



Testimony of
Coalition for the Homeless

before the General Welfare Committee
of the New York City Council

on the

Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2026

submitted by

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May 16, 2025

The Coalition for the Homeless (“Coalition”) welcomes this opportunity to submit testimony to the New York City Council’s General Welfare Committee. As the court- and City-appointed independent monitor of the Department of Homeless Services (“DHS”) shelter system and the shelter system for adult New Arrivals, and party in the historic *Callahan*, *Eldredge*, and *Boston* cases that created the right to shelter in New York City (“NYC”), we are uniquely situated to provide insight into the impact of proposed funding for unhoused New Yorkers and those at-risk of experiencing homelessness.

Compounding Crisis, Failed Responses

NYC has one of the largest populations of unhoused people in the United States. In February 2025, there were 114,791 people sleeping in New York City shelters, including 39,394 children.¹ This staggeringly high figure does not include the many thousands of people sleeping unsheltered in public spaces, or the hundreds of thousands temporarily sleeping doubled- and tripled-up in the homes of others. As such, the number of people without homes in New York has never been higher.

These alarming statistics have been fueled by decades of underinvestment in permanent affordable housing for low-income communities and the failure of all levels of government to enact policies to meaningfully reverse this trend. The affordable housing shortage in NYC, particularly for extremely low-income (“ELI”) households, is underscored by stark data revealing the depth of the crisis. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s 2025 report, “The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes,” there is a glaring disparity in the availability of affordable housing: for every 100 ELI households in the New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA metro area, there are merely 34 affordable and available rental units.² In a city where the cost of living far exceeds national averages, and ELI households are defined as those earning 30 percent or less of the area median income (“AMI”), this gap leaves a vast number of residents in precarious housing situations.

The housing precarity in NYC is evidenced by the rent burdens borne by its residents. The number of ELI households who were severely rent-burdened (spending more than 50 percent of their income on housing) was 73 percent in 2023.³ This financial strain severely limits the capacity of ELI households to afford other necessities, such as food, healthcare, and childcare. It forces many of them to live in overcrowded conditions – defined as having more than two people per bedroom or more than one person living in a studio apartment. In fact, nearly a quarter (23 percent) of NYC households with at least one child are overcrowded.^{4,5} Given that living in overcrowded conditions is frequently a precursor to homelessness, such statistics portend greater levels of mass homelessness if this affordable housing crisis continues.

¹ “Facts About Homelessness.” Coalition for the Homeless. <https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/facts-about-homelessness/>, Accessed 12 May 2025.

² “The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes.” National Low Income Housing Coalition, https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/gap/2025/gap-report_2025_english.pdf, Accessed 12 May 2025.

³ “The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes.” National Low Income Housing Coalition, https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/gap/2025/gap-report_2025_english.pdf, Accessed 12 May 2025.

⁴ “2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey Selected Initial Findings.” New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, 2024, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/2023-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf>.

⁵ “2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey Selected Initial Findings.” New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, 2024, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/2023-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf>.

The dynamics of NYC's real estate market have also exacerbated the affordable housing shortage. The city's median rent has consistently outpaced inflation and income growth, creating an environment where affordable housing becomes increasingly scarce. Rent-stabilized units are particularly difficult to come by. Per the most recent Housing Vacancy Survey, the vacancy rate for rent stabilized units was less than 1 percent in 2023 — down from an already distressingly low 4.6 percent in 2021.⁶ More to the point, the vacancy rate for affordable apartments — those renting for less than \$1,100 per month — was only 0.39 percent. Effectively, there are no affordable apartments left in New York for those who need them most.

Coupled with this is the fact that evictions have remained worryingly high, nearing pre-COVID levels. In New York City in FY24, there were 126,236 eviction filings in city housing courts.⁷ The increase in evictions is particularly impacting low-income residents and communities of color and further straining the city's social safety net. In addition, this surge in evictions, in conjunction with a near-total lack of available affordable housing, has made a substantial increase in mass homelessness in the city a near-inevitability.

The crisis extends beyond those in shelters to include those living unsheltered, which presents its own significant challenges. According to the last HOPE estimate published in 2024, more than 4,000 individuals experienced unsheltered homelessness in one night. However, there is no reliable count of the number of people sleeping unsheltered each night in New York City.⁸ The City's annual HOPE survey, mandated by the Federal government, underestimates the true size of this population due to flawed methodology, and as a point-in-time survey, it fails to capture the dynamic nature of unsheltered homelessness. Whatever figure is reported by the City, we can safely assume the true number of people sleeping unsheltered is far higher.

