

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Christopher Banks  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alexa Avilés  
Erik D. Bottcher  
Justin L. Brannan  
Darlene Mealy  
Chi A. Ossé  
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.  
Pierina Ana Sanchez  
Julie Won

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Tanesha Grant

Layla Law-Gisiko

Manny Martinez

Zulay Velazquez

Crystal Glover

Shaquaisa Spears

Eva Trimble

NYCHA Chief Operating Officer

Sylvia Aude

NYCHA Vice President of Tenancy

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Chief of Housing at NYPD

Howard Gottesman

Inspector at NYPD

Anna Luft

NYLAG

Luis Henriquez

Legal Services

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Elizabeth Rodriguez

Edna Wells Handy  
National Institute for Section 3 Empowerment

Elizabeth Brantl  
Center for Justice Innovation

Lisa Hall

Simone Hall

Renee Keitt

Ramona Ferreyra  
Save Section 9

Karen Blondel  
Red Hook West RA

Christina Chaise  
Justice for All Coalition

Jacqueline Lara

Teresa Scott

Christopher Leon Johnson



COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning. Good morning. Welcome to the New York City Council hearing on the Committee on Public Housing. At this time, please silence all electronics and do not approach the dais. I repeat, please do not approach the dais. If you are testifying today or have any questions or concerns, please contact the Sergeant at Arms. Thank you for your cooperation. Chair, you may begin.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I'm calling this meeting to order this morning. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this hearing of the Committee on Public Housing for the New York City Council. I'm Council Member Chris Banks, the Chair of this committee, and I'm glad to be joined by my colleagues, Council Member Avilés and Council Member Ayala. Today, we hold an oversight hearing on vacancies, transfers of NYCHA, and additionally, we will be hearing two pieces of legislation: Introduction 111 sponsored by Council Member Avilés which require NYCHA to report on vacant public housing units, and Introduction 122 sponsored by Deputy Speaker Ayala which require NYPD to publish

crime data for each NYCHA development. On this committee, we spend a lot of time talking about what needs to be improved at NYCHA, and its vacancies and transfer process are certainly on that list. But before getting to that, I want to take a minute to remind all of us of what we're fighting for. Public housing is a gem of this city and it has been setting an example for the rest of this country for nearly 100 years. When done well, public housing stands for the value that everyone deserves, to have a home, and especially in a time where we're seeing an affordable housing crisis, soaring costs of living, and attacks from the Federal Government. We should be protecting and uplifting public housing at all costs. If I'm critical of NYCHA, it's because I believe that we can do better and we must do better. But we need to have a conversation about how we actually get folks housed in New York City public housing. For years, the number of vacant NYCHA units have been on the rise from less than 500 in 2021 and 3,000 in 2022 and to nearly 6,000 today. Over the past year, an average of 75 apartments became vacant each month, more than two new vacant units every day while hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers sit on NYCHA's waiting list

waiting for a place to live. I want to stress that when we talk about vacancies, we're not just talking about empty apartments. We're talking about residents of this city who are waiting for access to decent and safe housing, and often these are New Yorkers in incredibly vulnerable situations. A December 2024 report by the Legal Services New York City found that survivors of gender-based violence are sometimes waiting years for a transfer, despite being in danger in their current housing. And that is simply unacceptable. And NYCHA is placing fewer and fewer shelter residents into public housing each year, reaching a 10-year low last year. Even as the homeless population in New York City reaches historic highs. I recognize that it takes a lot of time and money to make vacant units suitable for new tenants, especially some of these older units that require extensive rehabilitation. I greatly appreciate that NYCHA is putting more care into this work than it has in the past. Public housing residents, no less than any other residents, deserve to have safe, clean, and functioning housing. But when it takes a full year to turn around one vacant unit, we need to question why and try to find a better way. I hope that this

hearing will shed some light on why vacancies are increasing and taking so long to fill, what tenants are looking for in their fair and transparent placement policy, and how these processes can be improved to get more folks into decent public housing quickly and safely. I would like to thank my staff, Michael Lambert [sp?], Kyle Graham [sp?], along with Public Housing Committee staff, Jose, Charles, Jack, Reese [sp?], James, Sierra for all the work they've put into this hearing. I will now turn it over to my colleagues to speak about their bills, and I recognize Deputy Speaker, Madam Ayala.

COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you, Chair. I'm here to talk about Intro 122. Just not going to take up a lot of time. It's a very simple bill, but it's a bill that would require that NYCHA publish crime data for each development, and I find that this is information that I'm lacking in my community. I represent the largest stock of public housing of any elected officials citywide, and it is very difficult for me to ascertain where we need resources to, you know, to be evenly distributed throughout my community, because I don't know. I hear rumors, and I hear, you know, there's a beef between this



development and that development, and we have a higher rate of domestic violence in the community, but I don't have any idea where specifically, because NYCHA doesn't report-- the NYPD does not report specifically on violence that is occurring at the NYCHAs, other than, you know, maybe reporting on it at the local PSA meetings. But there's no published data and I think that that is a disservice. You know, knowing what I know, living in the community that I represent and how challenging it is, I would really welcome more information and more transparency in regards to what's happening at my developments. In regards to the transfers-- just because I have to step out because we have a meeting downstairs. I just want to say that, you know, I want to echo the Chair's sentiment about domestic violence families having to wait years to be able to get transferred. I've had instances where I've had women call me and they are paying the rent for months and months on end and staying with relatives because they don't feel safe living there while they wait for a transfer. I don't see how, you know, that is fair. I have a senior also at one of my developments and she was forced to live next door to her son's murder's family

1 for two years. She was afraid to come out of her  
2 apartment and we had to intervene to get her moved,  
3 and then I have another senior-- a senior that lives  
4 at a senior housing development, and I was door-  
5 knocking not so long ago-- who invited me in and she  
6 was so happy to see me because she wanted to share  
7 with me-- she wanted me to see for myself the  
8 conditions in her apartment. And she lived in a  
9 studio apartment in a building that's transferring  
10 over to PAC, and when she opened her closet door  
11 where all of her belongings are, because again, keep  
12 in mind this is a studio apartment. It was full of  
13 black mold, black mold. Her living quarters-- her  
14 sleeping quarters which is, you know, technically the  
15 living room/bedroom, again, mold everywhere. And  
16 it's been I would say maybe now close to six weeks,  
17 and I still haven't been able to get her transferred  
18 out, because they need to move her to a first or  
19 second floor because of mobility issue. And I'm just  
20 flabbergasted that there hasn't been a discussion  
21 with her about possibly moving her out to another  
22 development while this is happening. Black mold is  
23 dangerous. Older adults already suffering from, you  
24 know, other ailments, there's no need-- I mean  
25

there's no excuse under the sun for why anyone elderly or not is exposed to live in a condition like the one that I saw for myself. And I think that she is not the exception. She's the, you know, the rule. And I really would hope to see better. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Council Member Avilés?

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you, Chair Banks, and thank you Council Members for being here today and the public and also NYCHA. Thank for getting Intro 111 on the agenda today. This legislation was introduced in the last session to address this issue of rising vacancies at NYCHA, During a itme of a housing and homelessness crisis. This legislation would require NYCHA to provide a report on the units that have been vacant for more than 30 continuous days. The report would include the reasons why the unit was vacant to supplement the public information on NYCHA's website, which shows an alarming growth in the vacant-- in the number of vacant units across NYCHA's property. During our last hearing, NYCHA testified that much of the information required in this bill is already being reported. Today, we'd like to drill down on where

1 this legislation might enhance the current reporting  
2 requirements. So, we look forward to hearing more  
3 from NYCHA today and how we can work together not  
4 only on this piece of legislation, but certainly on  
5 the others. And on the note of the transfer, the  
6 transfer situation is appalling. It has taken our  
7 office well over a year to transfer people facing  
8 violence, and it is particularly appalling when you  
9 look at it and you know that there are thousands of  
10 vacant units NYCHA. It is-- it become so impossible  
11 to explain to someone who is experiencing violence  
12 when they see four units in their building are empty,  
13 that nothing can be done. So, we need to get this  
14 right. We need to get it moving and make sure that  
15 our residents are safe. We need a transfer situation  
16 that actually is unstuck, that can make sure that the  
17 health and wellness of our residents are first and  
18 foremost, particularly in a housing crisis. And so,  
19 I look forward, obviously, to pushing this forward  
20 and making sure that there is accountability. We  
21 have a lot of information. Much of it doesn't make  
22 sense. It is not accessible to residents to  
23 understand. It's very hard to hold an entity  
24 accountable where the data is incomprehensible. So,

thank you so much, Chair, and look forward to the discussion.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Now, we'll proceed to our pre-panel, and we'll call up the first: Tanesha Grant, Layla Law-Gisiko, Manny Martinez, and Zulay Velazquez. Please approach. Good morning.

TANESHA GRANT: Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Grant, you may proceed.

TANESHA GRANT: Good morning, Chair Banks and members of the City Council Public Housing Committee. My name is Tanesha Grant, Executive Director of Parents Supporting Parents New York, and I'm a community leader. I am pleased to offer testimony today on NYCHA transfers and vacancies. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before the public housing administrators present before the public housing administrators present their testimony. In my extensive experience with these meetings, it is discouraging when those responsible for serving the public do not remain to hear our perspective. As previously stated, I am a public servant, and my community-based organization collaborates with

numerous partners. One key partner is a resident-led organization dedicated to preserving public housing and advocating for its continued availability. The majority of its members are public housing tenants or tenants association presidents. Residents to Preserve Public Housing has been doing this work for seven years now. In my testimony today I represent not only myself and my community, but also the residents advocating for the preservation of public housing. To be clear, Chair, tenant transfers and vacancies are highly disorganized in their support of our public housing residents. For example, consider a resident, a Black mother who has lived in Section 9 apartments for 35 years and raised five children there. This apartment is located on the fifth floor of a five-story walk-up. Our resident requires a medical transfer to a lower floor and requests are pending for over 10 years. Despite first floor vacancies, NYCHA administration has been prioritizing tenants enrolled in those RAD and PACT Section 8 programs, delaying the necessary accommodations that she needs. Our residents-- another resident, disabled for years, is confined to the 19<sup>th</sup> floor due too the persistent elevator outages. She reports

frequent instances of NYCHA administrators providing false information. These necessities are immediate. So, serious oversight of all NYCHA operations is in order. The RAD and PACT projects should be suspended until all transfers, including medically-necessary transfers are completed and all vacant apartments are filled with Section 9 tenants. Our Section 9 tenants are being pushed out, Chair. They are being pushed out of their homes where they have raised generations of their children under the guise of home improvement. I can tell you that a lot of these repairs, these so-called repairs that they have done to NYCHA apartments months later are coming undone, because they were done as cheaply as possible. This isn't right. In the past couple of years, Black folks have been the number one population to leave this city due to an affordability issue. We have seen the highest eviction rates happening to our NYCHA tenants since these conversions started to take place. These private management companies are not doing their job in timely and effective manner, but they are quick to serve our tenants' eviction letters. The PACT conversions are hindering the Section 9 residents who have transfers in for years. NYCHA took the rights

away from the property management office to do transfers. Property management offices are telling residents who have approved medical transfers-- who have approved medical transfers that they do not handle transfers, and that they must call downtown. This is a direct attack on our public housing residents and we will not stand for it. These conversions were supposed to improve our NYCHA residents' quality of life. Instead, it has caused extreme mental illness and more health issues. There should be nothing done without the tenants' full knowledge and cooperation. I'm almost done. This is not what is happening. The lived experience experts here are the tenants, not the NYCHA administrators. Our residents deserve accountability and respect, and we intend to save Section 9 for any tenant who wants to keep their public housing. We also intend to keep fighting for permanent upgrades to Section 9 residents' apartments. Residents should never have to live in low-quality, harmful NYCHA apartments. We request full funding for NYCHA in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. We also approve these bills which our City Council Members are sponsoring. We hope that this will provide much transparency and



accountability to what is really happening at NYCHA.  
Thank you for your consideration.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your  
testimony.

LAYLA LAW-GISIKO: Thank you, good  
morning, Chair Banks and members of the committee.  
My name is Layla Law-Gisiko Cohen [sic]. I'm  
testifying today in my capacity as community advocate  
and district leader for Assembly District 75, part A.  
I would like to raise several serious concerns  
regarding the practices at Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea  
regarding vacancies. The first one is a discrepancy  
in unit counts. The initial RFP that was issued for  
FED redevelopment explicitly referenced 2,073  
residential units. However, recent official  
documentation including the draft Environmental  
Impact Statement now refers to 2,056 units. So, it's  
sounds like 17 apartments have evaporated from 2021  
to today. There has been no public explanation for  
this reduction. The disappearance of these units  
from the plan raises important questions about  
transparency, project scope and affordability  
commitments to public and current residents obviously  
deserve a full accounting of this change. On the

question of warehousing of units for transfer purposes, NYCHA and Related, the developer selected for this project, have admitted on multiple occasions including in public meetings and in communication with stakeholders that they are intentionally warehousing units within FEC development. The stated purpose is to facilitate further tenant transfer from the senior building at Fulton Houses-- the senior building at Chelese addition houses and building 11 at Fulton, both of which are scheduled for early demolition, were this redevelopment plan to be approved. This practice raises deep ethical and procedural questions. Warehousing rent-stabilized public housing units particularly amid a citywide housing crisis and record wait lists represents a significant disservice to families awaiting placement and undermines the mission of public housing. The exact number of these warehoused units is actually not known or not recorded anywhere. Furthermore, third point, the lack of documentation and accountability. There is no comprehensive documentation available to the public that details the total number of warehoused units, the duration for which they have been warehoused, the criteria

used to select units for warehousing, the duration of vacancy, as well as any oversight mechanism in place. NYCHA's opacity on this matter creates an accountability vacuum. Residents, advocates and elected officials are unable to verify how many units are being kept off the roll and for how long. This is really a problem, and we urge this committee to actually really get accountability from NYCHA. Finally, something that is really rubbing lots of tenants the wrong way-- the use of a NYCHA unit for a private consultant. It has come to light that one residential unit at Fulton Houses has been allocated to HOU, which is a private relocation consultant contracted by the developer. This unit is reportedly being used as an office for HOU staff where they also see tenants. This represents a diversion of a public housing unit intending to house low-income New Yorkers to a private entity for administrative purposes. Again, we're talking really about one unit, but it is really rubbing tenants the wrong way. This raises serious concern about priorities, misuse of precious housing resources and deserves to be addressed. In conclusion, at a time where tens of thousands of families are on the NYCHA waiting list,

every public housing unit matters. The practice of warehousing units without transparency, the unexplained reduction in proposed units, and if I can just get 10 more seconds--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Thirty seconds.

LAYLA LAW-GISIKO: The allocation of apartments for private consultants must be scrutinized. I thank you very much for holding this hearing and stand ready to answer any questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. Mr. Martinez?

