



# Community Health Center Funding. Take Action Now!



September 30th is the end of the federal government fiscal year which means an end to the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF), unless the federal government acts to reauthorize spending on its Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) by October 1st. Failure to accomplish reauthorization over the next three weeks jeopardizes the operation of federally funded community health centers (CHCs), like Care For the Homeless.

CHCs provide services to 28 million vulnerable patients nationally at 11,000 delivery sites across the country, including the 8,000 unstably housed people Care For the Homeless serves at our health centers in four of the 5 boroughs of New York City. CHCs

have consistently been rated as the most cost-effective local solution to our most pressing national health care problem: providing comprehensive quality primary and preventative health care to the people most in need and often with the least access. For example, CHCs have led initiatives to tackle the opioid epidemic through accessible Medication Assisted Treatment programs in vulnerable communities nationwide.

Federal grants, known as 330 grants are in danger. They provide at least 70% of our CHC funding. Obviously, our CHCs cannot operate as they do today without the federal grants. Before Congress went to recess in August there were some promising steps in ensuring that reauthorization of the CHCF is completed by the September 30th deadline.

First, Congress reached an agreement to increase the debt ceiling and avoid sequestration. Second, the Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone (D – NJ) and Ranking Member Greg Walden (R – OR) passed the H.R. 2328, the Reauthorizing and Extending America's Community Health (REACH) Act, out of the Health Subcommittee and through the full Energy and Commerce Committee. If passed into law, the REACH Act would provide a four-year extension of funding for Community Health Centers at \$4 billion/year, the National Health Service Corps at \$310 million/year, and the Teaching Health Center program at \$126.5 million/year.

Although these are promising steps, CHC advocates are continuing to be laser-focused on three very important asks:

- Long-term funding for health centers, greater than the two years we are currently funded at;
- An increase to the Community Health Center Fund that would allow for new sites, more staff and providers, and expanded services; and
- Passage of an extension bill before the September 30th deadline.

CHC advocates will be meeting with legislators on September 9th and 10th. Let's elevate their impact by reaching out to our Congressional representatives and telling them why Community Health Centers matter to every single community in NYC. You can contact your Representatives by calling the Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or emailing them through the Health Center Advocacy Network found [here](#).



# “Tale of Two Housing Markets”

The Coalition for the Homeless released a report, [The Tale of Two Housing Markets](#), that examines how Mayor De Blasio’s housing plan is actually fueling homelessness, rather than reducing it. The report looks at the current housing market and the availability of truly affordable units for those that need them the most. Notably, from 1999 to 2017 there has been a loss of 1 million apartments renting for less than \$800 a month. On the other hand, the availability of high rent units has increased substantially. As the report outlines, even with city funded rent supplements (known as CityFHEPS), it is extremely difficult for extremely low-income households to find apartments they can afford when the vacancy rate at CityFHEPS rent levels is a mere 1.82 percent for a studio and 2.96 percent for a three-bedroom apartment. Certainly, a bleak landscape when we have 59,000 people living in shelter in NYC.



Source: [Coalitionforthehomeless.org](#)

However, Mayor de Blasio has the tools to increase the number of affordable units available to extremely low-income households. For the last year and a half, leading advocates have tirelessly asked Mayor De Blasio to set aside 24,000 units of affordable housing specifically for people experiencing homelessness in his Housing New York 2.0 plan, with 24,000 of those units being new construction, and 6,000 units of preservation, for a total of 30,000 units or 10% of his overall plan. Last week, the “House Our Future NY” campaign held a rally at City Hall to call on the Mayor to address the housing crisis and put in to action a plan that would significantly reduce the number of households living in shelter. We will continue to advocate for our homeless neighbors.

Join the House Our Future Campaign [here](#) and stay up to date on ways to get involved.

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## Public Charge: Will Immigration be Limited to Rich?