Housing solutions for the unsheltered homeless population remain woefully inadequate. Recent statistics reveal a troubling disconnect in the supportive housing system. Out of 955 people living on the streets and subways who were approved for supportive housing during a period tracked by city social service and health agencies last year, only 175 successfully obtained a housing placement — just 18 percent of the total.⁹ Nearly 400 people were still waiting to be referred to a supportive housing provider for an interview, despite thousands of apartments sitting empty, while 131 people waited more than a year and had their applications expire without receiving a placement.¹⁰ This systemic failure highlights how even those who navigate the application process successfully are frequently left without the housing solutions they desperately need.

⁶ “2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey Selected Initial Findings.” New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, 2024, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/2023-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf>.

⁷ “FY24 Annual Report.” Department of Social Services, New York City Office of Civil Justice, https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hra/downloads/pdf/services/civiljustice/OCJ_Annual_Report_2024.pdf.

⁸ “Homeless Outreach Population Estimate 2024 Results.” New York City Department of Social Services, 2024, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dhs/outreach/hope.page>.

⁹ Hogan, Gwynne. “Most Street-Homeless Housing Applicants Never Get a Shot, Inside Stats Show.” The City. 6 Jan. 2025. <http://www.thecity.nyc/2025/01/06/homeless-supportive-housing-eric-adams-statistics/>.

¹⁰ Hogan, Gwynne. “Most Street-Homeless Housing Applicants Never Get a Shot, Inside Stats Show.” The City. 6 Jan. 2025. <http://www.thecity.nyc/2025/01/06/homeless-supportive-housing-eric-adams-statistics/>.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Expand CityFHEPS as an Eviction Prevention Tool Using Promised City for All/City of Yes Funding Commitments

The Council's City for All plan, negotiated in December 2024, was intended to bolster Mayor Adams' City of Yes for Housing Opportunity plan with increased funding commitments to address New York's homelessness and housing affordability crisis. As part of that plan, the Council secured a \$215 million commitment to expand the CityFHEPS rental assistance program to cover low-income tenants at risk of eviction and homelessness.¹¹ But now, the Adams administration is reneging on its commitment to keeping New Yorkers housed. It is crucial that the Council fight against this broken promise and ensure that low-income New Yorkers get the resources they urgently need. In the Council's adopted version, City of Yes/City for All laid out a framework for creating and preserving affordable housing across the city. While all components of the plan will take time to implement, the \$215 million for CityFHEPS was supposed to be available over the course of FY 2025 and FY 2026 — with at least \$115 million of it this year.

The \$215 million funding promised in City of Yes must be strategically deployed to expand CityFHEPS as an eviction prevention tool, targeting those most vulnerable to housing instability. We recommend applying specific criteria to maximize the preventative impact of this expansion, focusing on households who would otherwise face eviction, experience homelessness, and ultimately require rehousing at substantially higher cost to the city. The Coalition's Eviction Prevention Program, which pays rent arrears to keep households facing eviction in their homes, turns away approximately a quarter of people seeking assistance because they cannot afford to pay the rent going forward (something that is required to receive a grant for arrears). If many of these households received CityFHEPS, they not only would have been eligible for grants like those we provide for arrears, but they would have been able to stay in their homes.

To effectively target this funding, we propose prioritizing households that meet all of the following criteria: (1) currently facing legal action by their landlord in Housing Court; (2) living in regulated housing such as rent stabilized, rent controlled, Mitchell-Lama rental or cooperative properties, units with low-income tax credits, or those eligible under good cause provisions; (3) household includes either an elderly person over 62, a disabled person, or a minor child under 18; and (4) applicants' current rent does not exceed established CityFHEPS rent levels.