MANNY MARTINEZ: Good morning. Good morning. Thank you so much for this opportunity, Chair Banks, and the Public Housing Committee as well as Mr. Brannan [sic]. So, good morning, Chair Banks. Picture a river of money, billions of federal dollars rushing through the New York City's public housing every single year. Ninety-five percent of those apartments are still lived in, cooked in, studied in, dreamed in, kids doing homework at the kitchen table, grandmother's cooking on a battered stove. That's NYCHA's heartbeat. But somewhere in the skyscraper

board rooms, that heartbeat has been considered an obstacle to accessing trillions in collective property values and the demographic shift that come with gentrification. NYCHA's executives are bending over backwards for private management firms, smoothing the path to conversions that slice away residents' protections like a hot knife through butter. They call it modernization. We see eviction and displacement, because when privatization walks in the front door, economic rights slip out the back. This high rate of vacancy is due to their preparation of conversion to RAD, because at a specific percentage, it is profitable for the property management company to circumvent the \$15,000 worth of moveout by just having empty apartments. Look at 7,700 empty apartments. They could be training grounds, Section 3 opportunities where residents pick up wrenches, clipboards and payroll checks. Instead, NYCHA imposes contract thresholds apparently not relevant in regulations to public housing, restricting training, employment and contracting as required under our residents' economic rights. The law says opportunity. The practice screams exclusion. And who bears the cost? Survivors of

domestic violence waiting years for a safe transfer, wheelchair users stranded in fourth-floor walk-ups, New Yorkers sleeping on couches while 7,700 kitchens gather dust, all while executive polish taking points about economic mobility about looking for the residents' best interest, but all of that is just impotent nonsense which never reaches any meaningful results. Let's be plain. If public housing were mostly White, would this hollowing out be tolerated? Would HUD's field office look the other way while red-lining is camouflaged in a blue highlighter? Because this practice has persisted since our economic rights became law decades ago, truly more than four scores and seven years ago. Use those vacant units for Section 3 jobs, resident-owned contracts under a million dollars for apprenticeships that turn broken radiators into working resumes. That is the mission NYCHA trumpets only when asked. Economic mobility, but it's just camouflaged. We're not asking for charity. We're asking for the benefit that is demanded in our rights for those units to be used for our benefit to spur economic mobility through Section 3 and also for our community's dignity and integrity to be restored. We see these

empty apartments that become provocations of high crime rates where people are breaking into these apartments and using the crack houses and prostitution. We need safety. We need our economic mobility. We need our rights. Thank you, sir.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Is Zulay Velazquez-- thank you. You can approach the panel table. Thank you for being part of the pre-panel. We have to maintain order, ma'am. Thank you. You may proceed with your testimony.

ZULAY VELAZQUEZ: Hi, good morning, everyone. So, at Jacob Riis it appears to be that we have a vacant apartment, but one of the things that I've noticed during my canvassing against the privatization and among other things is that they're holding these apartments for-- let's say for instance the-- you know, a couple months ago, they did the Section 8-- they opened up Section 8. So, instead of HUD, it appeared to be that NYCHA led that initiative, and instead of HUD approving or disapproving the residents, they got letters from NYCHA saying that they accepted residents-- applicants based on random versus priority, date, postdate, etcetera. And only when those residents,

those candidates who submitted their application qualified, it was when I guess they got an approval. But anyone who was in the house component that didn't qualify, they said they just didn't qualify. Sometimes they were actually pre-screening the wrong residents, right? So, let's say for instance, my daughter fits the criteria, didn't get approved because of the parent that was the head of household. So, what I believe is happening is that they are taking from a list, right, but the new list they created. That's why the backlog for their actual Section 9 people is still what it is and hasn't moved, because they are basically privatizing within. So, let's say for instance, Jacob Riis, if they take all these Section 8 people and the apartments and they replace them with Section 8, then it's majority Section 8, not Section 9. So, I think this is the tactic that they do, and it's unfortunate. And regards to the turnover for the repairs, it is-- cost is costly, but if they replace all our piping and gas lines then it would be basically limit the quick, like let's say, fix, right? This way, the apartments will last longer, because they could patch up the work, but between the roof work that is or



1 isn't done has holes or the pointing that wasn't done  
2 properly and they didn't follow through with, it's--  
3 if they did things a little differently, it would be  
4 fine, but if you take one apartment that has a  
5 problem with a piece of pipe and you just cut that  
6 piece, it's not going to help the rest of the  
7 problem, right? It's just going to continue to  
8 surface. At Jacob Riis, it apparently appears that  
9 our piping and gas lines have never been replaced in  
10 the 75 years+ that we exist. And again, in the  
11 developments, if they replace the piping before this--  
12 - before their attempt to do it when the  
13 privatization, then the apartments will last a little  
14 longer. When breaking the pipes or doing any  
15 construction, they should consider doing-- giving the  
16 residents proper air monitors and proper clean water  
17 so we won't get contaminated. At Riis, there was  
18 residents who died and also hard arsenic poisoning  
19 from over-- I would say over 30 residents have proof  
20 from different laboratories. And it's just some  
21 other stuff, including this black mold that this lady  
22 mentioned. People are getting seizures. One my  
23 residents, seizures, two of her children. One has  
24 brain damage. So, if they replace the pipes, all the  
25

pipes throughout the older lines, that type of stuff will stop, and the apartments will be more, obviously available.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. We have an additional pre-panel member that's going to-- you may approach. Mrs. Glover? Thank you. And you have four minutes, Ms. Glover, like everybody else, so you don't have to rush.

CRYSTAL GLOVER: Mr. Banks, that's so sweet of you, because you didn't have to do that. I appreciate that. Good morning, Mr. Banks and the Public Housing Committee. My name is Crystal Glover and I want justice. Before I get to the vacancies and all that stuff, I want to talk about this. Almost two years ago, Adeline Carrion [sp?] who was a Vice President at Washington Houses had me falsely arrested. Washington Houses didn't have running water at that time. Management allowed the resident council to give water out, but they shouldn't have. When I went to reach for the water, Adeline, which is known as Ada [sp?], said, "I'm sick of her." She jumped on my back. That evening I called the police to report the incident because my back started hurting. They came. While I got into the ambulance,

Adeline was walking by with her dog. I told the officer, "There she go right there." Two cops went over to her. They took a long time. The ambulance took me to the neighborhood hospital and while the nurse was triaging me, which means taking my vitals, a bunch of cops from the 23<sup>rd</sup> precinct in PSA5 surrounded me. I asked them what's going on. A female cop said, "You said scratched her and she's getting a lawyer." I pleaded with the cop, "No, you got it wrong." They shackled me. They handcuffed me. I sat there for two hours waiting to see a doctor about my back, and when the doctor was done, the cops took me to the PSA5, took my picture, and then put me in a bullpen with a pissy woman laid out. Thank God my family was there waiting for me to be released. I had to go to criminal court. The first time I went, the lawyer told me, "Plead guilty. We can do the paperwork and have you out of here in no time." I said I will never plead guilty to something I didn't do. After 90 days the court sealed the case. I had to go through the Legal Department of Housing Authority. I testified, told the truth, and the case was dismissed. Because of the hate of Adeline Carrion who lives at Washington Houses and who is the former

TA Vice President, I could have lost my lease. Adeline and I never had any negative encounters. We just lived in the same development. Just as sure as there's a God, I gave this woman no reason to hate me. I want NYCHA to reprimand her. She should not be allowed to get away with this. This whole incident has caused me much stress physically and psychologically. As for vacant apartments, I wouldn't recommend anybody trying to move into New York City Housing Authority. The resident council at Washington Houses is supposed to be for voice for the tenants. All New York City Housing Authority, New York City housing resident associations, better known as tenant associations, are the voice. They gather information. They can meet with the management. Okay, let me get back to my paper. Okay. The resident councils are supposed to be the voice for tenants, legally and in accordance with 964 HUD regulations. Washington Houses hasn't had a tenant meeting in nine months. Since my getting falsely arrested in New York City Housing Authority grounds and the case being dismissed, we have had three managers. The management office is not safe. There is severe contracting work going on. The manager is

supposed to meet with the resident council monthly for monthly meetings. Not happening. In my building, elevator A car has been broken, working, broken, working for two years. I've been stuck in it at least three minutes. The Authority is going to wait until someone dies--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Thirty seconds, wrap it up.

CRYSTAL GLOVER: in it, in that elevator before they terminate it altogether. NYCHA is unethical and immoral. I'm spoken to the Vice President of PHO, Manhattan Property Management, EVP, for president [sic] services, Partnerships and Initiatives, office of the EVP, Vice President of Residents Service and Community Engagement and Partnership about the safety of Washington Houses. None of them have followed through. And like I said, if anything happens to me or my family, New York City Housing Authority is to blame. There is no safety, no security, nothing posted about PSA5 meetings for the residents, the tenants associations. It's a free for all. it's a mess, and I want you to know, Sir Banks, it's the tenants that have the power. They don't read and they don't know. It takes 720 months

before you can even apply. How I know-- for vacancy. How I know that, because I read it online. I thank you for allowing me to sit on this first panel. I appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Now we'll move to our virtual pre-panel. We will have Ms. Spears.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

SHEQUAISA SPEARS: Hi, can you hear and see me?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We can hear you and we can see your background. Now we can see you.

SHEQUAISA SPEARS: Hi, good morning.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Good morning. You may proceed.

SHEQUAISA SPEARS: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Banks and other esteemed members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this unique pre-panel. My name is Shaquaisa Spears. I'm a long-time resident of NYCHA, a native New Yorker, born and raised in Gunhill Houses. I'm also a member of Save Section 9, a grassroots organization and tenant-led coalition that works to educate and activate public housing tenants.

The testimony I'm about to provide was also forwarded to each of your district offices via email on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup>, and I pray that my direct appeal today will garner an immediate response. I'm seeking assistance with an issue related to being transferred into a right-size unit with a reasonable accommodation request at the recently RAD/PACT converted Boston Secor Houses which is being managed by Wave Crest Management in the Bronx New York and is now subsidized through project-based Section 8 as of October 2024. My teenage son and I have been waiting to be transferred into a two-bedroom apartment for over a decade with the most recent transfer approval being issued in 2019. In August 2024, I received a letter from NYCHA's Leased Housing Department stating my intra-developmental transfer was closed due to Boston Secor's privatization under RAD/PACT. I was advised to contact Wave Crest Management to initiate a new transfer request. An initial phone conversation with lease Housing Department's Director Robert Tsario [sp?] on September 24<sup>th</sup> noted that to be considered for a transfer, I would need to sign the new RAD/PACT lease to obtain a tenant-based Section 8 voucher. I obtained legal representation

to advocate for me to receive the voucher in advance of the 10-month conversion rule. The lawyer advised me that the issuance of a voucher was the only remedy to resolve my transfer request, although I asked to be placed in another Section 9 funded NYCHA apartment. Residing on the top floor of the building with constant elevator outages and living with a permanent partial disability has been hard. As a recent brain surgery survivor, concerns of exposure to construction dust, lead, and asbestos-contaminated debris presented themselves, and it was important to minimize my exposure to environmental toxins. I was told by NYCHA staff over the summer of 2024 that all transfers to other NYCHA developments and within Boston Secor were frozen. My right to be transferred out of my apartment was taken away from me due to RAD/PACT, which I never wished to be a part of. I later found out that I was expecting my second child who was born in March 2025. This made the need for a right-sized apartment more urgent. Unfortunately, throughout my entire pregnancy I was subjected to the toxic conditions that I tried to avoid which resulted in headaches, nausea, nose bleed, and high blood pressure. My newborn is now being exposed to the



1 same toxic environment with active demolition work  
2 being conducted as I speak to you all. Although I  
3 received a portable voucher in November 2024 and had  
4 vigorously sought housing in New York City, I haven't  
5 been able to find an apartment. I'm unable to port my  
6 voucher out to another New York county through the  
7 NYCHA portal, and a phone call to NYCHA's customer  
8 contact center on June 10<sup>th</sup> confirmed that my  
9 transfer voucher was closed on May 25<sup>th</sup>, although Mr.  
10 Tsario stated in an email on April 25<sup>th</sup> that he  
11 personally extended it to July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Wave  
12 Crest Management's property manager, Benjamin De Leon  
13 [sp?] has told me that there's no vacancies within  
14 Boston Secor. However, on April 25th, I was  
15 relocated to a fully-renovated two-bedroom apartment  
16 within my same building as my one-bedroom apartment  
17 was renovated. I have inquired about leasing the  
18 apartment and was told by lead housing assistant  
19 Carmen Alvarez that transfers are not being done at  
20 Boston Secor until the conversion is complete. This  
21 will be no earlier than the year 2027. I'm  
22 essentially being forced to return to an inadequately  
23 sized unit relative to my household size of three.  
24 Being in a wrong-sized apartment will create hoarder  
25

1                   like conditions for my household, and as a person  
2                   with a disability, my reasonable accommodation  
3                   request is being ignored. Wave Crest Management is  
4                   holding vacant units as--

5                   CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Thirty  
6                   seconds.

7                   SHAQUAISA SPEARS: hospitality suites  
8                   which is unfair to tenants like myself who are  
9                   approved for a transfer under a reasonable  
10                  accommodation before this contract between NYCHA and  
11                  real estate entities was signed. I am now being  
12                  threatened and retaliated against by Wave Crest  
13                  Management with hold-over proceedings which is  
14                  contributing to my post-partum anxiety and  
15                  depression. I would appreciate an opportunity to  
16                  discuss my issues further and obtain assistance or  
17                  advocacy in helping me remain in a two-bedroom  
18                  apartment that I'm entitled to. I sincerely thank you  
19                  all for the opportunity to share my concerns as I  
20                  represent many tenants who are being subjected to  
21                  similar unethical and potentially illegal practices.  
22                  Your attention to this urgent matter as I try to  
23                  obtain adequate housing for my son and daughter are  
24                  greatly appreciated. Thank you all for your time.  
25

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. To the panel, thank you so much. We've been joined by Council Member Bottcher and Council Member Brannan. We will now proceed to the administration. You may approach.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning. If you both could raise your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before this committee and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And before you begin, if you could identify your name and your title for the record, that would be great. Thank you.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Eva Trimble, Chief Operating Officer, NYCHA.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Sylvia Aude, Senior Vice President for Public Housing Tenancy Administration.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may proceed.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Thank you. Chair Chris Banks, members of the Committee on

