



Testimony of Taylor Brown, Inaugural Director  
New York City Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Before the New York City Council's  
Committee on General Welfare and Committee on Women and Gender Equity

Oversight Hearing on Housing Instability Among LGBTQIA+ Individuals in New York City

June 24, 2026

My name is Taylor Brown. I serve as the Inaugural Director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual ("LGBTQIA+") Affairs. Thank you to the members of the Committee on General Welfare and Committee on Women and Gender Equity for the opportunity to testify today on the critical issues of housing instability and homelessness among LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers. I appreciate the City Council's attention to these issues and desire to work towards meaningful solutions. I appreciate the testimony and ongoing partnership with my fellow agencies represented here today and across the Administration; as well as the community-based organizations, advocates, and community members working every day to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to safe, affordable, and stable housing and supportive services.

Part of the broad mission of the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs is to address both emerging and systemic barriers that prevent New Yorkers from thriving across all facets of life. We recognize that for every person, access to housing and housing stability are foundational to health, safety, economic opportunity, and overall well-being. We also understand that housing insecurity and homelessness do not impact all populations equally. LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers, particularly transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary people, youth populations, older populations, those living with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ people of color, have and continue to experience disparate barriers that place them at increased vulnerability of housing insecurity and homelessness. The seriousness of these issues is reflected in the testimony and data provided by our partner agencies and service providers. Their testimony demonstrates that housing insecurity and homelessness among LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers is not the result of a single factor but the culmination of myriad, intersecting, and entrenched inequities. These inequities have been further exacerbated by current economic, market, and political challenges facing us all. While every person's circumstances are unique, it is well established that educational opportunities, employment opportunities, and access to healthcare are equalizers and key determinants in a person's overall quality of life and ability to lead a stable, meaningful, fulfilled, and independent life.

But for most of our history, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender, sex, gender identity, gender expression, and LGBTQIA+ status, was permissible both socially and legally. This discrimination was perpetrated and condoned, explicitly and implicitly, by individuals, the private sector, and the public sector, including federal, state, and local governments. The consequences of this longstanding discrimination are borne out in the multitude of disparities facing LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers today. Longstanding discrimination has resulted in LGBTQIA+ people experiencing disparate rates of poverty; unemployment and lack of employment opportunities; income inequality; educational limitations; barriers to medically necessary healthcare; social and economic immobility; political and social exclusion, hostility, and violence; and criminalization. These issues have compounding and collateral consequences, including direct implications and impacts in the contexts of housing insecurity and homelessness for LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers.

The legacy of discrimination that informs contemporary disparities in the areas of housing insecurity, homelessness, and other critical areas of life, must also be understood in the context of the current economic and political climates. Across our city, state, and nation, most people are waking up every day to ever-declining economic conditions and forecasts, not seen in decades. At a societal level, we are collectively experiencing surging affordability crises across the entire spectrum of life; increased levels of indebtedness; stagnant wages and employment opportunities; the inability to save money; and longstanding issues in the housing market that further drive disparities in housing insecurity and homelessness for LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers and other minority communities. These longstanding market issues include a lack of housing supply in both the rental and ownership markets; skyrocketing rental costs; affordable housing deficits; lending barriers and costs; barriers to home ownership; unfair private sector housing and real estate practices; and lack of meaningful governmental solutions and interventions, over decades, to address these systemic issues. Concurrently, the Trump Administration has weaponized almost every part of the federal government to attack and rollback the progress we have made in establishing LGBTQIA+ legal equality and government-driven intervention models in redressing systemic discrimination and its collateral consequences. These macroeconomic conditions and federal political hostility compound and exacerbate the underlying causes of and disparities in housing insecurity and homelessness facing LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers, as well as other minority and marginalized communities.

Against this backdrop, the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs, housed within the New York City Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice and within the portfolio of the New York City Deputy Mayor for Economic Justice, has already begun its broad strategic thinking and planning to develop meaningful solutions to combat these specific disparities and other priority issues holistically; through interagency leadership, partnership, and coordination; and through innovative governmental solutions grounded in law, policy, humanity, and the lived experiences and realities of LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers. Over the course of its inaugural year, the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs will take a phased and analytical approach to ensure that we meaningfully

understand and prioritize all major issues facing LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers, with a focus on quality-of-life issues and baseline needs, including in the broad context of housing and sub contexts like housing insecurity and homelessness. The Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs will work to ensure that all New York City agencies are in compliance with non-discrimination law and protections, and that they are utilizing best policies and practices to meet the needs of and their obligations to LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers. The Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs will ensure that at the Executive level, across agencies, and across government, we are delivering bold and innovative solutions and meaningful interventions to redress and eliminate disparities and further needed progress. Finally, the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs will work to ensure that we are a community-based and driven governmental office that provides meaningful leadership and responsible governance to the communities we serve. Some of our current plans to implement this work include:

- Agency-wide regulatory and policy audits to examine current policies and practices, assess what has been successful and where improvements can be made, and to work collaboratively towards better solutions and innovation to ensure that agencies are serving LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers and addressing their unique needs;
- Agency-wide programmatic evaluations to understand what City agencies have historically done and what they are currently doing, in order to supplement, improve, and develop innovative governmental interventions, through programmatic and funding models, grounded in law, policy, data, community partnership, and centrally, the shared goal of materially improving the lives of LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers;
- Substantive-issue based stakeholder convenings with our agency partners, inter- and intragovernmental partners, experts, advocates, community-based organizations, and community members, to ensure the work of the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ affairs is collaborative, holistic, responsive, and centered on the needs of the communities we serve;
- Executive level strategy, coordination, and innovation geared towards bold solutions and government interventions to eliminate the myriad of disparities facing LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers; combatting and documenting federal hostility and the direct harms caused to LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers; addressing historic and contemporary data and research needs and gaps that inform and drive our initiatives and goals; and assessing and addressing governmental inefficiencies, policies, and practices that impact governmental operations and services (*e.g.* communications, contracting, funding, and other operational elements) to ensure that we are delivering better, more equitable, and more responsive services and models of governance.

The nexus of factors driving housing insecurity and homelessness disparities for LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers are entrenched, intersectional, and complex, but they are not insurmountable. As the work of the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs is developed and implemented, we want to assure committee members and City Council that we bring considerable substantive expertise and experience; true vision and leadership; an unwavering dedication to the communities we serve and this City; and a deep commitment to transformational government and cross-government collaboration, cooperation, and innovation to ensure that we are meeting the moment and establishing a lasting foundation for a more equitable, affordable, and accessible City for all.

Shared responsibilities and lasting solutions require us to address these interconnected challenges together. The Mamdani Administration, the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs, and our agency partners stand by as ready and proactive partners. We look forward to new and continued partnership and collaboration with City Council on the issues before the committees today, and those in the future, because LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers, like all New Yorkers, deserve the opportunity to live and thrive with safety, dignity, and stability. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome the committees' questions.



**Testimony of Erin Dalton, Commissioner  
New York City Department of Social Services**

**Before the New York City Council, Committee on General Welfare and  
Committee on Women and Gender Equity**

**Oversight Hearing on Housing Instability Among LGBTQIA+ Individuals in NYC**

**June 24, 2026**

Good morning. My name is Erin Dalton, I serve as the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS) and my pronouns are she, her. I would like to thank Chair Hudson, Chair Farías, the members of the Committee on General Welfare, and the members of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity for convening today's hearing on housing instability among LGBTQIA+ individuals in New York City. I am joined today by John Rojas, HRA Chief Special Services Officer, Rima Rivera, HRA Deputy Commissioner for Domestic Violence Services, Andrea Reid, HRA Executive Deputy Commissioner for Housing Services Administration-Rental Assistance, and Sonya Russell, DHS Interim Deputy Commissioner for Adult Services and Shelter Operations.

Serving vulnerable populations is an integral part of our work at DSS. Through our work at the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) we understand that our clients are reaching out for assistance precisely because they are at an acutely vulnerable moment. As stewards of critical programs and resources, it is incumbent upon us to recognize that one size does not fit all. That is why recognizing the unique experiences of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) and Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC) communities is so important in our work. To that end, DSS is committed to ensuring our services are culturally competent and welcoming.

At DSS, we are cognizant of the scale of the challenge in addressing housing insecurity for LGBTQIA+ and TGNC communities. Unique drivers for homelessness include familial rejection due to sexual orientation or gender expression and unlawful housing and employment discrimination. An intersectional lens informs this conversation and our policies by bringing to the fore the ways social identities interact with these communities. Systemic inequalities and discrimination can compound the challenges members of these communities face and we cannot flatten the diversity of experiences within the LGBTQIA+ and TGNC communities (e.g. the many impacts of age, race, ethnicity, language, disability, class, documentation status, education, mental health, and more). Providing culturally competent services includes recognizing the reality of clients' experiences at those intersections of identities, strengthening our partnerships

with community-based organizations, and ongoing engagement to gather feedback and improve services.

Building cultural competence begins with a foundation of setting expectations and training staff to meet those expectations. DSS' Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs works to identify and address systemic barriers affecting clients across DSS-HRA-DHS programs. This work includes improving service delivery, strengthening internal and external partnerships, and responding directly to client concerns related to access, discrimination, or safety.

All DSS, DHS, and HRA staff are required to attend training on LGBTQIA+ inclusion. In addition to the mandatory one-time training, employees are also required to attend refresher trainings every two years. Providers and their staff are required to comply with NYC Human Rights Law and the Citywide Equal Employment Opportunity policy. Providers may also require that staff attend trainings beyond what's required by city law and policy, including trainings focused on the unique needs of TGNC clients. One such training available to city and provider staff is the Placement Procedure Training for Transgender and Gender Non-conforming clients, which focuses on creating a safe, affirming system for clients who self-identify as TGNC and raises awareness about more gender-affirming placement options for TGNC individuals that are seeking shelter.

There are limitations we must acknowledge, especially as it relates to data collection. DHS seeks to affirm each individual's gender identity and ensure that they are appropriately placed by giving clients the option to self-identify their gender through a voluntary gender identity screening which occurs at intake. Clients who self-identify as TGNC are then given their gender affirming placement options. DHS clients are also offered the voluntary Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity survey at intake. However, because this is voluntary and not linked to a person's case or placement means participation is low and our data on our LGBTQIA+ and TGNC clients is limited. On the HRA side of the house, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity data is voluntarily offered for clients enrolled in Cash Assistance, SNAP, and IDNYC benefits programs, as well as those seeking services for domestic violence as per Local Law 130. We acknowledge our data represents an undercount of LGBTQIA+ and TGNC clients. Thus, the data we do have significantly underrepresents the actual number of LGBTQIA+ individuals receiving services across the DV and DHS shelter systems (that is more than 30 LGBTQIA+ survivors in DV shelters in calendar year 2025, and 383 LGBTQIA+ individuals in the DHS system). The voluntary data we collect is a factor that assists DSS in determining programmatic capacity needs and potential policy adjustments that could be made to better address the needs of this population.

All DHS sites and provider locations are required by contract to be LGBTQIA+ affirming environments. Our goal is to create safe environments where LGBTQIA+ individuals are treated with the same degree of respect and dignity as other identities. Affirming environments include visible signs in client and staff areas to make clear LGBTQIA+ people are welcomed and valued parts of the community (e.g. DSS "Ally" Cards, Welcome Palmcards, LGBTQIA+ themed posters).

In addition to the responsibility of all shelter sites to be LGBTQI-affirming environments, DHS also has specialized shelters and beds that are exclusively dedicated to serving the LGBTQIA+ and

TGNC clients. DHS' goal and current practice is for individuals who self-report as TGNC to receive expedited placement to a TGNC designated bed if that's what they choose. Ace's Place serves as the nation's first TGNC specific shelter site that can accommodate 150 residents. Similarly, Marsha's House focuses on serving the broader spectrum of LGBTQIA+ residents accommodating 80 residents overall. In addition, there are 42 beds at six shelters focused on serving TGNC clients at shelters in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens.

Regarding HRA programs, gender identity is considered by HASA when making emergency housing placements and flagged by clients' preferences. Domestic Violence Services supports both residential and nonresidential services that are available to LGBTQIA+ and TGNC survivors. Our OCFS licensed DV emergency and Tier II shelters are required to serve all survivors who meet the domestic violence eligibility criteria, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, so LGBTQIA+ and TGNC survivors have full access to residential services when DV shelter is the safest option.

In addition, we fund nonresidential supportive services in the community, including services specifically dedicated to LGBTQIA+ survivors through our contract with The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Center—known as The Center. Through this partnership, LGBTQIA+ clients can access culturally competent counseling, safety planning, case management, advocacy, support groups, and referrals without needing to enter shelter, ensuring there are affirming options both inside and outside the residential system.

The agency regularly checks in with advocates and clients on ways to improve our service model and to ensure that there are mechanisms and systems in place for LGBTQIA+ individuals to share feedback on agency policies, services, and programs. To that end, both clients and advocates serve on advisory boards (e.g. LGBTQIA+ Work Group, HASA Community Advisory Board, and the Shelter Accessibility Advisory Board). We also receive feedback and complaints directly from clients through 311, the Office of the Ombudsman, the DSS Office of Equal Employment Opportunities, or the Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs within DSS, or any other avenues through which we receive feedback. Our goal is to ensure this population has ample options to offer feedback.

I want to take this opportunity to spotlight our forthcoming TGNC Advisory Group. It is a group that has been several years in the making. This client advisory group aims to engage community-based expertise, bringing insights around what is working, what is not working, and what measures we can take to improve programs, services, and the experience of TGNC individuals in the shelter system. The TGNC Advisory Group will include 6 to 8 clients who have experience with homelessness. We aim for this advisory group to begin meeting later this year.

I also want to highlight the work of our Shelter Accessibility Advisory Board here. This nine-member board meets quarterly and is the result of Local Law 23 of 2023. The board issued its first suite of recommendations in January. The initial recommendations centered on access, support, workforce/staffing, and critical amenities. The board also focused on inclusivity, accessibility and safety needs of the TGNC population. The Board recommended providers assess and mitigate client safety concerns in their community for individuals in their Independent Living Plan. For example, the advisory board recommended shelter staff offer escorts to the bus/train. As

a result of these recommendations the TGNC-shelter is now offering these escorts. The board also recommended that DHS take into consideration the accessibility of transportation when determining shelter placements. We are taking a close look at how we can move the board's recommendations forward and remain committed to an approach to service provision that ensures client safety and breaks down obstacles to housing security.

To provide an example on that point of breaking down barriers – we know that identification document mismatch can create barriers for our transgender clients. In our DSS-HRA-DHS systems, providers, and staff – in accordance with NYC law – use a person's preferred name even if they have not legally change it. External entities' credit checks, proof of employment, or lease documents present challenges for transgender people seeking housing. In alignment with our commitment to helping clients find the support they need, staff are expected to work with TGNC clients to facilitate their road to independent living, including referrals for legal assistance with name changes.

Our Office of Community Outreach (OCO), alongside our Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs, serve as crucial hubs in connecting with the LGBTQIA+ and TGNC communities. Their work includes providing resources to community organizations like the Center, Ali Fomey, and Bronx Legal Services who work with DSS-HRA-DHS clients and assisting them navigate benefits access. OCO's work includes providing dedicated trainings on benefits to community providers, sharing monthly updates through a newsletter to community providers, and coordinating access for the more than 450 community-based organizations in total using the ACCESS HRA Provider Portal. We also participate in panels, schools and community events, shelter house meetings, and LGBTQIA+ support groups.

I would like to take this opportunity to share what Mayor Mamdani has said, "New York City is proud of its LGBTQIA+ community and will refuse to deny healthcare, safety or dignity to anyone on the basis of their identity." DSS will continue to uphold our commitment to ensuring all of our services are LGBTQIA+ culturally competent and welcoming. I will conclude by expressing my gratitude to my colleagues at DSS and across government, as well as countless human services providers, advocates, and community members uplifting the dignity of our LGBTQIA+ and TGNC family, friends, and neighbors.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify today, to say Happy Pride in this forum, and we welcome your questions.

Thank you.



**Testimony  
Before the New York City Council  
Committees on  
General Welfare and Women and Gender Equity**

**Oversight Hearing on**

**Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals**

**Presented by Associate Commissioner Wanda Ascherl**

**June 24, 2026**



Good morning, Chairs Hudson and Farias, and members of the Committees on General Welfare, Children and Youth, and Women and Gender Equity.

I am Associate Commissioner Wanda Ascherl at the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. I am joined today by Tracey Thorne (she/her), Senior Director of Runaway and Homeless Youth Services. On behalf of Commissioner Escamilla-Davies, thank you for the opportunity to discuss how DYCD addresses housing instability among LGBTQI+ individuals. We also wish a Happy Pride Month to LGBTQI+ New Yorkers and allies.

DYCD recognizes that LGBTQI+ youth may face discrimination and harassment that puts them at disproportionate risks of housing instability, exploitation, and adverse health and mental health outcomes. Access to trusted adults, affirming environments, and high-quality services is critical to ensuring their safety, well-being, and long-term success. Together with our dedicated provider network, advocates, and the City Council, DYCD has built a comprehensive continuum of services designed to meet the diverse needs of runaway and homeless youth ages 16 through 24.

Our Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) programs provide holistic, youth-centered services that help young people achieve stability, independence, and opportunity. Through residential services, drop-in centers, and street outreach programs, DYCD and its providers serve more than 40,000 young people annually.

Residential services include Crisis Services programs and Transitional Independent Living Support programs. Across the city, residential programs serving youth ages 16 through 24 providing a total of 863 beds. For homeless young adults ages 21 to 24, DYCD funds six programs with a total of 160 beds - 50 of which are scheduled to open in the next six weeks. We are especially pleased that, in partnership with the Council and under the leadership of Chair Stevens, this capacity was expanded by 100 beds for homeless young adults in this fiscal year, strengthening our ability to meet growing needs.

DYCD's eight contracted Drop-In Centers are a safe place for LGBTQI+ youth and other young people to access essential resources such as food, clothing, and hygiene supplies, alongside a wide range of supportive services, including counseling, educational and health workshops, recreational programming, and referrals to additional services and shelter when needed. Specialized staff—including Housing Navigators, Financial Coaches, Peer Navigators and Mental Health Clinicians—work closely with youth and young adults to help them identify goals and take meaningful steps toward long-term stability and self-sufficiency. To ensure accessibility, at least one Drop-In Center in every borough operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Our Street Outreach programs engage young people where they are, focusing on locations where runaway and homeless youth are known to congregate. Outreach teams provide immediate support, information, safety planning, and connections to housing and other critical services.



DYCD-funded RHY providers help young people navigate a wide range of challenges through individualized counseling, case management, and service referrals. From intake assessments through ongoing case management, providers work to identify each young person's strengths, needs, and goals while connecting them to services that support their overall well-being, including specialized mental health care when appropriate.

All RHY providers are trained for and welcoming to LGBTQI+ youth, including mission-oriented organizations like the Ali Forney Center, all of which have particular expertise and focus on serving LGBTQ+ young people experiencing homelessness. This includes professional development regarding sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; gender-affirming interactions that foster respect and appreciation; physically safe and culturally positive environments; and swift response to issues of bias, and discrimination.

In RHY programs, counselors work collaboratively with youth to develop Individualized Service Plans that establish both short- and long-term goals. Through direct services and community partnerships, youth can access a broad range of supports, including physical and mental health services, educational and career development opportunities, substance use prevention services, violence intervention and prevention counseling, and housing assistance. When appropriate, providers also support family reunification efforts or help youth transition to longer-term housing and supportive programs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss DYCD's efforts to address housing instability among LGBTQ+ youth. We remain committed to working alongside the Council, providers, advocates, and young people with lived experience to strengthen services and expand opportunities for the youth we serve.

We are pleased to answer any questions you may have.

**Testimony of Caitlyn Passaretti**  
**Citizens' Committee for Children of New York**  
**Submitted to the New York City Council**  
**Committees on General Welfare and Women and Gender Equity**  
**Oversight Hearing: Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC**  
**June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

For 80 years, Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC) has been an independent voice for children advancing child and family well-being through research, advocacy, and civic engagement. With deep expertise in data, policy and child-serving systems, CCC champions proven solutions and mobilizes allies to secure reforms that improve child outcomes and promote equity. CCC drives systemic change to ensure every child is healthy, housed, educated, and safe.

We would like to thank Chair Fariás, Chair Hudson and all the members of the City Council Committee on Women and Gender Equity and General Welfare for hosting this oversight hearing on housing instability among LGBTQIA+ individuals in New York City. Our testimony will center on the needs of Runaway and Homeless Youth, as nearly 40% of RHY youth identify as LGBTQIA+ statewide.<sup>1</sup>

**Deepen Investments to better Support Runaway and Homeless Youth**

Numerous challenges face Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) in New York. The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) is responsible for supporting this population; however, it is not uncommon for RHY to also be involved with ACS, DHS, and HRA in efforts to access permanent housing or social services. Currently, RHY providers across the city report that DYCD does not have sufficient capacity for young people (especially older youth).<sup>2</sup> As a result, many young people resort to living on the streets or in other dangerous living situations. City leaders must ensure that RHY have access to more beds and greater supports.

**We urge the City to increase provider rates, which have not been updated since 2017, to \$80,000 per bed to provide safe, temporary housing for youth who otherwise would be without a stable housing option.** The City must also expand housing capacity for older youth ages 21–24, ensuring that all 100 planned beds for this population are brought online (currently only 60 beds are operational due to the low rates).

**Invest in Supports for Queer and Trans New Yorkers**

CCC joins the NYC Trans and Queer Coalition in calling for investments into critical supports that would support the trans and queer community, as well as increase stabilization, safety, and access to care. Housing is key to safety – and funding these additional initiatives will support people finding housing as well as care and stability.