Based on our estimates, \$215 million over two years would prevent homelessness for most households that meet all the above criteria. An analysis by the Community Service Society of 2023 Census data (the most recent available) found that over 370,000 households with a child, senior, or person with disability are severely rent burdened and have incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Of these, fewer than half (148,000) live in one of the types of regulated housing set forth above. Of these, a smaller

¹¹ "NYC Council Secures \$5 Billion in Commitments for City for All Plan to Invest into Communities and Increase Affordability." New York City Council, Press Release, 19 Dec 2024, <https://council.nyc.gov/carolina-rivera/2024/12/19/nyc-council-secures-5-billion-in-commitments-for-city-for-all-plan-to-invest-into-communities-and-increase-affordability/>

subset — 7,490 households — are likely to face eviction. Covering these 7,490 households under CityFHEPS would cost the city \$116 million for one year.¹²

If the Adams administration honors its promise to the City Council, nearly 7,500 households could remain in their homes over the next two years. The Council must stand firm and ensure this crucial funding is delivered—without delay.

Successful expansion of the CityFHEPS program is also dependent on fixing the unnecessary delays and hurdles that plague every step of the process. Clients of the Coalition experience extended delays in processing their applications for CityFHEPS, approvals of apartments, and payments to landlords. Such extreme delays and processing issues are commonly experienced by people who are trying either to leave shelter and find permanent homes or to avoid eviction, like the seven tenants in a lawsuit filed by the Legal Aid Society who faced delays in the processing of their CityFHEPS voucher recertifications.¹³

In recent months, the Coalition assisted three different households that had already received eviction notices from Housing Court, even though two of those people had CityFHEPS vouchers and failed to receive help they needed to complete recertification. The third person was eligible for CityFHEPS to keep her in her home, but was told she was not eligible by a HomeBase provider. Two of these individuals entered the shelter system and were there for months before we were able to get them back in their homes. These examples are reflections of a broken and dysfunctional system that results in unneeded trauma and a waste of resources.

Reject the Human Resources Administration’s Proposal to Hike Rents for CityFHEPS Voucher Holders

On April 30th, the Adams administration quietly proposed a major change to CityFHEPS,¹⁴ New York City’s primary rental assistance program designed to help New Yorkers move out of homelessness and into permanent housing. In a typical rental assistance program, the tenant pays 30 percent of their income toward rent and the government covers the balance between that amount and what the landlord charges — up to a certain payment standard. This is because a renter who pays more than 30 percent of income on rent is classified as “rent burdened.” Under the Adams administration’s new proposal, all income-earning CityFHEPS households enrolled in the program for five or more years would have to pay 40 percent of their income toward rent beginning in year 6, effectively making many formerly homeless low-income New Yorkers rent burdened.

Nearly 30,000 New Yorkers would be hit with higher rents under this rule change. According to HRA, 20,227 single individuals and 9,521 families with children would be subject to the proposed 40 percent

¹² Stein, Sam, et. al. “No More Broken Promises: Commit City Funds to CityFHEPS in the Community.” Community Service Society, 16 May 2025, <https://www.cssny.org/news/entry/no-more-broken-promises-commit-city-funds-to-cityfheps-in-the-community>.

¹³ Zaveri, Mihir. “Program That Fights Homelessness Is Mired in Dysfunction, Advocates Say.” The New York Times, 5 Apr. 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/05/nyregion/ny-housing-voucher-program-problems.html>.

¹⁴ New York City Human Resources Administration. Notice of Public Hearing and Opportunity to Comment on Proposed Amendments to Chapters 10 and 11 of Title 68 of the Rules of the City of New York and to Chapter 60 of Title 28 of the Rules of the City of New York. 30 Apr. 2025. https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CityFHEPS_Pathway-Home-Rule-Change_CRIB_final.pdf

rent contribution.¹⁵ These households moved into permanent housing using CityFHEPS vouchers issued in 2019 and 2020. Under the proposed rule, the median single individual would owe \$2,400 more in rent annually — a \$200 monthly increase. The median family with children would be obligated to pay \$1,212 more each year, or \$101 more per month. This would force low-income households to cut essentials, like food, childcare, transportation, and health care.

The proposed rule would not only force households to be rent-burdened, it would enshrine rent burden into City policy. In 2017, the Trump Administration proposed raising rents in federally-subsidized housing to 35 percent of a household's income, a proposal that was heavily critiqued and ultimately rejected.¹⁶ A 2024 study published in the journal *Social Science and Medicine* found that increased rent burdens strongly correlate with eviction, reduced spending on food and medicine, and even premature death.¹⁷ That the City would go beyond even what was proposed by the Trump Administration is appalling and sets a dangerous precedent potentially impacting the millions of families who rely on subsidized housing.

While these rent increases will take a terrible toll on low-income working families, they will do little for the City. DSS Commissioner Molly Park testified that the City would save \$11 million — less than 0.01 percent of the city's \$112 billion annual budget. And even these savings may never actually materialize. Many formerly homeless tenants will be unable to meet the new rent standards, requiring emergency financial assistance from the City in the form of HRA's "One-Shot Deals" that help tenants avoid eviction by helping cover rent arrears. In effect, money "saved" by reducing CityFHEPS subsidies would simply become money spent on other forms of emergency rent relief.

If tenants return to shelters, the City pays even more. The sought-after savings would disappear if even a small share of CityFHEPS tenants cannot pay these elevated rents or secure a One-Shot Deal and are evicted and return to the shelter system. or secure a one-shot deal, are evicted, and return to the shelter system. If just one percent of single adults or families return to the shelter system for the average length of stay, not only will they be forced to relive the trauma of homelessness, the cost of shelter alone for the returning households would cancel out the city's projected savings. If a greater number returns to homelessness, the city would actually increase its overall costs. The proposed change is thus systemically dangerous, detrimental to struggling New Yorkers, and likely to cost far more than it saves.

Reject the Human Resources Administration's Unethical Creating Real Impacts at Birth ("CRIB") Research Study

On April 30th, the City also proposed a new research study on pregnant people seeking shelter that raises significant ethical concerns. The study would randomly assign pregnant people arriving at DHS' Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing ("PATH") intake center to one of three categories: a

¹⁵ "Special Initiatives Moveouts and Placements." New York City Open Data, Updated 29 Jan. 2025, https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Social-Services/Special-Initiatives-Moveouts-and-Placements/vnwq-9b7b/about_data, Accessed 15 May 2025.

¹⁶ "Trump Budget's Housing Proposals Would Raise Rents on Struggling Families, Seniors, and People with Disabilities." The Center of Budget Policy and Priorities, 12 Jul. 2017, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/trump-budgets-housing-proposals-would-raise-rents-on-struggling-families-seniors-and-people>.

¹⁷ Graetz, Nick, et al. "The Impacts of Rent Burden and Eviction on Mortality in the United States, 2000–2019." *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 340, 1 Jan. 2024, p. 116398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2023.116398>.

group that would receive Pathway Home assistance, a group that would immediately receive CityFHEPS, and a control group that would receive nothing.

The proposed research presents significant ethical concerns, particularly as it involves vulnerable human subjects, namely pregnant people. DSS has not received, nor is it seeking, Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) approval for this research. IRB approval exists to protect the rights, safety, and well-being of human participants in research and ensure that research involving human subjects meets ethical standards. A key ethical principle in research involving human subjects is that, “[p]articipation in potentially beneficial research should be fairly distributed to all who wish to participate.”¹⁸ Under DSS’s proposal, the group assigned to CityFHEPS would get immediate access to the vouchers without being required to meet the normal work or other requirements when applying from shelter. In contrast, the control group in the proposed research study would not receive this benefit of immediate access and would need to meet the existing eligibility requirements. Thus, the control group would be missing out on a substantial benefit by virtue of random assignment.

Furthermore, the random assignment of pregnant people to receive Pathway Home assistance is nonsensical. Pathway Home is a program that assists people to exit shelters by moving in with friends or family members by providing monthly payments of up to \$1,200 per month to the hosting household for up to 12 months. A person cannot be randomly assigned to a program that requires a condition precedent – here, that the person has family or friends who are willing to take them in. Pathway Home also does not do an assessment of the safety of the hosting household, such as whether it is overcrowded or whether the person might be at risk of interpersonal violence in the household.

The stated intent of the research is vague: “to track the three groups over time, measuring factors such as days in shelter and housing placements.” Why this research is necessary is unclear. The City regularly touts the success of CityFHEPS in assisting people to leave shelter to permanent homes.¹⁹ This begs the question of why the research study is necessary when DSS could simply make CityFHEPS immediately available to all pregnant people seeking shelter.

Create Affordable Housing for Extremely Low-Income and Homeless Households

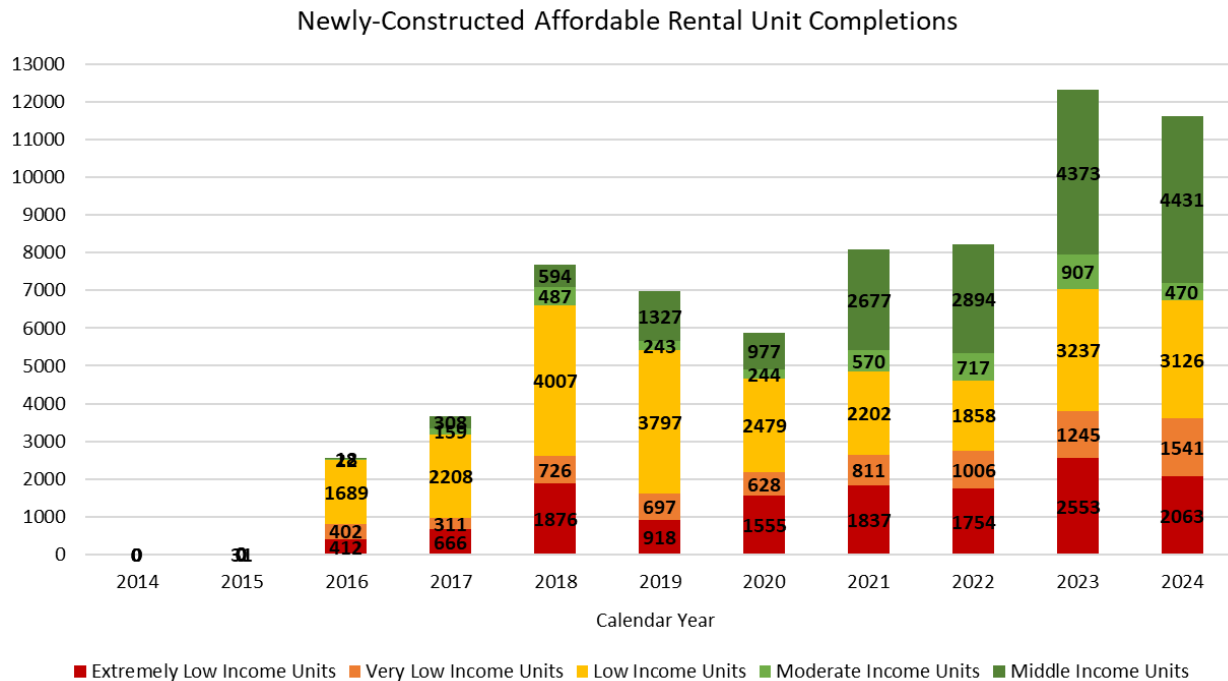
While the Coalition will continue to vigorously defend the Right to Shelter, our ultimate goal is to make shelters unnecessary. But the increasing need for emergency shelter over the past 43 years is a direct result of the depletion of housing that is affordable to those at the lowest income levels. The only way to decrease the number of people living without shelter and the crisis in the shelter system is through permanent, affordable housing. Yet, the City has no plan that acknowledges and addresses the housing need for homeless and ELI individuals and families. The City of Yes for Housing Opportunity zoning amendment did not set requirements for the deepest affordability, only creating an optional Universal Affordability Preference that allows developers to build 20 percent larger if the addition includes units that are affordable to households making 60 percent AMI or higher. Even these units – which are not addressing the greatest housing need – will not be built without subsidy, particularly as there is no

¹⁸ White, Michael G. “Why Human Subjects Research Protection Is Important.” *The Ochsner Journal*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2020, pp. 16–33, <http://doi.org/10.31486/toj.20.5012>.

¹⁹ Video and Transcript of the New York City Council General Welfare Committee’s Preliminary Budget Hearing on 17 Mar. 2025, <https://citymeetings.nyc/meetings/new-york-city-council/2025-03-17-1000-am-committee-on-general-welfare/chapter/efforts-to-address-homelessness-and-housing-instability/>, Accessed 16 May 2025.

requirement to build any affordable units.²⁰ Given the high cost of housing construction in NYC, there is not enough housing being developed for those who need it most, and no plan in place that fills this void.

From 2014 to 2024, only 20 percent of the City’s newly-constructed affordable rental unit completions were targeted for ELI households. That amounts to only 13,634 new affordable rental unit completions for the lowest-income New Yorkers over an entire decade.



Source: HPD, chart by Alexius Marciano (CFTH, 2025)

We urge the City to allocate \$2.5 billion in additional new construction financing each year for the next five years for apartments to specifically be built for homeless and ELI New Yorkers. Increased funding at this level would support building an additional 6,000 apartments for homeless households and 6,000 apartments per year for ELI households.

The City for All commitments that the City Council negotiated as part of the agreement with the Mayoral administration to pass the City of Yes zoning text amendment included “\$2 billion secured in additional housing capital investments to finance affordable housing development and preservation, support Mitchell-Lama developments, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), and HDFCs.”²¹ At least half of this commitment – \$1.25 billion – must be put toward the aforementioned \$2.5 billion recommendation to ensure the development of affordable housing for homeless and ELI households.

²⁰ “The City of New York. “City of Yes – Universal Affordability Preference.” City of New York, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/city-of-yes/housing-opportunity/guide-universal-affordability-preference.pdf>, Accessed 12 Mar. 2025.

²¹ “City for All Commitments.” New York City Council, <https://council.nyc.gov/press/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2024/11/City-for-All-Commitments.pdf>, Accessed 18 Mar. 2025.

Help Unsheltered New Yorkers

Low-Barrier Safe Haven Shelters

Every NYC resident can see that the number of people suffering on the streets continues to increase. The City must invest in more low-barrier shelter beds, such as Safe Havens and stabilization beds. These low-barrier shelter settings offer fewer restrictions, more privacy and security, and better staffing and social services to meet the needs of our unsheltered neighbors.

While the Mayor has often stated the need for creating more Safe Haven beds, and recently announced that 900 new beds would be added, it is simply not enough to meet the need. In the first four months of FY24, the City created only 350 new Safe Haven beds, even though they are proven to be more effective than the general shelter system for unsheltered individuals with mental illness and other disabilities.²²

Rather than ensuring that we have a sufficient number of these critical beds, the City and State are doubling-down on law enforcement sweeps, which data show connects few people to shelter, let alone permanent housing.²³ The City must allocate \$98 million to add 2,000 new Safe Haven beds for unsheltered New Yorkers.

Intensive Mobile Treatment

In addition to low barrier shelter beds, there is a desperate need for functional and expanded Intensive Mobile Treatment (“IMT”) teams. IMT is designed to provide intensive, continuous, flexible support and treatment to individuals in their communities, including mental health, substance use, and peer specialists, psychiatric treatment and medication, and facilitated connections to housing and supportive services. The program is currently stagnant in funding at \$42 million, with a long waitlist of individuals in need of help. The City must invest \$22 million in baselined funds to create additional IMT teams. This additional funding would bring the total to \$64 million and help address the critical shortage of services.

IMT is a critical part of addressing the needs of unsheltered individuals with serious mental illness, but key reforms and increased funding are needed for it to realize its full potential. If NYC truly wants to meet the standard of providing appropriate access to mental health care in the community, and to hold ourselves accountable to the standard of placing individuals in the least restrictive setting possible, then it requires allocating adequate funding to actually make those resources and services available to people in need.

Right to Counsel Legal Services

There is a critical need to expand funding for Right to Counsel (“RTC”) legal services. Under New York City’s RTC law, DSS/HRA’s Office of Civil Justice provides tenants facing eviction in Housing Court or NYCHA administrative proceedings access to legal representation and advice delivered by nonprofit legal services organizations from across the five boroughs. RTC legal services are free, available in every NYC ZIP code, and available regardless of immigration status. Since the expiration of COVID eviction protections in January 2022, over 73,000 tenants have been facing eviction court with no representation

²² “Mayor’s Management Report 2024.” Office of New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Sept. 2024, https://www.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/mmr2024/2024_mmr.pdf.

²³ “Local Law 34 of 2024 Quarterly Interagency Reporting on Encampment Cleanups and Aided Removals.” City of New York, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dhs/about/stats-and-reports.page>.

according to the NYS Office of Court Administration.²⁴ Despite RTC, the percentage of tenants with an attorney has been rapidly falling. In December 2024, only 21 percent of tenants in eviction court had an attorney when their case was filed, down from 65 percent in January of 2022 according to the NYS Office of Court Administration.²⁵

The City must allocate \$351 million in increased funding for the RTC program to ensure that all low-income tenants facing eviction have access to an attorney to fight for their right to stay in their home. According to DSS/HRA's Office of Civil Justice, 84 percent of NYC tenants who had a lawyer through the City's RTC program avoided eviction.²⁶ If NYC is truly committed to preventing homelessness and maintaining housing stability, then it must allocate adequate funding to ensure that every eligible tenant has access to legal representation when facing the threat of eviction.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We look forward to working with the Council on the budget and other legislation to address the needs of those who are unhoused or precariously housed throughout NYC.

About Coalition for the Homeless

The Coalition, founded in 1981, is a not-for-profit advocacy and direct services organization that assists more than 3,500 homeless and at-risk New Yorkers each day. The Coalition advocates for proven, cost-effective solutions to address the crisis of modern homelessness, which is now in its fifth decade. The Coalition also protects the rights of homeless people through litigation involving the right to emergency shelter, the right to vote, the right to reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities, and life-saving housing and services for homeless people living with mental illnesses and HIV/AIDS.

The Coalition operates 12 direct-services programs that offer vital services to homeless, at-risk, and low-income New Yorkers. These programs also demonstrate effective, long-term, scalable solutions and include: permanent housing for formerly homeless families and individuals living with HIV/AIDS; job-training for homeless and low-income women; and permanent housing for formerly homeless families and individuals. Our summer sleep-away camp and after-school program help hundreds of homeless children each year. The Coalition's mobile soup kitchen, which usually distributes 800 to 1,000 nutritious hot meals each night to homeless and hungry New Yorkers on the streets of Manhattan and the Bronx, had to increase our meal production and distribution by as much as 40 percent and to distribute PPE and emergency supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic. But growing food insecurity, increased homelessness, and the arrival of thousands of people in desperate need have greatly increased demand for emergency meals and resources provided by this program. Finally, our Crisis Services Department assists more than 1,000 homeless and at-risk households each month with eviction prevention, individual advocacy, referrals for shelter and emergency food programs, and assistance with public benefits as well as basic necessities such as diapers, formula, work uniforms, and money for medications and groceries.

²⁴ Analysis by the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD) in collaboration with the Right to Counsel Coalition. Data source: NYS Office of Court Administration via the Housing Data Coalition. <https://www.righttocounselnyc.org/nyccrisismonitor>

²⁵ Analysis by the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD) in collaboration with the Right to Counsel Coalition. Data source: NYS Office of Court Administration via the Housing Data Coalition. <https://www.righttocounselnyc.org/nyccrisismonitor>

²⁶ "New York City's Right to Counsel Website." New York City Department of Social Services, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/mayorspeu/resources/right-to-counsel.page>, Accessed 6 Mar. 2025.

Since the pandemic, we have been operating a special Crisis Hotline (1-888-358-2384) for homeless individuals who need immediate help finding shelter or meeting other critical needs.

The Coalition was founded in concert with landmark right-to-shelter litigation filed on behalf of homeless men and women (*Callahan v. Carey* and *Eldredge v. Koch*) and remains a plaintiff in these now consolidated cases. In 1981, the City and State entered into a consent decree in *Callahan* through which they agreed: “The City defendants shall provide shelter and board to each homeless man who applies for it provided that (a) the man meets the need standard to qualify for the home relief program established in New York State; or (b) the man by reason of physical, mental or social dysfunction is in need of temporary shelter.” The *Eldredge* case extended this legal requirement to homeless single women. The *Callahan* consent decree and the *Eldredge* case also guarantee basic standards for shelters for homeless men and women. Pursuant to the decree, the Coalition serves as court-appointed monitor of municipal shelters for homeless single adults, and the City has also authorized the Coalition to monitor other facilities serving homeless families. In 2017, the Coalition, fellow institutional plaintiff Center for Independence of the Disabled – New York, and homeless New Yorkers with disabilities were represented by Legal Aid and pro-bono counsel White & Case in the settlement of *Butler v. City of New York*, which is designed to ensure that the right to shelter includes accessible accommodations for those with disabilities, consistent with Federal, State, and local laws. During the pandemic, the Coalition worked with Legal Aid to support homeless New Yorkers, including through the *E.G. v. City of New York* Federal class action litigation initiated to ensure Wi-Fi access for students in DHS and HRA shelters, as well as *Fisher v. City of New York*, a lawsuit filed in New York State Supreme Court to ensure homeless single adults gain access to private hotel rooms instead of congregate shelters during the pandemic.