Public Housing, other distinguished members of the City Council, NYCHA residents, community advocates, and members of the public: good morning. I am Eva Trimble, NYCHA's Chief Operating Officer. I am pleased to be joined today by Sylvia Aude, Senior Vice President of Public Housing Tenancy Administration, and other members of the NYCHA team. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss vacancies and transfers at the Authority. NYCHA is a vital resource of affordable housing, and we strive to ensure that as many New Yorkers as possible can benefit from safe and decent public housing. As part of our efforts to improve residents' quality of life, and in compliance with the HUD agreement, we have been performing extensive and required environmental work in every apartment that becomes unoccupied. Considering the massive repair needs across the Authority, nearly \$80 billion, and the average tenure in a NYCHA apartment, 25 years, this is a vital opportunity to carry out critical health and safety work. Lead-based paint testing and abatement is a major element of the work we're doing in vacant apartments. NYCHA's policy is that when an apartment becomes vacant, our Healthy Homes team conducts a

lead-based paint inspection if the apartment hasn't already been inspected prior to becoming vacant. If lead-based paint is identified, the apartment is scheduled for abatement. An asbestos investigation is performed as well at apartments with damaged tiles or textured ceilings. Since the City instituted a more stringent lead paint standard in December 2021, Healthy Homes has cleared lead-based paint in more than 16,000 apartments at turnover. We are currently clearing vacant apartments for lead-based paint at a rate of 325 apartments per month. For vinyl asbestos floor tiles, we abate around 160 to 200 vacant apartments each month. Since December 2021, we have abated asbestos floor tiles in more than 7,500 vacant apartments. On average, it takes four to six months to complete lead and asbestos testing process, and abatement if necessary, during turnover. It costs approximately \$17,000 to complete lead testing, abatement, and clearance in each apartment and approximately \$25,000 to complete asbestos testing, abatement, and clearance in each apartment. While the practice of eliminating lead-based paint adds time to the apartment turnover process, it also means that every resident will move into a new apartment

that is free of this environmental hazard. Our work in this area is transformative, an accomplishment that addresses a long-entrenched issue and dramatically benefits residents. Since last June, NYCHA has been turning over approximately 535 apartments per month. Each development is expected to complete a minimum of five moveouts per month. While we are always working to turn over apartments as quickly as possible and to speed up our timelines, we take pride in the significantly increased turnover activity and the fact that residents are moving into safe and rehabilitated homes. We also understand that it's frustrating to wait for a new apartment. To reduce the wait time for families, we now match prospective tenants with apartments when the homes are turnkey ready, rather than once the apartment is vacated, per the previous policy. NYCHA's vacancy rate is currently 4.46 percent, which is lower than the national public housing vacancy rate of 5.2 percent. Additionally, the total number of move-ins in 2024 was 52 percent higher than in 2023. NYCHA works with partners at all levels of government to use every available resource to get New Yorkers into our deeply affordable apartments. We are grateful

for the City's ongoing support, including via funding for the Vacant Unit Readiness program. In the current fiscal year, the City has made approximately \$76 million available to NYCHA for this program, for rehabilitation work associated with expediting apartment turnover. Additional funding is also available for the following years. I'd like to take a moment to share some exciting updates about our Tenant Selection and Assignment Plan, TSAP. For nearly 30 years, TSAP has guided a fair and neutral process for filling vacancies with applicants and tenant transfers. We evaluate our transfer policies periodically to ensure we are serving residents and applicants as efficiently and effectively as possible, while adhering to applicable laws, regulations, and requirements. In line with our vision for transformation, we are considering changing the current TSAP from a four-tier to a three-tier system. Tiers 1 and 2 are allocated to tenant relocations. The third tier encompasses all remaining transfer and applicant selections, which would be divided into seven rotating groups, with certain categories allocated a higher proportion of selections to reflect their priority. The revised

rotation model will ensure a more balanced and efficient selection process while addressing the needs of multiple housing priorities, including health and safety matters, domestic violence, reasonable accommodations, and homelessness. We are currently seeking feedback from stakeholders, including resident leadership and elected officials, on these proposed transfer policy changes, and we have already briefed Chair Banks and Assemblymember Rosenthal, as well as other partners and housing advocates, as part of a robust outreach campaign. The changes are also described in the Draft Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Plan that was released for public review this past Friday, June 13th. Residents and any member of the public can comment on the plan, including the proposed TSAP changes, in person or virtually at a July 30<sup>th</sup> public hearing; comments can also be submitted via email. The annual plan, as well as details about the public hearing and commenting process, are available on NYCHA's website. We aim to provide housing to New Yorkers as quickly as possible, while ensuring that they are moving into safe and decent homes which have been remediated of hazards like lead and asbestos. The strides we are



making in carrying out critical work like lead abatement are benefiting residents today as well as the generations to come. We acknowledge that there is more work to be done, and we are always grateful to collaborate with the Council and other partners on ways we can improve our services to residents and continue making progress as an organization. Thank you. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your opening statement. We will begin in relation to reporting on vacant public housing dwelling units, I want to know how many vacant units are NYCHA-- are in NYCHA's portfolio as of right now? And particularly, NYCHA lists four categories of units available for occupancy, temporarily off rent roll and permanently off rent roll, and match to prospective tenants. Can you provide a clear definition of each category and the current number of vacant units in each category?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Thank you, Council Member. The number of vacant, available units right now as of June 1<sup>st</sup> is 5,969. Vacant available apartments are apartments that have had residents move out and are at some point in our

turnover or leasing process. Our temporary off the rent roll units as of June 1<sup>st</sup> are 1,712.

Temporarily off the rent roll is a category we use to take apartments that are being-- that need to be on hold and will not be turned over right away. Some of the examples of a temporary off the rent roll hold are apartments that we're holding for relocations as part of our comprehensive modernization programs,

including Comp [sic] Mod and the Trust [sic] program.

We also take apartments temporarily off the rent roll as they're-- if they're severely damaged and we know that they'll need additional work. Permanently off

the rent roll is 1,797 and we take apartments

permanently off the rent roll in anticipation of

conversions to the PACT program, and again, those

apartments will be used to facilitate relocations as

part of the construction work that the PACT

developers do on properties. We also take apartments

permanently off the rent roll if they're going to no

longer used for residential purposes, but for

community purposes such as resident association

offices or other community or management needs. In

addition, we have just over 800-- 809 units matched

to prospective tenants. So those are part of the

vacant available units, but they are in the lease-up process as we speak.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And on average, how long do such units remain vacant?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, we've been working really hard to reduce that timeframe. Right now, overall the prep time for a vacant unit is 352 days, and that's compares to 456 days last year. So we've created a reduction of 23 percent through our efforts to streamline this process. We are working hard to reduce that backlog of vacant available units.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And, I believe-- I don't know if you answered this question, but reasons that a unit would be moved from permanently off rent role?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, for permanent off rent roll, we primarily use that for PACT properties in order to preserve those units to facilitate on-site relocations for residents so that their lives are not disrupted during the construction process.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And then what is the average of time between when a vacant unit is

occupied by prospective tenant and when a tenant moves in?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Right now we're seeing an average time of 352 days. And again, that's a 23 percent reduction from last June.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Does NYCHA count of vacant units include units that are currently occupied by squatters?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: No. Well, let me rephrase that. If-- right now, those vacant available units are listed as vacant. If they-- depending on squatter-- if somebody breaks into an apartment that may be listed as vacant, and as soon as we know about that, we work closely with the NYPD to reclaim that unit.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, do you have a breakdown of the different type of squatters?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't have a breakdown right now. There are instances where apartments are broken into and people are staying in them illegally. We--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Do you know-- do you--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:

[interposing] I don't have the total-- total count of squatters.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, how often does NYCHA check these vacant units for unauthorized persons?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We ask that the-- we don't-- actively are checking for unauthorized. However, you know, our staff are in the buildings every day, and residents are usually aware of what's going on. And so as soon as we are told about an apartment that may have a squatter in it, we work closely with our Law Department and the NYPD's Reclamation Unit. Since the start of the Reclamation Unit, we've reclaimed over 300 units through our partnership with NYPD.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How you attain that information?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Either from residents or from our staff observing activity in an apartment.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, these apart-- there's no information that comes in from a tenant or from, you know, anybody's who's in that particular

building. How is that information gathered as the--  
is management door-knocking? Is there any proactive  
measures taken by the management to make sure that  
that particular apartment is secure?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We're  
not proactively going to each vacant unit. However--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And why  
is that?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: What's  
that?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Why is that?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Well,  
our staff are working on the vacant units. So,  
there's different people in and out of those units at  
different times. So, every-- as soon as an apartment  
becomes vacant, it opens the move-out work ticket,  
and then the lead and asbestos work is triggered. So  
we have-- we have different staff in and out of those  
units already and if those staff identify activity  
within the unit, which does sometimes happen, then we  
will respond.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But I mean,  
somebody's breaking into an apartment, or they broke  
into an apartment, and there's staff in and out.

Would that staff not know that there's a squatter in the apartment?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes, that's one of the-- that's one of the instance where the staff tell us, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But-- and those apartments that where there are no activities, or those no staff in and out, how are you then-- how are you accounting for to make-- how are you accounting to make sure that apartment is still secure?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: There are definitely some instances I'm sure where we're missing people are breaking into the apartments, but between the caretakers in the building every day, the skill trade and healthy home staff that are working on the vacants, and we are beginning to do annual inspections of our vacant apartments just like we do our occupied starting this year. So, we do hope to be able to catch those situations of squatters more quickly.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And if legal action is taken to remove a squatter, what is the average length of time before an apartment can be made available again for authorized residents?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It's the same as an apart-- as a regular vacant apartment. 352 days is our average turnover time right now.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And the bill, this particular bill that's being introduced by Council Member Avilés, the bill would require reporting of all units that are vacant for more than 30 continuous days. What are the reasons that a unit might remain vacant for more than 30 days?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Every single vacant unit is vacant for more than 30 days because of the required environmental work that's-- that we do. So, the lead and asbestos testing alone takes four to six months. The lead and asbestos testing, testing and abatement, rather, takes four to six months. So every unit will be vacant for more than 30 days in order to do that required work.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, how does NYCHA currently report on this its vacant units or share information about the vacant units with the public?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: NYCHA publishes vacant unit data on our website under our metrics page, and that information is updated monthly.



CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And is there any direct reporting or information given to maybe a tenant association or the resident association?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: If a resident association asks for vacant unit information, we share that with them.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: That information-- how often does NYCHA update its records relating to vacant units, and would a more frequent reporting scheme, for example, monthly be more useful?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, NYCHA's information, our internal information on vacant units in in real-time as we're processing moveouts and transfers and work on work tickets. So NYCHA internally has real-time day-to-day information. We publish it monthly on our website.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And if nother agency or office were to be tasked with preparing a report on vacancies, would NYCHA commit to sharing the necessary information with the agency or office?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We already share information monthly on our website.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But we're talking about directly with an agency.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We're open to considering other alternatives with the Council. We're happy to talk to you more about that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And just want to let you know, as far as the securing of the vacant apartments, obviously it's definitely of concern. When there is an apartment that is vacant-- and we've heard from multiple tenants throughout NYCHA, in particular in my district, that the issue is NYCHA's lack or its inability to secure those apartments. That has created a public safety issue for residents in that building, and that to me is unacceptable how NYCHA or its lack thereof commitment to secure those apartments. So I just want to just reiterate that.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, I just want to flag that when an apartment becomes vacant and the keys are turned in and we create that moveout work order to start the work on that vacant available unit, we change the locks. So, we put in a different cylinder. NYCHA has those keys that facilitates the work men coming in and out, the trades, the Healthy Homes. If a resident sees that that apartment has been broken into, the sooner that

they notify us, the better so that we can work with NYPD to reclaim it and change the locks again.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. In relation to Council Member Ayala's bill-- well, I guess before I go to Council Member Ayala's bill, I will allow Council Member Avilés to ask some questions.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Council Member, may I just correct the record on one thing in my testimony which was prepared prior to this. We did offer Assemblymember Rosenthal a briefing, but she was not able to make it due to a scheduling conflict. So, I just wanted to correct that we did not actually end up briefing her as I said in my testimony.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for the record. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you. Could you repeat the number of units that are permanently off the roll?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes, we have permanently off the rent roll, 1,797.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Got it. So, in terms of total-- from the vacants available, the

temporaries, the permanents, and then the matched, we're looking upwards of maybe 8,000 units?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay. So, NYCHA was originally founded with a mission in part to address families overcrowding in tenement housing. How is NYCHA currently addressing overcrowding conditions-- overcrowding conditions now being experienced by resident families in the buildings?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Thank you for the question. So, we have priorities in our current tenant selection and assignment plan for overcrowding and extreme overcrowding. So, tenants are welcome to submit a transfer for either of those reasons. We also right-size families upon relocation. So, if we are relocating them for any emergency work or the modernization work, they are being placed in the right-size apartment.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, how many units do you currently have tagged as overcrowded and extremely overcrowded, since you made the distinction?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: I don't have the exact number of families that are currently

experiencing overcrowding and extremely overcrowding,  
but we can get that for you.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay, but you do  
track it.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay, yes, we'd  
love to see that citywide and disaggregated by  
development. NYCHA like all landlords is required by  
federal, state and city housing laws to not  
discrimination and provide equal housing  
opportunities for all qualified applicants,  
transferees and residents. Residents with  
disabilities that are protected by these fair housing  
laws as well. How is NYCHA addressing reasonable  
accommodation transfer requested by disabled  
households?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, we also  
have a series of priorities within the TSAP for  
reasonable accommodations that cover a variety of  
reasonable accommodation types, accessible units,  
extra bedrooms, lower floors, and so we have-- sorry.  
We have several tenants that have requested those  
transfers. We have over 6,500 that are waiting for an  
accessible unit.

UNIDENTIFIED: Excuse, me. How many?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Over 6,500.

UNIDENTIFIED: Waiting.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: For an  
accessible--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]  
Waiting for an accessible unit. Got it.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you, Chair.  
During the last hearing on this bill, NYCHA noted  
that many aspects of Intro 111 are already being  
reported on, as Ms. Kimble just noted. Can you  
inform us specifically which elements are already  
being reported on and in what format?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: On our  
metrics page now, we report on the number of vacant  
available units, the matched units and the off rent  
roll units.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And are those  
disaggregated by development, or is it just one-- we  
have 5,000 units, just--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
[interposing] No, it's just the total.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay. so,  
relatively useless if I'm specifically interested in  
what's happening in Red Hook.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We're  
always happy to send you this information--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] You  
can respond to me, but in terms of a Red Hook  
resident wanting to know, seeing a multitude of  
vacant apartments, there is no way for them to go  
onto the website to see how many units are, in fact,  
empty in Red Hook Houses.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: If a  
resident needs a transfer, they can work with their  
property management office or apply online for a  
transfer, and they will have the choice of looking  
for a borough-wide wait list or a development wait  
list, but the number of units within Red Hook, it  
frankly changes, and wouldn't--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]  
Sure.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: matter  
to their transfer process.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Sure. It  
changes, but my point is there's no way for a

resident to see how many cumulative apartments are available and vacant in various stages on the website. So, that's just my point. The component of this legislation that seems incredibly important here is a requirement to report on the why the unit is available. Is this piece of information you're providing to the public in any form?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: No, it's also not a piece of information that we track easily. It's burdensome for us to track and document the reasons for every vacancy as there can be many reasons for vacancies.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: How many reasons beyond-- actually, let's talk about what are the major reasons that-- I mean, you could do infinity list, but I'm sure there are like a small classification that you can use to give a better understanding about why the units-- and NYCHA's also claimed a good number of them are for lead. What are some of the reasons you're seeing the units are vacant?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: If an apartment is vacant for-- an apartment isn't vacated for lead unless we're taking it offline for a



1 permanent reason. We do temporary relocations to  
2 hotels to facilitate our lead and asbestos work in  
3 order to remove the family while we're doing that  
4 hazardous abatement. However, the reasons for  
5 apartments to be vacated permanently are numerous,  
6 and it's not something that we-- that we have the  
7 ability to track on an ongoing way.

8  
9 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, does NYCHA  
10 have no under-- well, maybe no, but does NYCHA have  
11 an understanding of its-- the status of its  
12 apartments when its vacant? Like you don't know why  
13 some apartments are vacant currently?

14 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: A  
15 resident is also not required to give us a reason.  
16 If they want to move out and they process their  
17 moveout, and they turn in their keys, they don't have  
18 to give a reason. The housing assistant may know of  
19 the reason for the move-out. They may talk-- you  
20 know, talk to the resident and know. Obviously,  
21 there are some that we know if there's a deceased  
22 tenant, if their-- if someone is transferring outside  
23 of NYCHA, but we don't--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] So,  
25 I think we're misconstruing something. It's not why

1 the tenant is leaving. It is why NYCHA is holding  
2 this apartment vacant. That is what we are inquiring  
3 about, and I would imagine there would be some  
4 assessment when you understand a unit is vacant  
5 around why you would hold a unit and not flip it. So  
6 that's what we're talking about specifically.

8 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Okay, I  
9 understand what you're asking now. I'm sorry, I  
10 didn't not understand the question. I thought you  
11 were asking the reasons for tenants--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] No,  
13 not for--

14 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: leaving  
15 the apartment.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: the tenants, for  
17 why NYCHA has this in its custody and is subsequently  
18 holding onto it for very long periods of time.