- **Invest \$4 million for the Mayor's Trans Emergency Care Fund:** The current funding at \$2 million is not enough to support trans people experiencing crises. The increase in funding would provide flexible funding for urgent needs like housing and safety.

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<sup>1</sup> OCFS. Research and Data: LGBTQ. Accessed: <http://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/youth/LGBTQ/research.php>

<sup>2</sup> State of the City Report Cards: DYCD. Accessed: [https://council.nyc.gov/compliance/wp-content/uploads/sites/124/2025/12/DYCDDIGITAL\\_FINAL.pdf](https://council.nyc.gov/compliance/wp-content/uploads/sites/124/2025/12/DYCDDIGITAL_FINAL.pdf)

- **Invest \$10 million for the Trans Equity Initiative Fund:** Increasing funding for this fund is crucial to stabilize community-based organizations delivering critical care, housing, and supports.
- **Invest \$15 million for the Gender Affirming Care for Youth Fund:** The current \$3.5 million is not enough to support gender affirming care. The increased investment would expand access to critical gender affirming medical and mental health care for youth, offset rising costs for providers and ensure continuity of care despite federal rollbacks, support trusted, affirming providers serving trans and gender-expansive youth and reduce barriers so young people can access care safely, regardless of income or insurance
- **Invest \$10 million for the Supports for Persons Involved in the Sex Trade Fund:** New Yorkers involved in the sex trade—especially LGBTQ+, trans, and gender-expansive individuals—face high rates of violence, housing instability, and criminalization, yet current funding at \$3.5M is not enough to meet the need for safe, affirming support. Everyone deserves safety, dignity, and support—without stigma or criminalization.
- **Invest \$15 million for a NEW LGBTQIA+ Immigrant Fund:** LGBTQIA+ immigrants in New York face compounded barriers—from legal insecurity to housing instability and lack of access to affirming services—yet there is currently no dedicated funding stream to support their unique needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**Homeless Services United, Inc.**

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**Testimony for the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare and Committee  
on Committee on Women and Gender Equity**  
June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

My name is Kristin Miller, and I am the Executive Director at Homeless Services United. Homeless Services United (HSU) is a coalition representing over 55 mission-driven, homeless service providers in New York City. HSU advocates for the expansion of affordable housing and prevention services and for immediate access to safe, decent, emergency and transitional housing, outreach and drop-in services for homeless New Yorkers. Homeless Services United promotes effective solutions to end the crisis of homelessness in New York City.

LGBTQ+ Housing Instability

Throughout the country, LGBTQ+ youth and adults experience disproportionate rates of homelessness. LGBTQ+ youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQ+ youth and 17% of LGBTQ+ community members stated that they had experienced homelessness at some point in their life. Of youth from the LGBTQ+ community, 68% reported a history of family rejection, 65% had a history of mental health issues, and 54% had a history of family abuse. Working to prevent LGBTQ+ homelessness is not simply about providing individuals with a safe place to stay but also connecting them with the resources they need to heal from trauma and abuse. New York City has a rich history of LGBTQ+ advocacy and has become known as a safe haven for LGBTQ+ individuals throughout the country. Our City must make a commitment to continue to foster the legacy of being a safe place for those who do not conform to typical expressions of gender or sexuality, especially at a time when the federal government continues to attack transgender youth and adults.

There were 406 people from the LGBTQ+ population served by The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) in the first quarter of 2026, yet only 270 units of beds targeted to this population are in place. Currently, the City only has one shelter for LGBTQ+ individuals 18-29 and one shelter for transgender individuals over 30 years old; this is not nearly enough. LGBTQ+ individuals are underrepresented in the shelter system despite their higher likelihood of homelessness because of safety concerns and the lack of LGBTQ+ specific services. Two locations are far too few to meet the diverse needs of the LGBTQ+ homeless population. We urge the administration to invest in additional shelters throughout the City that will provide LGBTQ+ individuals with the safety, resources, and security they need to thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I may be contacted at [kmiller@hsunited.org](mailto:kmiller@hsunited.org) for more information.

# LEGAL SERVICES NYC

**TESTIMONY OF DAVID MIRANDA (HE/HIM)**

**SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY, LGBTQ+ AND HIV ADVOCACY PROJECT, LEGAL SERVICES NYC  
(MANHATTAN OFFICE)**

*Prepared by David Miranda and Isabel Heine*

Before the Committee on Women & Gender Equity and Committee on General Welfare  
Public Hearing on Housing Instability Among LGBTQIA+ Individuals in NYC  
June 24, 2026

My name is David Miranda, and I am a Senior Staff Attorney with the LGBTQ+ and HIV Advocacy Project at the Manhattan office of Legal Services NYC. I provide legal representation to low-income LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers facing a range of civil legal challenges. Legal Services NYC, is the nation's largest provider of free civil legal services. With offices in all five boroughs and a dedicated team of advocates, we provide critical legal support to LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers, many of whom experience housing instability, poverty, and discrimination. Each year, Legal Services NYC assists more than 100,000 low-income New Yorkers.

New York City's housing affordability crisis affects residents across the city, but LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers often face additional barriers that exacerbate housing insecurity. These challenges include pervasive discrimination, limited access to affirming housing and shelter environments—particularly for transgender, nonbinary, and intersex individuals—and administrative obstacles within public benefits systems. Today, I will discuss the HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) for case management and rental assistance, the homelessness crisis among LGBTQIA+ youth, and the failure of demographic data to capture the severity of this crisis.

***Housing opportunities are lost due to HASA administrative delays.*** While not all LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers access HASA services, NYC Open Data statistics indicate that the vast majority of HASA clients identify as sexual minorities. Our clients enroll in HASA to access the program's life-sustaining and lifesaving benefits, yet they continue to struggle to access stable housing. These are individuals who are doing everything right including completing the necessary assessment and caseworker assignment. Yet, the administrative delays within HASA lead to continued housing instability among LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers.

In New York City's extremely tight rental market with a current vacancy rate of 1.4% apartments disappear within days. A HASA voucher that is not approved—or supporting paperwork that is not issued promptly—is effectively useless because landlords cannot wait when there are multiple prospective tenants for the same apartment. HASA exists because stable housing is

## **Demand Justice.**

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LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

healthcare for our LGBTQIA+ clients living with HIV – we know that safe, stable and affordable housing is vital social determinant of health. Every HASA administrative delay increases the likelihood of interrupted medical care, medication nonadherence, emergency room utilization, and poorer health outcomes.

The HASA voucher approval process lacks transparency with no meaningful way to know where an application stands, what documentation is outstanding, or when a decision is expected. Unlike many benefit programs that have regulatory processing deadlines, applicants frequently experience lengthy waits without clear explanations or escalation procedures. Even when HASA ultimately approves assistance, those lost weeks or months can mean continued homelessness, unstable housing, or worsening health. ***HASA must establish maximum processing timeframes for voucher approvals and renewals and create an expedited review process for applicants facing imminent homelessness.*** Without such protections, legal services providers and other advocates are left with very little recourse to advocate on behalf of their clients.

“Ms. W.”

Ms. W is a Legal Services NYC client from the Bronx that who been trying to get a HASA housing voucher approved for five years. She identifies as a lesbian. She reached out to us because she could not handle another denial. During these five years, she and her adult daughter who suffers from severe autism, were forced into the shelter system. After finding the shelter unbearable because it did not serve her daughter’s needs, they moved in with family that quickly became impatient and unsupportive.

During those five years, Ms. W found three apartments through NYC Housing Connect. Ms. W was denied a voucher for each of these apartments. It was not until our advocate met with Ms. W that she realized it was because the rent was too low. During those five years, Ms. W’s case manager never explained to her why HASA continued to deny her. The denials from HASA also did not indicate why she continued to receive denials.

If HASA’s voucher approval process were more transparent or more accessible for applicants facing homelessness, Ms. W could have been in an apartment in 2021. Instead, she was only approved in February 2026 after advocate intervention.

***The City must provide for LGBTQIA+ youth experiencing homelessness who need additional support within and outside of the shelter system, including but not limited to workforce development programs, educational support, youth specific case management, and gender affirming care.*** No conversation regarding housing instability in the LGBTQIA+ community would be complete without mentioning the crisis that is homelessness among LGBTQIA+ youth. This is often the result of familial rejection due to gender and sexual identity. Forty percent of all youth experiencing homelessness identify as a sexual or gender minority. Without familial support, the City must provide additional support to ensure that LGBTQIA+ youth are valued, supported, and have the opportunity to create a better life for themselves.

Additionally, LGBTQIA+ youth are disproportionately represented in the City’s foster care system, with more than one-third of youth identifying at LGBTQIA+. Presently, for LGBTQIA+ youth aging out of foster care, there is no guarantee of housing, essentially creating a foster care-

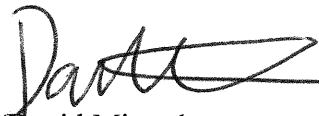
to-homelessness pipeline. *Housing guarantees for LGBTQIA+ youth aging out of care, that include longer-term supportive housing and better transition planning for youth prior to discharge from foster care would be a positive step forward in addressing the housing crisis for LGBTQIA+ youth.*

*New York City's demographic data collection creates a "Hidden Homelessness" crisis.* Many LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers are not in shelters. They are couch surfing, living in unsafe family situations, or cycling through temporary arrangements. Many LGBTQIA+ individuals experiencing housing instability prefer to avoid shelters due to the lack of affirming and safe spaces within those shelters. However, New York City's homelessness metrics only count individuals at shelter agencies, meaning that the City is not accurately tracking LGBTQIA+ housing instability and the number of impacted individuals is grossly underreported. When only 0.5% of DHS beds are specifically set aside for TGNC and LGBTQIA+ people, we are measuring failure, not prevention. Through improvement of demographic data and a concerted effort with community partners, the City could get a more accurate picture of the need within the LGBTQIA+ community for culturally appropriate and affirming spaces within its systems.

During this Pride Month, I thank the Council for its attention to these issues. I urge the Council to ensure that agencies serving LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers including the Human Resources Administration ("HRA"), Department of Homeless Services ("DHS"), and Department of Youth and Community Development ("DYCD") fulfill their mission of providing safe, affirming, and equitable services. Pride must be more than a celebration; it must be reflected in policies and programs that protect the housing stability, health, and dignity of LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers. The City has made important commitments to this community, and those commitments must be matched by effective implementation, meaningful oversight, and sustained investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



David Miranda  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Legal Services NYC/Manhattan



new destiny  
housing

**TESTIMONY OF NEW DESTINY HOUSING TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEES ON GENERAL WELFARE AND WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY  
JOINT OVERSIGHT HEARING ON HOUSING INSTABILITY  
AMONG LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS IN NYC**

Gabriela Sandoval Requena, VP of External Affairs  
June 24, 2026

Thank you, Women and Gender Equity Committee Chair Farías, General Welfare Committee Chair Hudson, Council Members, and Council Central Staff, for the opportunity to submit written testimony for this important hearing.

**ABOUT NEW DESTINY**

Founded in 1994, New Destiny's mission is to end the cycle of domestic violence and homelessness for low-income families and individuals by developing and connecting them to safe, permanent, affordable housing and services.

New Destiny is the only organization in New York City dedicated exclusively to permanent housing solutions for survivors of domestic violence. We are the largest provider of supportive housing for survivors in New York, and we operate the first and biggest federally funded rapid rehousing program for those impacted by domestic violence in our city.

We are a co-convener of the [Family Homelessness Coalition \(FHC\)](#), a collective of formerly homeless parents and organizations committed to tackling housing insecurity among families in our city. New Destiny is a member of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) Advisory Council and the Supportive Housing Network of New York.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS**

Domestic violence and homelessness are fundamentally connected. As New Destiny documented in our report, [A Crisis Compounded: The Dual Crises of Domestic Violence and Homelessness](#), domestic violence is the leading cause of family homelessness in New York City, pushing more families into shelter than evictions.

Due to the lack of permanent housing options, compounded by the devastating, long-lasting effects of abuse, survivors may linger in shelter for years. In 2025, only 8.5% of survivors moved from a Human Resources Administration (HRA) domestic violence emergency shelter to a permanent home, while more than half left for another shelter upon reaching the State-mandated limit of 180 days.

One in 4 survivors and their children had to move to the massive Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter system. For survivors, entering the DHS system means losing the anonymity and supportive services of the HRA domestic violence shelters. This not only

represents a safety risk for them and their children, but it also may mean an even longer shelter stay for survivors and increased costs for the city. On average, families with children stay in DHS shelter for over a year, according to the Preliminary Fiscal Year 2026 Mayor's Management Report.

With no certainty of when they might be able to find a safe home, survivors are forced to make the impossible choice between homelessness or remaining in abusive situations, putting their lives at risk. In 2023, 1 in 6 homicides were domestic violence homicides in New York City, in which the victim was either an intimate partner or a family member.

LGBTQ+ survivors face compounding barriers on top of these systemic failures. Single adult survivors — who disproportionately include LGBTQ+ survivors, trafficking survivors, and older adults — are the hardest to connect to shelter. In 2023, roughly half of all callers to the City's 24-hour domestic violence hotline seeking shelter were single adults, yet only 18% were ultimately linked to a shelter bed. Of the 2,285 emergency shelter beds in New York City, only about 111 are designated for single survivors — a structural shortfall that leaves some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers with nowhere safe to go. According to The National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence's [2024 National Field Needs Assessment](#), 72% of domestic violence service providers identify housing and homelessness as the most pressing need for LGBTQ+ survivors they serve, and anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination — including shelters that refuse to accept transgender survivors — compounds the barriers they already face.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

We thank the City Council for your support of survivors of domestic violence in achieving safety through stable housing. Your advocacy on the creation of the ENDGBV flexible funding program (within HOME+), the CityFHEPS expansion, and increased funding for supportive housing has made a direct impact on survivors all over the city. We offer the following recommendations to strengthen and expand housing services for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers.

### **Fix CityFHEPS, Implement the Expansion, and Protect NYCHA EHV Households**

We applaud the Council's relentless leadership in advocating for the implementation of the 2023 CityFHEPS expansion laws. Under current rules, eligibility remains tied to a stay in the DHS system — excluding survivors who fled to HRA domestic violence shelters despite facing the same homelessness and the same housing need. This gap falls hardest on LGBTQ+ survivors and youth who avoid the adult shelter system altogether.

The stakes are clear: as advocates [reminded us this Pride month](#), LGBTQ+ young people make up an estimated 40% of youth experiencing homelessness in New York City, despite representing roughly 10% of the youth population — a crisis concentrated among Black and brown young people, transgender and gender-nonconforming youth, and those cast out by families who refuse to accept who they are. [As Safe Horizon has underscored](#), CityFHEPS vouchers would give homeless youth a real pathway out of homelessness rather than forcing them into a system they rightly fear.

The urgency extends to NYCHA's 5,200 Emergency Housing Voucher households — including 1,144 domestic violence survivors and 600 runaway and homeless youth — whose federal vouchers were defunded by the Trump administration in 2025. NYCHA's only proposed solution is an internal transfer, but the units aren't there, and for survivors who have built safety around their current homes, schools, and support networks, an involuntary move is its own form of harm. The city must extend CityFHEPS eligibility to NYCHA EHV participants as part of the program's larger expansion and fund it in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. A coalition of nearly 350 organizations and directly impacted New Yorkers has called on the mayor to act — we refer the Committees to the sign-on letter included as an addendum to this testimony — and we urge this Council to do the same.

Expanding eligibility is only the first step. While CityFHEPS has been a lifeline for survivors and other New Yorkers in need of rental assistance, significant operational failures continue to delay move-ins, prolong shelter stays, and frustrate landlords and tenants alike. New Destiny published a full set of recommendations in [Fixing CityFHEPS](#), updated in June 2026, and we refer the Committees to that document for the full set of operational reforms.

### **Invest \$10 million in the HOME+ Program**

HOME+ is one of the few programs built around survivors' realities rather than system requirements. The free citywide initiative — created by the Council under Local Law 112 of 2022 and launched by ENDGBV in July 2024 — provides flexible funding grants, pendant alarm systems, and lock changes and repairs to help survivors of domestic violence stay safely in the homes and communities they choose. Crucially, it requires no documentation, no order of protection, and no clean credit or criminal history, and eligibility is unaffected by immigration status. For LGBTQ+ survivors, undocumented survivors, and others shut out of federally funded programs, it is often the only door open.

The program works. In its first year, 93.7% of survivors who were stably housed when they received a grant remained in their homes — for an average of \$2,055 per household, delivered within 19 days. Among survivors who were in a domestic violence shelter when they applied, nearly one in four moved into permanent housing. This is prevention at its most cost-effective: on average, family shelter costs the city close to \$100,000 per family per year; HOME+ costs a fraction of that.

But the program reaches only a fraction of those who need it. Of the 15,362 survivors who visited the city's Family Justice Centers in 2025, 2,988 sought housing help — yet HOME+ served just 426, constrained by a budget of \$1,125,000 and provider understaffing that slowed disbursement. The gap is one of resources, not need.

Full funding at \$10 million would change that. After staffing — four full-time staff per borough to clear the disbursement bottleneck — and an administrative set-aside, roughly \$7.9 million would go directly to grants, enough to reach approximately 3,845 survivor-led households. For many survivors, a single unpaid bill is all that stands between stability and the shelter system. HOME+ meets that moment quickly and on survivors' own terms. We urge the City to fund HOME+ at \$10 million in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget, and we refer the Committees to the coalition memo included as an addendum to this testimony.

## **Expand NYC 15/15 Supportive Housing for Single Survivors**

We urge the city to expand access to supportive housing, one of the most effective interventions for survivors with complex health and trauma needs. In 2024, the Adams administration included domestic violence survivors as an eligible population for NYC 15/15 — a hard-won victory. But the program remains limited to survivors in families, leaving single survivors behind. This gap falls hardest on those who most need it: LGBTQ+ survivors, trafficking survivors, and older adults make up roughly half of all NYC domestic violence hotline callers, yet rarely access shelter or permanent housing. The Mamdani administration should build on its predecessor's progress and expand NYC 15/15 eligibility to include single adult survivors.

We thank you for your unwavering support for survivors of domestic violence reaching safety in stable housing. Your partnership — and this hearing — signal that LGBTQ+ survivors of domestic violence are not invisible to this Council. That matters.



June 17, 2026

The Honorable Zohran Kwame Mamdani  
Mayor of the City of New York  
Office of the Mayor, City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

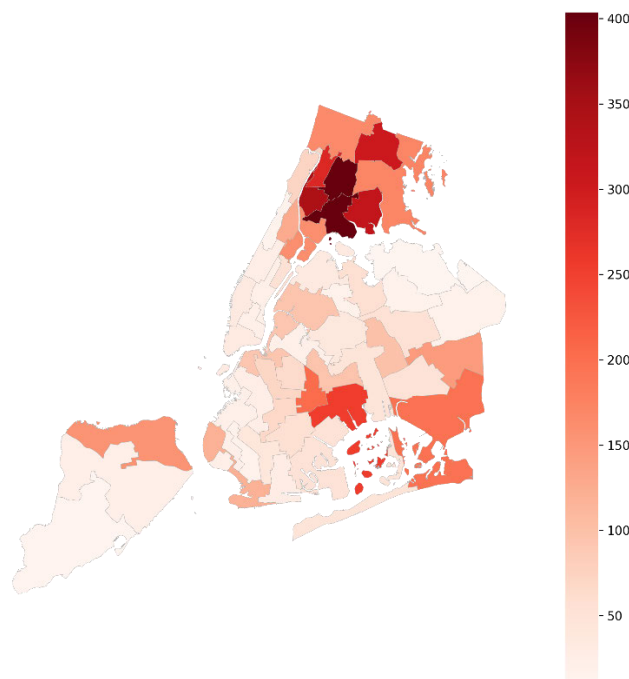
## Re: Emergency Housing Vouchers – Thousands at Risk of Homelessness

Dear Mayor Mamdani,

I write with urgent concern about the crisis now unfolding for thousands of vulnerable New Yorkers housed with NYCHA-administered Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs). I urge you to extend CityFHEPS eligibility to NYCHA EHV participants and fund it in the FY 2027 Budget. By creating a dedicated eligibility category, these households can seamlessly transition to CityFHEPS assistance without forcing anyone back into homelessness.

The federal EHV program, created in 2021, provides rental assistance to survivors of domestic violence, runaway and homeless youth, and other high-risk households. Although the program was originally funded through 2030, the Trump administration has announced that funding has run out, placing 50,000 households nationwide at risk of losing their homes. As the map shows, EHV households span every Council District.

*EHV Households by New York City Council District*



NYCHA administers 5,200 EHV — including 1,144 domestic violence survivors and 600 runaway and homeless youth. The only solution NYCHA has offered so far, applying to transfer within its portfolio, is not viable. Even where transfers are possible, they would uproot families from the communities they have built — for survivors, the very neighborhoods, schools, and support networks that anchored their lives after fleeing abuse. With limited units readily available — and [182,000 applicants](#) already waiting for public housing — many families will be evicted and forced into shelters, the streets, or, for domestic violence survivors, back into dangerous situations.

CityFHEPS is the obvious solution for NYCHA EHV households — but eligibility currently requires a DHS shelter history, which excludes many EHV participants, particularly domestic violence survivors and youth. Extending CityFHEPS eligibility to NYCHA EHV families and funding it in the FY 2027 Budget as part of the program’s larger expansion would allow these households to stay in the homes where they have rebuilt their lives, prevent further instability for EHV recipients, and maintain the income stream for the thousands of landlords renting to these tenants.

