLIHC, the Way Home Campaign, and many local and national partners stood with our unhoused neighbors at the first encampment to be removed to speak out against the forced removals and call for real and humane solutions to homelessness. NLIHC also joined 11 national organizations in issuing a [statement](#) opposing the D.C. encampment evictions.

The encampment evictions – scheduled to take place through May 20 – are counterproductive to efforts to end homelessness. The actions will displace approximately 90 people, many of whom were already forcibly removed in February 2023 from D.C.’s McPherson Square by the National Park Service at the direction of the local D.C. government (see *Memo*, [2/21/23](#)). Dozens of tents and personal belongings were discarded, and at least 17 individuals had no choice but to move to significantly less safe conditions, including highway underpasses. No individuals were moved into stable housing. D.C. has hundreds of unused housing vouchers and is weeks away from opening a new non-congregate shelter in Foggy Bottom, making these evictions especially cruel. Advocates continue to urge the Bowser administration and the National Parks Service to halt the evictions and shift their focus to connecting encampment residents with the resources they need.

The National Park Service originally scheduled a small encampment closure months ago before recently expanding the scope of these evictions. With the expansion, the local D.C. government decided to close additional encampment sites on the same timeline. Forcibly removing people experiencing homelessness violates best practices and proven solutions to end homelessness and only makes it more difficult for individuals to be connected to homes and services.

D.C. has made recent progress towards ending chronic homelessness through funding vouchers and offering shelter options, such as The Aston, a non-congregate shelter scheduled to open near the encampments that are scheduled to be removed. The Aston was scheduled to open last fall, but the opening has been delayed until August. Forcing encampment residents to leave when they have nowhere else to go and when there is a non-congregate shelter opening soon nearby is particularly cruel and ineffective.

The [Way Home Campaign](#), a coalition of thousands of people committed to ending chronic homelessness in D.C., called on the National Park Service and the Bowser administration to stop the evictions and instead devote their energy and resources to more productive measures, such as implementing an existing plan to end homelessness and connect encampment residents to already funded housing options. In a [letter](#) to the Bowser administration and National Parks Service, The Way Home Campaign and supporting organizations, including NLIHC, call on them to:

- Avoid encampment evictions, closures, and establishment of “no tent zones,” except in the rarest of circumstances when health and safety concerns must be addressed.

- Whenever possible, address health and safety concerns without evicting the encampment, displacing residents, and/or establishing no tent zones.
- Stop all the encampment evictions until The Aston opens and every encampment resident is provided with a solution that meets their needs.
- Address barriers to DC's larger shelter system (such as curfews, limits on possessions, and strict program rules) and expand non-congregate shelter capacity.
- Shift focus from closing encampments to swiftly connecting residents to housing vouchers, and fund programs and services that end homelessness, such as permanent supportive housing, street outreach, and more.

Local or national organizations can join The Way Home Campaign's sign-on letter [here](#), contact officials [here](#), or email Nadia Malik at Miriam's Kitchen for more information at:

Read the joint statement opposing the D.C. encampment evictions at:
<https://tinyurl.com/5d39az78>

Register for Tomorrow's (5/21) NLIHC, The Alliance, and CBPP Webinar on FY25 Federal Appropriations

NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (The Alliance), and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) invite advocates nationwide to [register](#) for the second webinar in our series on advancing solutions to the homelessness crisis. The webinar, "Using the FY25 Appropriations Process to Fund Solutions to Homelessness," will take place **tomorrow, May 21, from 2 to 3 pm ET** and will address the fiscal year (FY) 2025 federal appropriations process and how advocates can engage their members of Congress on the need for robust funding for affordable housing and homelessness programs. The webinar will feature Sonya Acosta from CBPP, Kim Johnson from NLIHC, and Steve Berg from The Alliance.

Earlier this month, HUD Acting Secretary Adrienne Todman testified before both the [House](#) and [Senate](#) Appropriations Subcommittees on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) regarding President Biden's FY25 HUD budget request. On the webinar, panelists will discuss the president's budget, where we currently are in the appropriations process, and opportunities for advocates to get engaged and make an impact.

Last year, more than 13,400 people participated in our monthly Homelessness and Housing First [webinar series](#). Given the tremendous interest among stakeholders and the worsening homelessness and affordable housing crises, we decided to continue and expand the series to focus on the solutions to homelessness. On the webinars, we will share more about proven strategies to successfully end homelessness, best practices for state and local advocacy, and actions advocates can take to advance solutions.

Homelessness demands urgent action from all levels of government. We know what works to end homelessness: providing individuals with stable, accessible affordable housing and voluntary supportive services. We hope you will join us in building the political will and congressional support necessary to do so!

Please note that this webinar is not a training, and webinar attendees will not receive a certificate of completion.

Register for the webinar at: <https://tinyurl.com/2spa9f7b>

Budget and Appropriations

House Appropriations Chair Cole Releases Topline Funding Levels for FY25 Appropriations Bills and Timeline for Committee Work

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) [released](#) topline funding allocations for all 12 fiscal year (FY) 2025 spending bills on May 16. The topline funding allocation – known as a “302(b) allocation” or simply “302(b)” – determines how much funding each committee will have to allocate for the various federal programs under its jurisdiction in the upcoming fiscal year.

Overall, House Republicans are proposing an increase of \$9 billion for defense spending and a decrease of at least \$67 billion for domestic spending programs. According to the [release](#), the FY25 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) bill, which funds HUD’s vital affordable housing and homelessness programs as well as federal transportation programs, will total approximately \$90.8 billion, a roughly 2% increase from the total level provided in the final FY24 budget. However, it is not apparent how this funding will be divided between HUD and U.S. Department of Transportation programs or how funding will be allocated for individual HUD programs.

With the 302(b) levels allocated, the House Appropriations subcommittees will get to work drafting their FY25 spending proposals. Chair Cole has released an ambitious [timeline](#) for the Appropriations Committee to finish drafting, reviewing, and voting on its FY25 spending bills. The THUD subcommittee will review the FY25 THUD bill on June 27, with a full committee review scheduled for July 10. Even if the committee meets these deadlines, it is unlikely that a final FY25 spending bill will be passed before the November elections.

Chair Cole has also expressed his commitment to drafting FY25 spending bills according to the limits imposed by the “Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023” (FRA), which allows for spending increases of only 1% in FY25. The Senate Appropriations Committee has yet to announce a potential timeline for its work, but both Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) and Vice Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) are considering a side deal that would boost both defense and domestic spending above the caps instated by the FRA. In the previous fiscal year, Chair Murray and Vice Chair Collins led the charge for a side funding deal that provided almost \$70 billion in extra funds for vital federal programs. To maintain the number of households served and services offered, HUD’s budget needs to increase year-to-year; it is extremely likely that additional funding above what would be provided under the FRA will be required to meet the increased cost of HUD’s programs in 2025.

Take Action: Tell Congress to Provide Significant Funding Increases for HUD in FY25

Your advocacy makes a difference! It is thanks to the hard work of advocates that in FY24 – at a time when [programs faced cuts of up 25%](#) – HUD received increased funding in the final spending bill.

Congress needs to keep hearing from you about the importance of affordable housing and homelessness programs! **NLIHC is calling on Congress to provide the highest possible funding for HUD’s affordable housing and homelessness programs in FY25, including significant funding for NLIHC’s top priorities:**

- Full funding to renew all existing contracts for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and expand assistance to 20,000 more households.
- \$6.2 billion for public housing operations and \$5.2 billion for public housing capital needs.
- \$4.7 billion for HUD’s Homeless Assistance Grants (HAG) program.
- \$100 million for the Eviction Prevention Grant Program.
- At least \$1.3 billion for Tribal housing programs, plus \$150 million for competitive funds targeted to tribes with the greatest needs.

Advocates can continue to engage their members of Congress by:

- **Emailing or calling members’ offices** to tell them about the importance of affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources to you, your family, your community, or your work. You can [use NLIHC’s Take Action page](#) to look up your member offices or call/send an email directly!
- **Using social media to amplify messages** about the country’s affordable housing and homelessness crisis and the continued need for long-term solutions.
- **Sharing stories** of those directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability. Storytelling adds emotional weight to your message and can help lawmakers see how their policy decisions impact actual people. Learn about [how to tell compelling stories with this resource](#).

National, state, local, tribal, and territorial organizations can [also join over 2,300 organizations on CHCDF’s national letter](#) calling on Congress to support the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY25.

HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes

Take Action: Weigh In on HUD’s Proposed Rule, “Reducing Barriers to HUD-Assisted Housing”

NLIHC is calling on advocates to [comment](#) in support of HUD’s recent Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ([NPRM](#)), “Reducing Barriers to HUD-Assisted Housing.” The deadline for comments is June 10.

The NPRM proposes updates to HUD’s existing screening regulations for applicants with conviction histories or a history of involvement with the criminal-legal system, including:

- **Clarifying the types of “relevant criminal activity” for which PHAs and owners can screen.** The rule would rein in some discretion PHAs and owners/operators have in conducting background screenings by specifying that only drug-related criminal activity, violent criminal activity, and other criminal activity “that would threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment” of the premises by others may be included in background screenings. The rule does not define what constitutes criminal activity “that would threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment” of others.
- **Limiting lookback periods in admissions decisions to no more than three years prior to an application.** The NPRM states that PHAs and HUD-assisted owners/operators should use a lookback period of “no more than three years” for most convictions; notes that three years may not be the right lookback period for all convictions; and observes that any lookback period longer than three years would be considered “presumptively unreasonable.” PHAs and HUD-assisted owners/operators would be allowed to extend this lookback period for certain convictions if empirical evidence exists justifying the extension.
- **Mandating an individualized assessment of rental applicants with a conviction history in admissions decisions.** Any time criminal history is used in an admissions decision, the PHA would be required to conduct an individualized assessment of the tenant that considers mitigating factors and other circumstances. However, an individualized assessment need not be performed if an individual’s record includes cases where statute requires denial of admissions based on criminal history.
- **Restricting the use of arrest records and banning the use of arrest records as the sole basis for housing denial or eviction.** The proposed rule clarifies that an arrest record alone may not be used as the basis for denying someone admission to HUD housing. However, an arrest record may be used in conjunction with other evidence of conduct to assess an applicant’s potential success as a tenant. Similarly, an arrest record could not be used as the sole basis to evict a current tenant from HUD-assisted housing but can be used along with other evidence to determine whether criminal conduct necessitating eviction occurred.
- **Clarifying the standard of proof for eviction and termination decisions based on criminal activity.** For evictions based on alleged criminal activity, HUD clarifies the standard of proof should be a “preponderance of the evidence” standard, meaning that based on the information available, it is more likely than not that the conduct in question occurred.
- **Better regulating third-party screening services and companies.** The rule clarifies that tenants should be provided with a detailed copy of their screening report, including when information is pulled by a third-party screening company, and notes that third-party screening companies are expected to abide by the provisions of the “Fair Housing Act.”

Advocates, especially those with lived experience, are encouraged to [submit a public comment](#) to help HUD shape the final guidance and support needed updates. Comments are due by June 10.

Advocates can weigh in with HUD by:

- *Submitting a comment.* Participating in the public comment period is an effective way to influence federal policymaking. After the public comment period ends, HUD must review and take into consideration all comments before publishing a final rule. Your comment can be long or short, written formally or informally, based on research or your own experiences and the experiences of people you know. Consider answering questions like:
 - What are some of the biggest challenges you/your clients have faced trying to find housing?
 - How many apartments did you/your client apply for before finding your/their current housing?
 - Have you/Has your client been able to find stable housing, and what has the impact been?
 - How have these barriers impacted your friends/family members/community?
- *Using the comment portal from the Vera Institute for Justice (Vera).* Vera created a [comment portal](#) where advocates can submit comments in support of the proposed rule. The portal includes a template with a pre-written message that advocates can submit as-is or update with their own content. While all positive messages help, to be fully considered by HUD, comments must be at least 30% original content.

NLIHC will also be circulating a comment for sign-on, open to all state, local, national, and tribal partners. We will continue to update our [website](#) with additional resources and information.

View the proposed rule and submit a public comment [here](#).

Learn more about the proposed rule [here](#).

Congress

House Financial Services Committee Votes to Move Several Housing Bills Forward for Full Consideration in the House

The U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Financial Services (HFSC) reviewed and voted on several bills during a May 16 markup, including the bipartisan "Yes In My Back Yard (YIMBY) Act of 2023" ([H.R.3507](#)), which NLIHC has endorsed. NLIHC had urged the committee to move the YIMBY Act forward by joining a [letter](#) led by the National Apartment Association and sent the previous day, May 15.

Sponsored by Representatives Mike Flood (R-NE), Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO), Ralph Norman (R-SC), and Brittany Pettersen (D-CO), the YIMBY Act would increase transparency and encourage localities to build more affordable housing by requiring Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) recipients to report on and make plans to track discriminatory land-use policies. The legislation encourages pro-housing policies, such as re-zoning areas for high-density housing, allowing single-room occupancy development wherever multifamily housing is allowed, reducing minimum-lot-size requirements, allowing accessory dwelling units, and allowing the conversion of office units to apartments, among other provisions. Senators Todd

Young (R-IN) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) introduced a bipartisan companion bill – the “Yes In My Backyard Act” ([S.1688](#)) – in the U.S. Senate in May 2023 (see *Memo*, [05/30/23](#)).

The HFSC also voted to move forward the “HUD Evaluation and Optimization Commission Act of 2024” ([H.R.8302](#)), a bill NLIHC opposes. Introduced by Representative Warren Davidson (R-OH), the bill would create a bipartisan commission to review HUD’s existing programs and policies; however, it would require any recommendations proposed by the commission to be introduced as legislation and voted on without amendment and would also require a vote on the floors of the House and Senate, bypassing the normal procedure for considering and enacting legislation.

The committee also passed two other housing bills – the “Disabled Veterans Housing Support Act” ([H.R.7480](#)), introduced by Representative Monica De La Cruz (R-TX), and the “Housing Unhoused Disabled Veterans Act” ([H.R.8340](#)), introduced by Representative Brad Sherman (D-CA). Both bills would exclude veterans’ disability compensation payments in calculating housing assistance for veterans.

Learn more about the bills and watch a recording of the markup [here](#).

Disaster Housing Recovery

Vermont Congressional Delegation Sends Letter to FEMA Urging Improvements to Disaster Response and Individual Assistance Access

The Vermont Congressional Delegation, including Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Senator Peter Welch (D-VT), and Representative Becca Balint (VT-AL), [sent](#) a letter to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Deanne Criswell on May 9. The letter urges Criswell to work with Congress and the Delegation to improve disaster response ahead of future emergencies and address the many challenges Vermonters have faced in accessing FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) after devastating floods affected the state in July 2023.

In the [letter](#), the Delegation thanks FEMA for the help it has already provided to Vermonters. However, the letter also draws attention to FEMA’s inadequate direct housing assistance, unclear application process, and insufficient technical assistance for impacted Vermonters seeking aid. The letter highlights multiple cases of failure on FEMA’s part to communicate not only with impacted Vermonters but also the Delegation itself.

According to the letter, following the flooding, FEMA worked in coordination with Vermont state officials to provide more than \$23 million in housing assistance through the Individuals and Households Program (IHP). However, only 11 households in the state ultimately received any Direct Housing Assistance.

The letter asks FEMA to answer a variety of questions related to disaster case management, the Direct Housing Assistance program, and IA determinations. The Delegation implores FEMA to answer these questions and host a staff briefing by May 29, 2024.

Many, if not all, of the challenges raised in the letter are problems that have been cited by NLIHC's Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) in the past as indicating that systemic disaster housing recovery reform is urgently needed.

The Vermont Delegation now awaits FEMA's reply.

Disaster Housing Recovery Update – May 20, 2024

Congressional and National Updates

The Bipartisan Policy Center held a [webinar](#) on disaster reform, "Finding Focus: A Look at Disaster Policy Priorities and Proposals," on April 30. The webinar included a panel discussion exploring key reform priorities, evaluating potential policies, and outlining the path toward a more effective, efficient federal disaster assistance system.

Congress is likely to pass several narrowly tailored disaster reform bills this year, according to a senior staffer involved with the U.S. Senate's Committee on Homeland Security, though the partisan political environment would likely prevent Congress from passing comprehensive disaster legislation without a natural or climate disaster. In particular, Senator Gary Peters (D-MI), Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee (which has jurisdiction over FEMA), hopes to enact the "[Disaster Simplification Act](#)" this year. Peters also supports passage of the "[Reforming Disaster Recovery Act](#)," which would permanently authorize the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Reform (CDBG-DR) program.

Two Democratic senators from disaster-stricken states – Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Peter Welch (D-VT) – made [pleas](#) in floor speeches for passing a new round of long-delayed disaster relief. President Biden had requested \$9 billion for the government's main disaster relief fund, as well as \$2.8 billion for HUD's CDBG-DR program, as part of a nearly \$56 billion domestic supplemental spending request he submitted last fall. Meanwhile, FEMA's disaster relief fund faces a financial shortfall this summer.

State and Local Updates

Hawaii

Maui wildfire survivor group Lahaina Strong and countless other DHRC partner organizations in Hawaii achieved a major [victory](#) for families impacted by the wildfire when Governor Josh Green signed [SB2919](#) into law on April 24. The law allows counties to convert short-term rentals into long-term rental units that will more easily house families displaced by the Maui wildfires. "I think we've made our catch," said Lahaina Strong member Paele Kiakona, who along with other Lahaina Strong members has spent the last five months protest fishing tirelessly in front of Kaanapali's resorts in an effort to ensure dignified long-term housing for displaced families impacted by the Lahaina wildfire. With the signing of the bill, their efforts, dedication, and organization have finally paid off.

Iowa

At least [24 tornadoes struck](#) West and Central Iowa in late April. The tornadoes in Pottawattamie County alone completely destroyed 40 to 50 homes. Milden, a town of only 600 people, saw [120 homes](#) damaged. As a result, Governor Kim Reynolds signed an executive order [declaring](#) a disaster emergency.

Ohio

[Ohio](#) set a record in 2024 for the most tornadoes recorded during the first three months of a year. As a result, FEMA issued a Major Disaster Declaration for 11 counties in Ohio that were deeply affected by the tornados: Auglaize, Crawford, Darke, Delaware, Hancock, Licking, Logan, Mercer, Miami, Richland and Union counties. Individual Assistance is available to families affected by the tornadoes, and Hazard Mitigation funding is available statewide. No Public Assistance is currently available. Sima Merick has been designated the federal coordinating officer for this disaster. [Those affected may apply for assistance here.](#)

Oklahoma

[Oklahoma](#) is still reeling from multiple tornadoes and associated disasters that struck the state during the final weekend of April. [Oklahoma](#) towns saw as many as 27 tornadoes – ranging in strength from EF-3 to EF-4 – as well as flash flooding. The [Mvskoke Creek Nation](#) (MCN) Reservation was also impacted by a number of tornados. As a result, FEMA approved a Major Disaster Declaration for three counties – Hughes, Love, and Murray counties – before amending the declaration to include Carter and Okmulgee counties as well. Individual Assistance and Public Assistance are now available to those affected in Hughes, Love, Okmulgee, and Murray counties. In Carter County, only Individual Assistance is available. Statewide FEMA Hazard Mitigation assistance is also available. The state plans to request that additional counties be added to the declaration as damage assessments are completed. [Those affected may apply for assistance here.](#)

Nebraska

Nebraska was hit by five major tornadoes, ranging from EF-1 to EF-3 in strength, in late April. Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen announced that at least [450 homes](#) in Omaha had been “totally destroyed” following the tornadoes. The destruction prompted Governor Pillen to [declare a state of emergency](#) for Douglas, Lancaster, and Washington counties on April 28. As a result, FEMA issued a Major Disaster Declaration. Residents of Douglas and Washington counties are now eligible for both Individual and Public Assistance. Statewide Hazard Mitigation assistance is also available. Andrew Meyer will serve as the federal coordinating officer for the disaster. [Those affected may apply for assistance here.](#)

South Carolina

[South Carolina](#) sustained more than \$5 million in damage following a hailstorm that devastated Rock Hill. The storm’s intense damage prompted both Democrats and Republicans to come together to urge Governor Henry McMaster to request a Major Disaster Declaration for York

County. The Governor sent the request to FEMA on May 7. Impacted families must now wait for a response from FEMA regarding whether and when they can begin their recovery.

Texas

More than a third of all [Texas](#) counties are covered by disaster declarations due to torrential downpours and major flooding that struck much of the state recently. Some areas of Texas saw two months' worth of rain in a mere five days. The floods follow a wave of extreme weather, including a [tornado](#) that destroyed many homes in Hawley. As a result, Texas has seen a slew of rescues and evacuations. At least 224 people have been rescued from homes and vehicles in Harris County alone. Throughout the state, more than 400 people were [rescued](#) from their homes, rooftops, and roads. Around 700 houses were [evacuated](#) in Polk County, near Houston, due to the flooding. Thousands of people have been [displaced](#).

Resilience & Mitigation Corner

Submit Comments on FEMA's new "National Resilience Guidance" Draft

FEMA is currently seeking feedback on the draft "[National Resilience Guidance](#)" the agency made public on April 23. FEMA explains that the [Guide's](#) goal is to help stakeholders at all levels understand and carry out their roles related to increasing national resilience. The DHRC will submit comments that urge FEMA to incorporate the "[Four Rights](#)" of communities – the rights to choose, stay, have equal treatment, and have a say – into their framework and to make sure equity, inclusion, and accessibility are at the forefront of resilience efforts. Make your voice heard by emailing written comments to National-Resilience@fema.dhs.gov. Written comments are due by May 23.

Register for HUD's FFRMS Final Rule Webinar Series

HUD is holding a webinar on its newly published [Federal Flood Risk Management Standard \(FFRMS\) Final Rule](#), which modifies HUD's floodplain management regulations. The webinar will be split into two parts, with one focusing on [Part 55](#) of the rule and the other highlighting [Part 200: Minimum Property Standards](#). Part 55 of the rule includes HUD's FFRMS approach, limitations on HUD assistance in floodplains, exceptions to the Rule, and the eight-step decision-making process. The webinar will be held on Monday, May 30, from 1:30 to 3:30 pm ET. [Register today!](#)

Mitigation Loans Available through the Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund

FEMA announced the second funding opportunity for the [Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund](#) grant program to make communities safer from natural hazards. The loan program has \$150 million to distribute to impacted communities. Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this program provides [capitalization grants to eligible applicants](#) nationwide. Applicants then offer low-interest loans directly to local communities to foster greater community resilience and reduce disaster impacts.

The Safeguarding Tomorrow funding notice is available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Eligible entities must apply for funding using the [Non-Disaster Grants Management System](#) on the FEMA website. Applications are due by Thursday, May 30, at 3 pm ET.

Apply for Swift Current Funds

Three hundred million dollars in Flood Mitigation Assistance Swift Current ([Swift Current](#)) funding is available to help homeowners across the nation become more resilient to flooding. Swift Current funding is available after a major disaster declaration following a flood-related disaster event and is part of the [Flood Mitigation Assistance](#) program. It is allocated on a year-by-year basis. This is the [second time](#) that FEMA is using resources from the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) for Swift Current. To be eligible, homeowners are required to be insured through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

All eligible applicants must submit their fiscal year (FY) 2023 Swift Current grant applications to FEMA via the [Mitigation eGrants webpage](#). Upon Swift Current activation, FEMA will provide the application deadline to the applicant. The application period opened on November 15, 2023, and the last eligible disaster declaration date is May 31, 2024. Full details are available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Funding Opportunity

FEMA posted funding notices for two [National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program](#) grants for more than \$3 million. The application period opened on May 1, and the funding notices can be found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Eligible applicants must apply for funding through the [FEMA Grants Outcomes webpage](#), the agency's grants management system. Submit applications in FEMA Grants Outcome Portal no later than Friday, June 14 at 5 pm ET.

FEMA is holding webinars to answer questions, discuss funding opportunities, and more. Register for the webinars on the [grants workshop webpage](#). The first webinar will be on Thursday, May 2, from 2:30 to 4 pm ET. The second webinar will be on Tuesday, May 14, from 2:30 to 4 pm ET.

HUD

Summary of PBV Project Cap in Final HOTMA Rule

HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) published a [final rule](#) in the *Federal Register* on May 7 implementing provisions of the "Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016" (HOTMA) affecting the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) tenant-based program and the Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program (see *Memo*, [5/13](#)). The sprawling final regulations also include non-HOTMA-related provisions. Many of the HOTMA provisions were implemented by *Federal Register* notices (for example, on [January 18, 2017](#)) and PIH Notices (for example, [Notice PIH 2017-21](#)). PIH issued a proposed rule on October 8, 2020 (see *Memo*, [10/13/20](#)). On May 15, PIH Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary Richard Monocchio distributed an [email](#) listing notable provisions in the final rule. In last week's *Memo*, NLIHC

summarized key provisions of the final rule pertaining to the PBV “program” cap – the maximum number of HCVs that a public housing agency (PHA) can choose to project base. The article also listed federal programs at which PBV units are not subject to the PBV program cap. In this week’s *Memo*, we discuss key provisions regarding the “project” cap – the maximum number of PBVs that may be assigned to a property.

Before HOTMA

Prior to the statutory changes made by HOTMA, the PBV statute and regulations limited the number of units in a project that could be project-based to 25% of all the units in the project (assisted and unassisted). This is called the “project cap” or the “income mixing” requirement. Some units did not count toward the 25% “project cap”; in general, such “exception” units are those made available to elderly and/or disabled households and units made available to households *receiving* supportive services.

HOTMA

The HOTMA statute changed the project cap to be either 25% of all units *or 25 units*, whichever is greater. The statute also allowed the project cap to increase to *up to 40%* of a project’s units *if the project is in an area where it is difficult to use a regular tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher – an area defined by the statute as a census tract with a poverty rate of 20% or less*. HOTMA also changed “exception” units to be those exclusively made available to elderly households or to households *eligible* for supportive services. Note the key word change pertaining to the social services exception: “eligible for” instead of “receiving.”

HOTMA also does not count toward the project cap, units that are project based through the PBV program that previously received other forms of HUD project-based rental assistance or that were previously subject to federally required rent restrictions (listed by the final rule).

The Final HOTMA Rule

The final rule follows the statute regarding the basic project cap, allowing a PHA to project base the greater of 25% of all units in a project or 25 units, and the final rule follows the statute allowing the project cap to increase to the greater of 40% of all units in a project or 25 units if the project is located in an area where vouchers are difficult to use. However, the final rule expands the definition of an area where vouchers are difficult to use to include:

- A census tract with a poverty rate of 20% or less;
- A ZIP code where the rental vacancy rate is less than 4%; or
- A ZIP code where 90% of the Small Area Fair Market Rent (SAFMR) is more than 110% of the metropolitan area FMR or county FMR.

The final rule adds to the list of PBV units that are not counted toward the project cap, units exclusively made available to youth assisted through HUD’s Family Unification Program’s (FUP) Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program (FUP/FYI). Therefore, PBV units are not counted toward the project cap (that is, are “excepted” units) if the units exclusively:

- Serve elderly households.

- Are made available to youth assisted by the FUP/FYI program.
 - Are made available to households eligible for supportive services.
- If any member of a household is eligible for one or more of the supportive services, the unit qualifies as an exception unit, even if the household chooses not to participate in the services. As previously refined in a January 18, 2017, [Federal Register implementation notice](#):
- The household in a social service exception unit may not be required to participate in the service(s) as a condition of living in an “excepted” unit.
 - The project must make the supportive services available to all PBV-assisted households in the project, not just those in the exception units.
 - The supportive services do not have to be provided by the owner or be provided on-site but must be reasonably available to all households receiving PBV assistance at the property. The final rule adds that the supportive services must be made available within a reasonable time frame defined by a PHA, not to exceed 120 calendar days from a household’s request for services.
 - The service(s) must be designed to help households in the property live as independently as possible or achieve self-sufficiency.
 - A PHA must include in its HCV Administrative Plan the types of services offered and the extent to which services will be provided. (The final rule offers examples, length of time services will be provided, frequency of services, and depth of services.)
 - A PHA that manages a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program may offer FSS to meet the exception criterion and make the supportive services used in connection with the FSS program available to non-FSS PBV households in the project. (The February 18, 2017, implementation notice elaborated on households participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program.)

The final rule adds a new clarifying clause stating that a project is not limited to a single exception category; instead, a project may combine any of the above exception categories. For example, some of the units may be designated for elderly households that do not need supportive services and some may be designated for households who are eligible for supportive services but are not elderly.

The final rule lists HUD and other federal housing programs for which PBVs are not counted toward the project cap (and program cap). Units do not count toward a property’s project cap if in the five years prior to requesting PBVs:

- A property’s units previously received assistance from various HUD programs, including public housing, privately owned properties assisted by the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) program, Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities, and several “legacy” programs; or
- A property’s units were previously subject to a federally required rent restriction, including the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), Section 515 Rural Rental Housing (administered by the Rural Housing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), Section 202, Section 811, and several legacy programs. (The final rule added LIHTC and Section 515 to the list previously included in the January 18, 2017, *Federal Register* notice and the 2020 proposed rule.)

For a unit to be considered an “excepted” unit, it must be occupied by a household that qualifies for an exception.

- For elderly households, a PHA’s HCV Administrative Plan must state whether the PHA will allow a household to continue to live in the unit when an elderly household member no longer lives in the unit due to circumstances beyond the household’s control, such as the death of that elderly member or because the elderly member has moved to nursing care. In this case, the unit may continue to count as an excepted unit as long as the household lives in it.
- For the supportive services exception, a unit is excepted if any member of a household is eligible for one or more of the supportive services even if the household chooses not to participate in the services.
 - If any member of a household chooses to participate and successfully completes the supportive services, the unit continues to be excepted for as long as any member of the household lives in the unit, even if the members who continue to live in the units are ineligible for all available supportive services.
 - The final rule is confusing because it states that a unit loses its excepted status only if “the entire family becomes ineligible...for all supportive services available to the family,” unless “any member of a [veteran] family has successfully completed the supportive services.” This seems to contradict the previous provision. The preamble to the proposed rule read, “The unit would only lose its excepted status if *no member of the family successfully completed supportive services* and the entire family becomes ineligible during the tenancy for all supportive services that are made available to the residents of the project.” NLIHC has requested clarity from PIH.
 - A household cannot be terminated from the program or evicted from a unit because they become ineligible for all supportive services.
- For the FUP/FYI exception, a youth must vacate a unit once their FUP/FYI assistance has ended. The unit loses its exception status if the youth does not move from the unit.

A potential exception unit PBV household must be selected from a waiting list for the PBV program through an admissions preference established by the PHA. Once a household vacates an exception unit, that unit must be made available to and occupied by a household that qualifies for the type of exception for which the vacated unit originally qualified.

Find the official *Federal Register* version of the final rule at: <https://tinyurl.com/a4c4swbz>

Find an easier-to-read version of the final rule at: <https://tinyurl.com/389yedj4>

Read PDAS Monocchio’s email at: <https://tinyurl.com/yu3avjce>

Find PIH’s HOTMA Resources page at: <https://tinyurl.com/mtv9nnk8>

Information about the PBV program prior to publication of the final rule is on [page 4-11](#) of NLIHC’s *2024 Advocates’ Guide*.

HUD Announces Preview Version of Proposed Changes to HOME Regulations

The Office of Affordable Housing Programs (OAHP) in HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) [announced on May 15](#) the availability of a [preview version](#) of proposed changes to the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program regulations. Formal publication is anticipated in the *Federal Register* later this month, at which time advocates will have 60 days to submit comments. Significant regulation changes were last made in 2013. NLIHC will summarize key provisions in future issues of *Memo* and offer a sample comment letter for advocates to consider using.

Some of the proposed changes emphasized by OAHP that are most relevant to *Memo* readers include:

- Significant expansion of tenant rights and protections.
- Expanded access to community housing development organizations (CHDOs).
- Making HOME tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) work better for vulnerable populations.
- Simplified provisions and new flexibilities for community land trusts (CLTs).
- Incentives for owners to incorporate green and resilient building technologies.

This issue of *Memo* provides an initial summary of the key tenant rights and protections as described in the preamble and as presented in the text of the proposed rule. NLIHC will further study these rights and protections, consider input from NLIHC's Tenant Leader Collective, and review feedback from the National Housing Law Project regarding provisions pertaining to lease addendums.

Written Lease and Addendum

The HOME rule has always required a written lease between a tenant and owner covering a period of at least one year and that incorporates a "Violence Against Women Act" (VAWA) lease term or addendum. The proposed rule adds that the written lease must have one convenient method for a tenant to communicate directly with the owner or property management staff, including in person, by telephone, email, or through a web portal; and that the lease must also have contact information for the participating jurisdictions' (PJ) HOME program (page 69 preamble; 178 text). The proposed rule greatly expands the lease requirements for tenants occupying both HOME-assisted units (i.e. units newly constructed or rehabilitated) and HOME tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) units, primarily through the addition of a detailed HOME tenancy addendum that contains the provisions summarized in the remainder of this *Memo* article.

Right to Organize

Tenants have the right to organize, create tenant associations, convene meetings, distribute literature, and post information (pages 73&74; 180). NLIHC welcomes this provision. The preamble notes that HUD's Multifamily Housing programs have these explicit protections, which are codified at 24CFR part 245 and echoed in the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)

Notice pertaining to public housing converted to Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs). NLIHC will urge OAHF to issue guidance mirroring the details of part 245.

Physical Condition of Units and the Project

Owners must provide tenants with the expected timeframe for maintaining or repairing units. Owners may not charge tenants for normal wear and tear or damage to a unit or common areas. (71;179). When there is a life-threatening deficiency that cannot be repaired on the day it is identified, a tenant must be promptly relocated until repairs are completed, either to housing that is decent, safe, sanitary, and in good condition, or to suitable lodging at no cost to the tenant (71;179). If the owner controls utilities, the owner must provide tenants with uninterrupted utility service. OAHF explains that this provision is proposed to “counteract a disturbing trend of so-called ‘self-help’ evictions” whereby owners use their control of utilities to force tenants to end their tenancy (72;179).

Use and Occupancy of a Unit

Owners must provide at least two days’ notice to tenants before entering a unit during reasonable hours for routine inspections and maintenance and for making repairs or improvements, or to show the unit to prospective tenants. An owner can enter a unit anytime without advance notice if there is a reasonable belief that there is an emergency. If an owner enters when there are no adults, the owner must provide a written statement explaining the reason for the entry and the date and time of the entry (73;180). A tenant’s household must have reasonable access to and use of common areas. The preamble explains that this provision is meant to prohibit separate elevators or amenities such as gyms, pools, rooftop gardens, or play areas that are only for non-assisted tenants (73;180).

Protection against Retaliation

An owner may not retaliate against a tenant by decreasing services (such as maintenance or trash removal), interfering with a tenant’s right to privacy, or harassing a household or its guests. A tenant may exercise any right of tenancy without fear of retaliation if the tenant reports inadequate housing conditions in the unit or in the property, or if the tenant requests enforcement of the lease and any of its protections (76&77;182).

Termination of Tenancy

An owner may not terminate the tenancy of a tenant or household member, or refuse to renew a lease, except for serious or repeated violations of the terms and conditions of a lease; for violations of federal, state, or local law; or for “other good cause” (78;183).

The proposed rule states that “other good cause” may include a tenant creating a documented nuisance under state or local law, or a tenant unreasonably refusing to provide an owner access to a unit to allow repairs. For an owner to establish good cause for violation of federal, state, or local law, there must be a record of conviction for a crime – during the person’s tenancy – that has a direct bearing on the tenant’s continued occupancy of the unit (such as a violation of law that affects the safety of others living at the property). NLIHC notes that the preamble adds “during the tenancy period” but the text does not seem to be as explicit. The preamble also states

that good cause cannot be based on a violation that occurred prior to tenancy. NLIHC will urge the final rule text to be as clear as the preamble discussion. The proposed rule adds that an owner shall not use a record of arrest, parole or probation, or current indictment to establish a violation of law (79-81;184).

At least 60 days before terminating a tenancy or refusing to renew a tenancy, an owner must provide a tenant with a written notice to vacate that specifies the reason for the action. An owner may not perform a “constructive eviction” (a so-called “self-help eviction”), such as locking a tenant out of their unit or stopping utilities. An owner may not create a hostile living environment or refuse to make a reasonable accommodation for a person who has a disability in order to cause the tenant to end their tenancy. An owner may not terminate a tenancy or evict a tenant or household members without instituting a civil court proceeding in which the tenant or household member has an opportunity to present a defense (81-83;184&185).

Notices

Before an owner proposes to carry out an adverse action (such as charging damages that require repair) the owner must provide a tenant with a written notice explaining the reason for the proposed adverse action. Tenants must be notified five business days before there is a change in ownership, including through foreclosure, and there must be at least 30 days’ notice before a sale or foreclosure (74&75;181).

Security Deposits

The proposed rule would establish new security deposit requirements, requiring security deposits to be no greater than two months’ rent and refundable. If an owner charges any amount against a tenant’s security deposit, the owner must provide a list of all items charged and their cost. An owner must promptly refund the security deposit, minus any amounts used to reimburse the owner for items charged (77&78;183).

Environmental, Health, and Safety Hazards

If a PJ has actual knowledge of an environmental, health, or safety hazard affecting the project, a unit, or tenants, the PJ must contact the owner and tenants, providing them with a summary of the nature, date, and scope of the hazard. The proposed rule has a similar requirement for an owner who has actual knowledge of such hazards – however, the rule does not require the owner to inform residents but only the PJ. NLIHC will urge OAHP to correct this oversight (88&89;189).

OAHP plans to add a fact sheet and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to its new [HOME Proposed Rule webpage](#). OAHP also plans to conduct virtual listening sessions. Check the HOME Proposed Rule webpage for upcoming listening sessions.

Read the preview version of the proposed HOME regulation changes at: <https://tinyurl.com/4cvc3nxb>

Read the HUD media announcement at: <https://tinyurl.com/yz9pjwr>

Read OAHP's HOME Proposed Rule webpage at: <https://tinyurl.com/2axxrzb9>

Find OAHP's HOME Program website at: <https://tinyurl.com/mssk9w6h> and the HUD Exchange HOME webpage is at <https://tinyurl.com/mr3stys2>

Read more about the HOME program on [page 5-1](#)

HUD PIH Issues Notice on New Waivers to Expedite Assistance to People Experiencing Homelessness

HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) issued [Notice PIH 2024-17](#) on May 10. The Notice outlines a streamlined review process for regulatory waivers to expedite admission to the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), Project-Based Voucher (PBV), and Public Housing programs for people experiencing homelessness.

The Notice provides a streamlined submission and review process for two regulatory waivers for verification requirements at admission to the HCV, PBV, or Public Housing programs: (1) third-party verification of date of birth and a person's disability status, and (2) third-party verification of income and assets.

People experiencing homelessness may not have the documents typically required to establish their eligibility for housing assistance programs readily available. Because missing documents can significantly delay assistance and access to housing, the waivers announced by HUD will allow public housing authorities (PHAs) to house families experiencing homelessness more quickly by allowing self-certification of income, disability status, and date of birth.

Streamlined Waiver Process

Notice PIH 2024-17 outlines a streamlined waiver process to help PHAs more effectively serve people experiencing homelessness. HUD will review waiver requests on a case-by-case basis and consider specific circumstances identified by the PHA. The Notice lists several factors a PHA might want to consider when requesting a waiver, such as a significant population of unhoused people or significant increase in the population of people experiencing homelessness within the PHA's jurisdiction, the length of time it takes to determine eligibility of applicants experiencing homelessness versus other applicants, the challenges applicants experiencing homelessness face when attempting to gather documentation, and other lessons learned from other programs or use of previous regulatory waivers, such as Emergency Housing Vouchers or CARES Act waivers, among other factors.

Available Waivers

Verification of Date of Birth and Disability Status: 24 CFR 982.201(e) and 960.259(a) and (c)(1)

For applicants experiencing homelessness, HUD may waive requirements to verify a family member's date of birth and/or disability status at the time of admission for purposes of determining the family's eligible expenses and deductions. For any applicant family

experiencing homelessness, a PHA may accept a self-certification from the applicable family member if the family is unable to provide third-party verification of date of birth and/or disability status for any of its members due to loss or lack of documents. The PHA must verify the date of birth and/or disability status within 90 days after admission. The waiver will be granted for 12 months following the date of waiver approval.

Self-certification of date of birth and disability status cannot be used when related to the eligibility for a particular special purpose voucher or for public housing that has been officially designated, in whole or in part, for families whose head of household, co-head, or spouse is a person with disabilities or age 62 or older.

Eligibility Determination, Income Verification: 24 CFR 982.201(e) and 960.259(a)(1), (a)(2), and (c)

PHAs must verify a family's income eligibility within 60 days before voucher issuance for the tenant-based voucher program and prior to admission for the PBV and Public Housing programs. HUD's notice allows the department to waive these requirements if a family lacks income documentation because the family is experiencing homelessness.

If HUD approves the waiver request, the PHA must first request third-party documentation from the applicant family experiencing homelessness. However, if the family cannot provide third-party documentation, the PHA may immediately allow self-certification. The PHA is not required to first attempt to obtain documentation of income from the third-party source before proceeding to the family self-certification, despite the requirement in Notice PIH 2023-27 that PHAs must demonstrate efforts to do so.

Applicants must submit a self-certification declaration of income, assets, expenses, and other factors that would affect an income eligibility determination within 60 days before voucher issuances for the tenant-based HCV program and prior to admission for the Public Housing and PBV programs. The PHA must verify that the family is eligible within 90 days after the PHA enters into a Housing Assistance Payment contract on behalf of the family. For the PBV and Public Housing programs, the PHA must receive information verifying that the family is eligible 90 days following admission.

The waiver will be granted for a period of 12 months. The waiver does not relieve the PHA of its responsibilities to correct any overpayments or underpayments. The PHA must take steps to identify and address any income discrepancies.

Existing Verification Policies Available without a Waiver

The Notice also provides guidance on existing HUD policies that have been streamlined recently to help applicants more easily provide documentation. In June 2023, HUD published [Notice PIH 2023-13](#), which highlighted ways PHAs could remove barriers for people experiencing homelessness using existing flexibilities (see *Memo*, [6/20/23](#)). Additionally, HUD provided updated guidance through [Notice PIH 2023-27](#), which was issued in September 2023 and updated in February 2024. Notice PIH 2023-27 provided guidance regarding implementation of Sections 102 and 104 of the "Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016,"

including verification policies available to PHAs related to Social Security Number verification; date of written, third-party verification; and self-certification of zero income.

Read Notice PIH 2024-17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/82acdn59>

Read HUD's press release at: <https://tinyurl.com/3xyhyu2c>

Our Homes, Our Votes

Register for Today's (5/20) *Our Homes, Our Votes* Webinar: "Voter Registration 101"

The [Our Homes, Our Votes: 2024 webinar series](#) provides resources, guidance, and inspiration for organizations and individuals seeking to launch or strengthen their own nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement initiatives. The next webinar in the series, "Voter Registration 101," will take place today, May 20, at 2:30 pm ET. Register for the webinar [here](#).

Because renters move more frequently than homeowners, they must update their voter registration more often, which imposes yet another obstacle to casting their ballots. Voters experiencing homelessness also face unique barriers in the voter registration process. The first step to empowering low-income people to vote is providing accessible voter registration opportunities. This webinar will review strategies to incorporate registration into your organization's day-to-day activities and organize designated voter registration events.

During the webinar, Chyann Sapp, campaign director of National Voter Registration Day, will present on best practices in voter registration and how to plan an activation for [National Voter Registration Day 2024](#). Andrew West, policy associate at Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, will discuss voter registration initiatives and tips for registering voters experiencing homelessness. Courtney Cooperman, project manager of Our Homes, Our Votes, will give a walkthrough of [TurboVote](#), a one-stop shop where voters can update their registration, check their registration status, sign up for election reminders, and learn about upcoming elections in their communities.

The webinar dates and topics are listed below. All webinars will be held from 2:30 to 3:30 pm ET. For full descriptions of each session, visit: www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/webinars-2024

- Voter Registration 101 (Monday, May 20)
- Forming Partnerships in Your Community (Monday, June 3)
- Tenant Organizing and Elections: Getting Out the Renter Vote (Monday, June 17)
- Voting While Experiencing Homelessness (Monday, July 1)
- Transportation to the Polls (Monday, July 15)
- Housing Providers and Voter Engagement (Monday, July 29)
- Getting Candidates on the Record about Housing and Homelessness (Monday, August 19)
- Celebrating the Civic Holidays (Tuesday, September 3)

- Voter Education: The Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How (Monday, September 16)
- Voter Education: Combating Misinformation and Disinformation (Monday, September 30)
- Overcoming Voter Suppression (Monday, October 7)
- Countdown to Election Day: Getting Out the Vote! (Monday, October 21)
- Knowing Your Rights: Voter Protection on Election Day (Monday, November 4)
- A Look Ahead: Next Steps for Civic Engagement and Housing Justice (Monday, November 18)

For more information about the *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign, visit: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/>

Rural Housing

USDA Releases Tenant Rights and Grievance Procedure Materials

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Development mission, which oversees the Rural Housing Service, released two new resources to ensure tenants of USDA-financed rental properties benefit from fair housing practices. The first, a “[Tenant Rights and Responsibilities](#)” [brochure](#), covers tenant responsibilities to a property, fellow tenants, the owner, and property management. The second, a “[Multifamily Housing Tenant Grievance Procedures FAQ](#)” [resource](#), aims to ensure renters and rental applicants know their existing rights and protections under the grievance process.

USDA framed the release of the materials as a continuation of the aims set out by the *Blueprint for a Renters Bill of Rights* released last year by the White House. In an [announcement](#), USDA connected the release of the materials to its commitment to “advancing the Biden-Harris Administration’s priorities to protect and educate renters and strengthen tenant protections across rural America.” USDA is requesting that multifamily property owners attach a copy of the Tenant Grievance Procedures FAQ as an addendum to their posted grievance process in all common areas visible to residents and visitors. USDA is also requiring multifamily housing property owners to place the Tenant Rights and Responsibilities brochure in common areas visible to residents and visitors. Both documents must be provided to tenants at the time of application, lease signing, or move-in.

Read the [Tenant Rights and Responsibilities brochure](#) and [Multifamily Housing Tenant Grievance Procedures FAQ resource](#).

Opportunity Starts at Home

OSAH Campaign and Prosperity Indiana Send Letters to Senator Young Urging Advancement of Bipartisan Housing Bills

NLIHC's [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) (OSAH) campaign and OSAH state partner Prosperity Indiana in partnership with NLIHC and the Hoosier Housing Needs Coalition sent letters to Senator Todd Young (R-IN) on May 14 urging him to reintroduce the "Eviction Crisis Act" in the U.S. Senate and work to include the bill and the "Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act" in any bipartisan housing package that moves forward in the Senate's Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs.

Signatories to the OSAH campaign letter included 29 leading national organizations from an array of sectors, including Catholic Charities USA, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, Food Research & Action Center, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund, National Women's Law Center, and Natural Resources Defense Council.

Signatories to the letter sent by Prosperity Indiana, NLIHC, and the Hoosier Housing Needs Coalition included 75 national and Indiana multi-sector organizations, including anti-hunger, health, youth, community development, anti-poverty, and faith-based groups.

Read the OSAH campaign's letter to Senator Young [here](#).

Read the letter sent by Prosperity Indiana, NLIHC, and the Hoosier Housing Coalition [here](#).

Apply for OSAH Campaign Endorsement!

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) (OSAH) campaign has released a new "[Endorsement Application](#)." The Endorsement Application offers state-level organizations that are undertaking multi-sector housing policy efforts the opportunity to earn a formal endorsement from the OSAH campaign and the chance to have their multi-sector work codified under the OSAH umbrella. The OSAH campaign recognizes that multi-sector efforts are being conducted around the country and hopes to identify such efforts, raise their visibility, and support their ongoing success. By expanding the number of state partners affiliated with its campaign, OSAH aims to strengthen advocacy efforts in general.

Those organizations that receive endorsements will be considered formal state partners of the OSAH campaign and be featured on OSAH's website. They will also participate in cohort learning experiences with organizations from other states and gain access to resources, networks, and technical assistance from the OSAH national campaign. Please note: OSAH endorsements do not come with financial assistance at this time.

The OSAH campaign currently provides support to 30 state [partners](#), 14 of which receive financial assistance from the national campaign. The campaign recognizes that it is critical that federal policymakers hear not only from national advocates but also from their own constituents

in the states they represent. While endorsements do not come with financial assistance, OSAH fully intends to secure more funding so it can expand its financial assistance to additional state partners.

The OSAH campaign is currently seeking applications from the following states: Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, Wyoming, and Washington, D.C.

Interested state organizations are encouraged to review the [criteria](#) for endorsement before filling out an [application](#).

Read more about OSAH's current state partners [here](#).

Research

Primary Care Housing Program Reduced Outpatient Visits and Improved Patient-Reported Health Benefits

A paper published in *Health Affairs*, "[Primary Care-Based Housing Program Reduced Outpatient Visits; Patients Reported Mental and Physical Health Benefits](#)," explores the outcomes of a healthcare-based housing program in Boston, MA, that provided support to patients currently experiencing homelessness, as well as upstream interventions to households at risk of housing instability and homelessness. The authors found that patients enrolled in the program had 2.5 fewer primary care visits and 3.6 fewer outpatient (e.g., social work, behavioral health, psychiatry, urgent care) visits per year on average, relative to comparable patients not enrolled in the program. Additionally, patients in the program indicated that their interactions with housing advocates helped to improve their mental health and their perceptions of the primary care site at which they received care, regardless of the patients' housing outcome at the end of the study period. This research adds to a growing body of literature focused on the intersection of safe, affordable housing and health and highlights the potential of cross-sector partnerships for addressing health inequities and establishing trust between marginalized communities and healthcare institutions.

The housing program in question was established in 2018 by Brigham Health, a Boston-based academic medical center, after it was observed that one in five patients seen in its primary care clinics were experiencing homelessness or housing instability. In response, a social care team consisting of housing advocates, community resource specialists, community health workers, and a medical-legal partner was formed to address health-related social needs among patients receiving primary care services at any of the medical center's 15 primary care locations. The housing advocates helped patients experiencing homelessness or unstable housing situations complete housing applications, negotiate with landlords or property management, submit reasonable accommodation requests, and arrange for shelter placements.

The authors used a mixed methods approach to evaluate the impact of the Brigham Health housing program over the course of three years (October 2018 to March 2021), during which time the social care team supported more than 1,000 patients. Relying on analyses of electronic medical records and housing outcomes, as well as qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with a selection of primary care patients, the authors aimed to answer three key questions:

- 1) Was housing program participation associated with differences in healthcare use or chronic disease management?
- 2) What types of housing problems do patients have? What housing services and outcomes were the housing advocates able to provide?
- 3) What were patients' views on the experience and value of participating in the housing program? In the same vein, did patients have any perceived effects on their health and wellbeing to report?

The researchers found a significant reduction in the utilization of primary care and outpatient services among housing program participants when compared to patients not participating in the program – specifically, an 81% reduction in social work visits and a 60% reduction in behavioral health, psychiatry, and urgent care visits. However, they did not find a statistically significant difference between program participants and non-participants in other measures of healthcare use and chronic disease management, such as emergency department use, inpatient care use, and diabetes or depression control. These findings demonstrate how housing interventions can help to reduce downstream healthcare costs. Prior [research](#) has shown that experiencing housing-related stressors such as homelessness, housing cost burden, being at risk for eviction, or being exposed to unhealthy housing can lead to overutilization of medical appointments and, in turn, higher healthcare costs. These costs can further burden households experiencing housing instability or homelessness.

To answer the second research question, the researchers reviewed 286 patient medical charts. Among the 257 patients whose charts included documentation on patients' participation in the housing program, they found that 8.6% were experiencing homelessness, 25.3% were at risk for eviction, 35.4% had unsafe or unhealthy housing conditions, and 30.7% were safely housed without eviction risk but desired change. Post-intervention outcomes for some patients were successful, with 14.4% of patients obtaining reasonable accommodations, 8.2% maintaining access to stable housing, and 7.8% accepting a new housing offer. Housing outcomes were unclear for just over half of the patients reviewed, many of whom were still on housing waitlists at the end of the evaluation period.

To address the third question, the authors analyzed qualitative data from interviews with housing program participants, from which four key themes emerged. First, the majority of patients described experiencing compounding housing stressors that collectively resulted in a need to change their housing situation. Named stressors included fearing for one's safety, needing more space, experiencing an unexpected and unwanted move, and experiencing unhealthy housing conditions. Second, many patients who gained access to new housing reported health improvements both in their physical and mental health. Patients attributed improvements to physical health to increased access to exercise, alleviation of exposure to allergens, and elimination of mobility obstacles after moving to new housing. Third, regardless of their housing

outcomes at the end of the study period, almost all patients interviewed reported improved mental health and valued the compassion, empathy, and respect they received from the housing advocates. Lastly, some participants who were able to gain new housing opportunities continued to experience suboptimal conditions in their new environment. About a third of patients who changed their housing during the evaluation period reported that they would need to move again due to serious issues such as inaccessibility, racial discrimination, rising rents, landlord disputes, and poor maintenance. These experiences highlight the vital need for greater funding for the preservation and rehabilitation of existing affordable housing, as well as the enactment of stronger tenant protections at the state and local level.

The authors recommend that healthcare systems consider advocating for policies that support the development and preservation of affordable housing units and pursue opportunities themselves to create dignified affordable housing solutions, as some healthcare systems have already done. For example, [Kaiser Permanente has shown a commitment to addressing housing affordability](#) by supporting affordable housing preservation and development through its Thriving Communities Fund. The authors also advise healthcare systems to be mindful of the role they play in perpetuating housing instability through medical debt collection and choosing not to pay hospital service workers a living wage with which they can afford rent.

Read the article at: <https://bit.ly/4dBjMMd>

Severe Flooding Disasters Significantly Increase Rents of Affordable Rental Housing Units

A paper published in *Urban Affairs Review*, “[High and Dry: Rental Markets After Flooding Disasters](#),” reveals that severe flooding disasters result in significantly increased rents for the most affordable rental housing units in an affected area – with an estimated average increase of 5% in the year after a severe flood – while having no significant impact on the rents of units in the middle or at the top of the rent distribution. The article also finds that rental assistance distributed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in areas affected by severe floods is not associated with these changes in rents. The findings indicate the importance of ensuring strong tenant protections and more equitable financial support for the lowest-income renters following disasters, especially as the frequency and severity of flooding events in the U.S. increase over time.

To examine the relationship between severe flooding disasters and rents, the researchers created a dataset of housing, demographic, and disaster variables from Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) USA data, which pulls from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. The dataset included 281 Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) that had experienced at least one severe flood disaster between 2012 and 2018, covering roughly 301 million households over the seven-year period. PUMAs are geographic regions defined by the Census Bureau for sampling purposes and are useful for assessing fluctuations in rental housing markets because of their size: they are smaller than Metropolitan Statistical Areas, which roughly correspond to cities/towns and are therefore too large to see neighborhood-level changes, and larger than a Census Tracts, which may be too small to detect meaningful changes in housing costs within a

one-year period. PUMAs with severe flood disasters were defined as those that received a Presidential Disaster Declaration for a flood event that resulted in an estimated value of property damage within the top 5% of all flooding disasters between 2002 and 2018.

The researchers then constructed a series of models to assess changes in rents following the first and second years after a severe flood disaster, specifically examining the lowest 10% and the mean of monthly gross rents paid by households in a given PUMA. The models also compared “mover households” – those that relocated following a severe flood disaster – to “non-mover households,” to account for differences in both the characteristics of households that are able or forced to move following a disaster and those that are able or forced to remain in place, as well as rent growth for new versus continuing tenants. To investigate the impact of FEMA rental assistance on rents, some of the models also analyzed the relationship between changes in rents post-flood and both the number of renters who received FEMA rental assistance and the total dollar amount of FEMA rental assistance administered for the disaster.

The models revealed that mover households from the lowest 10% of an area’s monthly gross rent distribution saw a 5% increase in rents (about \$35) the year after a severe flood disaster and a 6% increase (an additional \$5) in the second year post-disaster. The largest increases in rents for the lowest 10% of renters were found in areas with the most expensive rental markets, largest share of renters versus homeowners, and largest shares of residents of color pre-disaster. The authors also found that renters who move after a severe flood disaster tend to be “slightly wealthier and whiter” than renters who do not move, regardless of whether the households move into units priced at the lowest 10% or the mean of the rental market. They note that these findings align with prior research demonstrating that disasters (and floods in particular) in the U.S. disproportionately impact households of color, but they caution that the data used in this study does not include a large enough sample of renter households to run analyses by racial/ethnic group.

No significant interaction was found between the distribution of FEMA rental assistance and rents after a severe flood disaster, indicating that “FEMA aid is providing some assistance to renters without having a significant effect on market rents.” This result holds true whether it is based on the proportion of rental households affected by the disaster or the estimated severity of the disaster, suggesting that post-disaster changes in rents for affordable homes are influenced more by population change, the availability of affordable housing, and landlord behaviors than by the direct impact of the disaster on the housing stock. The researchers note that financial assistance for disaster recovery is vital to supporting the lowest income renters but emphasize that this assistance is not available to low-income renters whose homes were not damaged but who still face rising housing costs post-disaster. Furthermore, many renters who *do* qualify for FEMA rental assistance face substantial barriers to securing this assistance. The researchers strongly recommend that policymakers consider strengthening tenant protections to better safeguard renters post-disaster by, for example, limiting post-disaster rent increases and channeling funds for affordable housing construction to disaster-affected areas. They also call on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to more closely monitor the use of Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to ensure that assistance is provided to low-income renters in need, not just homeowners.

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

From the Field

Georgia Passes New Tenant Protection Law for Renters, Establishing Minimum Habitability Standards and Maximum Security Deposit Amounts

Georgia lawmakers passed in March a long-awaited tenant protection bill aimed at protecting renters from subpar living conditions. Passed through “[HB404](#),” Georgia’s new “Safe at Home Act” establishes a minimum “[duty of habitability](#)” that requires landlords and property owners to provide tenants with rental housing that is sufficient for habitation and free from health and safety risks. Georgia is one of the last remaining states to have passed laws establishing minimum habitability standards for tenants. Governor Brian Kemp signed the “Safe at Home Act” into law in April.

Laws that seek to strengthen a state or local jurisdiction’s housing codes by ensuring that units meet a minimum set of habitability standards are critical in ensuring housing stability, especially for the lowest-income and most marginalized renters. Across the country today, and [especially](#) in Georgia, housing-related health and safety hazards are commonplace for renters. In 2023, [more than 16% of all rental units across the U.S. had at least one habitability issue](#), including a lack of plumbing, a lack of kitchen facilities (such as working appliances), or a lack of smoke detectors. In Georgia, the number of households with severe housing habitability problems is at least 582,000, or [15% of homes in the state](#). Faulty housing structures can have [detrimental effects](#) for tenants and can exacerbate negative mental and physical health outcomes, leading tenants to develop asthma, causing developmental delays in children, heightening the risk of developing depression, and resulting in a host of other problems.

Among the most marginalized renters, habitability problems are not experienced equally across demographic groups. According to data provided by the [American Housing Survey \(AHS\)](#) in 2021, the share of Black, Indigenous, and Asian households suffering from moderately inadequate housing conditions across the U.S. is 7%, 10%, and 4%, respectively. In comparison, only 6% of white households suffer from moderately inadequate housing conditions, including lack of upkeep of a rental unit and its exterior premises. In Georgia, the numbers are far more pronounced, with [21% of Black families living in substandard housing conditions](#). In general, the lowest-income tenants living in areas with high concentrations of poverty are more likely to be at risk of experiencing health-related risks and habitability concerns in comparison to tenants in higher-income neighborhoods.

Moreover, tenants with maintenance issues and habitability concerns often fear retaliatory behavior from landlords if they raise concerns about habitability, and this can cause tenants not to report housing code violations altogether. In over [40 states](#) today, retaliatory, harassing, or discriminating behavior perpetuated by landlords and property owners against tenants is prohibited. However, such behavior can be difficult to prove in a court of law, which can cause tenants not to report instances of habitability issues and in turn enables health and safety risks to persist.

Under Georgia's new law, tenants are offered legal respite in the face of habitability concerns by requiring that a landlord or property owner keep the premises in good repair. This means that for any maintenance problems in a unit, it is the landlord or property owner's responsibility to rectify the problem and bring the property back up to code, making the landlord or property owner liable for ensuring the property is habitable. For maintenance requests that go unchecked, a tenant is granted the right to assert a claim against a landlord or property owner in court by stating that the property is not fit for human habitation.

"[HB404](#)" also guarantees two additional protections for tenants. In addition to outlining a landlord and property owner's duties to ensure that the tenant's rental unit is not in disarray and that all maintenance requests are addressed, the law also places limits on the amount of money that can be charged to a prospective tenant in security deposit fees, capping the amount that can be charged to a tenant at no more than two-months' rent. By placing a limit on the amount that can be charged to a tenant in the form of a security deposit, a prospective renter is better positioned to secure housing without the burden of straining their budget to secure housing that is both accessible and affordable. Across the country, efforts to pass laws that limit fees, especially security deposit fees, have been [growing](#). In 2023, for example, California passed "[Assembly Bill No. 12](#)," which includes language similar to Georgia's law. Under California's law, a landlord is prohibited from requiring a security deposit from a tenant that is more than two-months' rent.

For tenants who are at risk of eviction, moreover, the state has passed a provision to require landlords or property owners to provide tenants with at least three-days' notice before filing for eviction due to non-payment of rent or nonrenewal of a lease agreement. Prior to the passage of "[HB404](#)," a landlord or property owner was within their legal right not to provide notice to a tenant at all and instead was able to expedite the eviction process by filing an eviction case against a tenant without warning. Without notice, a tenant is left without sufficient time to rectify any infractions levied against them before an eviction is filed with the courts.

"[HB404](#)" was [supported](#) by a broad-based coalition of tenants and organizations that advocated across the state for nearly two and a half years. A similar habitability law was introduced in the state legislature in 2023 but ultimately did not pass. An organization that spearheaded the advocacy efforts was [Georgia Advancing Communities Together, Inc.](#) (Georgia ACT), NLIHC's state partner in Georgia.

"Regardless of race, color, class or creed, this issue was affecting everybody. Mold does not care what color you are or how much money you make," said Dr. Bambi Hayes-Brown, President and CEO of Georgia ACT.

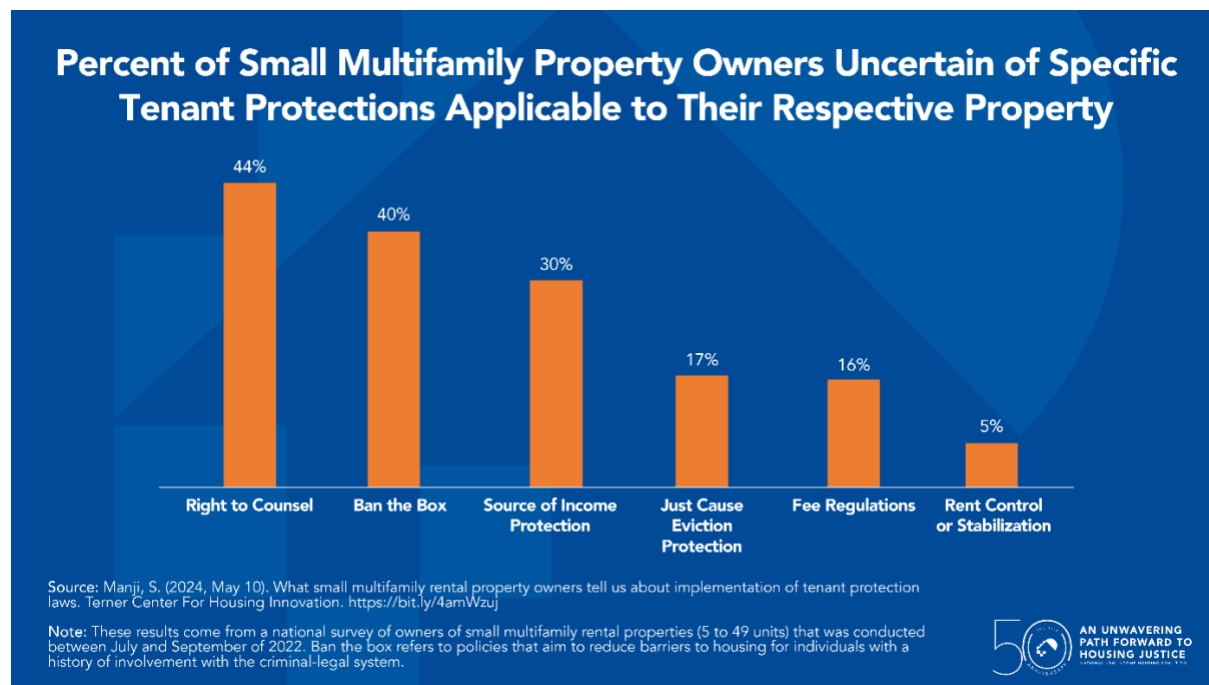
Georgia ACT and several other organizations continuously bused constituents from across the state to Atlanta to share their stories directly with policymakers. "Advocates do what they can, but the main thing was that the legislators were hearing about the conditions their constituents were living in and seeing photos of their living conditions, and that made the difference regardless of if they were Democrat or Republican," said Dr. Bambi.

Georgia's new law will go into effect on July 1, 2024, and will apply to any new leases signed – or renewed – on or after that date.

Learn more about Georgia's new law at: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64363>

Fact of the Week

Many Owners of Small Multifamily Properties Uncertain Whether Tenant Protections Apply to Their Properties



Source: Manji, S. (2024, May 10). *What small multifamily rental property owners tell us about implementation of tenant protection laws*. Turner Center For Housing Innovation. <https://bit.ly/4amWzuj>

Note: These results come from a national survey of owners of small multifamily rental properties (5 to 49 units) that was conducted between July and September of 2022. “Ban the box” refers to policies that aim to reduce barriers to housing for individuals with a history of involvement with the criminal-legal system.

NLIHC Careers

NLIHC Seeks Policy Coordinator/Analyst

NLIHC seeks a policy coordinator or policy analyst with a portfolio focusing on federal legislative policy and regulatory action related to the Coalition’s mission and priorities. The policy coordinator/analyst will be responsible for identifying, analyzing, and summarizing legislative and regulatory activities in plain language to inform and encourage advocacy by

members of the Coalition and its network. The policy coordinator/analyst will report to NLIHC's policy manager. The position will last two years.

The policy coordinator/analyst will lead NLIHC's work related to supporting the construction and preservation of deeply affordable housing, including expanding and strengthening the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF), expanding and reforming the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), preserving public housing, and other policies aiming to increase the supply of affordable homes. The policy coordinator/analyst will also work to expand job and training opportunities for HUD tenants, including through HUD's Section 3 program.

Core Role and Responsibilities

- Monitor legislative, regulatory, and administrative developments, as well as other activities or events of interest on Capitol Hill and at HUD, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and other relevant agencies, and ensure that Coalition staff and membership are apprised of key developments and events.
- Build and maintain relationships with members of Congress, national and state partners, Coalition members, and other housing and homelessness advocates to advance NLIHC policy priorities related to the construction and preservation of deeply affordable housing.
- Advocate for the Coalition's policy priorities before members of Congress, the administration, and their respective staff, including by drafting letters, organizing meetings, writing emails, planning Hill briefings, and other advocacy efforts.
- Develop advocacy materials, including factsheets, white papers, issue briefs, and advocacy toolkits, among other resources, that translate legislative and administrative proposals and actions into an accessible and understandable format for Coalition members and partners.
- Respond to requests for information from members of Congress, the administration, and other policymakers and Coalition members and partners.
- Draft action alerts and eblasts in coordination with NLIHC's field and communications teams to engage and activate NLIHC's members to take action on policy priorities.
- Write formal comment letters on behalf of the Coalition in response to proposed rules or other administrative requests for information, as well as draft sample comment letters and other advocacy materials for the Coalition's members and partners.
- Assist in coordinating Coalition meetings; coordinate and facilitate working group meetings, prepare materials, and make presentations. Attend meetings and events of other coalitions and represent NLIHC at conferences and at other events.
- Research and prepare articles for the Coalition's weekly *Memo to Members and Partners* e-newsletter, including updates on relevant legislative or administrative actions, through web-based and other research and attendance at hearings and briefings.
- Annually update the Coalition's *Advocates' Guide* articles that pertain to the policy coordinator/analyst's issues portfolio.
- Monitor, and provide updates for, the Coalition website.
- Attend and report (as requested) at meetings of NLIHC's Board of Directors, State and Tribal Partners meetings, internal staff meetings, trainings, and other events.
- Support planning and implementation of NLIHC's annual Housing Policy Forum, including speaker recruitment and organizing participants of Capitol Hill Day.

- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

A policy coordinator/analyst will hold a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred) and have up to two years of experience in public policy or legislative advocacy. A degree in public policy, public administration, or a related area is a plus. People with lived experience of housing instability or homelessness with an interest in shaping housing policy at a national level and experience in lieu of a degree are encouraged to apply.

A policy analyst will hold a master's degree and at least two years of work experience in policy advocacy. An additional three years of work experience in lieu of a master's degree will be considered.

Candidates should be able to work in a diverse, high-paced environment and have strong writing and editing skills, oral and interpersonal communications, organizational skills, and attention to detail.

Applicants should have a strong commitment to social, racial, and housing justice and knowledge of the fundamentals of affordable housing or homelessness.

Applicants should have a demonstrated ability to cultivate positive relationships with marginalized individuals, including those with lived experiences with housing insecurity and homelessness.

Applicants should have a demonstrated experience and ability to recognize and respond to the ways race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity intersect to further promote racial equity and social justice.

Applicants should be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite, Zoom, and social media platforms.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive benefits package.

The salary range for a policy coordinator is \$67,000-\$90,000, dependent on experience. The salary range for a policy analyst is \$87,000-\$102,000, dependent on experience.

This is a full-time position located in Washington, D.C., on a hybrid work schedule. Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter, and two writing samples to Jamaal Gilani, director of people and culture, at: jgilani@nlihc.org.

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of May 12

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of May 12:

- “HUD Takes Aim at Discriminatory Practices by Tenant Screening Companies and Housing Providers” *The Gary/Chicago Crusader*, May 10, at: <https://tinyurl.com/2v7nu9re>
 - “Down payment on home out of reach as Clark County’s high rents challenge middle-income families” *The Olympian*, May 10, at: <https://tinyurl.com/yakjmd6>
 - “This map shows how much you have to earn to afford rent in every state” *KXXV-TV* (Waco, TX), May 16, at: <https://tinyurl.com/4nfkuszv>
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NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Thaddaeus Elliott as Housing Advocacy Coordinator

NLIHC welcomes Thaddaeus Elliott as our new housing advocacy coordinator! Thaddaeus will work with the Coalition’s field team to expand membership and engage advocates in efforts to advance federal policy priorities. Before joining NLIHC, Thaddaeus completed a policy fellowship with the National Ministries of the United Church of Christ (UCC) in its Office of Public Policy and Advocacy in Washington, D.C. As a fellow, he educated and mobilized UCC churches and their members from all over the country to advocate on Capitol Hill for the denomination’s policy priorities relating to environmental justice, criminal justice reform, racial justice, and civil rights. Prior to his UCC fellowship, Thaddaeus worked at a local UCC church in his hometown of Miami, Florida, where he organized local youth mission projects supporting the work of Miami-based housing and hunger assistance programs and coordinated the direct assistance provided by the church to those in the community who were unhoused or experiencing economic hardship because of the high cost of housing. Thaddaeus holds an undergraduate degree in education and social policy from Northwestern University, with a specialization in community development and urban issues. He served as an NLIHC policy intern in 2012.

NLIHC Welcomes Hillary Poudeu Tchokothe as First-Ever *Our Homes, Our Votes* Intern

NLIHC is excited to welcome Hillary Poudeu Tchokothe as our first-ever *Our Homes, Our Votes* intern! Hillary is a rising junior at the University of Michigan, where she studies political science and history and is currently co-president of Turn Up Turnout, which works to increase voter turnout by addressing knowledge gaps about the voting process among college students. Hillary is passionate about ensuring that all people have the resources they need to be civically engaged, especially members of groups with historically low voter turnout rates. During her time at

NLIHC, Hillary will help ensure that the lowest-income renters are able to navigate barriers to voting and become more civically engaged.

Now Open: Application for 2024-2025 Collective Cohort

NLIHC is currently recruiting members of its next Collective cohort! The Collective is a group of tenant advocates and community leaders with lived experience of housing insecurity who work towards housing justice and racial equity in their neighborhoods and greater communities. The group convenes regularly to discuss shared concerns, chart an advocacy path, and ensure that NLIHC addresses the needs of low-income people and families throughout the country. The application period will run from now through May 31. During June and July, NLIHC will review applications, interview candidates, and select members of the next cohort. Apply to join NLIHC's Collective [here](#).

Those interested in joining the Collective are encouraged to view this [application guide](#) before beginning their application. **Please note:** This document is **NOT** the application. The application must be completed online. This document instead provides an overview of the questions included in the application. Please feel free to use the document to help prepare your answers for the online application.

If you need assistance or have questions about the application, please e-mail: sbetancourt@nlihc.org.

Where to Find Us – May 20

- *Grants Pass v. Johnson* Case and the Impact on Texas Homelessness – Virtual, May 23 (Tia Turner)
 - [2024 National Mass Care Exercise](#) – Shippensburg, PA, May 23 (Noah Patton)
 - Legal Aid Northwest Texas (presentation) – Virtual, June 3 (Tia Turner)
 - Mississippi Center for Justice Social Justice Empowerment Dinner (Keynote Speaker) – Washington, D.C., June 5 (Diane Yentel)
 - [Greater Syracuse Tenants Network](#) Annual Meeting – Syracuse, NY, June 13 (Lindsay Duvall)
 - [22nd Annual New York Supportive Housing Conference](#) – New York, NY, June 20 (Sarah Saadian)
 - A Home for Everyone Conference (Keynote Speaker) – Madison, WI, July 17 and 18 (Diane Yentel)
 - Rainbow 16th Annual Awards Banquet – Scottsdale, AZ, October 17 (Diane Yentel)
 - Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York annual conference – Poughkeepsie, NY, October 22 (Lindsay Duvall)
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NLIHC Staff

Sarah Abdelhadi, Senior Research Analyst
Lindsey Aramah, Communications Intern
Andrew Aurand, Senior Vice President for Research, x245
Sidney Betancourt, Project Manager, Inclusive Community Engagement, x200
Victoria Bourret, Project Manager, State and Local Innovation, x244
Jen Butler, Vice President, External Affairs, x239
Alayna Calabro, Senior Policy Analyst, x252
Billy Cerullo, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Matthew Clarke, Director, Communications, x207
Courtney Cooperman, Project Manager, Our Homes Our Votes, x263
Lindsay Duvall, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x206
Thaddaeus Elliot, Housing Advocacy Coordinator
Dan Emmanuel, Manager, Research, x316
Sarah Gallagher, Vice President, State and Local Policy Innovation, x220
Jamaal Gilani, Director of People and Culture
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Raquel Harati, Research Analyst
Danita Humphries, Senior Executive Assistant, x226
Nada Hussein, ERASE Project Coordinator, x264
Kim Johnson, Public Policy Manager, x243
Kayla Laywell, Housing Policy Analyst, x231
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Senior Communications Specialist, x201
Meghan Mertyris, Disaster Housing Recovery Analyst
Steve Moore Sanchez, Development Coordinator, x209
Khara Norris, Vice President of Operations and Finance, x242
Noah Patton, Manager, Disaster Recovery, x227
Mackenzie Pish, Research Analyst
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Manager, x246
Benja Reilly, Development Specialist, x234
Dee Ross, Tenant Leader Fellow
Gabrielle Ross, Project Manager, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, x208
Sarah Saadian, Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Field Organizing, x228
Craig Schaar, Data Systems Coordinator
Brooke Schipporeit, Director, Field Organizing, x233
Lauren Steimle, Web/Graphic Design Specialist, x246
Hillary Poudeu Tchokothe, Our Homes, Our Votes Intern
Tia Turner, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Julie Walker, OSAH Campaign Coordinator
Chantelle Wilkinson, OSAH Campaign Director, x230
Renee Willis, Senior Vice President for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, x247
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225