19 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, for  
20 our off-rent roll code, our off-rent roll process and  
21 why we're holding apartments outside the vacant  
22 available universe or the universe of apartments that  
23 have been vacated by residents, and we are in the  
24 process of turning. For a temporary and permanent  
25 off the rent roll, we actually have to list those

with codes that we submit to HUD, and so there's very specific reasons why we would take an apartment permanently or temporarily off the rent roll.

Permanently off the rent roll, the majority of those units, are being held in anticipation of the PACT and/or soon-to-be Trust conversions in order to facilitate relocations. Temporary off the rent roll, also a significant number is to be held for

modernization, both the Trust and our comprehensive modernization programs, again to facilitate on-site or nearby relocations of residents during major

modernization construction efforts. So those are the primary reasons for apartments being held off the rent roll. In addition, temporary off the rent roll can include things such as fire-damaged units that require more extensive work. There are some

apartments being held off for other reasons such as hospitality in order to facilitate other types of

transfers, and then the permanent status, as I

mentioned, we hold residents-- hold apartments off

the rent role that are no longer going to be used for residential purposes in order to facilitate space for resident association leaders or other communities.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Great. So, I think you have the large categories of why you're holding them, and--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
[interposing] Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: then you have the subcategories. Our point here is to-- for greater transparency and understanding what is happening. NYCHA could provide. More information rather than aggregate numbers. So, at the end of 2022, the vacant units at Red Hook East and West stood at 92. Currently, Red Hook East and West have 285 vacant apartments which is approximately one in 10 apartments. What accounts for this exponential increase? I was actually quite alarmed. I have all the vacancies here, and Red Hook East and West clearly outsized number of vacant units in addition to a whole host of the other categories. So, what accounts for this incredible, disturbing number of apartments that are vacant?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, Red Hook East and West, we were holding units available for relocation as associated with the comprehensive modernization project happening at Gowanus and

Wyckoff nearby. Again, we wanted to ensure that we can relocate residents if needed into apartments in their communities or nearby so that they're closer to schools, doctor's appointments, whatever they need in their support.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: But meanwhile we have 124 people on transfer lists from Red Hook East and West, 59 families for over-crowded, 34 families for domestic violence, 31 families for needing a unit that can accommodate their disability. How do you square holding apartment units for other people of a different neighborhood, holding 285 apartments vacant, and then telling the Red Hook residents who need transfers that are 124 that are sitting there waiting over a year-- like, how do we square that?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I also want to flag that in addition to those Red Hook residents that you're flagging, we have over 14,000 prospective tenants and residents on our current-- on the current wait list. So, the certified applicants and approved transferred waiting to be matched is 14,000. So, it's not necessarily, again, about those residents in Red Hook. It's about the full list. I'm not sure where those residents are--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]

Which makes it even more egregious. How-- why are we sitting on several hundred empty apartments?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: In order for us to do the comprehensive modernization work that is so needed for these developments, to address the underlying conditions as the resident from Riis mentioned, it's time to do the pipes. It's time to do the gas risers. In order to do that work, there's no way to get it done efficiently without relocations. So, this is a trade-off that we have to make between competing housing priorities in order to improve our desperate housing stock and make those projects work and the needs of residents waiting for transfers. There's just simply not enough vacancies to do everything.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, I just-- I mean, for the record, I just want to say two things. I understand we are holding the whole and citywide, and clearly the numbers become more egregious as we move up the citywide ladder. However, for the residents of Red Hook who are sitting there waiting for apartments when there is a double amount of

apartments available, waiting to accommodate RAD/PACT in another development, it's not okay.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: They're not waiting for RAD/PACT.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Whatever it is--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:

[interposing] Comprehensive modernization that we're--

-

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: they're waiting for, there are-- there are apartments there in their home that they could move into, and waiting for other-- to accommodate other developments, because NYCHA is prioritizing other developments, everybody deserves it. But I'm saying, I represent Red Hook residents, so I just need to state that for the record. We need to make sure that people are transferred and held safely. Waiting for other developments to do their thing, honestly, I-- nice, but I'm sure we can find more solutions. The last thing I just want to say for the record, this council fought very hard. The mayor repeatedly defunded the vacant readiness unit, and this council has put in those resources over and over again, and even when we put those resources in, it seems like the mayor wants

to pillage it and use it for other things. We need to get-- if we are serious about housing crisis, the capital dollars that we seem to be sending all around the City for all these random projects, we should make sure that all those 8,000 units are online, and if they take six months to turn over for lead, since that's the majority of them, we should have them all online very soon. So, just want to say this council is committed to getting these units online, and I appreciate the effort. I know you have been working hard to get them back online, but it feels like the City as an apparatus is not serious about this, and we need to get serious if we want to address housing rather than ramming luxury development units in every space we can. Thank you.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Council Member Avilés, I just want to correct the record on the reasonable accommodations. We have 1,700 families waiting for reasonable accommodation transfer, and of those, 442 are for accessible apartments. The 6,500 was total applicants. I apologize.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are you finished, Council Member? You good? Well, we'll have an



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CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. What crime data does the NYPD currently publish about NYCHA developments and which data is collected or published at the development level?

DIRECTOR LEVIN: So, I heard the Speaker's, the Deputy Speaker's statement earlier that NYPD does not publish data, so I'm grateful for this opportunity to correct the record. For several years now we have posted data that is extremely granular, and it is broken down by each individual housing development. It's located on our website where we put all our other crime, traffic statistics, dashboards, etcetera. It's really pretty granular. Not only does it go week by week, it also goes by 28-day window look and also a yearly look.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The bill would require NYCHA to publish the same crime data for each development as it is currently published for each precinct and patrol borough. What crime data does the NYPD currently publish for each precinct and patrol borough?

DIRECTOR LEVIN: So, if you go-- we call it the Eagle Report, because it has a picture of an eagle on it. We're very inventive. So, if you go on

1 the website and you pull this up, you can see for  
2 yourself that it has all the PSA areas. Each PSA  
3 area is broken down by borough into the individual  
4 precincts, and then each one of those has individual  
5 housing developments nestled there under. So, when  
6 you look at it, you'll see the PSA, you'll see the  
7 precinct, you'll see the housing development, and  
8 then the stats go across.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What will be the  
11 benefits of publishing the same data for each NYCHA  
12 development?

13 DIRECTOR LEVIN: I believe we want to  
14 make sure that people are able to see what is going  
15 on in the community as part of the Vallone report and  
16 some other reporting. We post these things publicly.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And how would  
18 NYCHA-- sorry. How would the NYPD protect residents'  
19 privacy and safety when publishing the development  
20 level crime data.

21 DIRECTOR LEVIN: So, this is the type of  
22 thing that is denuded or there's no PII or personal  
23 identifying information in it. It's basically the  
24 major sevens, plus shootings, broken down by each  
25 individual housing.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And does the NYPD's policing of NYCHA developments differ from its policing from other housing developments?

DIRECTOR LEVIN: So, I think-- okay. well, each different group has to have some type of specialized expertise. And so the harbor unit knows how to deal with boats and God-forbid tactical emergency operations, right? So, the people in housing are being trained on not only things that every police officer needs to know, but also the specific issues that you're going to see if you're in a NYCHA building. So, for example, something that we do is-- traditionally has been called verticals, right? Chair Salaam has talked to use about verticals before. And so you need to be trained on the layout of the environment and where escapes are and where the roofs are. You need to be familiar with those buildings themselves.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When it comes to the RAD/PACT developments, does the NYPD publish any crime data for the PACT developments?

DIRECTOR LEVIN: As I understand it, as long as it is one of the developments, a NYCHA

development, we publish it. I can double-check and confirm that, though.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And the reporting for the RAD/PACT developments, is that also-- is that also part of-- is that also published too, as well? Is that put on the-- is that part of the--

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Good morning.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you could both raise your right hand as well? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before this committee and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: I do.

CHIEF MCEVOY: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And if you could also state your name and title for the record. Thank you.

CHIEF MCEVOY: Chief Charles McEvoy, the Chief of the Housing Bureau.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Inspector Howard Gottesman. I am part of Chief McEvoy's staff.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You can proceed.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: So, regarding RAD/PACT, the way we approach the conversion is whatever PSA or precinct provided police services prior to conversion, they continue to provide it. Therefore, on our report, nothing changes. The RAD/PACT developments still appear on the report as if they are NYCHA developments. So, a resident of RAD/PACT could access this report and look up crime statistics in their development.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Do you see more crime associated with the vacant NYCHA units, and is that something the NYPD tracks?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: So, we do have a unit that works with NYCHA to help reclaim a percentage or a portion of those vacant units.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And currently, how many of those units are you working to reclaim?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: So, we have it broken down by year. This is not a-- historical unit. It came about in the beginning of 2023 where we did 100 reclamations. Last year, in 2024 for the entire calendar year we did 356 and currently this year we have reclaimed 92.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 92. Is there a breakdown per development?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: We could get that. I have every location, but I don't have that breakdown in front of me.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And also, too, that again-- as you said, when you look at the RAD/PACTs you just look at it as though as it's a NYCHA development. You're not looking at whether it's converted or still currently Section 9?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Yeah, essentially nothing changes for the Police Department other than we may have to work with private management when it comes to certain initiatives. Other than that, we proceed as if it was still a NYCHA development.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And when it comes to complaints being made by residents, are there any-- is there any data that shows the amount of complaints that are coming from residents about vacant units that are not secure?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: So, we don't have a breakdown in our tracking system specifically for vacant units. We have a 311 system and we have obviously a 911 system that tracks certain

categorical data. To my knowledge, we don't have a subcategory of specifically vacant units.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What is the conversation between you and NYCHA? Is there communication about particular vacant units that may exist in a particular development, or where there may be a repeat of a squatter that may be in a particular development?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Yeah, so we--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] In a particular apartment.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Yes. So we have a biweekly, once every two weeks, meeting with NYCHA Legal where they identify the units that need Police Department intervention. We don't proceed-- the Police Department does not proceed without--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Right.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: NYCHA-- NYCHA's legal department's permission.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright. Thank you. Now, we're going to go back to Section 9 vacancies and transfers. Do you have any questions? Yes, yes. And we've been joined by Council Member Pierina, Council Member Sanchez.



COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: I got you just before you're going to run away.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And then Council Member Mealy. You may proceed Council Member Avilés.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you. Thank you. I guess I was curious about-- thank you for noting that the data was on. Could you actually for the record provide the-- how you get there? Because I've been trying to look for it, and I can't-- I can find the precinct-wide data, but I can't find anything that disaggregates.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: If you open a dialogue box in Google and just type NYCHA crime statistics and hit enter, the top search, just click on it. A PDF will pop open. That's a 36-page report with--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]  
Great. Thank you.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: all the data.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you for that. That's helpful for the record as the public is watching and wanting to get access. In terms of-- can you talk to us about crime victim services, how--

as it relates to NYCHA residents. How is that data utilized and are you engaged with NYCHA around it?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: I'm sorry, can you just rephrase--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]  
Yeah, are you collecting any data around the services that are provided to crime victims in NYCHA?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Provided by who?

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: The agencies that should be providing crime services. Like, I know you partner with Safe Horizons. Are you tracking any information related to victims of crime at NYCHA?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Well, I mean, the second question was a different question.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, yeah. I'm trying to give you a couple different ways to approach it.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: Right. So your first question, to my knowledge, we're not tracking what other partner agencies or not-for-profits are doing. Every once in a while there may be a mention of it in a dialogue box somewhere that Safe Horizon is on scene or working with a victim. But as far as

tracking their information, that's something we don't do.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay.

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: your second question is a much broader question and the answer is essentially yes. Of course we're tracking victim information. That's what we--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing]  
right So, you're tracking demographic but not necessarily referrals or partnerships. Maybe this question is also for NYCHA. What is NYCHA doing with data for crime victims in terms of providing support? I guess it's an area-- for context, it's an area that we find very challenging where folks are just kind of left with no real services. So, we're trying to discern from various perspectives how are we doing better at providing comprehensive services to victims of crime.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, how does NYCHA engage with this data and referrals for services when residents are victims of crime?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It depends, really. We don't always know when our residents are victims of crimes. When we do, we make

connections through our Family Partnerships Department. So when we-- when we get notified of criminal or police activity on our property, we follow up with the family through Family Partnerships Department and ask if there are resources or services that they can be connected to, and sometimes they accept and sometimes they do not.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Got it. Okay, so you're I guess just managing as you see fit, but do you-- does NYPD talk to NYCHA about these kinds of stats and the provider-- the type of services that are provided to people?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Not on a case by case basis. However, we through our emergency management services, we're notified when there's police activity on our properties so that we can coordinate any type of response such as, you know, if a door is forced and we have to fix a door, or if there's some type of activity that we need to clean up afterwards. And as it was part of those notifications, we do Family Partnerships follow-ups on-- to check in with the family and find out, you know, if they need any resources.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Do either of you hold data around, I guess, satisfactory service ? if someone particularly is a victim of crime, does either agency go back to the person and says do you feel like you received adequate support?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: I think it depends on the specific individuals cases. So, for example, in a domestic violence case, yes, we will continue to check in on the person. We had to do check-ins to make sure that they are still safe, that the orders of protection are beign respected, that they have access to the resources that they need. When someone is also brought down to the precinct-- if you're talking to an SVU detective, if you're talking to a DV detective, they are aware of different organizations as well and we have posters inside the precincts that also tell people what services are accessible . So, I think it depends on the specific individual facts of the case.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: But aggregate data you hold around that is the question?

INSPECTOR GOTTESMAN: I don't believe so, but I can certainly double check.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Now we're going to proceed back to Section 9 vacancies and transfers. And the current backlog of vacant units started several years ago from December 2021 to December 2022. The number of vacant units increased from 490 units to over 3,300. Can you explain what caused that dramatic increase?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes, the primary reason for that increase was the change in the City's lead law that reduced the threshold for lead and as part of that we needed to take-- we needed to make changes in our program in order to address that. That included reformulating our XRF machines which are the lead testing equipment that we and HPD use to test for lead. So, we had to reformulate those machines. We had to scale up a new program. We also had to go back and re-test at the new 0.5 level when we had been testing at the 1.0 level previously. So, all of that did require a change in our program and did delay and create a backlog that we had to go back and deal with. We use that as critical marker to say we are-- you know, ensure that we are testing all apartments for lead and asbestos as part of the turnover process, and it

1 was at that time that we really ensure that every  
2 unit was getting through that process at the start.  
3 And so that did create some of the backlog. In  
4 addition, we also at that time made a change in how  
5 we were matching units. So previously, as soon as an  
6 apartment became vacated, we immediately matched to  
7 the next tenant. So, it didn't look like it was  
8 available anymore, but it was, and residents were  
9 then waiting a year after being matched for their  
10 unit which was really problematic. And now we've  
11 aligned our policies to match private sector  
12 landlords where you don't see an apartment until it's  
13 ready to be occupied. You get to see it, you know, a  
14 newly-completed turnover, an apartment that's really  
15 ready for you to move in, and so that you can make a  
16 decision whether you want to move in based on what  
17 you're seeing. So now, we match only after the  
18 apartment is finished with the turnover process and  
19 ready to be occupied. And so that did delay-- you  
20 know, in that year, you see that more apartments  
21 seemed available because we were no longer matching  
22 right away.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And from April of  
25 2024 to April of 2025, the number of vacant units

increased by an average of 75 units per month. Can you explain what is driving this increase?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I can't exactly reconcile to that specific increase, though I can say we have significantly increased our turnover process. So, again, in calendar year 2024 we turned over 52 percent more units than we did in the previous year, and so we have worked year over year to increase. We're doing now 535 units a month, and that increase in turnover is adding significantly to the-- you know, the apartments that are matching and getting people moved in. However, the total number of vacant units isn't going down because about 60 percent of the new move-ins are transfers. So, for 60 percent transfers means that when someone moves in, another apartment becomes, you know, vacant. So, it's very hard to get that total number down because of that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Well, the average turnaround time for a vacant unit tripled from 120 days in December of 2021 to 360 days in April of 2025. Can you explain the reason for this increase and what steps NYCHA is taking to reduce turnaround time?