Thank you,

*Organizations:*

ACMH, Inc.	Homeless Services United	Voices of Women Organizing Project (VOW)
AHEART Inc.	Housing and Services, Inc.	Volunteers of America - Greater New York
Ali Forney Center	Incarcerated Nation Network	We Will Rise Consulting, LLC
Anthos Home	Justice Ministries Committee, Presbytery of NYC (PCUSA)	We Will Rise Community Empowerment, Inc.
Arab American Family Support Center	Legal Aid Society	West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing
Barrier Free Living	New Destiny Housing	Win
Borikua Power	New York Legal Assistance Group	Womankind
CAMBA, Inc.	Noble Second Chances	Women4Women
Chelsea Neighbors Against the War	NYSFAFH	
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC)	Restore NYC	
Clinton Management	Safe Horizon	
Coalition for the Homeless	Samaritan Daytop Village	
Democratic Socialist America	The Fortune Society	
Enterprise Community Partners	The Health & Housing Consortium	
Exodus Transitional Community	Unbroken Voices	
Garden of Hope	VOCAL-NY	

*Individuals:*

A.C.R.	Breonna Payne	Eva Wu
Abel Rivera	Carla Padilla	Falanni Raines
Adele Pham	Catherine Acosta	Fantasa Benjamin
Afroja Akhi	Catherine Dardani-salvia	Fathema Zohura
Aisha Aroob	Cathy Pennington	Finola Garner
Alashia Heyward Owens	Chanel Chunn-Crawford	Fiona Bell
Alba Laureano	Chanel Sharpe	Gabriela Sandoval Requena
Alex Johnson	Chanel Stokes	Gabriella lee
Alexus Donaldson	Chanelly Vidal	Garcia E
Allyson Ryan	Changni	Gary A Barnett
Alyah Qari	Chanyea Ridges	Genesis De la Cruz Santos
Amalia Romero	Cherie Fletcher	George Awde
Ambrosia John	Cherisse Thomas	Gina Cappuccitti
Ana de la Cruz	Clara Almonte	Gloria Brandman
Ana Lopez Coronel	Claudette Montgomery	Grecia Lopez
Ana Perez	Cristina Cabral	Hanane el wassi
Analiese Cruz	Cynthia Evelyn Solorzano Va	Hannah Collins
Andrea Reyes	Cynthia Solorzano Vasquez	Hinda Silverman
Angela de la Cruz Ynfante	D. Nash	Hiroko Aizawa
Anikka Wright	Daisy Graciano	I.F.
Aniya Hines	Danielle Coombs	Ian Pamerleau
Anjelica Maria Camacho	Danielle N Bibber	Ices Cash
Ann P Meredith	Dariana Blanco	Insik Vessia
Anna Deason	Deandre Poole	Ivy Mensah
Anonymous	Delores Nettles	J. Loza
Anonymous	Derek Brennan	J.M.
Antonio Diaz	Destiny Moura	Jacqueline Rosellini
Arelis Ramirez	Dilem Valenzuela	Jamillet Cuellar
Arlene Adams	Dilenia Ramirez	Janet Serrano
Ashley Rodriguez	Dina Rivera	Jasmine Lee
Asma Fazil	Diomaris Diaz de Thompson	Jason Roman
Azariah Laureano	Dominique Tyson	Jayda Esteva
Baouwendsom Ouedraogo	Elaine Rodriguez	Jenise Pineiro
Barbara DiTomasso	Elise Joyner	Jennifer Mendez
Basma Abouelenin	Elizel Perez	Jennifer Suarez Veras
Belva Flowe	Ellen Friedland	Jeritza Acevedo
Benazir Mohsin	Emelin Hernández	Jessie Marie Tirado
Benicia	Emily Sukhdeo	Jihane Serkhane
Benjamin Prickett	Erica Anglin	Jimmy Meagher
Bianca Lubbert	Erika Picone	Jin Hui Chen
Blake Baldeo	Ernest Ialongo	Jinqiu Cao
Bouchra Bader	Esther Fernandez	José G. Ramirez Restituyó

Jose Ramirez  
Josephine Witherspoon  
Juana Norales  
Juanna Huang  
Judith Vives  
Julia Scherb  
Julissa Ortiz  
K.C.  
Kadisha Davis  
Keicha Campusano  
Kerly Cindy Alava Reyes  
Keya Mcnair  
Khady Sy  
Kiana Mohansingh  
Kimberly Munoz  
Kristal Franklin  
Kristina Marie Stumpf  
Kristine Ingram  
Kykesha Gaskin  
LaDeamMa McMoore  
Lakendra Stanley  
Larrel Shaw  
Latasha Moore  
Leini N. Ramos  
Lexus Moorer  
Liessel Brito  
Lilian Mendez  
Linasia Weston  
Lisa Rinaudo  
Lisette Lazu  
Lisette Cruz  
Liya Robinson  
Lizabeth Bruno  
Lotachukwu Okonji-Rodriguez  
Luz Figueroa  
Madeline Rodriguez  
Magdalena Franco  
Malvina Palloj  
Manuela Alvarado  
Marcella Wiggan  
Margarita Vargas Cuevas  
Margeaux Gray  
Maria Cristina Castro  
Maria Franco

Maricell Rodriguez  
Marie Hall  
Maritza Fermin  
Maritza Rico  
Massiel Ogando  
Matías Gallegos Ruiz  
Meagan Mooney  
Megan Sanchez-Warner  
Meihua Zheng  
Melissa House  
Melissa Mejia-Dickerson  
Melissa Quirk  
Melissa Sanchez  
Melissa Santiago  
Mily Martínez  
Minerva Antonia Restituyo  
Minerva Restituyo  
Mitzy Katze  
Moniya Ware  
Myashia Williams  
N.B.  
Nadia Bunch  
Nataki Lewis  
Natalie Heras  
Natalie Martinez  
Neycida Pichardo Escoboza  
Nibria Diaz  
Nick Lundgren  
Nicole Alvarado  
Nicole Armstrong  
Nicole Balestire  
Nicole Branca  
Nicole Cohen  
Nicole Dos Santos  
Nicole S.  
Nicole White  
Nicole Yuan  
Nosheen Ara  
Nya Dunmore  
Nyalease Laureano  
Nylah Jerrick  
Olivia Cano  
Onyeka Obi  
Patricia Diaz

Princess Thomas  
Rachel Parthemer  
Rahima Kalkan  
Raine Reilly  
Ramona Marmolejos Abreu  
Raquel Baez  
Regina Pinto de Oliveira  
Robin Glover  
Rodney Boston  
Ron Luft  
Rosa Payero Batista  
Rosa Rodriguez-Gil  
Rosana Diaz  
Rose Castro Almonte  
Roselvis Roseman  
Roxanne Peart  
Ruth Salvatierra  
Sadele Willoughby  
Saki Kotani  
Samantha Mcfarlane  
Sandra Michael  
Sasha Gayle  
Savannah lasalle  
Shaday Nicolette Delgado  
Shahara Waller  
Shalonna Young  
Shama Aziz  
Shanelle lloyd  
Shannon Torres  
Sharike  
Sharon H  
Shauna morris  
Sherlana Chapman  
Sherry Mills  
Shirmin Akter  
Soyoung Park  
Stephanie Christie  
Stephanie Garcia  
Stephanie M.

Stephanie O'Keefe  
Sujeidy Ramirez de Urraca  
Susan Cappuccitti  
T F Gogan  
T.G.  
Tabinda Khan  
Talayasia Dupree Hardy  
Tamara Dennis  
Tania Erceg  
Tarajee Saleem-Little  
Tashan Woods  
Taslina Islam  
Tawana Ntuli  
Tayyaba Chaudhry  
Ted Houghton  
Thaiasia Johnson

Tiara Carter  
Tiffany Feliciano  
Tiffany Prather  
Timeeka Grant  
Topaz Williams  
Tyana Reid  
Tytiana Myers  
Tyzeir Spruill  
Uzair Syed  
Valentina Matias  
Vanessa Baez Flores  
Vanessa Duncan  
Veronica Batista  
Wilma Torres  
Viviana Collazo  
Waldina Diaz

Wildania Alcantara  
William Dickerson  
Wren Longno  
Xiuyun Pan  
Yahaira Rodriguez  
Yan Chen  
Yennelin Castillo  
Yenny Mata  
YiTing TsaiSoumahoro  
Yoruba Forde-Rhone  
Yuko Murase  
Yuqing Luo  
Zaahira Naeema Farrakhan  
Zeny Gatdula  
Zhane Travieso

**CC:**

Budget Director Sherif Soliman  
Deputy Mayor for Housing and Planning Leila Bozorg  
Deputy Mayor for Community Safety Renita Francois  
Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Helen Arteaga Landaverde  
Director of the Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants Cea Weaver



## **New York City Leaders Must Fund the HOME+ Program at \$10 Million and Help Domestic Violence Survivors Stay Safely Housed**

June 23, 2026

*Domestic violence is the leading cause of family homelessness in New York City; investing \$10 million in the HOME+ program will prevent homelessness for a fraction of the cost of shelter, while helping survivors remain safe.*

HOME+ helps survivors of domestic and gender-based violence stay safely in the homes and communities they choose. It is a free citywide initiative of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) that provides pendant alarm systems to summon help within the home when an abusive person threatens safety, lock changes and repairs for doors and windows, and flexible funding grants to help cover the expenses of maintaining or securing housing. Every participant is also connected to additional support — including case management and safety planning — through contracted community-based organizations.

It works: in the program's first year, [93.7% of survivors](#) who were stably housed when they received a grant remained in their homes. For an average of \$2,055 per household, delivered within 19 days, HOME+ reaches survivors at the moment of crisis and helps them stay safe rather than uprooted. We urge the Council and the Administration to fully fund this proven program at \$10 million in the FY 2027 Budget.

Full funding is both humane and fiscally responsible. When a survivor loses their housing, the city pays for shelter — on average this is close to [\\$100,000 per family per year](#) — while the survivor bears the far greater cost of upheaval and renewed danger. The HOME+ program prevents all of it for a fraction of the price.

HOME+ is built around survivors' realities. It requires no documentation, no order of protection, and no clean credit or criminal history, and eligibility is unaffected by immigration status. For survivors who are undocumented or shut out of federally funded programs, it is often the only door open — and it meets people in their own language.

The first-year results bear this out. Between July 2024 and June 2025, 426 survivors received grants totaling \$875,268.78. Most assistance went directly to keeping people housed: 36.8% for housing retention and shelter prevention, followed by food and necessities (19.4%) and safety and security (13.3%). Among survivors in a domestic violence shelter when they applied, nearly one in four moved into permanent housing.

HOME+ is delivered by four community-based providers serving all five boroughs, reaching survivors directly or through referrals from domestic violence organizations, district attorneys' offices, the NYC HOPE hotline, and Family Justice Centers:

- Violence Intervention Program (Bronx)
- HELP R.O.A.D.S. (Brooklyn)
- Rising Ground Paths to Healing (Manhattan & Queens)

- Seamen's Society for Children and Families (Staten Island)

So why does HOME+ reach so few of those who need it? It has never been funded to do more. At the average grant of \$2,055, the FY 2025 budget of \$1,125,000 could fund only about 550 grants — and because the program launched on a rolling basis during an ENDGBV staff transition, providers moved only \$875,268.78 of it, reaching just 426 survivors. ENDGBV's own report names the bottleneck: provider understaffing and turnover leave too few case managers for intakes, safety planning, and grant processing — so survivors in crisis wait. Meanwhile the need is vast: of the 15,362 survivors who visited the Family Justice Centers in 2025, 2,988 sought housing help.

Our request funds four full-time equivalent staff per borough — 20 across the five boroughs — so they can disburse grants at the speed safety demands. We can project that a \$10 million allocation would enable the city to meet the need by using the following formula:

*Average grant × [# of survivors who used housing services at FJCs in 2025 + # of households in the city's domestic violence shelter system in 2025] × 50% utilization rate*

This yields about \$7.9 million in grant need. Adding the four staff per borough (\$1,240,000) to clear the disbursement bottleneck, plus an administrative set-aside (\$861,000), brings the request to \$10 million — enough to reach roughly 3,845 survivor-led households at the program's average grant size.

<b>Average microgrant amount in 2025</b>	<b>\$2,055</b>
# of survivors who utilized housing services at FJCs in 2025	2,988
# of households in the city's domestic violence shelter system in 2025 <sup>4</sup>	4,701
Estimated utilization of 50% (reflecting the program's low-barrier eligibility and rising demand)	50%
<b>Estimated grant need</b>	<b>\$7,898,987</b>

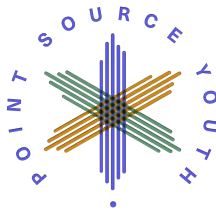
Together — \$7,900,000 for grants, \$1,240,000 for staffing, and \$861,000 for administration — this totals the \$10 million HOME+ needs to meet the need it was built for.

For many survivors, a single unpaid bill stands between safety and the shelter system. HOME+ meets that moment quickly, respects survivors' own judgment about what they need, and costs a fraction of the alternative.

We urge New York City leaders to allocate \$10 million to fully fund HOME+ in the FY 2027 Budget and help domestic violence survivors stay safely housed.

*Signees:*

New Destiny Housing  
 Rising Ground  
 Safe Horizon  
 Sanctuary for Families  
 Urban Resource Institute  
 Violence Intervention Program  
 Volunteers of America - Greater New York



## POINT SOURCE YOUTH

215 Park Avenue South, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10003 · [henry@pointsourceyouth.org](mailto:henry@pointsourceyouth.org)

Committee on General Welfare · NYC City Council  
Oversight — Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC

June 24, 2026

**Henry O. Love, PhD**

Director of Development & Growth, Point Source Youth

### I. WHO I AM — AND WHY I AM DONE FOLLOWING THE RULES AND WHY WE HAVE A PLAN

Chair Hudson, members of the Committee on General Welfare — thank you for this hearing.

My name is Dr. Henry Love, Director of Development & Growth at Point Source Youth — a national nonprofit dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness. We deploy direct cash assistance and wraparound support for young people on the edge of losing their housing, before they ever enter the shelter system. I am a queer Black man, a person living with HIV, and someone who has lost more people than I can count to the exact crisis this committee is here to address.

This week, as this city prepares to honor the anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, I want to be clear: the young people Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera sheltered and fought for in 1969 are the same young people we are fighting for right now.

I have done the decorum. I have earned the degrees. I have been polite. But today I am going to be honest — and I apologize if it makes you uncomfortable. That is the point. I am also here as living proof of what happens when support arrives in time. *At 21, I was housing unstable, with no safety net. What I needed — a floor, resources, someone who trusted me with dignity — is exactly what the Targeted Housing Assistance Program (THAP) provides. A one-time, targeted cash payment to prevent this tragedy. This testimony is for the ones who did not get that.*

**Point Source Youth recommends the NYC Council allocate \$4,775,000 in the FY27 NYC budget to sustain and expand THAP to protect 1,000 young persons from the violence of homelessness — and to establish it as a permanent baseline investment, not a one-time grant.**

### II. THE PEOPLE THIS SYSTEM FAILED

**Cordell Fowler. 2016. Funeral: Detroit.**

Cordell was my best friend — magnetic, brilliant, the kind of person who lit up every room. He dreamed of New York. Our last conversation was at the A Loft Hotel bar in Harlem. He was ready to start something new. But he was couch surfing. Surviving through sex work. Begging for help from agencies across state lines that turned him away.

[Cordell died in 2016](#). Do not call it a drug or vehicular death. His death is the result of the absence of public policy — no housing prevention, no mental health support, no floor. Peer-reviewed studies document that housing instability, survival sex work, substance use, and untreated mental health crises operate as interlocking syndemic conditions for young Black gay men — each one accelerating the others. When you deny someone help when they beg for it across state lines, you are not making a budget decision. You are choosing an outcome. Cordell was that outcome.

We do not need to stand-by as young people die. We know what to do. We have a plan.

**Dr. Devon Tyrone Wade. 2017. Funeral: Houston.**

Devon was my partner. My soulmate. He was from the Deep South, made it to Columbia University, and was one month away from completing his PhD. When I found out about Cordell's death, Devon carried me. When I received my HIV diagnosis weeks later, Devon carried me through that too. And then he was gone.

[Devon was killed in 2017 in a domestic violence incident](#). The person who took his life was housing unstable with untreated mental illness. Research is unambiguous: anti-Black racism, housing instability, mental health crises, and intimate partner violence operate simultaneously, each making the others worse. Devon's death was the outcome of a system that left two people without the support they needed. Housing instability does not just kill the people living it. It radiates outward. It took Devon from me.

Frank — Arkansas. James — Virginia. Jeremy and Delano — Detroit. People I saw every Thursday at Trappy Hour in Harlem. Beautiful, brilliant people you would walk past and never suspect were homeless, couch surfing, one crisis from disappearing. That is not a metaphor. That is a body count.

And every death has a policy explanation.

And a policy solution. We can prevent these crises before they happen—with a targeted one-time cash payment.

### **III. WHAT THE DATA SAYS — AND WHY THAP IS THE ANSWER**

THAP Prevents Homelessness  
THAP Creates Housing Stability

The deaths I have described are not outliers. LGBTQ+ youth make up 40% of all homeless youth despite being just 9.5% of the population. Those who experience housing instability have 3.7 times higher odds of attempting suicide than stably housed peers — and 45% of LGBTQ+ homeless youth have attempted suicide at least once. Depression rates reach 70%. 24% are victims of sex trafficking. Up to 20% of homeless youth in NYC are living with HIV. Nearly 75% of transgender youth experience periods of homelessness with dramatically elevated HIV risk.

This is why THAP is different. When a young person is couch surfing or in survival mode, they cannot access PrEP. They cannot maintain HIV treatment adherence. They cannot keep appointments. THAP's one-time cash assistance prevents homelessness and creates the stability that makes all of that possible. It is the only program of its kind in this city, evaluated by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health across seven states, with results that are clear

**In New York City — at The Door and Henry Street Settlement:**

- [98% of NYC THAP participants had no contact with the homelessness system at six months \(HMIS administrative data\)](#)

- **83% BIPOC / 40% LGBTQ+ participant demographics — this program is serving Cordell’s community**
  - **\$3,700 average one-time investment — vs. \$80,000+ per year in NYC shelter**
  - **39% decrease in substance use among cash recipients — because stability reduces the conditions that drive use**

*“We really thought we were gonna lose the apartment we had, but it gave us a three-month window to find work. It showed us that there are kind people out there that do want to help.” — THAP participant, [The Imprint, June 2026](#)*

NYC’s own Trust Youth Initiative found that 30 months in, only 8% of cash recipients reported recent homelessness — versus 25% not receiving cash. Seven states. Hundreds of youth. Consistent outcomes. A proven model, operating in your city, with your data, serving your constituents.

#### **IV. WHAT THE NYC COUNCIL CAN DO**

Cordell Fowler’s obituary is on this table. Dr. Devon Tyrone Wade’s obituary is on this table. Devon carried me through Cordell’s death and my HIV diagnosis. And then he was gone — one month from the finish line, taken by the same cascade of untreated need that this city has the tools to interrupt and chooses not to fund.

**Devon loved James Baldwin. Baldwin wrote: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” This committee has the power to face it. To fund it. To change it. And this hearing, this pride month, is the time to do it.**

Frank. James. Jeremy. Delano. The people at Trappy Hour every Thursday at Harlem Nights. The young people arriving in this city right now from the Deep South, from Detroit, from Houston — looking for a city that would let them be their whole selves, unapologetically. The young people who grew up here and no longer have a safe place to all home. A floor. One ounce of humanity in a world that has told them they deserve less than nothing.

**Point Source Youth recommends the NYC Council allocate \$4,775,000 in the FY27 NYC budget to sustain and expand THAP — and to establish it as a permanent baseline investment, not a one-time grant.**

The Council has the opportunity to enact Pride in Policy — to ensure the budget reflects the values on our flags. Flags can only do so much.

**Thank you.**

#### **KEY SOURCES & LINKS**

[JHU/UPenn 7-State THAP Evaluation \(Full Report\)](#)

[PSY: How Youth Spent the Money](#)

[Watch: THAP in Action](#)

[The Imprint: One-Time Cash Infusions \(June 2026\)](#)

[Trevor Project: LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness & Suicide Risk](#)

[PMC: Violence Syndemic Among Young Black Sexual Minority Men](#)

[PMC: Substance Use, IPV & HIV Among Young Black MSM](#)

[PubMed: PTSD Among Black & Latino MSM in NYC](#)

National Network for Youth: LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness  
NYC Trust Youth Initiative — Chapin Hall / Point Source Youth  
[pointsourceyouth.org](http://pointsourceyouth.org)

# POINT SOURCE YOUTH

## Key Sources & Links

Scan any QR code to access the full source · [pointsourceyouth.org](https://pointsourceyouth.org)



**JHU/UPenn 7-State THAP Evaluation**  
Full Report — Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health



**PSY: How Youth Spent the Money**  
7-State THAP Program Update — [pointsourceyouth.org](https://pointsourceyouth.org)



**Watch: THAP in Action**  
Video — YouTube



**The Imprint: One-Time Cash Infusions**  
June 2026 — [imprintnews.org](https://imprintnews.org)



**Trevor Project: LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness & Suicide Risk**  
Research Brief — [thetrevorproject.org](https://thetrevorproject.org)



**Violence Syndemic Among Young Black Sexual Minority Men**  
PMC — [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) · PMC5552245



**Substance Use, IPV & HIV Among Young Black MSM**  
PMC — [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) · PMC6195630



**PTSD Among Black & Latino MSM in NYC**  
PubMed — [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) · 23636991



**National Network for Youth: LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness**  
[nn4youth.org](https://nn4youth.org)



**NYC Trust Youth Initiative**  
Chapin Hall / Point Source Youth — [chapinhall.org](https://chapinhall.org)



**Point Source Youth**  
[pointsourceyouth.org](https://pointsourceyouth.org)



## NYC Council Brief · FY27 Budget

Targeted Housing Assistance Program (THAP) · Point Source Youth · [pointsourceyouth.org](http://pointsourceyouth.org)  
**\$4,775,000 FY27 Ask · June 24, 2026 LGBTQ+ Youth Hearing**

### WHY NOW — THE CASE FOR THAP IN FY27

Washington has cut \$2.67B in LGBTQ+ programs. NYC's shelter system turned away 1,386 youth in FY25 — the highest on record. Only 116 LGBTQ+-specific shelter beds exist citywide. THAP's \$3,700 one-time payment keeps young people housed before crisis hits — at a fraction of the \$80,000+/year cost to shelter them. 98% of NYC participants avoided the homelessness system at 6 months. FY27 is the moment to act.