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Source: <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com>

On August 14th, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security officially published changes to the controversial “public charge” rule that gives the Federal government the ability to deny green card or visa applications based on a legal immigrant’s use of governmental benefit programs including health care, food and housing benefits. When the changes were first proposed and made available for public review last December, over 200,000 comments were received. The great majority of comments pointing to the negative effects of such a rule.

The revised “public charge” rule is set to go into effect on October 15th, pending legal challenges already under way. The rule will define a “public charge” as someone who is likely to receive one of the restricted public

benefits for an aggregate 12 months or longer during a 36-month period. The changes will adversely impact low-income immigrants who rely on benefit programs to access lifesaving and life sustaining programs. Under the rule, benefits received can negatively affect their visa or green card application status. Immigration officials will also look at the totality of circumstances, including age, health, income, assets, resources, education/skills, and so forth.

There are several components to the anticipated impact of this rule. First, most immigrants who are applying for a green card are not eligible for the benefits listed in the rule. Also, this test does not apply to green card holders who are applying for U.S. citizenship. Lastly, the public charge inadmissibility test does not apply to every immigrant (refugees and asylees are amongst several exempted categories). Yet, the problem with this rule is the increased fear and anxiety that immigrant communities are already experiencing and the confusion that this rule is intended to create. It is anticipated that affected individuals will be forced to make seemingly impossible choices.

The Urban Institute released a [study](#) that found evidence of widespread anxiety among immigrant families, even before the rule was finalized. The study found that in 2018 nearly one in seven adults in immigrant families

## Public Charge: Will Immigration be Limited to the Rich? cont'd ...

reported that they or a family member did not participate in a noncash government benefit program in that year for fear of risking future green card status as the Trump administration considered the proposed changes. This is undoubtedly how immigrant families will react if this rule is implemented. Immigrant families will forgo lifesaving services because of fear of repercussion, leading to terrible health outcomes in these communities.

This is the latest part of an on-going attack by the current administration on immigrants that has as its rationale, "If you're not wealthy; you're not welcome." We anticipate than many lawsuits will be filed around the country to block this egregious rule before it takes effect on October 15th.

If you would like more information, please visit the [Protecting Immigrant Families](#) website or the [New York Immigration Coalition](#) for up to date information to share with your communities.

## RSVP for October 1st CFH Policy Seminar



Care For the Homeless invites you to attend our upcoming Policy Seminar on "The Trauma of Homelessness" on **Tuesday, October 1st from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 26 Federal Plaza, 6th floor Conference Room Center.** The panel will be moderated by CFH Executive Director, **George Nashak.** The panelists are **Michael Austin** (CFH Client Advocate), **Scott Auwarter** (BronxWorks Assistant Executive Director), **Dr. Andrea Littleton** (BronxWorks Medical Director and CFH Physician), **Dr. Regina Olasin** (CFH Chief Medical Officer), and **Frances Pierre** (Suffolk County Department of Social Services Commissioner).

Join us at this Seminar to contribute to the conversation about the "Trauma of Homelessness" to develop new ideas that could improve outcomes for New Yorkers experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. The event is free and open to all. Please make sure to bring your government issued ID and a printed copy of the ticket on the day of the event. Please click [here](#) to register and [here](#) to download the event poster.

If you have any questions, please email [policy@cfhnyc.org](mailto:policy@cfhnyc.org).

## The Busy Advocate's September Calendar

**Thur., Sept. 12th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting,** City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

**Wed., Sept. 18, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Voter Registration Day at St. John's Bread and Life,** 795 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, 11221.

**Tue., Sept. 24th, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., It's National Voter Registration Day!** CFH is holding a voter registration drive at Susan's Place, 1921 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453.

**Wed., Sept. 25th, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting,** CFH Conference Room, 5th Floor, 30 East 33rd Street, New York, NY.

**Wed., Sept. 25th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting,** City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

**Tue., Oct. 1st, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Policy Seminar Series: The Trauma of Homelessness.** The moderated panel will lead a discussion on the long-term consequences of being homeless. Please join the conversation. Click [here](#) to RSVP.

Become an advocate today! Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for up-to-the-minute-info