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.

The reason is all of the environmental work that we have been performing on the apartments, that was not previously done, and since 2024-- from May of 2024 to May of 2025, we've reduced the turnover time by 25 percent.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And can you also share the average time for each stage of the turnaround process, including the lead testing, the abatement, the asbestos testing, the abatement, general repairs, and final inspection and approval?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, lead and asbestos testing and abatement take typically four to six months depending on the level of abatement that's required for each of those hazards, and if both are positive-- in some cases you may have one and not the other positive, so it really varies. However, those are the first steps in the process. So, we do not allow skilled trades or other staff to come in until the apartment is cleared of both of those hazards, and then you have to remember that our apartments are typically occupied for 25 years. So, there's extensive wear and tear and extensive trade work that needs to be done as part of

the turnover. We typically have plaster, painting, tiling, new carpentry that has to get done. We're also only doing turnover-- those turnover work as part of overtime, and we-- because we are conscious of the competition between our skilled trades time with occupied repairs and residents waiting for work tickets to be completed. So, we are doing the turnovers as fast as possible via overtime, and there is limitations in our ability to spend overtime. So that is part of the reason why it can take 352 days to get done.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And what is the average wait time for new applicants, regular priority transfers and emergency transfers?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, for our standard applicants, the wait time is about four years, and for standard transfers, the wait time is about 2.5 years.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And for emergency transfers, do you have a more detailed breakdown of what is the time for the VWA-related transfers and the reasonable accommodations?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, for emergency transfers, those are waiting on average

close to two years. For reasonable accommodations, those are waiting on average 2.5 years, and that can vary based on if they're looking for a specific type of apartment, a low floor, accessible, they're looking for a specific development, meaning they want to be close to a medical provider, so that might impact the length of time that they wait.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And for disabled residents requiring reasonable accommodations, how many requests for accessibility-related transfers are currently pending, and what supports does NYCHA offer while these residents wait for those accommodations?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: By pending you mean on the wait list--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Correct.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: waiting to be matched?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, we have about 1,800 reasonable accommodation transfers waiting right now. We canvas those applicants once a year, and just to make sure that they are still interested in the transfer, if they want to make any changes, so we make those adjustments as we receive that information from the tenants.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And when it comes to residents, domestic violence survivors requiring a transfer, what support services does NYCHA provide while survivors wait for the transfer? And are those partnerships with the domestic violence urge providers to ensure continuity of care during this transfer process?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: We also canvas that group periodically and at the time that we receive the transfer request, we also connect them to Safe Horizon or Sanctuary for Families. We don't keep track of their interactions beyond that first connection, but we, like I said, do check in with them periodically regarding the transfer.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And has NYCHA explored partnerships with HPD to prioritize domestic violence survivors, disabled residents for placement at HPD's affordable housing programs when NYCHA transfer wait lists are extensive?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't believe we have had those conversations with HPD regarding their, you know, preference categories for their lottery programs. We certainly can have those conversations if they have not had them.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, what percentage of emergency transfer requests are from domestic violence survivors versus disabled residents needing reasonable accommodation?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Sorry, can you repeat that?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I said what percentage of emergency transfer requests from domestic violence survivors versus disabled residents needing accommodations?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Sorry. You're asking what's the percentage of each of those groups?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What's the percentage of emergency transfer requests from domestic violence survivors versus disabled residents needing accommodations?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: The numbers are pretty similar between the two groups.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And are there dedicated case manager or liaisons who work specifically with domestic violence survivors and disabled residents to expedite their transfer requests?

1 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: We do have a  
2 team that manages all transfer requests, and those  
3 folks will work with tenants that are requesting  
4 emergency transfers and other types of transfers. We  
5 no longer have a dedicated team for emergency  
6 transfers.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. I'm going to  
8 now allow my colleagues to have-- ask some questions,  
9 and then we'll allow Council Member Sanchez to ask  
10 her questions. Council Member Sanchez?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so  
12 much, Chair. A lot of energy over here [inaudible]  
13 excitement. Good morning for the next six minutes.  
14 So, I actually just wanted to follow up on the  
15 Chair's line of questioning around transfers. Do  
16 you-- could you share how many existing NYCHA  
17 residents are waiting for a transfer today?

18 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Sure. We  
19 have just about over 8,000 households waiting for a  
20 transfer.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Got it. And  
22 apologies if I miss this, but that is-- you, you all  
23 categorize that in terms of-- I heard emergency and  
24 reasonable accommodation. Any other categories?  
25

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Yes, we have several categories that we use, several priorities that we assign to each transfer type under our current tenant selection assignment plan, and those can vary from relocation-related, overcrowding, underoccupied, reasonable accommodations, emergency transfers, and other types of transfers.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Got it. And is there-- could you share the prioritization? You said emergency, of course, is at the top, but is there prioritization between those other categories, reasonable accommodations, overcrowding, underoccupied?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Sure. So, the top transfer type or the highest tier of transfer is a T0 and that captures uninhabitable conditions, relocations, reasonable accommodations. Then we have T1 transfers and those related to right-sizing types of moves, either overcrowding, or seniors-- senior families that no longer qualify for a senior development. Then we have the T2 priority and that includes those emergency transfers, victims of domestic violence, intimidated victims and witnesses. T3 has another group of right-sizing, friction

between neighbors, and then T4 is the lowest transfer priority and that one contains overcrowding, hardship for travel related to work or school, and then also, families that are looking to move from a general population development to a senior-only development.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you.

That's really helpful. So, I have just an example of a constituent who has expressed friction with neighbors, for instance. She was told that she had to wait about five years for an apartment to become available for her. Is that right? Because that's more than twice what you said is the average transfer time.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: It's possible depending on the wait list. If, you know, the size of the apartment that the family qualifies for, their preference on where they want to move. Like some boroughs are more popular than others and the wait list can be much more extensive.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you.

Chair, if I may?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Just-- thank you. Just a quick follow-up. And so every time that



a neighbor-- one of these 8,000 NYCHA residents moves to-- is able to transfer, that triggers all of these environmental processes and asbestos remediation and everything else to happen to the unit that they're leaving? And is there renovation work also happening in these units, or is this just the, you know, the bare minimum requirements, XRF testing, etcetera?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: No, there's also significant trade work that happens. Our units are occupied on average about 25 years. So there is typically plastering, painting, new cabinets, some tile work in the bathroom, things like that. So there is significant trade work that has to go in as well as part of the turnover.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Got it. And that turnover, you said, for a unit it's typically taking about a year.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you.  
Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. When it comes to the Trust or PACT factor, how do units that get transferred to the Trust into PACT factor into

your process when calculating turnaround time for units?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, the turnaround time for units is calculated on units that we are currently turning over. Apartments that we are holding off the rent roll for PACT are not part of that turnover process. We take them off the rent roll. They will be turned over by the developer as part of the construction that's happening in the those.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. and if the development confirms its exit from Section 9, does NYCHA handle work being done to the rehabilitated unit?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: To be able to--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
[interposing] That would all be done as part of the reconstruction and modernization scope that the developer would be proceeding with.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How is that information shared?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: The PACT program under our Real Estate Development Department oversees that construction process.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA maintain vacancy or transfer-related information pertaining to a unit once it exits Section 9?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't-- we're not tracking that information. However, our Real Estate Development Department receives updates from the developer. I'm not sure if turnover time is something they review, but we can certainly ask.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The reason why I think that's important is because, you know, when you have tenants who may have a domestic violence issue and we just don't want to make sure they're being lost in that, and it seems as though that's taking place when a domestic violence victim is waiting for a transfer, and when the conversion takes place it seems like they're totally lost in the shuffle. And we want to know why has that been taking place?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Prior to those transfers being cancelled for those PACT conversions, we do share that list with their Real

Estate Department and our leased housing Section 8 program, so that they have awareness of who--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] But are you aware that the transfer opportunities are very limited when a conversion takes place? Are you aware?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Yes, we're aware. So, NYCHA is working-- and I can't speak to many details on this as this involves the leased housing Section 8 team. We are exploring PACT to PACT transfers as part of new policy changes. So we do understand that the transfer opportunities are limited within just that one development.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, if that particular developer or management company only has one PACT development in their portfolio, is that tenant then relegated to that development if they're even considered again for that transfer that was submitted to NYCHA?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: I believe that's the case today under the current policy, but as I mentioned, the PACT to PACT transfers would open that up to other PACT developments,--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] would you agree--

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: not just that developer.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. I mean, would you agree that timeframe or that length of time where that particular tenant is sitting there waiting, and we know that these domestic violence requests, it's obviously an emergency, it puts that tenant in danger?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We understand that the limited resource-- the limited availability for transfers after conversions, and that's why we're working to open up a PACT to PACT transfer process so that residents can transfer within the PACT program.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But in the meantime, you have a resident that is basically sitting there waiting while this conversion is taking place. Is there any information or data to show how quick the new RAD/PACT management companies are moving to address that? Is there any follow-up to make sure--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
[interposing] I don't have that data today, but we

will follow up with Real Estate Department to see if they have that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You did say in your testimony that the information is transferred over, and I correct, to the RAD/PACT developer?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We share that information with our Real Estate Department and with our Leased Housing Department of existing transfer requests.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well then, do you have any data? Because obviously they've been converted developments really within the last 10 years. Is there any data showing how many residents have been transferred over who have domestic violence requests?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't have that information with us today, but we can certainly follow up. I also want to clarify that once a-- once a development goes through the PACT process and is reconstructed, their turnover process will obviously be much faster since they've already done the lead and asbestos work. Their occupancy isn't as long anymore. They just had a complete modernization. So, we don't-- I don't have that data

1 with me, but we will follow up with real estate as to  
2 what they collect from the PACT developers is they  
3 collect that information. But just-- I would know  
4 that that would be a faster process since they've  
5 just gone through major construction.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you provide us  
8 with an update on the vacancy readiness program?

9 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes.  
10 So the City's funding for-- that is provided, we're  
11 very grateful for. In City Fiscal Year 25 is  
12 approximately \$39 million in expense funding and \$36  
13 million in capital funding. The capital funding is  
14 used entirely to support the asbestos abatement  
15 program, and the expense funding is used for the  
16 turnover work, the trades work and other aspects of  
17 it. And so, we-- that funding is just a portion of  
18 the funding that is needed in order to do all the  
19 turnovers that we're doing. We estimate it's about  
20 20 percent of our total cost of turnovers.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. How is NYCHA  
22 monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its  
23 process in relation to turnover vacant units and  
24 getting people off the wait list?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, on the turnover side, operations-- we have extensive performance management that we've instituted with our teams and operations in order to review the work. We are tracking information on a daily basis and that is how we've been able to ensure that we've been increasing our productivity in this area by over 50 percent in the number of turnovers we're doing year over year. We're tracking vacant available units, moving through each step of the process in order to make sure staff are responding. However, again, most of that work is being done through overtime, and so there is limited capacity in order to complete work. As far as the selection process, as I've said, we've changed our policy so that selections are not done until the unit is ready for occupancy. And so, once it's completed on the turnover, it hands back to management, and management will run the selection and choose a tenant and then take it through the lease up [sic] process.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. and in relation to work in vacant units, what specific training do property managers receive on communicating with prospective tenants and



coordinating repair schedules and other customer service standards?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, because we are not selecting until the work is complete, there is no coordination with the prospective tenant during the turnover process.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. What quality assurance measures exist to ensure that vacant units are properly repaired before tenants move in?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Our Quality Assurance Department is reviewing a sampling of vacant units. In addition, they've also been instrumental in helping to train property management staff on performance of the turnover work, and so we work closely with our partners in quality assurance to ensure that, you know, if they're finding deficiencies in the work that that's brought back to property management and the skilled trades in order to retrain or correct deficiencies.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I have multiple examples where tenants have been given a transfer, and they've moved into an apartment that is still in disrepair. Are you familiar with those instances?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I am not, but I'm happy to follow up on any specific cases that you can share with us so that we can make those corrections.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And when those instances do take place, how quick is the response to correct those deficiencies in that apartment?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I'm not familiar with those cases, but I'm happy to follow up.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, I'm talking about overall. Like, what's the-- you know, how quick does NYCHA move to correct those deficiencies in the apartment?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It depends on what we're-- what kind of deficiency we're talking about. If it's a new work ticket, if it's something that needs to be corrected prior to move-in, if it's something that's after they've been in the apartment a little bit and it's a standard work ticket, I really can't say a time, but I'm happy to follow up on any specific examples that you have.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, I mean, I'm just hinting at the quality of insurance and the--

1                   you know, the fact that they say that it's quality  
2                   assurance, but it's not happening on the ground.  
3                   Tenants are moving into-- well, moving into  
4                   apartments and they're still plagued with major  
5                   issues, and then they're already in that apartment,  
6                   and then when they're putting in tickets and they say  
7                   well, I'm in a new apartment, we've having these  
8                   issues or concerns, it's-- NYCHA is not moving as  
9                   quick to prioritize to make sure that those issues  
10                  that should have been corrected. So, again, it's  
11                  hitting on a fact that what degree of quality  
12                  assurance is really being done by NYCHA.

14                CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Again,  
15                I can't speak to those specific examples. What I can  
16                say, it's possible that someone moves into an  
17                apartment and then immediately experiences a leak  
18                from above-- remember, we have an \$80 billion capital  
19                needs gap, and so there are issues in all of our  
20                buildings everywhere. So, somebody could move into a  
21                perfectly good apartment, experience a leak from  
22                above that same week, and have an issue that needs to  
23                be corrected. Happy to follow up on any specific  
24                cases. Our typical maintenance response time right  
25                now is about three days. So, if someone puts in a

work ticket, we will send a maintenance worker to identify the problem and schedule any follow-ups that are needed.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, the federal monitor on April 2025 quarterly report mentions that NYCHA completed a project to create a consolidated report card, dashboard, and incorporate a streamlined set of key performance indicators which is A KPIS to document NYCHA's property's performance. Are vacant units and work on such units including turnaround time and transfer placement captured-- is it captured in NYCHA's KPIS?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, we have a vacant unit dashboard that we use in operations to track the work that we're performing. I don't recall now if that's part of the report card which is still being finalized, but we do have a dashboard that we use to monitor performance. As I mentioned, we're tracking on a daily basis with our teams in order to make sure that our work is moving as efficiently as possible and that's what's led to a 52 percent increase in our turnovers this year.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Well, how are NYCHA's vacant units represented or evaluated?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I'm  
sorry, can you repeat question?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How are NYCHA's  
vacant units represented or evaluated?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
Evaluated in what way?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: In the dashboard.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, we  
are tracking on a development level how many vacant  
units we have. We're confirming that the move-out  
work order was created. Once the moveout work order  
is created, it should immediately create a work order  
for lead and asbestos testing, and so then we make  
sure that it's moving through each of those processes  
as efficiently as possible. So, is the testing  
scheduled? The testing was scheduled. Did it occur?  
What were the results? If they test positive, is the  
abatement then scheduled? Once the abatement is  
scheduled, has it been completed? Did it go through  
its quality assurance check? Once its completed, are  
the skilled trade then-- work orders then set up and  
scheduled? So, we track it to make sure it's moving  
through every step of the process.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: There have been reports of tenants who were approved for a transfer to a development before it was converted to PACT, but when they had-- when they had their approval cancelled after the development was converted, how many of those tenants has this happened to?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: We don't have that information right now. We can get back to you on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I know that was kind of question we had asked earlier, but I just want to put emphasis on that, because we constantly see when these conversions take place, there's so many tenants that are being left in the dark and being left out in the weeds, and especially when it comes to a domestic violence situation. That puts them in danger.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: And we do reach out to every transfer in the system prior to the conversion in order to work with them and see if there's another development that we can reassign them to you whether they want to change their preference category to a specific development or a different borough. So we do outreach to every single transfer in order-- ahead of the conversion in order to make

sure they're aware of what's happening and select a different preference in order to preserve their transfer.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, then if you do do that, then what are the numbers? Is there any data showing how many of those tenants you've reached and how many of those tenants have been transferred before the conversion has taken place, or before they have signed the Section 8 lease?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't believe we have that data with us today, but we will follow up with you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, can you share what resource-- what recourse has been offered to these tenants that had their previously-- they were previously approved for transfer applications and where they were cancelled?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, prior to cancelling them, we do reach out to them as Eva said to see if they're interested in changing their location, the wait list that they are on. So, in order to try to expedite their transfer out. Because of our tenant selection and assignment plan and the availability of apartments, we can't always transfer

folks out even in emergency or even in domestic violence situation, because we adhere to the tenant selection and assignment plan.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, I mean, you can understand and I hope see how that adds insult onto injury when the-- when they're in a Section 9-- when they're still in Section 9 and then when a conversion takes place, and they're totally just, you know, left in the dark or just lost in the weeds when it comes to that transfer. Why hasn't NYCHA established at least when there's some type of priority a list given to the RAD/PACT converted development-- the developer, and where it's-- you know, where it's some degree a pressure applied on these developers or this new management company to make those transfers?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: As we said before, we do provide those lists of tenants that are in a domestic violence situation--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well, I'm not-- okay. they actually transfer those lists, I hear that. But I'm talking about then once the tran-- once that list is transferred over, where's the oversight from NYCHA to make sure that those transferred are being honored?