### ABOUT POINT SOURCE YOUTH

Point Source Youth is a national nonprofit ending youth homelessness by placing resources directly in young people's hands — advancing data-backed, community-rooted solutions across 7+ states.

- Youth Choice
- Dignity
- Community Power

### WHAT IS THAP?

THAP provides a one-time direct cash payment to young adults facing an imminent housing crisis — before they enter the shelter system. Youth-directed. No red tape. 48-hour turnaround. Average payment: \$3,700.

### NYC PILOT RESULTS (2024–2025)

- 98%** of NYC participants avoided the homelessness system at 6 months
- \$3,700** average one-time THAP payment per young person
- \$80,000+** average annual cost per person in the NYC shelter system
- 2 sites** Henry Street Settlement & The Door (NYC)

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS



**Ky'ree Taylor**  
New York City

*"We were praising God. I'm never doubting God again."*



**Alia Taylor**  
New York City

*"Freeing to receive help without being questioned."*



**Kolby Riser**  
Georgia

*"I knew what my goal was."*

### WHY CASH WORKS: EVIDENCE FROM JOHNS HOPKINS & UPENN

Young people know what they need — and the data proves it. A 7-state evaluation by researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the University of Pennsylvania found that 92.8% of THAP participants avoided the homelessness system at 6 months. In NYC specifically, participants spent funds on rent arrears, security deposits, and utilities. 39% reported decreased alcohol and drug use. Zero evidence of misuse across all 7 states.

### THE SHELTER SYSTEM IS FAILING YOUTH

**FY24: 1,361** youth denied shelter beds (DYCD LL79 Reports)  
**FY25: 1,386** youth denied — highest on record, still climbing  
Only 116 LGBTQ+-specific shelter beds exist citywide. Federal cuts eliminated HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program, defunded the 988 LGBTQ+ Youth Suicide Lifeline, and removed the Pride flag from Stonewall. NYC cannot wait.

### THE ASK

- 1. Champion THAP in the FY27 Budget**  
Support \$4,775,000 in NYC Council allocation for THAP expansion. Every vote before the June 24 hearing matters.
- 2. Attend the June 24 LGBTQ+ Youth Hearing**  
Show up for LGBTQ+ youth and young people with nowhere else to turn. Coalition testimony is ready.

### A LEGACY WE OWE

Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera founded S.T.A.R. House in 1970 — the first trans-led youth shelter in America. S.T.A.R. House was the original THAP. The city is 54 years late. FY27 is how we answer.

### SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA

Point at any code below to open the link — no app needed

[pointsourceyouth.org](http://pointsourceyouth.org)  
PSY's Website



CBS News

Watch: Cash Transfers Work



The Guardian

Read the Research



JHU / UPenn Report

Full 7-State Evaluation



# National Cash Assistance Program Prevents Youth Homelessness



## Report Finds Youth Stayed Housed 6 Months After Intervention

### Results Overview

New findings reinforce that a one-time direct cash payment stabilized housing for youth at imminent risk of homelessness. Johns Hopkins School of Public Health researchers found that a 7-state Targeted Housing Assistance Program (THAP) pilot helped youth secure housing 1, 3, and 6 months after receiving the cash. **90% of recipients who completed a follow-up survey reported being stably housed one month after receiving the cash.** Additionally, Homelessness Management Information System data also show that **98% of participants had not accessed the shelter system within 3 months of THAP, and 92% had not accessed it within 6 months.**<sup>1</sup>

### Program Overview

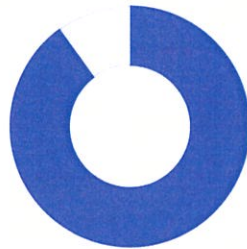
Point Source Youth's Targeted Housing Assistance Program (THAP) is a youth-centered intervention designed to prevent youth homelessness by providing an immediate, flexible, one-time cash payment paired with a youth-driven housing plan. Across sites in Arizona, California, Georgia, Michigan, New York, Oregon and Texas, THAP reached **345 youth households**, supporting **623 people total** (including dependents and household members) between May 2024 and May 2025. Each household received an average of \$3700 or \$2048 per person. **83% of participants were BIPOC and more than half were Black or African American** (including 7% who identified as Afro-Latine/x).

THAP is modeled after Washington State's Homelessness Prevention and Diversion Fund (HPDF), which has reported strong housing outcomes at 12 months.

### 7-State Key Results

345

youth households served



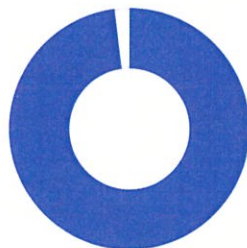
90% stably housed at 1 month (among participants reached for follow-up)



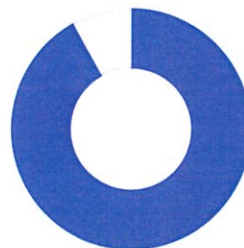
52% of funds budgeted for housing, relocation & utilities

623

total people impacted (including household members/dependents)



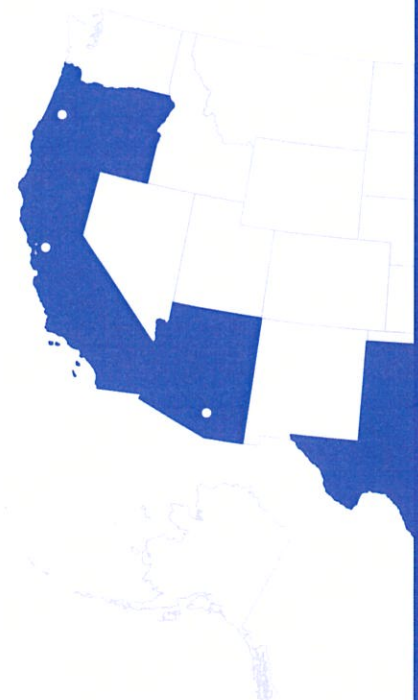
98% stayed out of the homelessness system at 3 months



92% stayed out of the homelessness system at 6 months

\$3.7k

average cost per household (or \$2,048 per person)





## 3 Takeaways

### Housing stability improved quickly

At one month, 90% of recipients who completed a follow-up survey reported being stably housed for an average cost of \$3,700 per household.

### Administrative data show sustained prevention of shelter entry

The HMIS shelter system data suggest THAP may help prevent deeper involvement with the homelessness system during a period when young people are typically most vulnerable to spiraling into chronic instability.

### Qualitative feedback reinforces the data

Interviews with recipients and providers highlight a strong program design, gains in housing stability, and clear demand to scale the program.



“Trust young adults. We all know what is better for us. And having that support, it’s really life changing.”

**Valeria Mendoza**, Arizona



“It was very freeing to receive help without being questioned, just being given grace, kindness, trust was a breath of fresh air. I’ve never seen something like this. I didn’t even know it was possible.”

**Alia Rosa Pasqual Taylor**, New York



“This program worked well for me because I knew what my goal was. I knew what my issue was. knew why I really needed this money.”

**Kolby Riser**, Georgia

### Looking Ahead: Implications for Scale

Taken together, the 1-month outcomes, 3- and 6-month homelessness system records, and qualitative insights show THAP is a fast, youth-centered, cost-saving intervention that prevents housing crises before they become homelessness—and we’re not waiting to act: expansion is already underway in California, New York, Michigan, and Oregon, with new launches in motion in Hawai’i, Maine, Maryland, North Carolina, and Oklahoma.

<sup>1</sup> In New York, Henry Street Settlement received 90- and 180-day Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter data, while comparable data were not available for The Door. For both providers, the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) compiled homelessness-services engagement data and shared aggregate 90- and 180-day percentages with the providers and study team.



## **Targeted Housing Assistance Program: Proposal to Prevent Youth Homelessness in NYC**

### **Program Overview**

Point Source Youth (PSY) is a national nonprofit working to prevent and end youth homelessness. In New York City, roughly 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+ — most forced out by family rejection. Nationally, LGBTQ+ youth are more than twice as likely to experience homelessness as their peers, and Black and Brown young people are most overrepresented in that number.

Data from PSY's most recent pilot programs across 7 states shows that 92% of youth remained stably housed six-months after receiving one-time direct cash assistance. *The pilot also reached young people from demographics that are most impacted by housing instability: 83% of participants identified as BIPOC and 40% identified as LGBTQ+.* Each PSY participant completes a housing action plan designed to stabilize their housing and prevent entry into the homelessness system.

Targeted Housing Assistance Program (THAP) is also a cost-saving alternative to relying primarily on emergency shelters and transitional housing after a crisis has already occurred. THAP is designed to prevent youth from entering that pipeline in the first place—reducing both cyclical harm to youth and avoiding the public costs of sheltering youth.

### **THAP Expansion Proposal for New York City**

As New York City celebrates Pride, THAP is the policy that matches the promise: for every dollar invested, it returns more than \$14 in avoided public costs — a fiscally responsible, morally necessary alternative to crisis-driven shelter spending. PSY proposes expanding the NYC Council's Guaranteed Income Program Initiative by \$4.775M to support a new one-time direct payment program that would help 1,000 youth annually avoid homelessness. Outreach and enrollment of youth in PSY's THAP would be facilitated by the 6 CBOs operating the DYCD affiliated runaway and homeless youth drop-in centers throughout the 5 boroughs, which service over 26,000 youth per year. PSY will also be able to leverage NYC Council funding to secure additional foundational support for this program, for which Trinity Wall Street has already pledged partial matching funds.

Based on statewide data, 41% of runaway & homeless youth enter shelter directly after living in a family, guardian, or friend's home, which indicates a population that would benefit directly from THAP. Additionally, NYC currently spends roughly \$81,000 to house each homeless individual per year. Taking into account PSY's average shelter avoidance rate of 91%, this program would save NYC \$6,920,000 for every 100 youth served, based on an average one time payment amount of \$3,700.

\$3.7M of the program's budget would be used to provide \$3,700 one-time payments to 1,000 youth in NYC. An additional \$1,075,000 would be used to support operational, training, and implementation efforts through Point Source Youth and Henry Street Settlement; as well as DYCD's Borough-Based Runaway & Homeless Youth Drop-In Centers which include Ali Forney Center, The Door, Safe Horizon, SCO Family of Services, Rising Ground, and Project Hospitality.

Rising Ground, Inc. Written Testimony of Nancy Hruska, Government Affairs Liaison  
Submitted to: Committee on General Welfare  
jointly with the Committee on Women and Gender Equity  
Wednesday, June 24, 2026

On behalf of Rising Ground, Inc., thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for the oversight hearing of the Committee on General Welfare jointly with the Committee on Women and Gender Equity held on Wednesday June 24, 2026.

Founded in 1831 as the Leake and Watts Orphan House, Rising Ground has been at the forefront of evolving community needs for almost two centuries, growing into a respected and wide-reaching human services leader recognized for the quality of its services and its results-focused and evidence-based practices. Today, nearly 2,000 dedicated staff members support over 30,000 children, youth, and families across more than 100 sites in New York City. Our programs focus on the core areas of child welfare, early childhood education, developmental disabilities services, juvenile justice services, runaway and homeless youth, mental health clinical services and intimate partner violence prevention.

We offer today's testimony in the role of one of the four community-based providers who deliver services and supports to survivors of intimate partner and gender based violence through the Home+ program. And the request to include an additional \$10 million to the fiscal year 27 budget for the Home+ Program.

Funded through the Mayor's Office to End Gender Based Violence (ENDGBV), Rising Ground supports survivors of intimate partner and gender-based violence across Manhattan and Queens with a focus of increasing housing security and stability, and safety planning. We support this vulnerable population by offering trauma-informed, cultural-responsive care, resource referrals and case management supports for survivors to remain safely in their homes or acquire housing stability. Through flexible funding to clients, we provide concrete supports and prioritize the holistic well-being of survivors as they navigate the nuanced challenges faced by this diverse and vulnerable population; finding a haven for stabilization and support on their journey toward healing. The Home+ program provides critical in-home safety interventions and financial stabilization services that allow survivors to remain safely housed. Rather than requiring survivors to relocate to emergency shelter, the program strengthens safety within their existing homes whenever possible.

Through the decades of experience working with IPV survivors and their families, we are keenly aware that if basic needs are not being met, a person often cannot focus on their longer-term mental health needs and healing. Personal safety must be immediately assessed and addressed for a survivor to begin their journey. Our Home+ program focuses on assisting survivors and their families to remain safely in their homes or identify and build a stable home environment. This could include mechanical, tangible support, such as lock changes and alarm systems, and/or connection to longer-term psychosocial assistance to understand how current behaviors create unsafe situations and environments.

In response to the growing need for housing-related services, Rising Ground launched the Home+ program in Manhattan when it was introduced by ENDGBV in 2020. Since its inception, we have successfully distributed flexible funding, provided housing stabilization services, and supported survivors in securing safe and stable living arrangements. Our expertise in administering financial assistance programs ensures that survivors receive timely, transparent, and client-directed economic support, addressing critical needs such as rental assistance, utility payments, home security improvements, and emergency relocation.

With the individual respect each survivor deserves, we conduct an intake interview to discern the circumstances that created the unsafe environment and assess what immediate, short-term and longer term supports are needed to change the conditions and bring the family to a safe and healing place. Our staff are trained to discuss and collaborate with individuals and families to offer resources and link to appropriate support without judgement or bias. We identify concrete steps to address the concerns, including on-going services.

Beyond safety planning, we integrate psychoeducation workshops to help clients recognize trauma symptoms and understand the profound impact of trauma on their health and well-being. These workshops, coupled with expedited referrals to other Rising Ground programs and community-based resources, are tailored to remove engagement barriers and foster trust. When assisting clients in finding appropriate service providers, we consider their preferences for location, accessibility to virtual or in-person services, scheduling convenience, and other factors that make participation feasible and comfortable. We offer to make initial appointments or register clients for services directly, creating a seamless pathway for connection. Utilizing interdepartmental collaboration, we draw upon internal resources and community partnerships to address the holistic needs of survivors and their families, ensuring they feel supported every step of the way.

The Home+ program, like our other Paths to Healing initiatives for survivors, is built on recovery- and resilience-oriented values. Guided by a harm reduction philosophy, we meet clients where they are and work with their existing coping strategies, provided these strategies do not significantly threaten their safety. This approach recognizes that progress often involves incremental steps, and it emphasizes reducing risk while respecting clients' autonomy. By focusing on concrete needs, fostering connection, and supporting safety, we create a foundation that allows survivors to move toward stability while feeling treated with dignity, respect, and compassion. Through our interactions with families and community leaders, we have been able to identify immediate needs and appropriate responses. We offer a safe and friendly oasis for struggling families; providing access to services to build the foundation for continued and long-range success.

In Fiscal Year 2026, through our ENDGBV contract, Rising Ground Home+ program served approximately 865 survivors and family members across Manhattan and Queens. An additional 435 survivors were supported through City Council discretionary funding that supported flexible financial assistance to address rent arrears, utilities, transportation, groceries, and other urgent stabilization costs that directly impact a survivor's ability to remain safely housed. The program also coordinates and funds lock changes, door and window repairs, and other security upgrades to reduce immediate safety risks. This additional Council funding demonstrates the need for additional baseline funding in the ENDGBV contracts.

The need is great – Citywide, of the 15,362 survivors who visited the Family Justice Centers in 2025, 2,988 sought housing help. Current funding doesn't meet the need. We are urging City Council to increase the ENDGBV funding for Home+ program by \$10 million within fiscal year 2027. For an average of \$2,055 per household, delivered within 19 days, HOME+ reaches survivors at the moment of crisis and helps them stay safe rather than uprooted.

Full funding is both humane and fiscally responsible. When a survivor loses their housing, the city pays for shelter — on average this is close to \$100,000 per family per year — while the survivor bears the far greater cost of upheaval and renewed danger. The HOME+ program prevents all of it for a fraction of the price. **The request to \$10 million will be enough to reach roughly 3,845 survivor-led households at the program's average grant size.**

The requested \$10 million would pay adding the four staff per borough (\$1,240,000) to clear the bottleneck, plus an administrative set-aside (\$861,000), to manage the grants of 3,845 survivor-led households with the average \$2,055 grant size (\$7,900,000).

This additional funding helps to address the demand for Flexible Financial Assistance which continues to exceed available funding. Throughout the year, we received a significant number of requests from survivors seeking support with rent arrears to remain safely housed after leaving abusive situations. Due to the high volume of requests and limited funding, Home+ was required to reduce the maximum amount of Flexible Funding available per household in order to assist as many survivors as possible. While this allowed us to extend support to more families, it often meant we could not fully meet survivors' immediate financial needs, particularly for those requiring assistance with two or more months of rent to prevent eviction.

Furthermore, the Home+ program strengthens community safety and stability by preventing homelessness and displacement, reducing repeat violence, and promoting economic security. By providing tangible safety upgrades and flexible funding, survivors are able to remain safely housed with their children and families. This approach reduces reliance on emergency shelter systems and strengthens neighborhood stability by allowing survivors to maintain connections to schools, employment, healthcare providers, and community supports. The program contributes to long-term healing and independence while enhancing overall public safety.

For many survivors, a single unpaid bill stands between safety and the shelter system. HOME+ meets that moment quickly, respects survivors' own judgment about what they need, and costs a fraction of the alternative.

We urge New York City leaders to allocate \$10 million to fully fund HOME+ in the FY 2027 Budget and help domestic violence survivors stay safely housed.

###

Rising Ground is a leading nonprofit human services organization providing children, adults, and families in the greater New York City area with the resources and skills needed to rise above adversity and positively direct their lives.



## **New York City Leaders Must Fund the HOME+ Program at \$10 Million and Help Domestic Violence Survivors Stay Safely Housed**

June 23, 2026

*Domestic violence is the leading cause of family homelessness in New York City; investing \$10 million in the HOME+ program will prevent homelessness for a fraction of the cost of shelter, while helping survivors remain safe.*

HOME+ helps survivors of domestic and gender-based violence stay safely in the homes and communities they choose. It is a free citywide initiative of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) that provides pendant alarm systems to summon help within the home when an abusive person threatens safety, lock changes and repairs for doors and windows, and flexible funding grants to help cover the expenses of maintaining or securing housing. Every participant is also connected to additional support — including case management and safety planning — through contracted community-based organizations.

It works: in the program's first year, [93.7% of survivors](#) who were stably housed when they received a grant remained in their homes. For an average of \$2,055 per household, delivered within 19 days, HOME+ reaches survivors at the moment of crisis and helps them stay safe rather than uprooted. We urge the Council and the Administration to fully fund this proven program at \$10 million in the FY 2027 Budget.

Full funding is both humane and fiscally responsible. When a survivor loses their housing, the city pays for shelter — on average this is close to [\\$100,000 per family per year](#) — while the survivor bears the far greater cost of upheaval and renewed danger. The HOME+ program prevents all of it for a fraction of the price.

HOME+ is built around survivors' realities. It requires no documentation, no order of protection, and no clean credit or criminal history, and eligibility is unaffected by immigration status. For survivors who are undocumented or shut out of federally funded programs, it is often the only door open — and it meets people in their own language.

The first-year results bear this out. Between July 2024 and June 2025, 426 survivors received grants totaling \$875,268.78. Most assistance went directly to keeping people housed: 36.8% for housing retention and shelter prevention, followed by food and necessities (19.4%) and safety and security (13.3%). Among survivors in a domestic violence shelter when they applied, nearly one in four moved into permanent housing.

HOME+ is delivered by four community-based providers serving all five boroughs, reaching survivors directly or through referrals from domestic violence organizations, district attorneys' offices, the NYC HOPE hotline, and Family Justice Centers:

- Violence Intervention Program (Bronx)
- HELP R.O.A.D.S. (Brooklyn)
- Rising Ground Paths to Healing (Manhattan & Queens)

- Seamen's Society for Children and Families (Staten Island)

So why does HOME+ reach so few of those who need it? It has never been funded to do more. At the average grant of \$2,055, the FY 2025 budget of \$1,125,000 could fund only about 550 grants — and because the program launched on a rolling basis during an ENDGBV staff transition, providers moved only \$875,268.78 of it, reaching just 426 survivors. ENDGBV's own report names the bottleneck: provider understaffing and turnover leave too few case managers for intakes, safety planning, and grant processing — so survivors in crisis wait. Meanwhile the need is vast: of the 15,362 survivors who visited the Family Justice Centers in 2025, 2,988 sought housing help.

Our request funds four full-time equivalent staff per borough — 20 across the five boroughs — so they can disburse grants at the speed safety demands. We can project that a \$10 million allocation would enable the city to meet the need by using the following formula:

*Average grant × [# of survivors who used housing services at FJCs in 2025 + # of households in the city's domestic violence shelter system in 2025] × 50% utilization rate*

This yields about \$7.9 million in grant need. Adding the four staff per borough (\$1,240,000) to clear the disbursement bottleneck, plus an administrative set-aside (\$861,000), brings the request to \$10 million — enough to reach roughly 3,845 survivor-led households at the program's average grant size.

<b>Average microgrant amount in 2025</b>	<b>\$2,055</b>
# of survivors who utilized housing services at FJCs in 2025	2,988
# of households in the city's domestic violence shelter system in 2025 <sup>4</sup>	4,701
Estimated utilization of 50% (reflecting the program's low-barrier eligibility and rising demand)	50%
<b>Estimated grant need</b>	<b>\$7,898,987</b>

Together — \$7,900,000 for grants, \$1,240,000 for staffing, and \$861,000 for administration — this totals the \$10 million HOME+ needs to meet the need it was built for.

For many survivors, a single unpaid bill stands between safety and the shelter system. HOME+ meets that moment quickly, respects survivors' own judgment about what they need, and costs a fraction of the alternative.

We urge New York City leaders to allocate \$10 million to fully fund HOME+ in the FY 2027 Budget and help domestic violence survivors stay safely housed.

*Signees:*

New Destiny Housing  
 Rising Ground  
 Safe Horizon  
 Sanctuary for Families  
 Urban Resource Institute  
 Violence Intervention Program  
 Volunteers of America - Greater New York



June 24, 2026

New York City Council

Committee on General Welfare  
Hon. Crystal Hudson, Chair

Committee on Women and Gender Equity  
Hon. Amanda Farías, Chair

**Testimony of Jimmy Meagher, Senior Policy Director  
Safe Horizon**

**On Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Jimmy Meagher, and I am Senior Policy Director at Safe Horizon, the nation's largest non-profit victim assistance organization. Every year, 250,000 people seek safety through our services. Our mission is to stand with those who have experienced violence, abuse, and exploitation. We offer unwavering support and advocate for systemic change. We envision a world where safety is a universal human right. And to the New Yorkers we serve, housing *is* safety.

Safe, stable, affordable housing consistently remains the number one need among survivors we serve across all programs. Housing is a key foundation for safety and healing and for a safer city. That is why New Yorkers need a fully funded and fully implemented CityFHEPS voucher program.

Safe Horizon supports LGBTQ+ New Yorkers across all our programs, but I'd like to highlight Safe Horizon's Streetwork Project, which provides shelter, showers, hot meals, therapy, service linkage, safer sex supports, case management, and so much more, in a therapeutic harm reduction community serving homeless youth ages 13 to 25. We work with homeless and street-involved young people, many of whom identify as LGBTQ+, to help them find safety and stability. Many homeless young people face a day-to-day struggle to survive, which can lead to physical and emotional harm. Homeless youth may have experienced family abuse, violence, rejection, and instability that led to their homelessness. We welcome these young people, help them navigate complex systems, connect them to community, and provide essential resources at our drop-in centers, at our overnight shelter, and through our street outreach teams. The number one need of the young people we serve at Streetwork is safe, stable, affordable housing.

DYCD clients have always been excluded from city housing resources – LINC, CityFHEPS, NYCHA priority, homeless set-aside units, etc. - and this solvable problem continues. Precisely because homeless youth are excluded from housing resources, they will likely be disproportionately harmed by the end of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program. They need CityFHEPS.



## CityFHEPS and City Investments in Housing

Right now, thousands of New Yorkers, including survivors of domestic violence and formerly homeless youth, are about to lose their homes as a result of the Trump Administration prematurely ending the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program.

During the pandemic, New York City helped thousands of New Yorkers access safe, stable, affordable housing through EHV. Streetwork was able to assist hundreds of homeless youth access vouchers. And survivors of domestic and gender-based violence were able to apply through community-based partners (like Safe Horizon) and domestic violence shelters. Partnering with the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender Based Violence (ENDGBV), Safe Horizon's Criminal Court Programs, Crime Victim Assistance Program (CVAP), and Manhattan Family Justice Center assisted about 400 survivors with EHV.

For most of our Streetwork clients, this was the first opportunity in their life to access stable housing. Ten years ago, Mayor de Blasio promised homeless youth that they would soon have access to LINC vouchers, which is now CityFHEPS. Although the Council has passed multiple bills to extend access to CityFHEPS vouchers to RHY in DYCD programs, Mayors de Blasio, Adams, and now Mayor Mamdani have fought this expansion. Since that initial broken promise in 2016, 11,344 young people have been discharged from youth shelters into ongoing homelessness because the city offers them no pathways out of homelessness. And those are just the homeless youth who were able to access youth shelters. While continuing to fight for CityFHEPS, our programs were able to connect hundreds of homeless youth to EHV during the pandemic.

Receiving a housing voucher literally changed their lives. Since EHV began, our clients have worked hard to take advantage of this rare opportunity and have been successfully housed for several years now. Once housed, they were able to begin to find stability and put down roots in their communities. These young people have been able to go back to school, find and maintain stable employment, and even find better job opportunities, grow their families and build healthy relationships, improve their physical and mental health, and become involved in their neighborhood communities. For those young people with children, their children have also found stability and community. For survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, they were able to find safety and sleep well at night, sometimes for the first time in years. Many have been able to put down roots, build community, build family, ensure stability for their children, go to school, and find employment. A safe home allows for a survivor to accomplish so much and rebuild their life.

The end of EHV is crushing. **Homelessness is trauma, and cycling in and out of homelessness is retraumatizing.** Homeless and formerly homeless young people have already experienced significant trauma, which lead to them being homeless as young adults. Now our government is failing them. A significant number of them will lose everything and return to homelessness. We are needlessly and carelessly retraumatizing them. There are also many survivors who may choose to go back to an abusive partner rather than face homelessness with their children. Domestic violence is a leading driver of family homelessness in New York City, and our City government must ensure that no survivor is left behind.



NYCHA's current “plan” will not help the majority of the young people and survivors we helped with EHV. First, the number of EHV households vastly outnumbers the number of available NYCHA apartments. Second, NYCHA famously does not have very many studio apartments, and the overwhelming majority of DYCD EHV households are single individuals who only qualify for studio apartments in NYCHA housing. Third, we are talking about young people and survivors who have finally put down roots, found community, and rebuilt their lives. Even if they receive their one NYCHA apartment offer, having to relocate and start over may not be the safest option for them. Lastly, we help hundreds of DV survivors each year apply for NYCHA as N-1 priority (Victim of Domestic Violence) or for a NYCHA emergency housing transfer as a Victim of Domestic Violence (VDV) or Intimidated Victim (IV). We fear that NYCHA’s stopgap plan for EHV is only going to force survivors already on waitlists to wait that much longer.

With EHV ending, survivors and formerly homeless youth need our City government to ensure that they aren't forced again into dangerous, unsafe situations. We implore Mayor Mamdani and the City Council to extend CityFHEPS eligibility to NYCHA EHV households and fund it in the FY 2027 Budget as part of the larger expansion of CityFHEPS, allowing survivors and formerly homeless youth to stay in the homes where they have rebuilt their lives and begun to heal.

Some EHV households are already being pushed out of their housing and returning to homelessness because their landlords know the program is ending and are not renewing their leases. The timing here is urgent.

Our clients need CityFHEPS so they have the option of staying in the homes that they have worked so hard to build and to help mitigate the inevitable harm that will last for decades due to the sudden defunding of this federal Emergency Housing Voucher program. We still hear from landlords that they do not want to rent to voucher holders because they felt the repercussions of the Advantage voucher abruptly ending due to the failures of our state and city governments 15 years ago.

Housing is a key foundation for safety and healing and for a safer city. That is why New Yorkers need a fully funded and fully implemented CityFHEPS voucher program. CityFHEPS has already been essential to connecting New Yorkers to a pathway out of homelessness - especially New Yorkers that have no other options, like RHY. It would be unconscionable for this Administration to turn its back on the very New Yorkers that need help the most. We urge Mayor Mamdani and the City Council to fully fund the CityFHEPS expansion, extend eligibility to EHV households, and end the cycle of homelessness that plagues New York City.

### **Home+ and Survivor Microgrants**

HOME+, like CityFHEPS, is a key tool in connecting survivors to housing. HOME+ helps survivors of domestic and gender-based violence stay safely in the homes and communities they choose. It is a free citywide initiative of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) that provides pendant alarm systems to summon help within the home when an abusive person threatens safety, lock changes and repairs for doors and windows, and flexible



funding grants to help cover the expenses of maintaining or securing housing. Every participant is also connected to additional support - including case management and safety planning - through contracted community-based organizations.

We know that HOME+ works. In the program's first year, 93.7% of survivors who were stably housed when they received a grant remained in their homes. For an average of \$2,055 per household, delivered within 19 days, HOME+ reaches survivors at the moment of crisis and helps them stay safe rather than uprooted. **We urge the Council and the Administration to fully fund this proven program at \$10 million in the FY 2027 Budget.**

Full funding is both humane and fiscally responsible. When a survivor loses their housing, the city pays for shelter - on average this is close to \$100,000 per family per year - while the survivor bears the far greater cost of upheaval and renewed danger. The HOME+ program prevents all of it for a fraction of the price.

HOME+ is built around survivors' realities. It requires no documentation, no order of protection, and no clean credit or criminal history, and eligibility is unaffected by immigration status. For survivors who are undocumented or shut out of federally funded programs, it is often the only door open - and it meets people in their own language.

The first-year results bear this out. Between July 2024 and June 2025, 426 survivors received grants totaling \$875,268.78. Most assistance went directly to keeping people housed: 36.8% for housing retention and shelter prevention, followed by food and necessities (19.4%) and safety and security (13.3%). Among survivors in a domestic violence shelter when they applied, nearly one in four moved into permanent housing.

HOME+ is delivered by four community-based providers serving all five boroughs, reaching survivors directly or through referrals from domestic violence organizations, district attorneys' offices, the NYC HOPE hotline, and Family Justice Centers.

Unfortunately, we are not allowing HOME+ to reach its full potential. At the average grant of \$2,055, the FY 2025 budget of \$1,125,000 could fund only about 550 grants - and because the program launched on a rolling basis during an ENDGBV staff transition, providers moved only \$875,268.78 of it, reaching just 426 survivors. ENDGBV's own report names the bottleneck: provider understaffing and turnover leave too few case managers for intakes, safety planning, and grant processing - so survivors in crisis wait. Meanwhile the need is vast: of the 15,362 survivors who visited the Family Justice Centers in 2025, 2,988 sought housing help.

Our \$10 million request would fund four full-time equivalent staff per borough - 20 across the five boroughs - so they can disburse grants at the speed safety demands.



Many survivors need only a small microgrant to find and maintain safety. HOME+ meets that moment quickly, respects survivors' own judgment about what they need, and costs a fraction of the alternative.

**We join with our coalition partners in urging New York City leaders to allocate \$10 million to fully fund HOME+ in the FY 2027 Budget and help domestic violence survivors stay safely housed.**

## Testimony

### New York City Council Committee on Women and Gender Equity

#### Oversight – On Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals—With a Focus on LGBTQ+ Older Adults

June 24th 2026

Good Afternoon Chair and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on housing instability among LGBTQ+ New Yorkers, particularly LGBTQ+ older adults.

My name is Bryan Ellicott-Cook, and I serve as Director of Government Relations at SAGE—Advocacy & Services for LGBTQ+ Elders. SAGE is the country's oldest and largest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ older adults. Here in New York City, we provide housing, supportive services, and community-based programming to thousands of older adults each year, including through LGBTQ+-affirming housing developments like Stonewall House in Brooklyn and Crotona Pride House in the Bronx.

New York City is home to one of the largest LGBTQ+ populations in the country. Across New York State, more than 1 million adults identify as LGBTQ+, including a significant and growing number of older adults.

As our population ages, so too does the number of LGBTQ+ older adults: nearly one-third of LGBTQ+ adults in New York State are age 50 and older. [\[health.ny.gov\]](https://health.ny.gov) [\[aging.ny.gov\]](https://aging.ny.gov)

And yet, LGBTQ+ older adults are far more likely to experience housing instability. Nationally, approximately **40 percent of LGBTQ+ older adults live below the federal poverty line**, and fewer than half—just **49 percent—own their homes**, compared to about 65 percent of the general population.

These disparities are driven by a lifetime of discrimination in employment, housing, and access to benefits—combined with higher rates of social isolation and a greater likelihood of aging without traditional family support. [\[gaycitynews.com\]](https://gaycitynews.com)

Here in New York City, the broader homelessness crisis among older adults underscores the urgency of these challenges. The number of individuals aged 55 and older in the shelter system increased by approximately **250 percent between 2004 and 2017**, with those aged 65+ increasing by more than **300 percent**.

Without intervention, that population is projected to continue growing significantly in the coming years. Within that already vulnerable group, LGBTQ+ older adults face even greater risks of housing insecurity, discrimination, and unsafe placements. [\[nyc.gov\]](https://nyc.gov)

At the same time, there are **very limited LGBTQ+-affirming housing options** available. While New York City has made important strides—such as the development of Stonewall House in Brooklyn and Crotona Pride House in the

Bronx—the total supply of affirming, affordable housing for LGBTQ+ older adults remains extremely limited relative to need. [[gaycitynews.com](http://gaycitynews.com)]

For many LGBTQ+ older adults, especially transgender and gender non-conforming elders, the shelter system itself can feel unsafe or inaccessible. Reports from providers and advocates highlight ongoing challenges, including harassment, misgendering, and barriers created by gender-segregated shelter systems that do not reflect the realities of people's identities.

As a result, many individuals avoid seeking shelter altogether, choosing instead to remain in unstable or dangerous living situations. [[coalitionf...meless.org](http://coalitionf...meless.org)]

This is why federal protections like HUD's Equal Access Rule are so important. The rule ensures that individuals in HUD-funded programs can access shelter and housing consistent with their gender identity and without discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. For LGBTQ+ older adults—who may already be navigating health challenges, fixed incomes, and social isolation—these protections are often the difference between accessing care or falling through the cracks entirely.

However, HUD's recent proposal to eliminate the Equal Access Rule threatens to reverse this progress. The proposal would remove explicit protections for LGBTQ+ individuals and require shelters to place people based on a narrow definition of "biological sex," rather than their lived gender identity. It would also allow providers to request invasive proof of sex and force compliance even where local laws—like the New York City Human Rights Law—prohibit such discrimination.

For LGBTQ+ older adults, the consequences would be profound. This proposal would increase the likelihood that transgender older adults are turned away, misclassified, or placed in unsafe environments. It would deepen distrust in the shelter system and further isolate individuals who already face disproportionate barriers to care.

Importantly, these changes are not grounded in evidence. There is no data showing that inclusive policies decrease safety; in fact, providers across the country have consistently affirmed that affirming, inclusive environments improve outcomes for all residents.

New York City has long been a leader in advancing gender equity and protecting LGBTQ+ communities. But federal rollbacks like this threaten to undermine that progress and create impossible situations for providers forced to choose between federal funding and compliance with local law.

As this Committee examines housing instability among LGBTQ+ individuals, it is critical to recognize that LGBTQ+ older adults sit at the intersection of aging and identity-based inequities—and that policy decisions at every level of government shape whether they can age with dignity.

I urge the Council to continue investing in LGBTQ+ -affirming senior housing, strengthen oversight of shelter conditions, and use its voice to oppose federal actions that would increase discrimination and housing instability.

Ensuring safe, stable, and affirming housing for LGBTQ+ older adults is not just a housing issue—it is a matter of equity, public health, and basic human dignity.

Thank you for your time and your continued leadership.

Bryan Ellicott-Cook

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Empowering all to create sustainable healthy places to live

## Seeds in the Middle - Hip2B Healthy School Network of Farm Markets/Fresh Cooking - A PILOT

**FY27 FUNDING REQUEST: \$250,000 (for up to 10 school-run farm markets in highest-need neighborhoods)**

**Overview: This is a call for a new, locally-based strategy to overcome persistent food insecurity and directly address the inequitable systemic lack of fresh fruits and vegetables or healthy choices in NYC's lowest-income, food-insecure zones - all predominantly communities of color suffering from NYC's highest rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease, maternal and infant mortality and premature death.**

### **Background:**

Seeds in the Middle was founded in 2010, named by 4th graders at PS 91 in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, among NYC's lowest-income neighborhoods. Educators were inspired by First Lady Michelle Obama's organic garden and her alarm about tragically high rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease among Black/Brown Americans.

Educators, parents and students at PS 91 quickly realized that they were at the center of the obesity epidemic with no access to fresh produce, healthy cooking classes, affordable fitness or edible gardens - actually no way to avoid preventable diseases tied to poor diet. The closest farmers market was 2 miles away - a distance that some parents walked and still do in order to consistently get nourishing quality food for their families.

Then and 16 years later, farmers markets exist only in the wealthiest neighborhoods flush with fresh shops and options to buy healthy at reasonable prices. In the dozens of neighborhoods that Seeds in the Middle serves and has served, farm stands are scant if they exist at all, and produce in supermarkets is often rotten or not fresh, and pricier than those in Park Slope or downtown Manhattan. The inequity is stunning, like an invisible wall.

Little to nothing has changed since we started in 2010, despite millions and millions of dollars invested by government & foundations. Food pantries, free food distributions have not moved the needle on food insecurity and hunger. Nor do they regularly offer fresh healthy food. And people are forced for hours to stand in bread lines to get anything, always first come first serve. It is not only an insult to dignity, but such a method excludes the most vulnerable who cannot get there, keeps people dependent, fails to grow economic development through food, plentiful in other more fortunate areas. No sustainable access, just ineffective "drive-by" interventions.

This systemic failure is evidenced by NYC statistics year after year: obesity, hunger, diabetes heart disease rates among low-income New Yorkers is only going up, not down. **TIME TO TRY A DIFFERENT APPROACH!**

Founded by Black and Brown New Yorkers tired of food inequity, we instead are calling for funds to:

1. **EQUITABLE LOCALLY-RUN FRESH FOOD ACCESS:** Sustain and expand our network of farm stands run by students in the highest need neighborhoods. **See our map at [bit.ly/seedsinthemiddlemap2026](http://bit.ly/seedsinthemiddlemap2026)**
2. **DIGNIFIED, EFFECTIVE HIP2B HEALTHY BUCKS:** distributed to those in need to "buy fresh" (no bread line)
3. **FOCUS ON IDENTIFYING THOSE WHO NEED HEALTHY FOOD:** Engage schools, community-based and government organizations focused on poverty to identify those who need these Hip2B Healthy Bucks (our young moms and seniors, i.e., who can't wait hours on bread lines)
4. **FRESH COOKING WORKSHOPS;** Hire culinary professionals to help people learn and feel empowered to prepare fresh, nourishing meals at home - guidance they often ask for but don't get.
5. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** Stipends for teens, parents in need, community members identified by schools or local residents to be trained and run markets as sustainable businesses and school fundraisers.
6. **HIP2B HEALTHY CAFES:** Run by students, offering fresh orange juice, smoothies, i.e, to fundraise, instead of candy, junk food, thus making schools healthy oases amid a swamp of unhealthy advertising.
7. **COMMUNITY FOOD COUNCILS:** Residents say what they need and act, empowering healthy change.

These are current partners of Seeds in the Middle - More schools have asked for us.



**Farm Stands**  
**Fresh Cooking**  
**School Gardens**  
**Soccer**  
**2026**

Contact us: [info@seedsinthemiddle.org](mailto:info@seedsinthemiddle.org)  
 T: 862-701-3858



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|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Bed-Stuy Farm Stand @ Peaches      | 9 Coney Island Farm Stand                    | 17 Flatbush - PS 6                |
| 2 Bergen Beach @ PS 312              | 10 Crown Hts-PLG SIMCA - Spot! Year-round!   | 18 Harlem: PS 108                 |
| 3 Brownsville - FirstStepNYC - SCO   | 11 Crown Heights: PS 241                     | 19 OceanHill - B'ville @PS-IS 178 |
| 4 B'ville @ PS-IS 184                | 12 Crown Heights @PS289                      | 20 Sunset Park - PS 1             |
| 5 B'ville - MS for Arts/Philosophy   | 13 Cypress Hills @ PS938, MS935              | 21 Sunset Park - PS 24            |
| 6 Bushwick @ PS 145                  | 14 East Flatbush @ IS 285                    | 22 Staten Island - PS 19          |
| 7 Canarsie at IS 68                  | 15 East Flatbush: Cultural Academy for the A | 23 Staten Island - Concord HS     |
| 8 Canarsie - HS for Innovation, Arts | 16 Flatbush - PS 235                         |                                   |

**@seedsinthemiddle**



## **NADIA SWANSON, LCSW**

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### **The Ali Forney Center**

& New York City Trans and Queer Coalition (NYCTQC)

### **Oversight Hearing: Housing Instability Among LGBTQIA+ Individuals in NYC**

*Committee on Women and Gender Equity and Committee on General Welfare*

*June 24th 2026*

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## **I. About The Ali Forney Center and the NYC Trans and Queer Coalition**

The Ali Forney Center (AFC) was created in honor of Ali Forney (he/him), also known as Luscious (she/her), a Black Gender Non-Conforming young person who experienced family rejection, entered foster care at age 13, and left due to the absence of affirming placements at age 15. Like many of his peers, Ali survived through street economies and substance use. He was an activist who carried condoms through the community to prevent HIV transmission among Black transgender youth. In 1997, at age 22, Ali was murdered – a case that remains unsolved. In his memory, the Ali Forney Center was founded in 2002 by those who knew and worked with him.