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up with our Real Estate Department and get back to you with an answer on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And the reason why I continue to bring this up, because most of these-- some of these developments take close to three to four years to go through a rehab, and we know that-- and I have seen this from experience, most of the developers when they come in, the focus is on rehab, and it's not on dealing with some of the administrative issues like the transfer, some of the existing requests that have put in to-- that have been put in through-- you know, [inaudible] it was under Section 9. So, I'm not confident that NYCHA is really handling these tenants with the care that they demand and need. Do you keep track of these tenants, and with the list that you do transfer over to the new developers that are coming in, what continuous conversations are held to make sure that there is a focus on these particular tenants?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Again, unfortunately, I'm not involved in the post-conversion process and so we'll have to regroup and

get back to you on anything that happens after the conversion outside of Section 9.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are you aware of the status of these tenants and their transfer applications?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I am not personally aware, because once they're outside of Section 9, I'm no longer involved, but we can follow up with the other parties at NYCHA that-- and get back to you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. these tenants are waiting, and I just-- I don't feel that the attention and the priority is being paid, paid attention to them, and again, it's just another example of NYCHA just handing the keys to these developers and forgetting that these folks are-- these are humans. These are human lives that they've been waiting so long to get this transfer. How would you propose-- this is dealing with the Tenant Selection and Assignment Plan, the TSAP. How would you propose the TSAP changes expedite the placement of new applicants and transfers?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, with the new TSAP proposal we've made three main areas our

1 priority. We want to make sure that we are  
2 optimizing the applicant and tenant rotation cycle  
3 and that means we've restructured from a four-tiered  
4 system to a three-tier system. We are also  
5 streamlining the priorities that exist today by  
6 consolidating them and adjusting them to meet the  
7 current housing needs. And then lastly, we're also  
8 refining applicant and tenant choices to improve wait  
9 list efficiency and empowering residents with greater  
10 flexibility to select their preferred locations. So,  
11 with a simplification and offering more opportunities  
12 for specific urgent priorities like VOWA [sic]  
13 related and reasonable accommodations, we do think  
14 that there will be more opportunity for folks to be  
15 selected and that the wait list will move more  
16 efficiently.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: well, how would the  
19 proposed TSAP changes expedite emergency transfer  
20 requests?

21 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, for-- in  
22 the new proposed system we are elevating the  
23 emergency transfer priorities to a T0 priority, and  
24 we're also giving them two selection opportunities in  
25

a seven-rotation cycle in that Tier 3 that I mentioned.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Currently, the TSAP allows new applicants to select two boroughs waiting list. Would you-- why would the new TSAP restrict applicants to selecting only one borough?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, currently they select two boroughs at the preliminary wait list stage. Our wait list is managed in three parts. First, when an applicant first applies, they are on the preliminary wait list, and they pick those two boroughs, and that helps us identify when we anticipate vacancies which applicants we will invite for an eligibility interview. And then after that eligibility interview, once they're deemed eligible, they're placed on the certified wait list with the transfers as well. So, in the new TSAP we will only allow applicants a borough choice. Right now, once they pick those two boroughs at the eligibility stage, they would pick a development-specific wait list, and that could take a lot of time, because you're on one wait list, right? So, in the new TSAP we're proposing that applicants can pick a whole

borough and they would be on every development wait list in that borough.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When it comes to input from the residents, were the proposed TSAP changes developed with resident input? Because I know you did brief the residents after the plan was done, but can you let us know what input was given by the residents?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: So, we leveraged resident feedback that we've received throughout our day to day interactions with residents, asking, inquiring about application--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] No, was there a formal process or a formal opportunity for residents to give input in this particular plan?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Not in the proposal, but we-- since we released it with the annual plan, we are seeking--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] So, there was no formal process for the residents to give input into this plan?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We're in the formal process right now. Public comment period opened on Friday and is open until August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. When would these changes go into effect, and what opportunities when residents-- you said they're going to have that particular opportunity. When it comes to funding for vacancies, rehabilitations, what is NYCHA's total annual revenue loss from-- when it comes to vacant units?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: I don't have that information with us today. I know that you did ask us for that prior to the hearing. we're working on calculating it as it's-- it's not a straightforward formula the way HUD funds us, so we wanted to make sure we get you accurate information, so we're working on that follow-up for you now.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. and I guess unload on some of these questions here. Well, how much funding is currently available for the vacant units that need repairs or that-- how much is tied to any federal funding?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, right now, we're very grateful for the city's support of the-- of our vacant unit work, and we're receiving a total of \$75 million in the current fiscal year, the capital and expense funding that I mentioned

earlier. The rest-- we think-- we estimate that's about 20 percent of our total cost of doing vacant units, and the remainder of it is funded through our federal operating subsidy.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And what percentage of the City budget is allocated to NYCHA operations and capital needs?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I am not sure what we make up as the total percent of the City budget.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What emergency funding can the City access to address some of these-- the vacancy crisis that exists?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I am not familiar with the City's access to emergency funding. I think that's a question for OMB.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And is NYCHA receiving support from other city agencies to help reduce vacancies?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Other than the funding we receive from the City, that's the support we're getting.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What joint city and state initiatives exist to address NYCHA's capital needs?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Our capital needs more broadly or just for vacant units?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: For vacant units.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, we're very excited that the state this year has allocated \$25 million in the budget for NYCHA for a vacant unit. As you may know, in order to access state funding we have to enter into a grant disbursement agreement with the state through DASNY and we're excited to start those conversations and determine how we're going to apply that \$25 million in funding.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And has the City considered creating dedicated city funded positions for the vacancy turnover?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I think that's a question for the City.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How many NYCHA positions are currently vacant?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I don't have our staffing vacancy with us. So we've-- we



1 don't have a-- you know, we don't have a large  
2 vacancy. We have improved our hire-- our ability to  
3 rehire and so right now we are filling front lien  
4 positions. I think in around 40 days, and so we're--  
5 we have great relationship with our HR. we're  
6 working through civil service lists, and we're able  
7 to backfill pretty quickly.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And has the  
10 City done any-- conducted any cost/benefit analysis  
11 comparing the expense of keeping families in shelters  
12 versus renovating a vacant NYCHA unit.

13 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I'm not  
14 aware of a specific analysis. However, homeless  
15 families are a preference category for us. I'm very  
16 pleased that we've doubled the amount of placements  
17 of people coming out of the shelter system into NYCHA  
18 this year, and we're expected it reach probably 1,000  
19 homeless placements this year.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Has the Mayor  
21 set any specific targets for reducing the vacancies,  
22 and if so, what are they?

23 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We  
24 don't have a specific target for reducing our  
25

vacancies. We're just working to improve the process and increase productivity as much as possible.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Has the mayor cleared NYCHA vacancy reduction a top priority for this administration?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I'm not aware of that, but he's asked us to work on these issues that we're-- the allocation of the funding both expense sand operating through OMB is a representation of the priority of this program.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And how are tenant participation activity funds being impacted by vacancies and what information is being provided to the tenant association presidents for these impacts?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Yes. Tenant participation funds are allocated based on occupied units, and so there is an implication for TPA funding overall. If a resident-- if resident leaders are given their tPA allocation with the number of vacant units that's it's based off of or occupied units that it's based off of or occupied units that it's based off of, and so we do share that information with resident leaders, and if anyone has

not received out there, we're happy to share it again.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Council Member Avilés?

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you, Chair. Just to follow up, I think I may have missed it. In terms of the City's-- I'm delighted to hear that the stat is investing in vacant unit readiness, finally. In terms of the overall capital commitment to NYCHA, what percentage does the City's commitment to the vacant unit readiness make of the capital dollars?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I'm sorry, I don't have our total capital budget with me today. But we can certainly--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] Okay. could you report back, and--

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: [interposing] But we can certainly follow up. Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: I'm sure it will reflect the commitment to actually getting the units back online.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Though I will say our capital program, the city's capital funding that we're getting, is being used for the

comprehensive modernization program as well as significantl for the lead abatement program which are two critical issues in reducing vacancies.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Particularly because we have a monitor that is closely focused on making sure that we meet those metrics. But yes, however, it probably pales deeply in comparison to the investment in RAD/PACT just writ large. Poultry [sic] investment. In terms of I just wanted to go back to Red Hook. So, the transfer for the houses-- so we have 149 families with approved transfer requests, but who are waiting for vacant units. We have 285 vacant units and a whole host of others in the other categories that are temporarily and all that other stuff. If in fact, if we-- the whole pot for red Hook Houses is 323 units vacant. So, of these 149 families that have their approved transfer request, we have 59 families in overcrowded conditions, 34 survivors of domestic violence and 31 families for disabilities. Can-- with each of these categories, when can we expect families to be placed in a unit?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It'd difficult for us to provide an exact timeframe for

1 when a family will be matched to an apartment,  
2 because there are a lot of different factors that  
3 come into play. You know, when we match a family to  
4 an available apartment, the priority that they're  
5 assigned is a major factor, but the apartment, the  
6 bedroom size, the location-- if they're looking for a  
7 lower floor or an accessible unit, that can really  
8 impact the amount of time that they wait for-- to be  
9 matched to an apartment.  
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, in terms of  
12 the 285 units that are sitting vacant, can you give  
13 me a breakdown of why they are vacant?

14 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It's  
15 the same general categories as I mentioned earlier  
16 between permanent and temporarily off the rent role.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: No, but those  
18 accounted for, actually. These are the ones that are  
19 just vacant, no designation, just vacant.

20 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Then  
21 they're just waiting for us to get to them to do the  
22 turnover work. We--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] But  
24 how long--  
25

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:

[interposing] We do have--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] How long is that going to take given we have 34 tenants that are approved for transfers for domestic violence transfers?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Our average turnaround is 352 days. However, again, it's not guaranteed that those folks waiting for transfer at Red Hook would get these Red Hook units. It depends on the selection that is--

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] So, I'm sorry I may have missed it, but why does Red Hook have such an outsized number of vacant units just sitting there?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Some of that again is due to what we were holding for comprehensive modernization.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: How much? How much were you holding exactly?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: You know, we have released some of those apartments back to the vacant units, so what I'd like to do is get back to you with a full list. So we were holding--

we released based on updated projections for Gowanus and Wyckoff, and when we release it back to the vacant available, it means that those units are now in the backlog to be turned over. We're still holding some small amount there. So I'd like to get back to you on exactly how much we were holding previously and how much we're holding right now.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, Gowanus, as far as my list is concerned, that was provided by your data, Gowanus is holding 70 temporary appointments and then Wyckoff is holding 46. And Red Hook is sitting on 145 East and 140 West. This has to get addressed. This is incredible. I will follow up with you. When we have 125 people-- 149 waiting for transfers, this is-- I'm actually at a little loss for words. Are any of the units that NYCHA is currently holding related to the Brooklyn Marine Terminal?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: No, not that I'm aware of.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Are any of the units that are currently being held vacant in Red Hook being held for RAD/PACT conversion?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Not  
that I'm aware of.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. When it  
comes to PACT vacancies and transfers, how many  
vacant units are across the PACT portfolio?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I do not  
have data on the PACT portfolio with me today.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, how does NYCHA  
exercise oversight of vacant PACT units to ensure  
that they are rehabilitated and occupied in a timely  
manner?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: so, to  
specifically answer that question, I'll have to get  
back to you, but just-- the PACT program goes through  
a comprehensive modernization. All of those  
buildings get complete renovation and improvements,  
and so all of those apartments get fixed up. As part  
of the turnover or not, they're getting fixed up, and  
then vacancies that occur after the construction I  
assume will be turned over fairly quickly because  
it's less wear and tear and it's no environmental.  
But we'll have to get back to you on any specific  
data related to the PACT portfolio.



CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, what kind of record-keeping does NYCHA require the PACT managers with regard to management of vacant units, and how often is NYCHA receiving these records?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: So, I oversee the Section 9 portfolio and operations. I do not oversee the review of the PACT data. So, I'll have to get back to you with that information.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, can-- this is a little deeper dive into a particular development. Can you explain why the Fulton Elliott-Chelsea Environmental Impact Statement showed a decrease of 17 units in the development?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I do not have that answer with me today, but I can follow up with you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And is true that a unit at Fulton Elliot-Chelsea is being used as office space, and can you explain-- can you explain how that decision was made?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I believe that's correct, though I'd have to double-check. Yes, we are using that. And as I mentioned, we do take units temporarily and permanently off the

rent roll in order to facilitate both resident association, community, and other management needs in order to facilitate meeting with residents on-site and at-- you know, to make it most convenient for residents. We like-- we sometimes take a unit off the rent roll temporarily in order to facilitate that work.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And when it comes to inter-PACT transfers, does the new TSAP plan apply to RAD/PACT developments?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: No, the TSAP is only for the public housing inventory.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But why not?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Well, those would be governed partially by Section 8, and there's a Section 8 administrative plan that would govern rules and regulations around the Section 8.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, can you give us an overview of NYCHA's new intra-PACT transfer policy?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: We are not familiar with the intricacies of that policy. That's managed by the Leased Housing Section 8 program.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But was the inter-PACT transfer policy developed with feedback from many of the residents?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: I can't speak to that.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I can't speak to that either.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When did this-- when did the policy go into effect?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: I'm actually not sure if it's in effect. I know that we were very close to implementation.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, can you explain how the inter-PACT transfer policy differs from the TSAP or transfer policy from Section 9?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I think we'd have to follow up with you to make sure we have the subject matter experts on that policy here to answer those questions.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, why doesn't the inter-PACT transfer policy allow transfers from PACT to Section 9? And if a PACT resident wants to transfer to Section 9, what are those options? What options are available?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: It would be a new admission. So that once they sign their Section 8 lease and they become a Section 8 resident, they're no longer a Section 9 resident.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And so why can't a PACT resident request a transfer to a specific development or borough?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Within the Section 9 program?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yeah.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: They can apply as a new public housing applicant and be placed on the--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] but not as an existing.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Are you saying prior to?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, prior to the conversion, yeah.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Yes, they can. They can submit a transfer, but when it comes to the conversion date as the conversion date approaches, if that tenant is not going to be reached. That's when we cancel their transfer.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, NYCHA's website says that the inter-PACT transfers are limited to the following transfer categories: One, a court action, intimidated victim, intimidated witness, a VERA [sic], 24-hour life-threatening, housing quality standards, a reasonable accommodation, which is to a larger unit, lower floor, elevator. Why are the inter-PACT transfers limited to just those categories?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Council Member, with all due respect, unfortunately, we're not able to speak to that today, because there's a different subject matter experts at NYCHA that handle the leased housing program of which the Section 8 program is managed, as well as the real estate department that manages the PACT program.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, has NYCHA-- I just want to get this on the record.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE:  
Understood.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Maybe if you find the answers or information you can send it to us. Has NYCHA considered creating a cross-portfolio transfer system that would allow domestic violence survivors

or disabled residents to access units across Section 9, PACT or Trust and potentially affordable housing provided by HPD in order to reduce the wait times?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: We are exploring policy options to allow Section 9 and Section 8 NYCHA that are managed under NYCHA to transfer across programs.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And does the inter-PACT transfer policy apply to tenants who requested a transfer prior to the development may be converted to PACT?

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: The transfer reasons after conversion are managed by-- or are guided by the Section 8 admin plan, so even I cannot speak to those topics.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And what is the role of the PACT managers in the inter-PACT transfer process, and do they have say in who's approved for a transfer?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up on answers to that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You'll get that. For the record, what is NYCHA's oversight over inter-pact

transfers, and does NYCHA access PACT manager's data on inter-PACT transfer requests?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Since-- for the record, since the inter-PACT transfer policy went into effect, how many PACT residents have been transferred or put into transfer wait lists?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: For the record, of those, how many transfers within the same PACT development or to another PACT development to a private rental unit or tenant-based Section 8 assistance or to another permanent housing agency with tenant-based Section 8 assistance?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, and for the record, what is the average wait time for the inter-PACT transfers?

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: We will follow up on that.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We're looking forward to you following up on all of those questions. I just wanted to get those on the record. With that being said, we thank you for your testimony and for your opening statements, and thank you so much.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: Thank you.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AUDE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We've been also joined by Council Member Salamanca who's with us via Zoom. I'm opening the hearing for public testimony. I remind members of the public that this is a government proceeding and decorum shall be observed at all times. As such, members of the public shall remain silent at all times. The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony, but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant of Arms for inclusion into the hearing record. If you wish to speak at today's hearing, obviously, please feel free to fill out the appearance card with the Sergeant of Arms and wait to be recognized. When



recognized, you will have two minutes-- you will have two minutes to speak to today's hearing topic: vacancies and transfers, or to the two bills we are hearing today. If you wish to submit a written statement or additional written testimony for the record, please give a copy to the Sergeant of Arms. You may also email written testimony to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) within 72 hours of this hearing. audio and video recordings will not be accepted. We will now proceed to-- we have Anna Luft, NYLAG, Luis Henriquez, Elizabeth Branty [sp?], Mathin Scarce [sp?], Edna Wells Mandy [sic], Elizabeth Rodriguez, and Christopher Leon Johnson. Good afternoon. You may proceed. Yes, make sure the red light is on. Thank you.

ANNA LUFT: Greetings, Chair Banks and members of the New York City Council Committee on Public Housing. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on these important measures that will provide a much-needed increase in transparency for the NYCHA community. My name is Anna Luft, and I am the Public Housing Justice Project Director in the Tenants' Rights Unit at NYLAG. PHJP is the first team of legal advocates solely dedicated to directly

representing permanent housing residents in New York City. First, I'd like to speak about vacancies. Addressing NYCHA's vacancy rate is about the stability of both NYCHA households and the Housing Authority itself. Nineteen percent of NYCHA's budget is from its rental revenue, and yet, since 2020 vacancy rates have more than doubled from close to zero percent to two percent. As the future of federal funding for NYCHA is called into grater uncertainty and NYCHA calls residents into Housing Court for COVID-era arrears, it is unacceptable that so many units remain vacant, and NYCHA willingly forgoes the potential income from these units. Indeed, each time we appear in Housing Court on a non-pay, or at the NYCHA of Impartial Hearings on a termination of tenancy based on chronic rent delinquency, the NYCHA LNT attorneys act like the missed rental income from that single unit will be the undoing of the Housing Authority. Meanwhile, NYCHA is sitting on thousands of unoccupied units that could be a part of the rent roll, but are not. But more importantly to our clients, NYCHA failure to move vacant units promptly results in due process violations, exacerbating existing inequities and de-

1 stabilizing families and communities in the process.  
2 NYCHA residents seeking transfers based on  
3 overcrowding-- as you can imagine, long wait times  
4 for transfers can have cascading effects for our  
5 clients with many facing loss of their housing due to  
6 NYCHA's profound inaction and the disconnect between  
7 the Law Department and those who spoke earlier today.  
8 By way of example, we represented Mr. S in a  
9 termination of tenancy based on allegations that he  
10 was failing to occupy his apartment. However, the  
11 only reason he was not in his apartment was because  
12 he was wheelchair bound in a nursing home, and the  
13 facility would not discharge him until he was  
14 transferred to an accessible unit. The NYCHA Law  
15 Department insisted on continuing to prosecute this  
16 case, even after they were aware of that. While  
17 ultimately, we prevailed and his tenancy was not  
18 terminated, he died in the nursing home waiting years  
19 for his transfer. Ms. W lived in a one-bedroom  
20 apartment with her husband and five children. That's  
21 seven people in a one-bedroom apartment. In addition  
22 to the severe overcrowding, she had also been  
23 assaulted in the development and requested an  
24 emergency transfer on that basis. Finally, the  
25

1 physical condition of her apartment was so  
2 deteriorated that ACS opened an investigation for  
3 her family and made a referral directly to NYCHA,  
4 stating that the apartment conditions and  
5 overcrowding were unsafe for children and they needed  
6 a transfer.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds to wrap it  
9 up.

10 ANNA LUFT: Alright. I'm just going to  
11 give you one more example, because you asked about  
12 crime victim services earlier. Another client of  
13 ours, Mr. O, we represented in a failure to occupy  
14 case at the Office of Impartial Hearings. Mr. O was  
15 a crime victim. He had been essentially kidnapped in  
16 his own apartment, held hostage for months before the  
17 NYPD eventually conducted a raid and released him.  
18 NYCHA brought a "failure to occupy" while he was  
19 waiting for a safety transfer and then when we  
20 explained to the NYCHA Law Department why he wasn't  
21 in his unit, amended the charges for non-desirability  
22 because of the people who had been residing in the  
23 apartment while he was being held hostage. I offer  
24 this very abbreviated testimony. You have my longer  
25 testimony there to emphasize that there needs to be a

stronger connection between the policy presented by the NYCHA executives earlier today, the Law Department and our clients' actual due process rights. Thank you so much for this opportunity and I welcome any questions.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. You may proceed, sir.

LUIS HENRIQUEZ: Am I on now? Yes. Thank you, Chair Banks. Good morning. My name is Luis Henriquez and I am the director of litigation at Manhattan Legal Services which is part of Legal Services NYC. I'm also one of the authors of the report that you mentioned in your opening remarks. My organization published a report in December 2024 in which we intended to shine the light on who we are talking about when we are talking about transfers and vacancies and those folks who are on the wait list. Right? The [inaudible] unacceptable, and thank you, Chair Banks, for using the word unacceptable also in your opening remarks, because when we're talking about 2,000 DV survivors who on average are waiting 800 days, 797 to be exact, for a transfer, or when we're talking about 1,700 people living with disabilities who are waiting 400 days for a transfer, the first

1                   thing we need to say is that that is unacceptable,  
2                   right? We can then talk about the policy and what do  
3                   we do next. I was hoping actually this morning to  
4                   hear NYCHA say-- start their testimony saying that  
5                   the reality faced by survivors of domestic violence  
6                   and by people with disabilities is unacceptable.  
7                   They didn't do that. Right? In the interest of  
8                   time, I'm going to cover just a few highlights from  
9                   my testimony. One thing that wasn't mentioned this  
10                  morning, I heard NYCHA's COO talk about various  
11                  reasons for why the turnover rate has spiked up in  
12                  the past five years. Page three of my testimony I  
13                  have a graph here. FY20, 98 days average turnover  
14                  rate. FY24 rose to 424 days. During that same  
15                  period of time, and that is the graph on the bottom,  
16                  staff [sic] vacancies specifically in the division  
17                  that handles apartment turnover, the ATAP [sic]-- and  
18                  we had Sylvia Aude here this morning who's the  
19                  director of that Department. Staff vacancies rose  
20                  from five vacancies to more than 2,000 vacancies in  
21                  that same year period. Cumulatively, over 6,000  
22                  staff vacancies in the division that is entrusted  
23                  with turning over apartments. So, it's-- there is a  
24                  near-perfect correlation between NYCHA bleeding  
25

1 staff, the staff that are entrusted to turn over  
2 apartments and the average turnover rate spiking up  
3 in the past five years. And this point goes a little  
4 bit into Intro 111 from Council Member Avilés. We  
5 thing that legislation would be beneficial to NYCHA  
6 tenants because it will increase accountability and  
7 transparency for NYCHA to publish how many apartments  
8 are vacant and the reasons why. We would suggest  
9 that that bill go further and force NYCHA to say not  
10 only the reason why apartments are held vacant, but  
11 efforts NYCHA has expanded in the past calendar year  
12 to make sure that those apartment are turned over.  
13 So, for example, when it comes to the understaffing  
14 that I just mentioned, NYCHA should not just say in  
15 their report, this amount of apartments are vacant,  
16 and we are losing-- we have this many thousands of  
17 positions that are vacant. NYCHA should also say  
18 what efforts did it took in the past calendar year to  
19 refill those vacant positions, right? Why did NYCHA  
20 petition the City Council for funding, right? What  
21 type of publications or what type of hiring or  
22 training has NYCHA done, right? So, we believe that  
23 the legislation could be strengthened if NYCHA is  
24 required to not only say this many apartments were  
25

vacant and this is why, but also add "and this is what we're doing" to turn around the corner on this very big problem that NYCHA has with the vacant units crisis. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, Chair Banks.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony and your report. You may proceed.

ELIZABETH BRANTL: Good afternoon, Chair Banks, and esteemed members of the Committee on Public Housing. My name is Elizabeth Brantl and I serve as the Government Relations Coordinator for the Center for Justice Innovation. The Center is a community justice organization that partners with courts, communities, and those most impacted to promote safety, racial justice and stability, including through housing. Across our sites, we are seeing troubling delays in the NYCHA transfer process. Tenants regularly wait years to be moved even when facing urgent situations such as the need for ADA-compliant housing, emergency safety concerns, or uninhabitable living conditions. With over 5,000 units sitting vacant last year, these delays are unacceptable. Last year, one of our clients survived an armed home invasion where his father was shot.



Even after this, their family has waited over a year for a safety transfer. We had a client whose daughter became ill due to the mold and lead in their apartment. Even though her transfer was approved and she put down the security deposit on the new apartment, NYCHA delayed for so long that she was forced to live with friends. NYCHA then took her to Housing Court over the unpaid rent on the unlivable apartment and cancelled her transfer. Only through legal advocacy was her transfer reinstated, and her family was finally given safe housing. We are now working with a client who has waited over three years for a transfer after mold and mildew from leaks made his apartment hazardous. Currently, NYCHA policy just states that transfers will not be approved for residents who are in active Housing Court proceedings for failure to occupy. However, this fails to consider that the very reason tenants are in Housing Court may be related to their transfer request. NYCHA residents deserve better. We urge the Council to push for clear timelines, better communication and accountability for NYCHA to ensure that no family has to endure these conditions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony.

EDNA WELLS HANDY : Excuse me. Good afternoon, Chair, Committee Counsel, staff members, fellow witnesses. My name is Edna Wells Handy, and I am the founder of the National Institute for Section 3 Empowerment or the NISE. We are a nonprofit New York State 501C3 committed to ensuring that public housing residents and other low-income individuals are prioritized for job opportunities. Excuse me. I've been sitting here a long time and it's cold, so my voice is acting out, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: It's okay.

EDNA WELLS HARDY: --are prioritized for job and contract opportunities. I'll be brief. We recommend three solutions to the matters covered by this bill. One, train and employ NYCHA residents to rehabilitate vacant units. The most immediate and sustainable path to turning units around faster is already authorized under Section 3 of the HUD Act which requires that low-income residents be hired for jobs generated by HUD-funded projects. We strongly urge the Council to support the creation of a resident repair corp, a Section 3 complaint workforce

1 initiative that hires and trains public housing  
2 residents to turn and help turnover vacant units more  
3 rapidly. This is not new. Our second solution  
4 therefore is build on what works. There are three  
5 models we bring to your attention. Chicago has  
6 leveraged Section 3 housing and small contractor  
7 programs to create resident job pipelines for  
8 maintenance and rehab work, reducing unit turnaround  
9 time while building skills locally. Philadelphia's  
10 residents maintenance trainee program brought in  
11 residents for apprenticeships, and an Australia model  
12 promoted by community services by Rosanne Haggerty  
13 [sp?] modeled the program here in New York. We  
14 believe that there's an opportunity in most of the  
15 legislation that's before you for Section 3  
16 involvement. We are here to work with you and  
17 members of the Council as part of our effort to  
18 provide for universal understanding. Our goal is to  
19 meet with all 51 of you to show you how one, Section  
20 3 is working in your district, and two, how to work  
21 with the wonderful tool that-- I'm sorry that  
22 Councilwoman or Council Member Avilés is not here--  
23 the tracker. The tracker is an underutilized  
24 mechanism that is at your disposal and we're here to  
25

assist you, and we recommend again the resident training program for turnovers.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. We will now move to our Zoom testimony. Okay, we will now move to our Zoom testimony. Once your name is called, a member of our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant of Arms will give you a go-ahead to begin. Please wait for the Sergeant to announce that you may begin before delivering your testimony. Lisa Hall?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

LISA HALL: Good afternoon. NYCHA is being directed to make publicly available an annual report on public dwelling units that have been vacant for more than 30 continuous days. An annual report would provide information that is one year old and possibly outdated. NYCHA can produce and publish an updated report every 30 days in real-time. This would prevent a family desperate for a place to live to miss out on opportunities to find housing. The real estate industry knows within hours what housing is available. NYCHA has incorporated a real estate operation into its business model to transition away from managing its buildings. This action has allowed

neighborhood to turnover its daily management operation to private management companies under the RAD/PACT program. NYCHA does whatever it wants to do regarding its properties, including the sale of properties. An example, the sale of Boston Secor Houses in the Bronx to Wavecrest Management Group and the BRC Master Tenant LLC located in Boston, Massachusetts without informing the tenants. This action violated HUD regulation 964, the Tenant Participation and Tenant Opportunities in Public Housing Rule which ensures tenants' rights and responsibilities in the decision-making process. Regulation 964 mandates that tenants have a say in managing and maintaining housing developments while protecting their tenants, and private ownership ignored HUD regulation 964 starting with adding unexplained arears on monthly rent statements for tenants who signed the PACT lease and those who did not sign the PACT least, and--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you. Your time expired.

LISA HALL: May-- extra time, please?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds to wrap it up, ma'am.

LISA HALL: Okay. The tenants are required to sign leases before the PACT program received HUD approval for the conversion to private Section 8. So, a monthly report could show available inventory of apartments and review the compliance by Housing Authority and private partnerships to adhere to the laws of Section 9 and HUD regulation 964 to remain accountable to the tenants' needs. And it would highlight cases of success or failure in meeting the goals of the program. And some people have \$30,000 in arrears since the program was implemented at their development. We will submit the rest of the four-page testimony to the City Council. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony, Ms. Hall. Simone Hall?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

SIMONE HALL: I'm the mother and I have the same complaint. It was being directed to publicly make available an annual report. You don't need a year to make an annual report. You can make a baby in nine months, so I don't see why you have to wait for a year to be told that there are vacancies. Everyone in every project knows where there are

vacancies, and nothing is being done to alleviate that problem, and this causes more people to be without a place to stay. Some are sleeping in cars. They're sleeping in subways, and they're in the staircases, and all of this is happening now. So, we don't want that to happen to anyone. The homeless crisis is especially bad because of NYCHA's negligence in making repairs and getting things up-to-date. So, I don't know. Chris Banks, I want to thank you for your very pertinent questions, and you are on the ball. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony, Ms. Hall. We'll now move to Renee Keitt.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

RENEE KEITT: Okay. Thank you, Chair Banks and members of the Committee. My name is Renee Keitt. I'm both a resident of the Elliott-Chelsea House and the President of our Resident Association. I'm here to raise serious concerns about what's happening in our community under the guise of choice and improvement. Once a decision has been for us, not by us, that our development is being pushed into PACT, it is if we no longer count. Our homes and families are treated as liabilities on a spreadsheet,

not as communities with history, stability, and rights. If you look at the NYCHA metrics dashboard, it shows only four vacancies between Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses, but when you examine the non-dwelling units, there are 199 listed. This is how they're masking true vacancy numbers by reclassifying livable apartments as non-dwelling. It artificially lowers the vacancy rate and create the illusion that our buildings are obsolete, when in reality they're being warehoused. To make matters worse, two of our apartments are currently being used by Housing Opportunities Unlimited, a relocation contractor known for their involvement in [inaudible] aversion including Linden Houses. These are apartments that could and should be used by NYCHA residents, Section 9, particularly those on transfer lists or in unsafe units, but instead they're being handed over to outside consultants who are there to facilitate the PACT process and ultimately the demolition of our homes. At Fulton, 11 households have been selected to move in, but instead of being welcomed into a stable home, they're being drawn into a misleading process, one that pushes them to self-evict by dangling a supposed lottery and urging them to act



quickly to secure their spot in an undefined future. This is not resident choice. This is managed displacement. The proposed bill Intro 0111-2024 would require NYCHA to report publicly on all units that have been vacant for more than 30 days. While this sounds promising, I must emphasize such a bill is only as good as the numbers NYCHA chooses to disclose. As I have just discussed--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you. Your time expired.

RENEE KEITT: there are good [inaudible] the real picture. Can I have 30 more seconds?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30, yes, 30 seconds.

RENEE KEITT: Thank you-- at hiding the real picture through reclassification and data manipulation. As Ms. Hall just discussed, this should be done on a weekly basis on a live dashboard. Meanwhile, residents await transfers at Fulton Elliott-Chelsea are being sidelined. These delays are not accidental, they are strategic. They serve the clear the path for the demolition of these buildings and the hand-off of public land to Related and Essence in what could only be described as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century landgrab. We are not against improvement.

We are against being erased. We demand a just process, a meaningful vote, and real estate, and real investment in our communities, not demolition disguised as revitalization. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony and advocacy. We'll now move to Ramona Ferreyra.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

RAMONA FERREYRA: Hi, everyone. This is Romona Ferreyra from Save Section 9 and I'm going to highlight for you some of the solutions that we came up with regarding vacancies and the transfer process that's currently not serving the tenants of Section 9 public housing. We are asking the Council to consider incorporating the following recommendations in any legislation having to deal with transfer requests. We wish that NYCHA upholds HUD's transfer regulations or rules for developments in the process of converting out of Section 9 to RAD and PACT. Basically, when a development is undergoing conversations regarding conversions, tenants are supposed to be offered an opportunity to take a transfer to another Section 9 development closest to

1 them, and this is not being done. We want for NYCHA  
2 to provide publicly accessible statistics on how many  
3 people are actually requesting a transfer and wishing  
4 to stay within Section 9 when a conversion is being  
5 faced by their development. How many of these  
6 families accept the transfers and how many are not  
7 honored? We want RAD and PACT partners to clarify  
8 the timeline for conversion so that we can better  
9 understand at what point transfers are being frozen  
10 at the development. We want for RAD and PACT  
11 partners to create or make a public transfer tracking  
12 system so that tenants have access to information on  
13 their status of their transfer and get real-time  
14 updates. We want partners for RAD and PACT to be  
15 held accountable, provide transparent communication  
16 to tenants regarding their transfers before and after  
17 conversion, and demand that they identify point  
18 people at each development that can actually address  
19 the questions of the tenants. And then we wish to  
20 have an investigation into the currently 5,000 vacant  
21 units. The job portal at NYCHA--

22  
23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank  
24 you. Your time expired.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds.

RAMONA FERREYRA: Thank you. And we would want to see why NYCHA is not actually hiring for the transfer units and making sure that we have skilled labor that can bring down the wait time on these transfer vacancies-- transfers and vacancies. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And Ramona, can you just forward those recommendations to my office?

RAMONA FERREYRA: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. We'll now-- and thank you for your advocacy and thank you for your testimony. We'll now proceed to Linda Harrison.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Linda Harrison?  
Linda Harrison, you may proceed with your testimony.  
We'll now move to Karen Blondel.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

KAREN BLONDEL: Good morning. Thank you for hosting this hearing, Chairman Banks. I work with the team of Turner Williams at the Red Hook Houses. We do have a way of knowing what the vacancy number are, because we talk to each other on a regular basis. I want to add that there may have

1                   been increase in vacancies not only because of Cop-  
2                   mod [sic] but also from my own knowledge, not  
3                   everybody turns in keys, Chairman. And without  
4                   having those keys back, New York City Housing  
5                   Authority has to go through a process to secure those  
6                   apartments. So, on behalf of the Red Hook West  
7                   Houses and Ms. Fatima Turner [sp?], I can say that  
8                   this woman has been doing her job. Our numbers are  
9                   going down. The residents are coming to me, and I  
10                  invite you to come out for a tour [inaudible]  
11                  everybody [inaudible] and at the same time there's a  
12                  lot going on. Council Member evaded [sic] to,  
13                  there's an opportunity [inaudible] million dollars  
14                  for capital needs for [inaudible] apartments in the  
15                  Brooklyn Marine Terminal project that is going to be  
16                  voted on within the next week. So, I thank you for  
17                  your time. And again, this is my second, third time,  
18                  asking you can you please come to Red Hook for an  
19                  actual tour. Thank you so much.

21                 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your  
22                  advocacy and thank you for the invite. We will  
23                  definitely try to make it over to Red Hook to do a  
24                  tour. Thank you again. Thank you for your  
25                  testimony. Now we'll proceed to Christina Chaise.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHRISTINA CHAISE: Hi. Good afternoon.

My name's Christina Chaise. I'm Second Vice President of Ravenswood Houses and a steering committee member of Justice for All Coalition, a grassroots tenants' rights group in western Queens. Thank you, Council Member Banks for your critical leadership and Council Member Avilés and Ayala for your unwavering support, too, and for NYCHA residents as reflected by this bills. I support these bills and look forward to engaging with the additional data which will allow us to fully understand what is happening at the development level for residents, both with vacancies and policing. I wanted to uplift the vacancy numbers at Ravenswood Houses as well as our neighboring development four blocks away, Queensbridge Houses, also my childhood home. Ravenswood, we have 64 out of 2,060 vacancies. So that's three percent. Queensbridge North, 70 out of 1,526, so that's about five percent, and Queensbridge South 91 out of 1,582, so that's about six percent which is double that of Ravenswood. And so that's really concerning. We need those apartments to be brought back online considering how many families are

on the waiting list, but also because their vacancies are causing safety concerns and issues and other related concerns that my residents are really-- they want to see repaired are broken doors and locks, broken intercoms, broken and old mailboxes that need to be replaced so packages aren't stolen. Today's hearing highlighted for me one thing which was how one RAD/PACT conversion impacts a whole neighborhood and the whole city at large. It's clear how PACT destabilizes our communities and our families. We cannot afford to let it continue, especially since our federal resources are scarce and under attack. We cannot let another penny for public housing go to RAD/PACT or any of it's related initiatives. We must take seriously what a RAD moratorium bill looks like. Let's meet. Let's write it up. Let's mobilize and let's get it passed. Some of you know me as an advocacy coordinator at Take Root Justice, and I wear all my hats--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] 30 more seconds to wrap it up.

CHRISTINA CHAISE: This moratorium, so let's protect what's left of public housing in the city and in this country. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for your advocacy, and thank you for your testimony. We will now proceed to Jacqueline Lara.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

JACQUELINE LARA: Hi, my name is Jacqueline Lara. I live in Fulton, and I'm speaking that we, the residents, do not want demolition and we need to somehow hold NYCHA accountable of how they're harassing the residents at Fulton Building 11. They are coming to me asking me if they should sign this or sign that, because they have HOU coming to them and telling them that they have to move, and NYCHA's sending them letters that they have to leave the premises so they could demolish that building. So, please, you know-- somehow, some way we have to hold NYCHA accountable. I don't care. We have to hold them. We don't want no demolition at all. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. We will now move to Teresa Scott.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

TERESA SCOTT: Peace and blessings. Good afternoon everyone. First of all, I want to give



1 honor to God and to the Council for speaking to  
2 NYCHA. We need-- we-- it is sad that the people  
3 living in these conditions and that NYCHA doesn't  
4 seem to understand the danger that people are living  
5 in and the oversight that is happening with NYCHA.  
6 Every time we have a meeting, they don't know  
7 anything. That's their regular story. I really  
8 believe that Save Section 9 need to come and get with  
9 NYCHA, you know, the people that does the-- the  
10 executives, and let us train them, because they come  
11 here every meeting with the same story. I can't  
12 answer that question. Yes, they don't have the  
13 answer, because they're not-- they're not concerned  
14 about us. We need to stop the injustice. Like, what  
15 I'm in awe of is that they actually are raising their  
16 hand and making an oath that they're going to tell  
17 the truth. If that was one of us, we would be put in  
18 jail right away. Why isn't NYCHA punished for them  
19 always [inaudible] and not making sure that they have  
20 the right people with the right answer. They know  
21 what the stuff is about and they purposely come here  
22 every time saying I don't know the answer or I can't  
23 answer. That is a purpose-- that is on purpose and  
24 that is causing people to suffer. We have residents  
25

who are living in places that-- living in dust. They know that we're living in dust. They say that they have all of these information, they have all this data. I need to see where the data is at. I need to see the information or some kind of application that says hey, show me-- all these people that they visit. We have residents who said that the NYCHA has not done any of these programs that they said they have implemented. So why are they allowed to come here and lie every time and never be accountable. They say they're going to get back to us. I need-- I need to be personally--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you. Your time expired.

TERESA SCOTT: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Scott, you have 30 seconds to wrap it up.

TERESA SCOTT: I need to see the information and the data. We need to stop-- we need to put a moratorium to stop RAD so that [inaudible] sees what's happening with the people that living in RAD. So it can stop because it's not fair that these people are living in such horrible conditions and NYCHA always has the same answer, I don't know. They

1 know. They don't care. And I'm-- there's a  
2 scripture that say that God sees the wicked, and they  
3 need to know I'm serving a notice from God that just  
4 as much as you're doing wicked for people in NYCHA,  
5 the same thing could happen to you, so you need to be  
6 careful. This has nothing to do with [inaudible].  
7 This is my personal opinion. You-- the same  
8 injustice that you're doing to NYCHA going to happen  
9 to you and your families. And because you're part of  
10 such a wicked [inaudible], no telling what happen, so  
11 you need to be careful when you come to these  
12 tenants' association-- to these hearings spewing  
13 these lies, and these-- this data that you don't see  
14 [inaudible]

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, Ms. Scott.

17 TERESA SCOTT: [inaudible] so much.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, Ms. Scott,  
19 for your testimony and your advocacy. Now we'll  
20 proceed to Christopher Leon Johnson.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

22 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah. Hello.  
23 My name is Christopher Leon Johnson. Thank you,  
24 Chair Banks, for having this hearing today. Let me  
25 make this clear that first off, the City Council

needs to put a bill into City Council to eradicate CCOP [sic] , because CCOP is the reason why NYCHA always able to get away with what they got to get away with, because they always use those people to say, like, well, NYCHA's doing the right thing. They're doing the right thing. But they're not. NYCHA is working with the developers like Related to displace everybody in Fulton Chelsea and Fulton Chelsea Houses all over the City, including all over the City, but their main experiment is Fulton Chelsea Houses and they trying to turn [inaudible]. So, like I said, we need to call for the eradication of CCOP. I'm calling on this City Council Chair Christopher Banks to disassociate himself from Tanesha Grant who is part of RPPH, because RPPH is controlled opposition that is ran by Marquis Jenkins [sp?] who works for Carlina Rivera, and Rivera is the biggest control opposition, [inaudible] elected official in the City Council. She is hellbent on destroying NYCHA for the developers. How are you saying that you're fighting for the people, at the same time you're working with RPPH which is an organization that works with Carlina Rivera and Harvey Epstein that is hellbent on destroying the lower east side

1 for the developers. At the same time that these  
2 vacancies-- or the reasons they won't say the  
3 vacancies because those vacancies are high, and they  
4 want these vacancies to be so high because they can  
5 adjust by these NYCHA to abolish these buildings for  
6 developers. They see these people as eyesore. They  
7 see these people as roaches. That's true. I don't see  
8 [inaudible]. NYCHA does not want the people here no  
9 more. They want the people out. They want the open  
10 New York for all experience [inaudible] in those  
11 units because they willing to pay the market rate  
12 rent, three, four, five times the amount of rent they  
13 could pay for the stuff. So, like I said, this is  
14 what's going on here. So, like I said, Mr. Chris  
15 Banks, you need to disassociate yourself from Ms.  
16 Tanesha Grant because she is the biggest problem of  
17 this stuff because she's controlled opposition from  
18 these developers to make sure that-- to protect  
19 Jumaane Williams who's public advocate. So like I  
20 said, Mr. Chris Banks--

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] 30  
23 seconds to wrap it up.

24 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: 30 seconds.  
25 Like I said, 30 seconds. Like I said, Mr. Chris

Banks, the Chair of the City Council House Committee, you need to disassociate yourself from Tanesha Grant. Make sure that she does not be the public pre-panel because she is control opposition sent by Mr. Marquis Jenkins to protect Jumaane Williams who is part of the eradication of NYCHA. [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Thank you. Thank you. If we have inadvertently missed anyone that has registered to testify today and has yet to have been called, please use the Zoom raise hand function if you are testifying remotely and you will be called into order that your hand has been raised. If you're testifying in person, please come to the dais. Okay, and we actually had a missed person. I just want to I guess announce their name again. Mathene Scarce [sp?]? Please come to the dais. Alright, seeing none, I will now close the hearing. Thank you to all the members, the administration, the members of the public who have joined us today to discuss this very important topic. This hearing is now adjourned.

[gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 31, 2025