Today, AFC serves more than 2,00 unhoused LGBTQ+ youth, ages 16 to 24, each year. We are the largest provider of housing and wraparound services for unhoused LGBTQ+ youth in New York City and the world. We operate a 24/7 Drop-In Center in Manhattan and 13 Emergency and Transitional Housing sites across Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens – including New York City's only transitional housing program specifically designed for transgender, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary (TGNCNB) youth. We also operate the nation's first around-the-clock LGBTQ+ drop-in center, established in 2015.

I also serve as the founder and leader of the New York City Trans and Queer Coalition (NYCTQC), a network of more than 50 trans-led and LGBTQ+-missioned organizations. This testimony reflects the NYCTQC platform and the shared urgency of the providers, advocates, and community members who make up that network.

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## II. The Crisis: LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness in New York City

Across 3 prior administrations, NYC has convened roundtable discussions, commissioned reports and studies to illustrate the scale of youth homelessness in NYC and solutions. The answers are clear, the lack of action is consistent. Youth homelessness and LGBTQIA+ youth homelessness is a policy choice. We need to reach “Functional Zero” for youth homelessness. It can be rare, brief, non-recurring and safe. The first steps are ensuring youth can access a DYCD crisis bed the same day they have contact with a drop in center and they have pathways to exit homelessness with housing vouchers and supportive housing.

[New York City Youth Homelessness System Map & Capacity Overview Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago](#)

### The Scale

Between 2023 and 2024, the total number of unhoused youth identified in New York City nearly doubled – from 3,673 to 6,823. AFC reached more than 2,200 of them last year. We placed 381 young people in 212 beds – meaning that for every young person we housed, more than two others remained without a placement.

New York State now has the second-highest number of unhoused youth in the nation, and unaccompanied youth homelessness rose more than 70 percent in a single year. These are not gradual trends. This is a crisis accelerating in real time, and New York City's response has not kept pace.

At AFC specifically:

- We serve over 2,000 young people per year but are seeing 90 to 150 new youth intakes every month – against a capacity of only 30 to 40.
- We have 400 youth on our waitlist for a crisis bed – up from 300 in 2025 and up from under 100 when youth could access housing vouchers.
- More than 100 youth are on a separate waitlist for case management and therapy services at the drop-in center.
- Youth under 21 typically wait one to three weeks for a bed after completing intake. Youth ages 21 to 24 wait four to six months.
- There are only 80 LGBTQ+-affirming Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units in all of New York City – for a population of thousands.

### Who These Young People Are

LGBTQ+ youth become homeless through three primary pathways: family rejection and abuse, foster care placements that fail to affirm their identity, and contact with the juvenile justice system. These pathways are well documented and yet the prevention infrastructure – in schools, behavioral health, child welfare, and the justice system – remains dangerously thin.

AFC's own intake data tells the story of who these young people are when they arrive at our door:

- 90% are BIPOC and the vast majority come from low-income households.
- 74% report being thrown out of their homes, the majority specifically for being LGBTQ+.
- 70% were physically attacked before seeking services.
- 70% have contemplated suicide; 40% have attempted it.
- 40% have experienced sexual violence.
- 25% report engaging in survival sex prior to intake.
- 64% have no documentation; 18% are seeking asylum; 24% are from outside the United States.
- 62% say their family's religious beliefs were the primary cause of rejection.

The Family Acceptance Project has documented that family rejection alone produces catastrophic health outcomes: rejected LGBTQ+ youth are 5 times as likely to experience depression, 5.5 times as likely to have suicidal thoughts, 8 times as likely to attempt suicide, 3 times as likely to misuse substances, and 3 times as likely to contract HIV.

LGBTQ+ youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their cisgender and heterosexual peers. Once unhoused, they face criminalization for survival behaviors, worsening physical and mental health, sexual violence, substance misuse, and profoundly delayed development during the years when those foundations are built. 20% of all youth in the juvenile justice system — and 40% of those who are girls — identify as LGBTQ+. It costs approximately \$500,000 per year to hold someone at Rikers Island. The connection between underfunded RHY services and the over-incarceration of our young people is not coincidental, and the math is not complicated.

Since 2020, AFC has grieved the deaths of 25 young people — and those are only the ones we know of. LGBTQ+ unhoused youth die at more than double the rate of their peers.

### **When It Works, It Works**

When youth are given real, sustained support, they thrive. More than 90% of AFC graduates are enrolled in school or employment at the time of exit. 85% maintain stable housing. Our outcomes exceed national benchmarks by every measure.

The most dramatic evidence of what adequate policy can do came when youth had access to CityFHEPS and federal Emergency Housing Vouchers between 2021 and 2025. During that period, AFC's waitlist dropped below 100. Citywide, the number of young people moving into stable, independent housing increased by 350 percent. We know what works. The problem is not the intervention — it is the political will to sustain it.

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### **III. A System Designed to Fail: The Funding Gaps**

#### **RHY Bed Rates**

DYCD's Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) programs fund 913 crisis and transitional beds in New York City, with 863 currently available for placement. Current RHY bed rates range from \$47,000 to \$51,000 per bed per year. The true minimum cost is \$75,000 for Transitional Independent Living (TIL) beds and \$80,000 for Crisis/Emergency beds.

Providers are being asked to absorb a \$25,000 to \$30,000 per-bed gap, every year. That gap does not disappear. It is paid in the form of staff we cannot retain, beds we cannot afford to open, and young people we turn away at the door. We are operating under contracts that structurally guarantee failure.

To close the full gap: a \$20,000 per-bed increase across all 913 beds would require \$18.26 million. To address crisis beds alone – 293 beds – would require \$5.86 million. For 620 TIL beds, the need is \$12.4 million. In the context of an \$111 billion City budget, these are not large numbers. They are the minimum investment required for the system to function.

Furthermore, without adequate bed rates, providers cannot expand capacity. Organizations across the RHY system want to open new beds and serve more youth – but they cannot do so on contracts that do not cover costs. The City is simultaneously deploring the waitlist and refusing to fund the solution.

#### **The Bottleneck: No Entry, No Exit**

Youth homelessness in New York City has become a two-sided bottleneck. On the entry side: there are not enough crisis beds, waitlists are months long, and youth with serious mental health diagnoses have no appropriate RHY placements whatsoever. On the exit side: youth have lost access to all housing vouchers, there are only 80 LGBTQ+-affirming PSH units citywide, and supportive housing takes at least one year of documented homelessness to apply and then sit on another waitlist for at least a year.

This means youth cycle in and out of crisis without the ability to stabilize. No young person should spend six months sleeping upright in a drop-in center chair – but that is the current reality. The City's No Sleep Directive of January 2023 ordered drop-in centers to remove beds; the City has not replaced them with sufficient crisis beds. Young people experiencing psychosis, trauma responses, and suicidal ideation are sitting in chairs waiting for a system that cannot hold them.

The Mayor's Block by Block plan did not include any housing that youth can access through DYCD. In fact the only mention of RHY in DYCD is to fund Peer and Housing Navigators, each at \$1.6M. Those are important resources but without voucher access we don't have anywhere for them to be navigated to.

The State reduced RHY funding in FY27 by \$3.5M. The upstate beds were only getting \$5600/bed and relied on federal funding through the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) to fill the gap, but FYSB has cut that funding and all of the upstate programs will likely close by the end of 2026. Now more youth will be coming to NYC to replace supports that were already too thin to begin with. And this City has not treated any of this as the emergency it is.

The State Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP), only gave max 1100 vouchers to NYC. When funded we were told that the vouchers could be accessed through DYCD programs but in implementation they did not follow through on that promise. Now if youth want to access HAVP, they would have to leave the safety of a DYCD shelter / housing program and enter the adult DHS system to receive one.

Every time a voucher becomes available the pathway for DYCD Housing Navigators and Case Managers to refer their clients is denied or not included in the conversation. Despite the acknowledgement that youth are better served and safer in youth programs compared to the adult system; and there is currently no Right to Shelter for youth in the DYCD system or unaccompanied 16 and 17 year olds.

### **AFC's Own Financial Crisis**

AFC's government funding fell 8% last year while demand increased 27%. We have had to draw on our endowment and exhaust our line of credit to make payroll — because government contract payments from the City and State are routinely delayed by months if not years. This is not a nonprofit management problem. This is a government that is failing its own contractual obligations to the organizations it depends on to serve our most vulnerable youth.

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## **IV. The Federal Context: Why Local Action Is Urgent**

The federal government is actively dismantling the safety net that LGBTQ+ homeless youth depend on, making robust City and State investment more urgent than at any point in recent history.

On April 28, 2026, HUD published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking to gut the Equal Access Rule — the federal protection that since 2012 has ensured LGBTQ+ people can access HUD-funded shelters and housing programs without discrimination. The proposed rule would remove all references to 'gender identity' from HUD regulations, allow shelter providers to require 'reasonable assurances or evidence' of a person's sex assigned at birth, permit invasive questioning and documentation, and attempt to preempt state and local anti-discrimination laws. The public comment period closed June 29, 2026.

If finalized, this rule would expose the trans youth we serve to the exact conditions that drove them to homelessness in the first place: rejection, forced misgendering, and

violence in the facilities designed to protect them. Prior to the 2012 and 2016 Equal Access Rules, studies found that only 30% of shelters would appropriately house trans women with other women, and 1 in 5 shelters would turn them away outright. HUD has already halted enforcement of the current rule since February 2025.

Additional federal threats include: elimination of Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) funding for upstate RHY programs – which will force those programs to close by year's end, driving more youth to New York City; deep cuts to HUD's Continuum of Care; gutted LGBTQ+ health funding; and the rollback of protections for LGBTQ+ victims of violence. 67% of all U.S. nonprofits that receive government funding are now considered at risk.

New York City cannot fill every gap left by federal disinvestment. But it can and must fully fund what is within its control.

### **Additional Reports for Reference**

[New York City Youth Homelessness System Map & Capacity Overview Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago](#)

[Direct Cash Transfer Study Report: Trust Youth Initiative with LGBTQIA+ Unhoused Youth at The Ali Forney Center](#)

[Ali Forney Center 2025 Intake Data](#)

[City Limits Op-Ed: Homeless Youth are Being Excluded Yet Again](#)

[Opportunity Starts with a Home: NYCs Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness](#)

[Chapin Hall Research Report on LGBTQ Youth Adults Experiencing Homelessness \(2018 but most accurate report we have and still reflects the local numbers\)](#)

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## **V. The Trans Equity Initiative: \$10 Million**

The Trans Equity Initiative was designed by trans community leaders to provide direct investment in trans-led and trans-serving organizations that have historically been shut out of City funding. It represents a foundational commitment to equity that has not yet been fulfilled.

Out of a City budget of \$111 billion, the current Trans Equity Initiative fund stands at approximately \$6.45 million. The fund was designed for trans-led and trans-serving organizations; the current structure has not delivered on that design.

Since the Initiative's creation, more trans-led organizations have been established – but the funding structure makes it nearly impossible for new groups to join or for existing groups' awards to increase. The result is a scarcity mindset that pits community organizations against each other rather than building collective capacity.

When the fund was doubled, the impact was immediate and tangible. Organizations like Destination Tomorrow expanded housing and shelter support services. Trans Latinx Network and Caribbean Equality Project grew their food justice, workforce, and immigrant support services. Black Trans Liberation Kitchen expanded its community-building and mutual aid work. PFLAG opened name and gender marker clinics. Transformative Schools provided over 2,000 student hours of STEAM, identity, and activism programming for trans youth ages 9 to 15.

This is what trans-led investment produces. An increase to \$10 million — a difference of \$3.55 million from the current level — is not a large ask. It is the floor of what is needed for the Initiative to function as designed.

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## **VI. Gender-Affirming Care for Youth: \$15 Million**

With gender-affirming care under sustained attack at the federal level, New York City must affirmatively step up to ensure that transgender, gender non-conforming, nonbinary, and intersex (TGNCNBI) young people can access the care they need safely, quickly, and without barriers.

At AFC, we operate a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in partnership with the Institute for Family Health (IFH). This clinic is one of our most utilized services — youth return to it even after becoming stably housed, often until age 25, because affirming primary care, OB-GYN care, and gender-affirming services are extraordinarily difficult to access in New York City for this population. We currently fund our services from IFH through the City Wide Initiative: LGBTQIA+ Youth Support Services for RHY. This \$5M fund must be baselined to ensure consistent funding for gender affirming care.

The barriers are structural. TGNCNB New Yorkers face extremely long waitlists for the limited number of providers trained in gender-affirming care. Medical students are not receiving adequate training in affirming care across specialties. TGNCNB individuals — and LGB individuals more broadly — frequently avoid seeking medical care for non-gender-related needs because of the absence of competent providers, resulting in untreated chronic conditions, worsening health outcomes, and deepened medical mistrust.

For RHY youth specifically, those with higher medical needs have the hardest time exiting homelessness and maintaining stability. Gender-affirming care is not a supplement to housing stability — it is a prerequisite for it. A young trans person who cannot access care consistent with their identity cannot stabilize, cannot build employment, cannot build a life.

## **VII. LGBTQ+ Immigrant Legal Services Fund: \$15 Million**

Approximately 150,000 to 200,000 LGBTQ+ immigrants live in New York City. An estimated 60 to 70 percent cannot access the legal services they need. Language

barriers alone prevent approximately 60 percent of undocumented immigrants from obtaining legal support. There is currently no dedicated funding stream specifically addressing LGBTQ+ immigrants' legal needs in New York City.

At AFC, 18% of the youth we serve are seeking asylum and 24% are from outside the United States. Many arrived here having fled countries where being LGBTQ+ is criminalized, where their families were the source of the violence, or where the government itself persecuted them. They came to New York because this city held a promise. Right now, that promise is not backed by sufficient resources.

The barriers facing LGBTQ+ immigrant youth are compounding: immigration legal services range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 or more – costs that are unmanageable for youth who are unhoused and surviving on the margins. LGBTQ+ asylum seekers face significantly slower processing times and lower approval rates than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts. Many are ineligible for shelter or housing assistance available to citizens or those with documented status, forcing them into homelessness even when they have done everything asked of them. The Caribbean Equality Project (CEP), a NYCTQC steering committee member, currently serves over 650 LGBTQ+ asylum seekers – and 90% of their undocumented community members cannot access legal services.

Transgender and nonbinary immigrants face particularly acute harm. Many are pursuing asylum while simultaneously facing housing discrimination, denial of gender-affirming and basic healthcare, social isolation, and heightened vulnerability to violence. The rapid changes to federal filing fees, Employment Authorization documents, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status rules have created an increasingly hostile and expensive immigration system. Youth need lawyers who understand the legal landscape for unaccompanied minors – and there is currently only one immigration attorney per 1,000 undocumented immigrants nationwide.

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## **VIII. Full Budget Asks**

### **Runaway and Homeless Youth**

- Raise RHY bed rates to \$80,000 per Crisis/Emergency bed and \$75,000 per Transitional bed – a \$18.26 million investment across 913 DYCD-funded beds, or \$5.86 million for Crisis beds alone as an immediate priority.
- Fund LGBTQ+ youth Mental Health Beds – specialized RHY placements for youth with serious mental health diagnoses, who currently have no appropriate shelter options.

- Increase crisis beds citywide to eliminate waitlists and ensure any youth can access a bed, case management, and therapy the same day they present at a drop-in center.
- Restore DYCD voucher access (CityFHEPS) for RHY youth – the single intervention that reduced AFC's waitlist by 75% and increased citywide exits to stable housing by 350%.
- Protect the 500+ youth at risk of losing federal Emergency Housing Vouchers. Do not allow youth who stabilized, got housed, and followed the rules to be pushed back to the street. Ensure they have choice in their replacements, and can access neighborhoods they feel safe in.
- Expand LGBTQ+-affirming Permanent Supportive Housing far beyond the current 80 units – with particular urgency for youth ages 21 to 24.
- Baseline \$1.6 million for Peer Navigators and \$1.6 million for Housing Navigators.
- Seat RHY providers and youth advocates at every homelessness planning table, roundtable, and forum.

### **Trans Equity Initiative**

- Increase the Trans Equity Initiative to at least \$10 million (an increase of \$3.55 million from current levels).
- Prioritize BIPOC trans-led and trans-serving organizations in allocation.
- Fund technical assistance for trans-led organizations.

### **Baseline the \$5 million LGBT Youth Support and Services Speaker Initiative.**

#### **Gender-Affirming Care**

- Invest \$15 million annually in youth gender-affirming care through LGBTQ+-affirming nonprofit providers.
- Expand gender-affirming clinic capacity and require WPATH Standards of Care compliance across providers.
- Provide City bridge funding to protect community-based affirming health programs from federal cuts.

#### **LGBTQ+ Immigrant Legal Services**

- Establish a \$15 million LGBTQ+ Immigrant Legal Services Fund in FY27.
- Structure through a \$7.5M Speaker Initiative and \$7.5M Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs expansion.

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## **IX. Closing: The Path Forward**

Youth homelessness is a policy choice. The waitlist is a policy choice. The funding gap is a policy choice. Every one of those choices has a face, a name, a young person who deserved better from the adults in this city.

For ten years, RHY providers have come before this Council and successive administrations with the same warnings. We have been met with sympathy, some progress, and persistent underfunding. In some respects – the loss of vouchers, the cut to RHY bed rates, the absence of youth in the Mayor's housing plan – we have gone backward.

The [Built for Zero framework](#), which the homelessness sector uses to measure real progress, defines success as youth homelessness that is Rare, Brief, Nonrecurring, and Safe: rare because prevention is funded; brief because youth can access a bed immediately; nonrecurring because stable housing pathways exist within a year; and safe because every program a youth encounters is affirming and equipped for their needs. New York City has the provider network, the data infrastructure, and the organizational capacity to achieve this. What it has lacked is the political will to fund the system at the scale the problem demands.

This is the moment. The federal government is retreating. The state has cut funding. The need is accelerating. And this city has an \$111 billion budget and an unambiguous responsibility to its most vulnerable young people.

You can be the Council and the administration that eliminates the waitlist. You can be the government that finally, in the history of this city, treats LGBTQ+ youth homelessness as the emergency it is. The investments are specific, the price tags are clear, and the evidence base is overwhelming.

**Our young people cannot wait. Not one more year. Not one more budget cycle.**



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**New York City Council  
Committee on Women and Gender Equity  
Committee on General Welfare**

**Oversight Hearing: Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC  
June 24, 2026**

**Testimony of The Legal Aid Society**

Prepared by:

Ethan Dan Lo (he/him) – Staff Attorney, LGBTQ+ Law and Policy Unit

We wish to thank the City Council, members of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity, and members of Committee on General Welfare for holding this oversight hearing on Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC.

The Legal Aid Society is committed to ensuring that LGBTQ+ New Yorkers have access to safe, affirming, and stable housing. Based on our work representing LGBTQ+ New Yorkers experiencing housing instability, navigating the shelter system, and interacting with the child welfare system, we respectfully offer the following recommendations:

1. Strengthen pathways from shelters to permanent housing by expanding CityFHEPS
2. Increase the number of beds reserved for TGNCNBI individuals experiencing homelessness
3. Improve staff communication to clients regarding the rights and resources for LGBTQ+ individuals entering New York City Department of Homeless Services (“NYC DHS”) shelter
4. Expand the capacity of the LGBTQI Affairs Unit at the Department of Social Services
5. Require more comprehensive LGBTQ+-affirming training for shelter staff
6. Reduce the amount of time LGBTQ+ youth spend in the shelter system by supporting the recruitment of LGBTQ+ foster parents and increasing affirming placement options

## The Legal Aid Society

The Legal Aid Society is the oldest and largest not-for-profit public interest law firm in the United States, working on more than 300,000 individual legal matters annually for low-income New Yorkers with civil, criminal, and juvenile rights problems. The Society also brings law reform cases that benefit all two million low-income children and adults in New York City. The Society delivers a full range of comprehensive legal services to low-income families and individuals in the City. Our Civil Practice has local neighborhood offices in all five boroughs, along with centralized citywide law reform, employment law, economic equities, immigration law, health law, and homeless rights practices.

The Society's LGBTQ+ Law and Policy Unit addresses systemic issues affecting LGBTQ+ individuals across all three of Legal Aid's practice areas – Civil, Criminal Defense, and Juvenile Rights – by advocating for affirming and equitable treatment.

The Society's Juvenile Rights Practice (JRP) provides comprehensive representation for children who appear before the New York City Family Courts in abuse, neglect, juvenile delinquency, and other proceedings affecting children's rights and welfare, typically representing more than 30,000 children each year. The Legal Aid Society represents most children and youth placed in foster care through New York City's Family Courts as well as most children charged as juvenile delinquents. The Legal Aid Society has dedicated teams of lawyers, social workers, paralegals and investigators devoted to serving the unique needs of children and youth in the custody of the Administration of Children's Services (ACS). In addition to representing clients in trial and appellate courts, the JRP also pursues impact litigation and other law reform initiatives.

The Society's Homeless Rights Project (HRP) protects and enforces the right to shelter for homeless families and individuals in NYC. The HRP advocates to city agencies on behalf of clients, works closely with community partners to advocate for policies that support the needs of homeless New Yorkers, and regularly testifies before City and State legislatures. HRP currently monitors and enforces the *Butler v. City of New York* settlement, which ensures all New Yorkers with disabilities who need shelter can meaningfully access it. Moreover, as counsel in the historic *Callahan*, *Eldredge*, and *Boston* cases that created the right to shelter in NYC, Legal Aid Society's HRP is uniquely situated to provide insight about issues related to shelter for both long-time New Yorkers and new arrivals.

LGBTQ+ New Yorkers face disproportionately high rates of housing instability and homelessness. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services notes that approximately 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+, despite LGBTQ+ youth comprising a much smaller share of the overall youth population.<sup>1</sup> The NYC Department of Social Services recognizes that LGBTQ+ individuals are “disproportionately likely to live in poverty and need access to public benefits.”<sup>2</sup> LGBTQ+ New Yorkers experience housing instability for many reasons, including family rejection, discrimination in housing and employment, poverty, and barriers to accessing affirming services. These challenges are especially acute for transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and intersex (TGNCNBI) individuals and LGBTQ+ youth.

Housing instability among LGBTQ+ New Yorkers requires ensuring that shelters are safe, affirming, and accessible. LGBTQ+ individuals often face barriers to accessing and remaining in shelter because of discrimination, lack of affirming placements, inadequate accommodations, and insufficient awareness of available resources. These barriers can discourage individuals from seeking shelter, contribute to premature departures from shelter placements, and prolong housing instability. For many LGBTQ+ New Yorkers, shelter is the primary pathway to stable housing. When individuals cannot safely access or remain in shelter, housing instability worsens.

Most importantly, while ensuring that LGBTQ+ individuals have access to safe and affirming shelter is critical, housing instability cannot be meaningfully addressed without ensuring that individuals experiencing homelessness have pathways to permanent housing. This is especially true for LGBTQ+ youth and young adults, many of whom are in the Department of Youth and Community Development shelters and entered the shelter system after experiencing family rejection, violence, or discrimination. Too often, LGBTQ+ New Yorkers remain in shelters longer than necessary because they face barriers to securing permanent housing, including limited affordable housing options, administrative delays, and discrimination in the housing market. These barriers can prolong stays in shelter, disrupt employment and educational opportunities, and increase the risk that individuals will cycle back into homelessness.

City Council should take steps to address these gaps by considering the following recommendations.

1. Strengthen pathways from shelters to permanent housing by expanding CityFHEPS

CityFHEPS is one of the City's primary tools for helping New Yorkers transition from shelter to stable, permanent housing. Yet many individuals who could benefit from the program remain unable to access it. During his campaign, Mayor Mamdani pledged to expand CityFHEPS, but that expansion has not been implemented since he took office. The City Council should continue to prioritize expansion of the CityFHEPS program to ensure that more New

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<sup>1</sup> *Research and Data*, N.Y. State Office of Children & Family Services, <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/youth/LGBTQ/research.php>.

<sup>2</sup> *LGBTQI*, N.Y.C. Human Resources Administration, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/lgbtqi.page>.

Yorkers can successfully exit shelter and obtain permanent housing. For a successful expansion of CityFHEPS, the City must also address unnecessary administrative delays that prevent vouchers from being effectively utilized, including delays in apartment approvals and payments to landlords. These barriers can cause eligible individuals to lose available apartments, unnecessarily prolong stays in shelter, and increase the likelihood that they will return to homelessness.

2. Increase the number of beds reserved for TGNCNBI individuals experiencing homelessness

When TGNCNBI individuals cannot access affirming shelter placements, they may face safety risks in inappropriate shelter settings or leave shelter placements altogether and sleep in unsafe spaces, like the subways, parks, and other outdoor areas. Expanding affirming shelter capacity is essential not only for safety, but also for ensuring that TGNCNBI individuals remain connected to housing and social services.

Under the November 2021 *Mariah Lopez v. NYC DHS* settlement, the City agreed to establish TGNC Shelter Units and TGNC-Affirming Shelters, mandatory staff training, and evaluation and enforcement criteria to protect TGNC clients from discrimination and harassment. While the City has made some progress in complying with the *Lopez* settlement by expanding affirming shelter options through the opening of Ace's Place, additional work remains, as the *Lopez* settlement contemplated TGNC-affirming shelter capacity across four boroughs. Legal Aid continues to receive reports from TGNCNBI individuals who struggle to access affirming placements due to capacity constraints. The City should continue to expand access to safe, affirming shelter options for TGNCNBI New Yorkers throughout the shelter system.

3. Improve staff communication to clients regarding the rights and resources for LGBTQ+ individuals entering New York City Department of Homeless Services shelter

Many LGBTQ+ individuals entering the shelter system are unaware of the ability to request placement in an LGBTQ+-specific or TGNC-specific shelter units, access gender-affirming accommodations, or obtain assistance from the DSS LGBTQI Unit. As a result, some remain in unsafe placements or miss opportunities to access affirming shelter options. Legal Aid often receives calls from LGBTQ+ individuals who experienced unsafe or inappropriate placements simply because they were never informed that safer options exist. At the same time, many beds at Ace's Place, a TGNC-specific shelter, remain unfilled despite the ongoing need of TGNCNBI people for affirming shelter placements. DHS intake staff and shelter providers should be required to provide clear, multilingual notices of rights, and intake staff should be required to proactively inform clients of these options. Expanding notice and outreach would help LGBTQ+ New Yorkers access affirming placements more quickly and remain connected to shelter and housing services.

4. Expand the capacity of the LGBTQI Affairs Unit at the Department of Social Services

Delays in affirming placements, accommodations, or transfers can leave LGBTQ+ individuals in unsafe environments for extended periods and increase the likelihood that they disengage from shelter services altogether. For many LGBTQ+ individuals, resolving these issues quickly is important to remain connected to shelter and housing services.

The DSS LGBTQ Affairs plays an important role in helping LGBTQ+ New Yorkers navigate the shelter system, secure affirming placements, obtain accommodations, and address discrimination and safety concerns. The City should invest additional resources in DSS LGBTQ Affairs and explore creating dedicated LGBTQ+ liaison positions throughout the shelter system. Expanding the number of staff available to address LGBTQ+-related concerns would improve access to affirming placements, expedite transfers and accommodations when necessary, and provide shelter residents with additional points of contact when they experience discrimination, harassment, or safety concerns. Expanding the capacity of DSS LGTBQ Affairs would help ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals can access and maintain stable shelter placements when problems arise.

#### 5. Require more comprehensive LGBTQ+-affirming training for shelter staff

LGBTQ+ individuals often face unique challenges in the shelter system that require staff to understand issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, and safety. For TGNCNBI individuals in particular, these challenges may include access to gender-affirming care, medically necessary accommodations, and placements that allow them to live safely and authentically. Comprehensive LGBTQ+-affirming training is essential to ensure that shelter staff can identify and appropriately respond to these needs.

For example, a Legal Aid Homeless Rights Project client, a transgender woman, required a single room accommodation due to a need to perform a daily procedure following gender affirming surgery. Yet, she was placed in an adult DHS site where she shared a room with four other women, leaving her unable to perform the necessary procedure directed by her doctors. When Legal Aid advocated on her behalf, DHS staff flagged her case as an LGBTQI issue and disregarded her reasonable accommodation claim. It took five days and extensive discussion and education surrounding her needs as a transgender woman before DHS transferred her to a different shelter. Experiences like this can undermine trust in the shelter system and discourage LGBTQ+ individuals from seeking or remaining in shelter when they need it.

Legal Aid has also received reports of TGNCNBI clients describing negative experiences in Ace's Place and TGNC-units, including instances where staff lacked sufficient understanding of TGNCNBI identities and needs. While some of these concerns may reflect the challenges of implementing new programs and expanding affirming shelter capacity, they underscore that affirming shelter environments require more than policies and designated beds. They also require ongoing training to ensure staff can provide respectful and supportive services to LGBTQ+ residents. Rather than limiting LGBTQ+ affirming training to new employee orientation and biennial refresher courses, DHS should require more frequent training accompanied by post-

training competency assessments to ensure staff understand and retain the material. Competency should not be assumed based solely on attendance; staff should demonstrate an ability to appropriately apply LGBTQ+-affirming policies and practices in real-world situations, with additional training provided where gaps are identified.

6. Reduce the amount of time LGBTQ+ youth spend in the shelter system by supporting the recruitment of LGBTQ+ foster parents and increasing affirming placement options

Housing instability among LGBTQ+ youth often begins with family rejection and placement instability. ACS should invest additional resources in community-based programs to maintain children in their homes with support. For those children who may need to be placed in the foster care system, ACS must enhance recruitment of foster parents from within the LGBTQ+ community and ensure that LGBTQ+ youth are placed in safe, affirming, and family-based settings whenever possible. Too often, our clients remain in temporary shelter placements for months because ACS cannot locate an affirming foster home or leave placements altogether due to rejection and discrimination. Some youth have experienced depression, disengagement from school and services, running away, self-harm, or even homelessness because of non-affirming placements. No child should have to wait months, or even years, for a safe and supportive home because of their identity.

While ACS certifies foster homes as LGBTQ+ affirming, our experience shows that bias and lack of understanding continue to negatively impact placements. Additional funding and oversight are needed to expand the pool of affirming foster homes, particularly by recruiting LGBTQIA+ foster parents and providing enhanced training that reflects the heightened risks LGBTQIA+ youth face in the current climate. The City should also expand affirming congregational care options, including LGBTQ+-specific group homes, to ensure that youth who require higher levels of care have access to environments where they feel safe, supported, and understood.

## Conclusion

LGBTQ+ New Yorkers continue to experience disproportionately high rates of housing instability, and TGNCNBI New Yorkers face particularly significant barriers to accessing safe, affirming, and stable housing. Addressing these disparities requires more than ensuring access to affirming shelter; it also requires meaningful pathways to permanent housing. Expanding access to CityFHEPS and improving transitions from shelter to permanent housing, increasing affirming shelter capacity, improving communication regarding available resources, strengthening the Department of Social Services' LGBTQI Affairs Unit, requiring more comprehensive LGBTQ+-affirming training for shelter staff, and expanding affirming placement options for LGBTQ+ youth are practical and achievable steps the City can take to reduce housing instability and improve outcomes for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers. We urge the City Council to continue exercising robust oversight and to invest in both affirming shelter services and permanent housing solutions

so that LGBTQ+ New Yorkers can achieve lasting housing stability instead of remaining in or returning to the shelter system.

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**Testimony of Urban Resource Institute Before the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare, jointly with the Committee on Women and Gender Equity on Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in New York City**

June 23, 2026

Thank you, Chair Hudson, Chair Farias and members of the Committees on General Welfare and Women and Gender Equity for the opportunity to submit testimony on housing instability among LGBTQ+ New Yorkers.

Urban Resource Institute (URI) submits this testimony to elevate the urgent housing needs of LGBTQ+ survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, families experiencing homelessness, and households whose stability is threatened by the impending loss of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care (HUD CoC) and Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) funding.

URI is the largest provider of domestic violence shelter services in the country and a leading provider of transitional housing for families experiencing homelessness. URI has the capacity to provide temporary housing to nearly 4,000 people on any given night in the safety of one of our 24 temporary housing locations in four of the five boroughs. URI has begun construction on its first supportive, deeply affordable permanent housing development for survivors of domestic violence and community members in Harlem.

#### **Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Survivors and Families**

LGBTQ+ survivors, particularly single adults without children, face heightened vulnerability when shelter systems and rental assistance pathways are built around assumptions that do not reflect their lives or family structures. Research from the [Anti-Violence Project](#) shows that LGBTQ+ New Yorkers experience disproportionately high rates of intimate partner violence and face significant barriers to accessing services. [National Institutes of Health study reported data](#) among couples who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual experience intimate partner violence at higher rates than among heterosexual couples. These challenges are compounded by discrimination in housing, family rejection, and barriers to affirming care.

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) have been a critical tool for stabilizing New Yorkers at risk of or experiencing homelessness, including survivors of domestic violence, survivors of trafficking, and families with children. However, the impending expiration of federal EHV funding threatens to destabilize households who currently have stable housing by complying with program requirements, completing the necessary paperwork and navigating an often-cumbersome application and renewal process. Without a clear and reliable transition pathway, EHV households may face unaffordable rent levels, arrears, eviction proceedings, or returns to shelter, further exacerbating pressure on an already overextended system. For LGBTQ+ survivors and families who have already experienced violence, discrimination, and homelessness, this is a direct threat to their safety and stability.

At the same time, broader federal funding threats, including reductions to HUD CoC funding, risk further destabilizing the provider network and limiting access to transitional housing. These impacts are

particularly acute for single adults, where capacity is already extremely constrained and beds fill within hours of becoming available. This is especially concerning given the limited availability of safe and affirming shelter and housing options for LGBTQ+ individuals. With federal funding, URI works closely with referral partners, including The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center to connect single adult survivors to housing, yet the shortage of appropriate placements continues to restrict safe options for those seeking to leave violence. With the turbulent climate of federal funding and hostility towards the most marginalized populations, particularly LGBTQ+ communities, we are deeply concerned about the destabilization of existing social and transitional housing networks as well as limitations to producing housing models.

### Recommendations

URI respectfully urges the Council to take the following actions:

- **Fully implement and expand CityFHEPS.**  
Expanding access to CityFHEPS is essential to providing stable housing for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers. The program must be accessible to a wider range of households, including single adults and those with nontraditional family structures.
- **Establish a CityFHEPS carveout for EHV households.**  
The City should create a dedicated CityFHEPS pathway for households currently reliant on EHV who cannot be safely transitioned to other federal or state rental assistance programs. This will prevent households from falling into homelessness due to the premature end of federal funding.
- **Expand safe and affirming housing options for LGBTQ+ survivors, including single adults.**  
HRA's recent RFP for housing serving single survivors of domestic violence without children represents a critical and long-overdue investment. This initiative will help expand emergency housing capacity for single survivors, a group that includes many LGBTQ+ individuals who often present as single adults. URI supports this effort and encourages the City to build on this progress by advancing additional opportunities to increase capacity. The City must continue to address the shortage of appropriate shelter and housing models for single LGBTQ+ individuals and survivors whose needs are not adequately met by existing systems.

We are deeply grateful to the New York City Council for holding this important hearing and urge the City of New York to take swift action to prevent households that have been stabilized with an EHV from being pushed back into homelessness because federal funding expires. LGBTQ+ New Yorkers, survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, and families experiencing homelessness need housing systems that reflect the full reality of their lives. Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to submit this testimony. For follow-up, please contact Samantha Cardenas, Senior Director of Government Affairs, at [scardenas@uriny.org](mailto:scardenas@uriny.org).



**Testimony Submitted by**  
**Greg Silverman, CEO**  
**West Side Campaign Against Hunger**  
**General Welfare Committee, June 4th, 2026**

Dear Chair Hudson and members of the Committee on General Welfare,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and for your continued leadership in confronting food insecurity across New York City.

My name is Greg Silverman, and I am the CEO of West Side Campaign Against Hunger and the Executive Director of The Roundtable: Allies for Food Access. The Roundtable is a coalition of ten of the largest emergency food providers in New York City: Citymeals on Wheels, Community Help in Park Slope (CHIPS), Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen, Met Council, New York Common Pantry, Part of the Solution (POTS), Project Hospitality, St. John's Bread and Life, The Campaign Against Hunger, and West Side Campaign Against Hunger.

Together, our members serve communities in all five boroughs and support a network of more than 800 emergency food distribution sites that serve over one million New Yorkers every year.

We come before you during the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget process at a moment of extraordinary strain. More than 1.4 million New Yorkers are food insecure, including hundreds of thousands of children, and demand at our pantries and soup kitchens remains far above pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, federal instability is reshaping the ground beneath us. More than 43,000 New York City residents are at risk of losing SNAP benefits, and new federal work requirements are about to generate a wave of recertifications, exemption claims, and appeals that will fall hardest on the households least equipped to navigate them.

Those of us in the emergency feeding sector see something every day that I want to make plain to this Committee: benefits access and food security are not two separate systems. They are one. When a family hesitates to apply for SNAP or quietly lets their benefits lapse because they are afraid of federal enforcement, that need does not disappear. It walks through our doors

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instead. The chilling effect of federal policy is already translating, household by household, into longer pantry lines.

We also see an opportunity to meet that fear head-on, in partnership with HRA, by getting clear "know your rights" and data-privacy information into the hands of the families who need that reassurance most. Protecting applicant data and helping eligible New Yorkers feel safe enough to stay connected to their benefits is, quite literally, food security work.

And our system is being asked to absorb this pressure with less, not more, per person. According to the City's own CFC FY25 Impact Report, in our highest-need neighborhoods, the volume of supplemental food per food-insecure New Yorker fell from 42 pounds to 34 pounds in a single year—a 19 percent drop. Total food volume is up, which is real progress we are grateful for, but the need is rising faster than supply. The gap is widening even as the network works harder than ever.

Our first request is urgent and specific: fund and protect NYCBenefits. The Mayor's proposed Executive Budget does not include funding for NYCBenefits, the program that helps New Yorkers connect to and keep the benefits they are entitled to. At the exact moment new federal work requirements are about to drive a surge of recertifications, exemption claims, and appeals. Allowing this program to lapse would be a profound mistake. We urge the Council to restore and baseline NYCBenefits, to expand it beyond its current providers, and to raise per-provider funding so that community organizations can meet this wave. Every household we keep connected to SNAP upstream is a family fed more reliably and a measure of breathing room for an emergency network stretched thin.

Our second request concerns Community Food Connection (CFC). We are genuinely encouraged that the Executive Budget proposes a significant CFC baseline increase. It reflects exactly the move toward stable, predictable funding that providers have asked for, and we thank the Administration and this Council for it. To let the sector plan with confidence, we ask that this increase be truly baselined and not a one-year addition for FY27 alone. We also ask the City to keep its sights on the full need: providers estimate it would take roughly \$100 million annually to close the citywide Supply Gap, and we want to plan honestly, together, for what reaching that level will require.

CFC's credit model funds the food itself well, and providers are grateful for it. What it does not yet capture is the coordination and capacity-building that coalitions contribute—the shared infrastructure and planning that help the whole network stretch every dollar further. We urge the City to explore a dedicated CFC allocation for that kind of systems-transformation work, alongside the per-site food credits, so the network we are all invested in grows stronger and not simply larger. We would also welcome the chance to deepen our partnership with HRA on the eligible-but-not-enrolled gap, including tracking enrollment progress in the highest-need neighborhoods and understanding whether newly enrolled households come to rely less on

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263 West 86th St • New York, NY 10024 • 212-362-3662 • [info@wscach.org](mailto:info@wscach.org)

 /wscach  @wscach  @wscach\_

**DIGNITY. COMMUNITY. CHOICE.**

emergency food over time. That is how all of us will know the system is working the way we intend.

We recognize the real fiscal pressures this city faces. But these investments are not luxuries; they are the difference between a system that holds and one that buckles. As federal support becomes more uncertain and more punitive, New York City must lead with compassion, dignity, and urgency. No New Yorker should go hungry because of policy decisions made far from this chamber.

We thank you for your partnership, and we stand ready to work with HRA, DSS, and this Council to protect every New Yorker's access to nutritious food.

Greg Silverman  
CEO, West Side Campaign Against Hunger  
Executive Director, The Roundtable NYC

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## **Chaitanya's Testimony**

Good morning to the Chair and the members of the City Council. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify today.

My name is Chaitanya Gundrathi, and I am a member of the Youth Action Board of New York City. The Youth Action Board is made up of young people with lived experience of homelessness. Our role is to help shape programs and policies that affect runaway and homeless youth in New York City, and to ensure that their voices are heard.

I am here today because I know firsthand how difficult it is to navigate housing instability as a young person. When you do not know where you are going to sleep at night, everything becomes harder—finding a job, continuing your education, taking care of your health, and planning for your future.

Through my work with YAB, I have learned that LGBTQIA+ youth face some of the highest risks of homelessness. While they represent an estimated 5–10% of the overall youth population, they make up as much as 40% of youth experiencing homelessness. Many are pushed out by family rejection, discrimination, and unsafe home environments. Despite this disproportionate need, resources and funding have not kept pace, leaving many young people without access to stable and affirming support.

For LGBTQIA+ immigrant youth, these challenges are often even more severe. Many come from countries where they face discrimination, persecution, or criminalization because of their identity. After arriving in the United States, they often encounter additional barriers to housing, legal services, healthcare, and community support. However, there is currently no dedicated city funding stream specifically focused on LGBTQIA+ immigrant communities, leaving some of our most vulnerable youth without targeted and affirming services.

That is why I support expanding housing options for LGBTQIA+ youth and increasing funding for organizations that provide affirming services. I urge the Council to expand LGBTQIA+ youth housing, increase investments in affirming services, and establish the proposed \$15 million LGBTQIA+ Immigrant Fund. No young person should have to face homelessness alone because of their identity or immigration status. Thank you for your time and consideration..

Chairperson and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on this critical issue. My name is Eva Jacroux, and I am a case manager at one of New York City's safe havens, facilities that serve as a last safety net for our most vulnerable neighbors. Every day, I work alongside New Yorkers who are ready to leave shelter behind and rebuild their lives in permanent housing. But I am here today because my colleagues and I across the city are hitting a wall: an administrative Catch-22 that leaves thousands of people trapped in homelessness for no reason other than a missing piece of plastic.

Here is the problem in its simplest form: **IDNYC requires a photo ID to get a photo ID.**

For someone with a stable home and a file drawer full of documents, this makes sense. But for the populations we serve in safe havens: runaway and homeless youth, survivors of domestic violence, immigrants fleeing danger, people whose belongings have been swept away or destroyed, and individuals living with severe mental illness, this requirement is an impossible barrier. These are New Yorkers who have never had an ID, or who have had their documents stolen, withheld as a tool of abuse, or discarded during a street sweep. Without a government-issued photo ID, they cannot apply for the very programs designed to lift them out of homelessness: 2010e supportive housing, HRA benefits, public assistance, CityFHEPS, and SOTA.

Currently, IDNYC does allow certain caretakers to vouch for a client's identity in lieu of a photo ID. But the list of eligible agencies is narrow, and, in what I believe is a profound oversight, **it does not include the Department of Homeless Services.** We are the very agency charged with housing this population, yet we are locked out of the process that could unblock their path to housing. IDNYC currently accepts vouchers only from: the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, the NYS Department of Health, the NYS Office of Mental Health, and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. DHS safe havens, which often serve as a catchall for New York's most marginalized residents, are absent from this list.

Let me pause here to name what this means. My clients are often better served in medical or psychiatric facilities, but instead they are confined to the shelter system. They are ineligible for the programs they desperately need, not because of their circumstances, but because of paperwork. And because IDNYC only accepts original documents, no copies, even those who can track down a birth certificate or Social Security card face additional obstacles. For immigrants, obtaining an original document from their home country can take months or be impossible. For individuals born out of state, physically appearing at a vital records office is not an option when you are unhoused. And for undocumented clients, Medicaid is only available as emergency care at hospitals, so they cannot use a Medicaid card as proof of birthdate, even if they have one.

This is not a failure of effort on the part of case managers. This is a structural failure. And it is condemning New Yorkers to a life sentence in transitional housing, and chronic homelessness.

I am here to propose two straightforward administrative fixes:

**1. Add DHS to the caretaker list.**

Allow DHS case managers, who have established, ongoing relationships with their clients and access to verified case records, to waive the photo requirement for IDNYC. This simple change would immediately unblock housing for thousands of shelter clients. We already carry the trust and the documentation to vouch for our clients' identities; we simply need the city to recognize that authority.

**2. Accept physician statements as a backup.**

Allow licensed physicians to sign a statement verifying a patient's identity, a practice already accepted by the Social Security Administration for issuing replacement Social Security cards. For clients with complex medical histories, this would provide a reliable secondary pathway to identification.

**Let me put a human face on this policy failure.**

I have a client who was adopted from Mongolia, later became a German citizen, and then married an American man and became a U.S. citizen. That man withheld her documents as a form of abuse and eventually destroyed them. She is now essentially undocumented, internally displaced, unable to apply for permanent housing or public assistance, and legally invisible in the country she calls home.

I have an elderly client from Appalachia who grew up in an unstable household and was seemingly never issued a photo ID. He cannot remember where or when his parents might have kept a birth certificate or Social Security card. He has been chronically homeless his entire life. We recently secured Medicaid for him, so he now has access to healthcare, but he remains blocked from public assistance and permanent housing.

And I have a client with a traumatic brain injury and schizoaffective disorder who cannot recall when or how he left his home. We traced his hospitalization records to recover his Social Security number. He has been street-homeless for years and has a vague memory of a sweep in which all his belongings were disposed of, including any documentation we might have used to get him an ID. He, too, is blocked from the housing and benefits he needs.

For two of these clients, I am pursuing a workaround: Access-A-Ride, which issues government photo IDs to members. Because they are disabled, they qualify. We are also applying for Medicaid cards, which provide birthdates. But this process has introduced months of delays, and if Access-A-Ride changes its policy or denies them, we are back to square one. My first client is

not disabled and does not qualify for Access-A-Ride at all. She has no path to IDNYC under current rules.

I am not asking for a new program. I am not asking for new funding. I am asking for a simple administrative change that would restore dignity, opportunity, and a path home to thousands of New Yorkers who are ready to move forward, if only the system would let them.

Thank you for your time, your attention, and your commitment to this work. I welcome your questions and would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss these proposals further.

Respectfully,

Eva Jacroux

Case Manager and Concerned New York Resident

████████████████████

Thank you to the Technology and Education Committees, council members De La Rosa, Dinowitz, and others for holding this critical hearing on the timely issue of Artificial Intelligence software systems and their impact on public education, the staff, parents and students.

My name is Naveed Hasan and I am a proud parent of two children in our local upper Manhattan public schools. I am also an elected member of the Panel for Educational Policy, what used to be the NYC Board of Education. My academic and professional background is Computer Science, specifically AI as it has been developing since the late 1990s.

Today I want to highlight why I have joined calls for a 2 year moratorium in our schools. The reasoning is multidimensional, and touches on education technology in general, DOE vendor mandates being imposed on all schools, and the hollowing out of our professional teaching staff in the school system in favor of unnecessary outsourcing of core DOE educational functions.

A city and school system with a budget as large as ours must be able to set the terms of engagement when dealing with consultants and contractors. This means demanding vendors follow our directions. The city needs to build its own municipal technology infrastructure and human capital for the long term benefit of its residents, including all families and students. This is one of the only ways to guarantee data privacy and security for school's use of AI software, and we have existing, working examples of this model in use by school affiliated not for profit organizations, large corporations and sovereign systems for nation states. Without meaningful technology infrastructure specifically for the public good, people will be beholden to the whims of trillion dollar companies and their narrow profit motives.


On this city operated hardware and network, we should have a walled garden where whatever contracted vendors are deemed effective for teaching and learning are invited to securely host their software. Unionized city pedagogues and employees, would help determine what and how ed tech actually works to the benefit of our children.

For too long, the DOE has used unfettered and de facto unregulated vendors to do what any respectable education system should handle themselves. This outsourcing of core responsibilities must end, as its incentives are deeply misaligned with the good of our kids. With the terrible boxed curriculum mandates continuing to be imposed by the DOE, there are insidiously partnered Silicon Valley ed tech firms forcing device use in foundational learning. This is harmful to our kids and I ask the Council's help in prohibiting this private profiteering of public funds.

I call also on the mayor to establish an entity akin to EDC NYC, the Economic Development Corporation, specifically to establish a public private non profit partnership for technology policy and implementation for all New Yorkers. The greatest city in the world can lead the way with the best open source software, open standards hardware, open weights models and top technologists designing and maintaining it all.

Thank you!

Naveed Hasan  
Elected Manhattan parent member, Panel for Educational Policy

  
<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families/panel-for-education-policy/members/naveed-hasan>

Good morning Chair and members of the Council.

My name is Nedelyn Helena-diaz, and I am the cochair of the NYC Youth Action Board and Outreach Specialist with Housing Works' LGBTQ+ Housing Assistance Program. Through my work with housing works, I connect LGBTQ+ individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability with housing resources, supportive services, and pathways to stability.

In my outreach I've met young people who have been rejected by their families, forced to leave their homes, or left without a safe place to go simply because of who they are. I have worked with youth sleeping on friends' couches, cycling through shelters, or trying to survive without any support system. The emotional toll of rejection, discrimination, and housing instability is something no young person should have to endure.

Unfortunately, these stories are far too common. According to research from The Trevor Project, 28% of LGBTQ+ youth have experienced homelessness or housing instability. Among youth who were kicked out of their homes, 40% said it was because of their LGBTQ+ identity. More than half of those who ran away reported doing so because of mistreatment or fear of mistreatment related to their identity.

These experiences have lasting consequences. LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability were found to have two to four times greater odds of reporting depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicide attempts compared to those with stable housing.

That is why I support the Coalition's call for a \$15 million LGBTQIA+ Immigrant Fund. Many LGBTQIA+ immigrants face compounded barriers, including housing instability, legal insecurity, language barriers, and difficulty accessing affirming services. Dedicated funding would help ensure they can access housing, legal support, healthcare, and community resources.

I also support the \$10 million Supports for Persons Involved in the Sex Trade Fund. Many individuals become involved in survival economies because they lack stable housing and economic opportunities. Investing in housing, legal services, harm reduction, and community-based support creates pathways to safety, stability, and dignity.

Housing is more than shelter, it is safety, opportunity, and hope. I urge the Council to continue investing in solutions that ensure every New Yorker has access to safe and stable housing.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify.

Onyx Walker  
Housing Works/New York City Youth Action Board  
6/24/26

Good afternoon, City Council,

My name is Onyx Walker. I am a former Co-Chair and current Community Manager for the New York City Youth Action Board, and I am working with Housing Works. I am a lived expert on homelessness and have worked alongside numerous runaway and homeless youth throughout New York City. My own experience includes two years of street homelessness, which gave me firsthand insight into the barriers young people face when trying to secure safe and stable housing.

Today, I am here to speak about the growing housing crisis facing young people. As the cost of living continues to rise, affordable housing has become increasingly out of reach for youth, particularly those exiting homelessness. Many of these young people identify as LGBTQIA+, a population that experiences homelessness and housing instability at disproportionately high rates. National data shows that 28% of LGBTQ youth have experienced homelessness or housing instability, including 38% of transgender girls and women, 39% of transgender boys and men, and 35% of nonbinary youth. At the same time, young people are navigating one of the most difficult entry-level job markets in decades, making it even harder to meet basic needs and achieve housing stability.

I urge the Council to take immediate action by implementing CityFHEPS vouchers for youth accessing DYCD Runaway and Homeless Youth programs and expanding overall voucher access for young people experiencing homelessness. I also ask that DYCD be directed to open and operate more tailored facilities for LGBTQIA+ young adults, ensuring they have safe, affirming spaces while working toward stability. Young people should not have to choose between survival and safety. With targeted investments and meaningful support, New York City can provide vulnerable youth with the housing and resources they need to thrive

Thank you

To: Committee on General Welfare and Committee on Women and Gender Equity  
Re: Oversight - Housing Instability Among LGBTQ+ Individuals in NYC.  
Date: June 24, 2026

**Subject: Affirming shelter is necessary, but permanent affordability and tenancy protections are what create safety.**

I submit this testimony on behalf of Save Section 9 (SS9), a tenant-led coalition working to preserve and strengthen public housing as permanently affordable housing.

We appreciate the Committee's attention to housing instability among LGBTQ+ New Yorkers. The briefing paper correctly identifies family rejection, discrimination, shelter mistreatment, and economic exclusion as major drivers of housing insecurity. These realities are urgent and require intervention.

At the same time, SS9 urges the Committees to recognize that housing stability is not achieved through shelter policy alone.

If New York City is serious about reducing homelessness among LGBTQ+ residents, it must invest in stable, permanently affordable housing—not only emergency responses.

Section 9 public housing remains one of the strongest anti-homelessness tools available.

Every night, more than 100,000 individuals sleep in New York City's shelter system, while thousands more remain rent burdened and at constant risk of displacement. Current responses increasingly rely on emergency shelter, vouchers, temporary subsidies, and crisis intervention. These services are necessary, particularly for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers facing discrimination and family rejection, but they address the consequences of housing instability rather than its root cause.

Section 9 addresses that root cause by removing the instability created by housing costs. Additionally, public housing disproportionately stabilizes women, caregivers, disabled residents, and households historically excluded from homeownership.

Unlike market-based housing programs, Section 9 public housing ties rent to household income rather than market conditions or Area Median Income calculations. This structure allows households to remain housed during periods of unemployment, illness, disability, caregiving responsibilities, retirement, or economic disruption.

For LGBTQ+ households—particularly transgender and gender-expansive residents who experience higher rates of poverty, discrimination, and rent burden—this predictability matters.

Public housing offers something shelters cannot: permanence.

Section 9 also includes important federal tenant protections that support long-term housing security. Residents maintain rights to grievance procedures, due process protections prior to

termination or eviction actions, notice requirements, continued affordability standards, resident participation structures, and federal oversight obligations that establish enforceable accountability. These protections create stability that many LGBTQ+ New Yorkers cannot reliably access in private rental markets.

This matters because safety is not only protection from violence—it is protection from displacement.

For LGBTQ+ individuals who have experienced family rejection, housing discrimination, harassment in congregate settings, or repeated moves through shelter systems, stable housing becomes a condition for healing, employment, education, healthcare access, and community connection.

From a fiscal perspective, preserving and modernizing Section 9 is also more efficient than managing the consequences of instability. Shelter placements, emergency housing assistance, rental subsidies, crisis services, and homelessness prevention programs require ongoing public expenditures. Public housing creates durable affordability that reduces future reliance on emergency systems.

Every household that remains stably housed in Section 9 is one less household entering shelter and one less household requiring repeated crisis intervention.

SS9 urges the Committees to treat Section 9 public housing as essential welfare infrastructure and as a gender and LGBTQ+ equity strategy.

Our recommendations are:

- Ensure that all public monies are allocated to the comprehensive modernization of Section 9 public housing.
- Expand Section 9 by 23k units within our Faircloth allowance rather than relying primarily on privatized delivery models.
- Ensure that in privatized NYCHA sites private management companies preserve federal tenant protections and resident participation rights.
- Create awareness campaigns that encourage LGBTQ+ New Yorkers to apply for Section 9 public housing.
- Recognize housing permanence—not temporary placement—as the benchmark for success.

Affirming shelter systems matter. But the strongest protection against homelessness is a home people can afford to keep.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In solidarity,

Ramona Ferreyra

Tenant, Mitchel Houses  
Founder Save Section 9

## **Testimony Before the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare**

Good morning Chairman and members of the Committee on General Welfare.

My name is Timothy Pena. I am a Navy veteran, a former resident of the Borden Avenue Veterans Residence, and founder of Veterans Justice Project.

I appear before the Committee on General Welfare today because neither the Department of Veterans' Services nor the Committee on Veterans has taken these allegations seriously while veterans continue to suffer.

For years, veterans have reported violence, assaults, drug activity, mental health crises, overdoses, deteriorating living conditions, and a lack of accountability at the Borden Avenue Veterans Residence, New York City's only Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem transitional housing program.

Yet instead of meaningful oversight, homeless veterans have too often been ignored, marginalized, or dismissed.

In 2024, during a public discussion concerning conditions at Borden Avenue, former Department of Veterans' Services Housing Director Lllamar Wheeler described the facility as the "Cadillac of shelters." For veterans living there, that statement did not reflect reality. It signaled that the concerns being raised by residents were not being taken seriously. Many veterans believe that comment effectively shut down further discussion of abuses and conditions at Borden while officials continued to defend the status quo.

Since that statement was made, public records have identified approximately 1,365 emergency calls associated with the facility in just sixteen months. More than seventy arrests were recorded between 2022 and 2025, including felony arrests involving assaults, narcotics, weapons, and violence against emergency personnel. Approximately 218 emergency calls involved emotionally disturbed persons, including eighty-five violent mental health incidents.

The burden extends beyond the veterans living there.

These repeated crises place enormous demands on the NYPD 108th Precinct, EMS personnel, hospitals, courts, and taxpayers. Conservative estimates suggest that responding to emergencies associated with Borden Avenue may have cost taxpayers approximately six million dollars over sixteen months alone.

Today, veterans are also reporting what appears to be an ongoing tick infestation. Residents describe repeated bites and have discarded donated clothing and bedding because they fear contamination. These are not the conditions veterans should experience in a federally funded transitional housing program.

Veterans deserve safe housing. Taxpayers deserve accountability. And New York City deserves answers.

I respectfully ask this Committee to conduct an independent review of conditions at Borden Avenue, examine the impact on public resources, evaluate compliance with federal Grant and Per Diem standards, and ensure that homeless veterans finally have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

# FACTS AND FIGURES SUMMARY

Prepared by:

**Timothy Pena**

Founder, Veterans Justice Project

June 2026

## Emergency Activity

- Approximately 1,365 emergency calls (Aug. 2024–Dec. 2025)
- More than one emergency response every 9 hours
- Approximately 705 ambulance/medical incidents
- Approximately 218 emotionally disturbed person incidents
- Approximately 85 violent EDP incidents
- Approximately 58 assault-related incidents
- Approximately 58 suspected overdoses

## Arrest Activity

- More than 70 arrests (2022–2025)
- Approximately 21 felony arrests
- Assaults account for nearly half of all arrests
- Additional charges include narcotics, weapons, threats, and offenses against emergency personnel
- More than 60% of calls reportedly lacked a publicly available final disposition.

## Impact on NYPD 108 Precinct

- Hundreds of emergency responses generated by a single building
- Patrol officers diverted from surrounding neighborhoods
- Significant demand on supervisors, detectives, EMS personnel, hospitals, courts, and correctional systems
- Police increasingly serving as the default behavioral health response system

## Taxpayer Cost

- Estimated public cost (16 months): \$4 million–\$8 million
- Midpoint estimate: approximately \$6 million
- Estimated annual emergency-response-related cost per veteran: \$20,455

- Estimated long-term taxpayer burden (18 years): \$54 million–\$108 million
- Midpoint estimate: approximately \$81 million

## **Oversight Concerns**

- 2024 statement by former DVS Housing Director describing Borden Avenue as the "Cadillac of shelters"
- Veterans contend the remark discouraged further scrutiny of abuses and safety concerns
- Limited discussion of homeless veterans in the Veterans Advisory Board's 2025 Annual Report
- Repeated testimony from homeless veterans without meaningful reform

## **Health and Sanitation Concerns**

- Reports of ongoing tick infestation
- Multiple veterans reporting bites
- Donated clothing and bedding reportedly discarded
- Questions regarding sanitation and habitability standards

## **Recommendations**

- Independent operational audit
- Federal GPD compliance review
- Public reporting of emergency calls, arrests, overdoses, and deaths
- Review of NYPD resource impact
- Resident health and sanitation inspection
- Expanded representation of homeless veterans in city policymaking

## **Sources:**

- [Analysis of NYPD 911 records associated with 21-10 Borden Avenue, Long Island City, August 2024–December 2025.](#)
- [Analysis of arrest records and mental health-related emergency calls associated with 21-10 Borden Avenue, 2022–2025.](#)
- [Assistance of ChatGPT artificial intelligence.](#)

## **Prepared by:**

Timothy Pena  
257 W. 29<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10001  
(602) 663-6456  
[tim.pena@vetjuspro.com](mailto:tim.pena@vetjuspro.com)  
<https://www.vetjuspro.com/>

**Subject: Urgent: End Discriminating Practices  
Requiring Minors' Sensitive Data for Housing,  
Education and Healthcare**

**From: Shaun Butler**

**Dear Politicians:**

**Am writing to urge yor immediate (all three branches  
of government) actuib agaubst systemic familial  
status discrimination via the unnecessary collection of  
minors' personal data.**

Families are routinely denied housing, education and vital services unless they surrender sensitive identifiers belonging to children. This includes birth certificates, Social Security Numbers (SSNs), and sweeping HIPPA disclosure overrides to pediatricians and OB/GYNs.

### The Scope of the Problem:

- Housing Rentals: Landlords block or compromise applicants by demanding children's SSNs or birth certificates under the guise of background checks,


directly violating the Fair Housing Act (FHA) protections against familial status discrimination.

They will offer approved application with this as condition or delay!

- Education Enrollment: Schools and extracurricular programs erect barriers for immigrant and low-income families by conditioning enrollment on non-essential, highly sensitive documentation.
- Service Providers: Medical, extracurricular, and ADA service providers increasingly require broad

**medical record releases to third parties violating consumer privacy and child safety protocols.**

- **Harm to Vulnerable Populations:**
- **Identity Thefts:** Minors are the prime targets for lifetime identity theft when their SSNs are leaked from unsecured databases.
- **Housing Insecurity:** Families face immediate or prolonged homelessness when they refuse to sign over broad, unsafe parental disclosure overrides to corporate landlords and associates.

- **Chilled Access to Care:** Parents are forced to cancel critical therapy, medical appointments, and ADA accommodations due to coercive, all-or-nothing data collection policies.
  
- ** Requested Legislative Actions**
  1. **1.Ban Minors' SSN Mandates:** Prohibit housing providers and non-financial entities from mandating a minor's SSN as a condition of service or tenancy.

1. **2.Restrict Medical Overrides:** Limit the scope of pediatric and OB/ GYN disclosure overrides to strictly necessary data, banning blanket waivers.

1. **3.Strengthen FHA Enforcement:** Increase penalties for housing providers who use data requests to screen out or penalize families with children.

1. No parent should have to choose between their child's data privacy and their basic need for housing, health, and education. I welcome the

opportunity to discuss draftin a legislative  
solution to protect our community's children.

-

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 384 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Madlyn Helena-Diaz

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Housing Works NYC YAB

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 384 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 06/24/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: REDDY CHAITANYA GUNDRATHI

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: YAB Youth Action Board

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Asher Blackman

Address: 4 WTC NYC NY 10007

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/24/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rima Rivera

Address: 150 Greenwich St, 43rd F NY, NY 10007

I represent: NYC Human Resources Adm

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/24/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jacqueline Dudley

Address: [Redacted] NY NY

I represent: DSS/HRA

Address: 150 Greenwich Street NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/26/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Henry Love

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Point Source Youth

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/24/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Erin Datta

Address: 218 Front Street #201

I represent: DSS, NYC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: X. Pamela Farouhar

Address: [REDACTED] NY 10013

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/24/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN RUTAS

Address: 150 GATEWAY ST, NY, NY

I represent: DSS - ITCA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/24/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sonyia Russell

Address: 33 Beaver Street

I represent: NYC Dept. Homeless Svcs

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tracey Thorne

Address: Senior Director, Runaway and Homeless Youth

I represent: NYC DYCD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Timothy Pena

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Veteran Justice Project

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Wanda Ascherl

Address: Associate Commissioner,

I represent: Dept of Youth and Community Development

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nadia Swanson

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: The Ali Forney Center

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 06/24/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bryan J. Ellicott-Cook

Address: [REDACTED] SI, NY 10306

I represent: SAGE

Address: 308 7th Ave NY, NY 10001

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alex Guevara

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Youth Advocate at The Ali Forney Center

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 0/24/20

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Taylor Brown

Address: 59 Maiden Ln

I represent: Mayor's Office of LGBTQA Affairs

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ethan L.

Address: 45 Thomas St New York NY 10013

I represent: Legal Aid Society - LGBT Unit

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Miranda - Legal Services NYC

Address: [redacted] Adam Clayton Powell

I represent: Legal Services NYC

Address: 40 Worth Street

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EVA JACROUX

Address: [redacted] Vanderbilt Ave

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mateo Guerrero

Address: 104-19 Roosevelt Ave, Corona NY 11368

I represent: Manc the Road NY

Address: [redacted]

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms