



Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Observance



Photo Credit: Karen Smul and Connor Moriarty

On December 19, 2018, Care for the Homeless observed Homeless Persons' Memorial Day to remember those who passed away in New York City during 2018 without stable housing. This year we joined with several partners including Urban Pathways, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Dinosaur BBQ and Broadway Presbyterian Soup Kitchen to feed about 125 people, memorialize those who passed away, and talk about how to end homelessness. In a program featuring City Councilmembers Ben Kallos and Carlos Menchaca, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, New York State Assembly member Andrew Hevesi, the Commissioner of the Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance Samuel Roberts, and 10 CFH client leaders, the names of 163 departed were read and projected on a screen while a bell tolled and a candle was lit for each individual.

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day has been observed on or about the winter solstice – fittingly the longest, darkest night of the year – for almost 30 years now in cities across North America, to recognize the lives of our neighbors unnecessarily impacted by poverty and homelessness; and to recommit ourselves to ending this immoral and avoidable inhumanity. We live in an age when shocking things, like the violation of the basic human right to healthcare and decent housing, quickly lose their impact to shock. Those of us who care so deeply about these issues cannot let that happen. Homeless Persons' Memorial Day is an opportunity to make that clear.

It is shocking that in a country with at least 585 billionaires – far more than any other country in the world – in the city with more billionaires than any other – more than 46 million Americans live below the poverty threshold, and over 110,000 New Yorkers pass through our city homeless shelter system each year, with thousands and thousands more living rough on our streets. It is shocking that the death rate among chronically homeless people is two-to-four times higher than among our general population, meaning an avoidable loss of 20 or 30 years of life for chronically homeless people.

An excerpt from CFH Executive Director George Nashak opening remarks reads, "George Bernard Shaw famously said, "There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?" Won't you join me in this solemn moment to ponder why not?"

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Observance cont'd ...

- Why not stable housing for the 60,000+ men, women and children in city homeless shelters tonight, when it costs our city more to run shelters than it would to operate stable housing?
- Why not the human right of proper healthcare for all in the world's richest society?
- Why not in our community of excess provide basic food security for every family?
- And why not, at long last, end the discrimination, racism and stigmatization that costs each of us so very much?"

As we read 163 names of people who died in our city in 2018 without housing, we reminded those in attendance that each death was a tragedy that didn't need to happen. It is said that our biggest problem in ending homelessness isn't apathy, it's ignorance. That is why we hold a Homeless Persons' Memorial Day to recommit to our mission of advocating for better policies and programs that can save so many children, women and men who suffer every night. Thank you to all of our partners for their effort in making this a meaningful Memorial and especially our elected officials that came out to show their support and commitment to ending homelessness.

Let's Keep People in Their Homes – Here's How We can Do That



Source: homestabilitysupport.com

Assembly member Andrew Hevesi is continuing his fight in Albany to pass the Home Stability Support (HSS) Legislation, something that he spoke about at our 2018 Homeless Persons' Memorial Day. Care for the Homeless and our client leaders have been advocating for this legislation to raise the housing subsidy available to New Yorkers receiving public assistance up to 85% of the average fair market rent established by the federal Department of Urban Development (HUD) for a community based on family size. HSS is a statewide rent

supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions.

There are currently 171,000 households in New York receiving the public assistance "shelter allowance", but the allowance has not kept up with rising rents. Prior to 1975, the rents of households on public assistance were eligible for the full payment of rent. However, over the past 40 years the failure to regularly increase the benefit to keep up with the rising costs of rent has made it less and less valuable. For example, the household allowance for a family of three in the state currently ranges from \$264 a month to \$447 a month, based on location and other considerations. The actual average market cost for a 2-bedroom apartment in New York State, according to HUD, should be between \$760 and \$1,907. This is a huge difference that puts many people at risk of homelessness.

The cost of the updated home stability support allowance is estimated at \$450 million in state funding. In New York City, it is estimated that the new home stability support allowance would cost about \$11,224 on average for a family of three, while city shelter cost for the same family is on average \$38,460. That is a savings of \$27,236 per household per year. Keeping very low-income families or those in deep poverty in their apartments, and avoiding homelessness, would save the state millions of dollars.

In this budget cycle we hope that Assembly member Hevesi, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the many legislators who support the program will keep at this effort. If you are committed to fighting homelessness you can help, too! Please call your State Assembly Member and your State Senator (find them at whoaremyrepresentatives.org) and urge them to support Home Stability Support. You can also tell Governor Cuomo that you support the legislation at 518-474-8390.

CFH Looking for Opportunities To Give Public Education Presentations

Care for the Homeless, and our client leaders in the CFH Speakers' Bureau, are looking for opportunities to make presentations to civic groups, school classes, faith groups, media and other interested groups about homelessness in New York City, and how we can fight, prevent and end homelessness. Presentations often include a client leader talking about their own story of experiencing homelessness, and often includes a CFH policy advocate. We're also glad to include open question-and-answer sessions as part of our presentation.



CFH client leader Philip Malebranche speaking at Columbia University

We are glad to try and customize our presentations for interested groups, and can arrange our presentation to fit your time schedule as well as addressing any subject your group is particularly interested in. All presentations are free, although contributions are gladly accepted.

In the past we've made presentations on radio shows, to school classes of all ages from elementary through college graduate programs, to church groups, neighborhood organizations, state and national conferences and more. If you are part of a group or organization looking for an interesting and enlightening program, don't hesitate to get in contact with us at policy@cfhnyc.org.

The Busy Advocate's January Calendar

Thur., Jan. 3, First Session of Congress, House and new Senate member sworn in, Washington, D. C.

Wed., Jan. 9, 12:00 p.m., NYC City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Jan. 9, Legislative Session starts, NY State Senate and State Assembly, State Capitol, Albany, NY.

Mon., Jan. 14, 10:00 a.m., City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings Hearing, City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings Hearing for Intro 1211-2018 requiring developers who receive city financial assistance to set aside housing units for homeless individuals and families, City Council Chambers at City Hall, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., Jan. 21, Martin Luther King Day, many people observe this with volunteer public service.

Thur., Jan. 24, 1:30 p.m., NYC City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., Jan. 28, 10:00 p.m. - 4:00 a.m., HOPE Count, NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) will conduct its annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE), to volunteer please register [here](#)

Tue., Jan. 29, 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, Manhattan, NY, 10016.

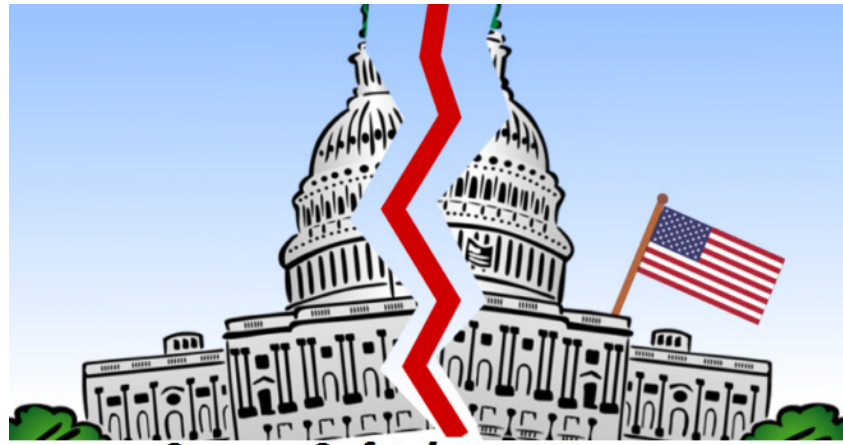
Become an advocate today! Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for up-to-the-minute-info





Government Shutdown ... It Can Happen Again

Our country's longest running government shutdown in history is finally over, but it could happen again. The "compromise" that ended the calamitous shutdown of a portion of the federal government only extended federal funding for the programs effected for three weeks through February 15th, so that only one week of that extension is left. While the negative political fallout from the recent partial shutdown would argue against any repeat performance, last Saturday was Ground Hog's Day, and recent history has an unfortunate record of repeat dysfunctional government outcomes.



Source: Safetylawmatters.com

It wasn't just a crisis for the 800,000 federal workers directly affected. Some people – for example those who take planes regularly – learned quickly just how much they count on the services that were involved. For us at CFH, and our clients, the shutdown meant a suspension of work on HUD rental assistance contracts and a real threat of eliminating SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps) payments for millions of households in desperate need.

Some of the damage from the shutdown can be fixed, but many of the terrible impacts will linger. For example, the financial loss to government contractors shut out of work, or businesses and communities dependent upon federal workers who lost paychecks, won't have loss made up. The devastating impact on HUD rental assistance programs will linger for some time as beleaguered and often short-handed federal workers returning to their work attempt to catch up on the back log, even as they have the prospect of another shutdown.

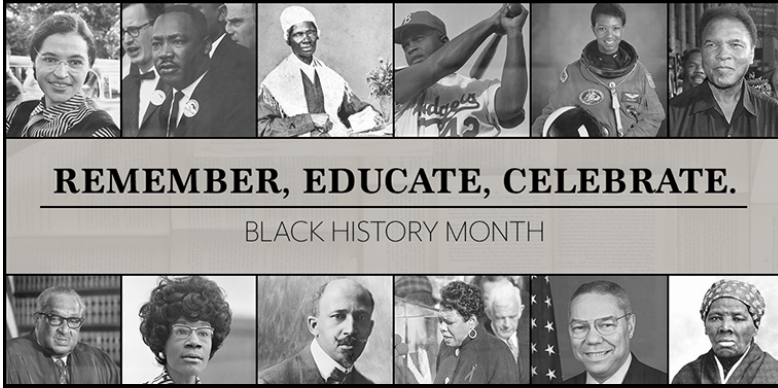
It doesn't take a public administration expert to acknowledge that programs to address long-term social ills, like the unavailability of healthcare access, homelessness or food insecurity, can't operate effectively on three-week fits and starts. Erratic funding puts these programs, and their recipients, on a constant emergency basis. What we must do, and what our laws call for, is an annual full-year budget.

Last week a Congressional Budget Office report estimated the 5-week-shutdown cost our economy \$11 billion. Keep in mind, this was all over a \$5.7 billion request for a wall to address an emergency that most people think was made up to start with. And that doesn't begin to consider the anxiety and long-term impact on the millions who suffered through this.

Congress and the President simply must pass a full year spending plan, and then address a full-year fiscal 2020 budget that should pass on time before the October 1st start of the new federal fiscal year. Both the current funding and the coming budget should fully meet the needs of our neighbors in need, considering the human right in the richest nation in the history of the world to healthcare, decent housing and food security. And it isn't too early for people who care to let our leaders know that.

Please join CFH today in calling your member of the U.S. House of Representatives and members of the U.S. Senate and telling them to fully fund programs to deliver access to healthcare, housing and food security for vulnerable people, and to make sure that funding is on time. You can find your Congressional representatives [here](#) or by calling the Congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

Thinking About Racism During Black History Month



Source: NYSenate.Gov

Homelessness effects every community and every racial demographic across America. But the scourge of homelessness and unstable housing is hardly an “equal opportunity” tragedy. In the United States, historically and still today, racism and homelessness are intertwined. Some of the impact that results in people of color being far more likely to experience homelessness is caused by historic and ongoing discrimination in housing, employment, the criminal justice system and the health care system.

People of color on average operate on less of a safety net than others because historically discrimination has resulted in a diminished set of assets than other communities. This often means that people of color on the verge of homelessness have less support because their families and friends may be less able to assist them. Racism may not be the direct cause of a person experiencing homelessness, but like most social ills, it always exacerbates the problem.

African Americans make up about 12% of the U.S. population, but some studies have estimated that they represent between 40% and 45% of people experiencing homelessness across America. An Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness study reported they were 7 times more likely to experience homelessness than white Americans. In New York City about 58% of people experiencing homelessness are Black, and 31% are Hispanic, and only about 7% are white non-Hispanics, according to the Coalition for the Homeless.

It’s especially appropriate to think about the impact racism has on homelessness and other social problems during February, Black History Month. Jeff Olivet of the Center for Social Innovation, an expert who has studied the issue and has helped with training at Care for the Homeless, says “the high rates of homelessness among people of color are no accidents. They are the direct result of policy decisions we have made over the years.”

Care for the Homeless has an ongoing effort to address racism, which has included training, policy briefings and discussions and presentations about the issue. In February, CFH is holding a Black History Month event for invited staff, Board members and client leaders featuring former U.S. Ambassador Harry K. Thomas who also served as a Special Assistant to the Secretary of State and as Director General of the U.S. Foreign Service. Renewing CFH’s commitment to work toward undoing racism, we were recently chosen for a newly empaneled National Health Care for the Homeless Council “learning collaborative” on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, limited to just 10 health care providers nationally.

Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness

Care for the Homeless, our client leaders and our partners have been advocating for the Home Stability Support (HSS) legislation to raise the housing subsidy available to New Yorkers receiving public assistance up to 85% of the average fair market rent established by the federal Department of Urban Development (HUD) for a community based on family size. HSS is a statewide rent supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions.

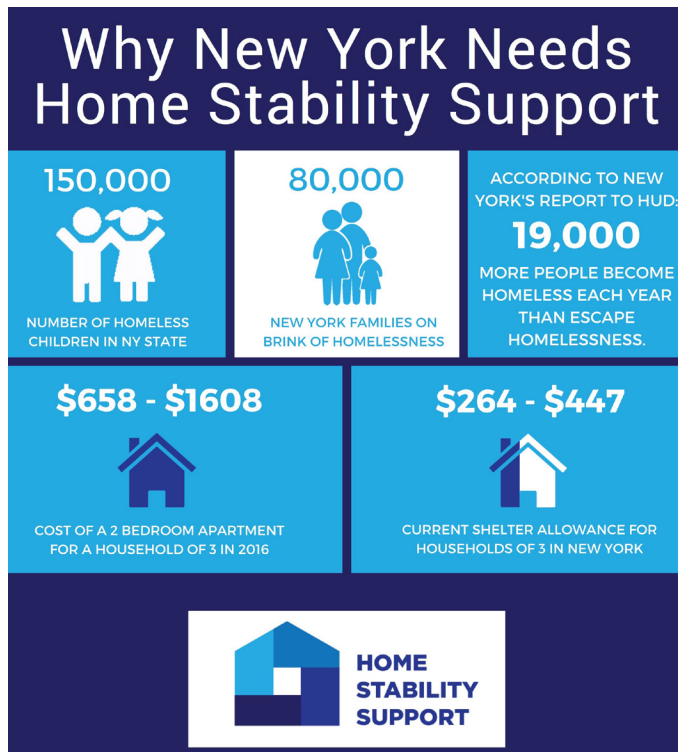
There are currently 171,000 households in New York receiving the public assistance “shelter allowance”, but the allowance has not kept up with rising rents. Prior to 1975, the rents of households on public assistance were eligible for the full payment of rent. However, over the past 40 years the failure to regularly increase the benefit to keep up with the rising costs of rent has made it less and less valuable. For example, the household

Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness cont'd ...

allowance for a family of three in the state currently ranges from \$264 a month to \$447 a month, based on location and other considerations. The actual average market cost for a 2-bedroom apartment in New York State, according to HUD, should be between \$760 and \$1,907. This is a huge difference that puts many people at risk of homelessness.

The cost of the updated home stability support allowance is estimated at \$450 million in state funding. In New York City, it is estimated that the new home stability support allowance would cost about \$11,224 on average for a family of three, while city shelter cost for the same family is on average \$38,460. That is a savings of \$27,236 per household per year! More importantly, keeping very low-income families or those in deep poverty in their apartments and avoiding homelessness would save the state millions of dollars.

The bill is sponsored by Andrew Hevesi in the Assembly, the Chair of the Social Services Committee, and Senator Liz Krueger in the Senate, the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Assembly bill (A1620) has over 110 co-sponsors and the Senate (S2375) has 9 co-sponsors so far with more to come. With the support of our allies in the Assembly at the Senate we have the utmost confidence that this legislation will pass this Session, creating a big win for homeless advocates and those most affected by housing instability. Assembly member Hevesi is also still pushing to include this in the FY20 Budget. If you are committed to fighting homelessness, you can help too! Please call your State Assembly Member and your State Senator [here](#). You can also tell Governor Cuomo that you support the legislation at 518-474-8390.



Source: Hungeractionnys.org

The Busy Advocate's February Calendar

February is Black History Month.

Wed., Feb. 13, 1:30 p.m., NYC City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Feb. 27, 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, Manhattan, NY, 10016.

Thur., Feb. 28, 1:30 p.m., NYC City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., Mar. 4, Advocacy Day for New York's Community Health Centers and Their Patients, Advocates will head to Albany to advocate for issues involving homelessness and healthcare.

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





Momentum for House Our Future NY Grows

With the number of people experiencing homelessness continuing to rise each year, there is an urgent need to advocate for policies that can put us on the path towards ending homelessness.

For the past year, Care for the Homeless and 63 ally organizations, led by Coalition for the Homeless, have been advocating for the House Our Future NY (HOFNY) campaign asking Mayor Bill de Blasio to increase the construction of affordable housing units available for homeless New Yorkers. The campaign addresses Mayor



Source: Coalition for the Homeless

De Blasio's Housing New York Plan 2.0, which promises to create 300,000 units of affordable housing. Currently the plan only commits 15,000 units of affordable housing to people experiencing homelessness, most of which will come from the preservation of already occupied units. HOFNY calls for an increase to 30,000 units to be reserved for homeless New Yorkers, (or 10% of the overall plan) that would include 24,000 move-in ready units. Targeting newly created units means families and individuals would be able to immediately move from shelter into permanent affordable housing, essentially cutting the current DHS shelter census by at least half.

Thanks to the collective advocacy efforts of the campaign members and hundreds of allies, there have been several wins in the last few months providing a great deal of momentum to continue pushing HOFNY before the adoption of the NYC FY20 Budget. In October of last year HOFNY marched to Gracie Mansion joined by 300+ advocates in support of the campaign. That same month Councilmember Salamanca introduced a bill (Intro 1211) that would require developers who receive City financial assistance, for housing preservation and new construction, to set aside at least 15 % of the units in each project for homeless individuals and families. In December the campaign led a teach in at City Hall accompanied by Councilmember Salamanca and dozens of supporters as well as a vigil led by faith leaders. And, at the end of January City Council Intro 1211 reached a veto proof majority of 35 Council members. This is a big win for HOFNY as this legislation would provide the practical tools to help reach the overall goal of 24,000 move in ready units.

There is still more to be done, and that includes getting the Mayor on board with what would be decisive strategy to combat homelessness. A recent NYC Independent Budget Office report comparing the affordability levels of the Mayor's housing plan with neighborhood incomes found that the from June 2014- June 2018 thirty nine percent of the units financed under the Mayor's housing plan were set aside for extremely low income or very low income households (meaning up to 50% of AMI or \$31,750 for a 1 person household) exceeding the goal of 26%. However, only about 30% of those units are new construction projects which further questions how effective the affordable housing plan can be in increasing the availability of housing for those most in need. Fifty-nine organizations, 38 Council Members, the Public Advocate, the City Comptroller, four Borough Presidents and thousands of advocates and grass roots supporters believe that committing 30,000 units to people experiencing homelessness, including 24,000 new construction units, would align the affordable housing plan with the reality of record homelessness.

That's why our clients, advocates and supporters will continue fighting for this campaign to get the Mayor on board with the HOFNY ask. It's the right thing to do, and over time it would save New York City an enormous amount of public resources. We want you to get involved, please join us today, Thursday, March 7th for a Town Hall to learn more about the campaign, next steps and to hear our allies speak about the importance of HOFNY to reducing homelessness in NYC. The Town Hall will be held at The Church of the Village (201 West 13th Street, Manhattan) from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A meal will be served. You can RSVP [here](#).

State Advocacy Priorities

NY THE 2019 - 20

STATE
BUDGET

AFFORDABILITY
OPPORTUNITY
HEALTHCARE
HOUSING
SECURITY

Earlier this year Governor Cuomo released his FY 2019-20 Budget Proposal that is set to be adopted on March 31st. In conjunction with our many allies, Care for the Homeless (CFH) identified our top two policy issues at the State level. First, is to increase support of the 800 Community Health Centers (CHC) throughout New York State that help ensure primary care access to all individuals. Second, is the passage of the Home Stability Support Legislation (HSS) that will increase the current shelter allowance to 85% of the federal market rent thus helping to keep people in their homes.

Source: *NYSenate.gov*

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), like Care for the Homeless, are on the front line of State health care challenges. One of those challenges is providing care for uninsured patients who make up about 16% of the patient population. Fears in immigrant communities, in response to the proposed changes to the public charge rule at the Federal level, have begun to take hold, resulting in lower rates of enrollment in programs like Medicaid and CHIP, which are crucial to ensuring patients and their families have appropriate resources to stay healthy. A national study has found that NYS health centers could see 95,000 patients disenroll from Medicaid leading to a loss of \$100M in annual revenue. New York State currently allocates \$54.4M in funding to help cover the cost of caring for uninsured patients. FQHCs are asking for an increase of \$20M to the Safety Net Pool Fund, to ensure health centers can continue to provide access to comprehensive care should patients disenroll from Medicaid.

Another critical health care component is the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) certification program, a certification that Care for the Homeless has achieved. We are asking the State to maintain its level funding of \$220M for providers participating in the PCMH program to support comprehensive primary care services. Any cuts to the funding is a threat to a health centers' ability to provide the full range of comprehensive services required under PCMH including outreach and engagement, person-orientation, patient activation, and team-based care approach. Ensuring level funding will maintain support for the certified providers in the PCMH program increasing access to high quality, comprehensive primary care services.

CFH believes that housing is healthcare and keeping people in their homes is the best tool to fight homelessness. The Home Stability Support (HSS) Legislation will be a new statewide rent supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions. The bill is sponsored by Andrew Hevesi in the Assembly, (A 1620) and Liz Krueger in the Senate (S 2375). This legislation aims to assist 150,000 homeless children in NYS and 80,000 families who are on the brink of homelessness by raising the shelter allowance to 85% of the HUD defined fair market rent.

The cost of the updated home stability support allowance is estimated at \$400 million in state funding. In New York City, it is estimated that the new home stability support allowance would cost about \$11,224 on average for a family of three, while city shelter cost for the same family is on average \$38,460. That is a savings of \$27,236 per household per year! Keeping very low-income families or those in deep poverty in their apartments and avoiding homelessness would save the state millions of dollars and most importantly, it would keep people in their homes and out of shelter.

Providing high-quality primary care at CHCs and providing stable housing for those in need is not only the right thing to do but it also saves taxpayer dollars and resources. Join us in contacting your State Assembly members and Senators to advocate for:

- Added funds allocated to the Safety Net Pool,
- Maintaining support and funding for the PCMH program, and
- Passage of the Home Stability Legislation

The result? Better healthcare and better housing for those in need. You can find your State representatives [here](#).

Maintaining Health Care Access for Vulnerable Population

Did You Know? Community Health Centers (CHCs), like Care for the Homeless, provide comprehensive care to over 28 million patients at 11,000 service delivery sites in every state and territory. CHCs across America serve our most vulnerable populations including over 1.2 million people experiencing homelessness each year. We provide access to people who might otherwise not get regular access to healthcare. Furthermore, CHCs save the health care system more than \$24 billion annually in reduced emergency, hospital, and specialty care costs.



Source: *Business.eocc.org*

With that in mind, CHCs are gearing up for the upcoming Federal Budget negotiation period to avoid any possible lapse in funding. In 2017 the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF), which provides about 70% of the funding for CHCs, expired at the end of federal fiscal year and was not reauthorized until 5 months later. The lapse in funding was referred to as the "fiscal cliff". The CHCF will expire this year at the end of the federal budget cycle (September 30, 2019) and in order to avoid another fiscal cliff, health center advocates have started to engage Congressional representatives in supporting legislation to extend and expand the CHCF.

To date, two bills have been introduced in the Senate. The first is the Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence (CHIME) Act (S. 106) introduced by Senator Blunt (R – MO) and Stabenow (D – MI) which extends the CHCF for five years, starting at \$4.2 billion with \$200 million increases each year. The second is the Community and Public Health Programs Extension Act (S. 192), introduced by Senate HELP Committee Chairperson Alexander (R – TN) and Ranking Member Murray (D – WA) which extends the CHCF for five years at level funding of \$4 billion each year. We expect members in the House to introduce legislation addressing funding for health centers in the coming weeks.

Care for the Homeless will participate in Hill visits on Thursday, March 28th at the National Association for Community Health Centers advocacy day in Washington D.C. where we will urge our Congressional representatives to co-sponsor the CHIME Act or the Community and Public Health Programs Extension Act. We will continue our advocacy for the next several months and will keep you updated on the progress to secure sustained funding for CHCs. If you care about the invaluable services that CHCs offer, call your Senators and ask them to co-sponsor one of the current bills. You can reach your member of Congress at 202-224-3121.

The Busy Advocate's March Calendar

Thur., March 7th, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., House Our Future Town Hall, The Church of the Village, 201 W. 13th Street, New York, NY 10011. RSVP [here](#).

Mon., March 11th, 10:00 a.m. City Council Public Housing Committee, Oversight of NYCHA's agreement with HUD, City Hall Committee Room, New York, NY 10007.

Mon., March 11th, 5:30 p.m., CFH "First Monday" Policy Briefing on the Home Stability Support Legislation, 30 E. 33rd Street, Manhattan, NY 10016.

Wed., Mar. 13th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., March 18th, 10:00 a.m., Preliminary budget hearing for the Health Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY 10007.

Mon., March 25th, 10:00 a.m. Preliminary budget hearing for the General Welfare Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY 10007.

Tue., March 26th, 2:00 p.m., Preliminary budget hearing for the Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction Committee, City Hall Committee Room, New York, NY 10007.

Wed., Mar. 27, 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, Manhattan, NY, 10016.

Thur., Mar. 28, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Sun., March 31st, End of New York State fiscal year meaning a new state budget will be adopted.



Advocates in Washington D.C.

Last week a delegation of CFH advocates traveled to Washington D. C. to meet with the Congressional representatives of CFH's 23 federally qualified health centers along with 100's of community health center (CHC) champions from across the nation. New York State had a strong presence in the Congressional halls where we all wore blue in solidarity.

Our major policy ask is the continuation and expansion of the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF) which accounts for about 70% of funding for CHCs like Care for the Homeless (the other 30% comes from annual discretionary appropriations). The CHCF fund expires on September 30th of this year and CHCs are advocating for stable funding that would reduce the uncertainty caused by year to year renewals of this critical investment in by year to year renewals of this critical investment in access to health care.

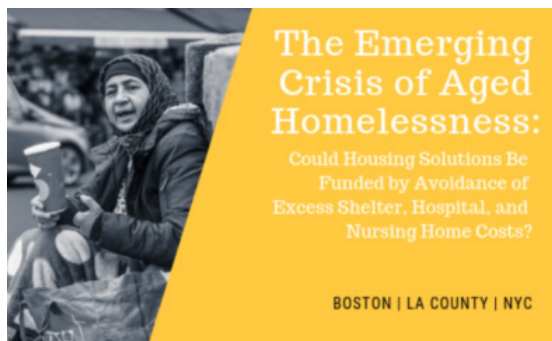
For 50 years, CHCs have served 23 million consumers nationwide providing high-quality comprehensive primary medical and mental health care in more than 9,000 underserved communities. In New York State any changes in funding would have a great impact on the 678 federally funded CHCs that serve 2,132,003 patients. These funds guarantee cost-effective primary medical and mental health care along with a wide range of specialty services specific to the populations that we serve. Sustained and increased funding would ensure health center programs can continue to serve vulnerable communities, programs that include the 340B drug pricing program that allows patients to buy their medications at affordable prices, programs that prevent & treat substance use disorders, and initiatives that expand telehealth services. We also asked our Congressional representatives to join the bipartisan Community Health Center Caucus to help champion health care access to vulnerable populations.

Three pieces of legislation have been introduced to date. The first is the Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence (CHIME) Act (S. 106) introduced by Senator Blunt (R – MO) and Stabenow (D – MI) which extends the CHCF for five years, starting at \$4.2 billion with \$200 million increases each year. The second is the Community and Public Health Programs Extension Act (S. 192), introduced by Senate HELP Committee Chairperson Alexander (R – TN) and Ranking Member Murray (D – WA) which extends the CHCF for five years at level funding of \$4 billion each year. And the third is the Community Health Center and Primary Care Workforce Expansion Act introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) which extends the CHCF for five years with a 10% annual growth. If you care about the invaluable services that CHCs offer, call your Representatives and ask them to co-sponsor one of the current bills. You can reach your member of Congress at 202-224-3121.



Left: CFH advocates at the U.S. Capitol **Right:** CFH and other advocates meet with Congressional Offices

The Aging Homeless Population



Much has been written about the post-World War II 'Baby Boom' and its impact and influence on American society. Increased risk of homelessness has been a part of this impact as competition for jobs, unemployment, a downward pressure on wages, an upward pressure on housing prices, and a recession in the 1970's and 1980's led to a surge of people living in poverty.

A new study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania, "The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions Be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Costs?", presents an important 13 year projection about the baby boom population (born 1955-1965) experiencing homelessness in three cities: Boston, New York City and Los Angeles. The purpose of the study is to encourage

dialogue about an impending public health crisis and to offer policy suggestions to avoid costs associated with unstable housing and divert savings to housing solutions. The forecasts are similar in all three cities where the number of homeless people aged 65+ is predicted to grow between two and three times that of 2017 numbers. In New York City, it is stated that the number of homeless adults 65+ will grow from 2,600 in 2017 to 6,900 by 2030.

The study shows that as the aged homelessness population grows, the usage and costs of services (for example hospital visits and nursing home stays) will continuously increase in all three cities. New York City data, for example, suggests that combined shelter and healthcare costs, are projected to triple from 2011 to 2030, from approximately \$150M to \$461M annually. This increase is caused by the premature aging of this generation as older adults have medical ages that far exceed their biological ages by 20 years, thus experiencing geriatric medical conditions

The Aging Homeless Population cont'd ...

like cognitive decline and decreased mobility at a much younger age than their housed counterparts resulting in higher health care and nursing homes costs.

It is a given that aged populations have more health care needs, and the same goes for those experiencing homelessness. But, if there are early interventions in the form of housing, the projected savings for the 55+ cohort is impressive! Housing interventions can lead to a cost reduction of \$1,900 - \$2,200 per person per year, that comes from reduced use of shelter, health and nursing home services and related expenditures. This approximates to about \$20M in annual savings for NYC. A permanent housing placement will not only reduce the number of elder adults experiencing homeless in NYC, but it will also lead to better health outcomes. It is important when deciding on future policy initiatives that we consider the demographic trends of homelessness and do what is possible to mitigate the health consequences. Not to mention allowing the aging population to live in dignity without being trapped in homelessness.

Without housing solutions, substantial public resources will unnecessarily be spent on excess shelter, health care and long-term care costs. As the elderly component of the homelessness population grows, a more courageous, sustained and humane response is the right thing to do.

Making Affordable Housing A Reality



Client leader Michael Austin is speaking at a press conference in front of City Hall

On March 22nd Client Leader Michael Austin represented Care for the Homeless at a City Hall press conference immediately before a City Council Housing and Buildings Committee hearing. The topic was the House Our Future Campaign asking Mayor De Blasio to set aside 30,000 units of affordable housing in his Housing New York Plan 2.0, that includes 24,000 new construction units. Client advocates shared personal stories of the difficulty in finding affordable housing options, with many living in shelter for years. Michael Austin shared the following story:

"My name is Michael Austin and I'm a client advocate with Care For The Homeless. I have the misfortune of being undomiciled or homeless in one of the richest cities in the world and I've been homeless for roughly 8 years. Finding a viable way out has been nerve wrecking. By attempting to get assistance through various agencies I have learned that there is a tier system in receiving assistance, First is individuals with mental health issues, second is individuals that are formerly incarcerated or with substance abuse issues, and third is the "general public".

Why is there so much "red tape" to find assistance & get viable housing? Each tier is important and if there was enough supply of affordable or supportive housing for extremely low-income New Yorkers, there would be no distinction between each category.

My question is, why are so many resources going towards short term solutions when they could be better retooled for truly affordable rents, saving the city, state and tax payers hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars?

I was so blessed to take a course last summer in website design and now I'm pursuing a career in encryption & cyber-security. Unfortunately, without affordable, safe, secure and sensible housing, I don't have the opportunity to make that dream a reality. I can't compete with the rising cost of rents here when Hudson Yards developers spent \$23 billion to make their dreams a reality. Or when someone can purchase a penthouse on Central Park South for a record \$238 million, a purchase that has changed the landscape for future purchases in North America. How will I ever compete with that?

I had the misfortune of having four friends die while waiting for housing, two who froze to death in the street, one who died two days before his housing was approved...I pray I don't end up like that. If we want to make an impact on the increasing numbers of people experiencing homelessness, De Blasio needs to commit to developing 30,000 units of affordable housing for homeless New Yorkers, that includes 24,000 units of new construction. It's the right thing to do that will put us on the path towards ending homelessness in NYC."

The Busy Advocate's April Calendar

Tue., Apr. 9th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Apr. 15th, 10:00 a.m., Committee of Public Housing meeting on NYCHA management oversight, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Thur., Apr. 18th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Apr. 24th, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, New York, NY, 10016.



Councilmember Reynoso Visits CFH Health Center

Brooklyn Councilmember Antonio Reynoso joined CFH Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Regina Olasin, in touring our health center located at Peter Jay Sharp in April during our HIV Awareness Carnival. Councilmember Reynoso and Dr. Regina Olasin spoke about the health challenges that people experiencing homelessness face and what CFH does to address those challenges. Those efforts include a highly successful citywide Peer Outreach program that trains and employs currently or formerly homeless peers to locate unstably housed individuals not currently accessing health care services and provide them with the information and aid necessary to increase proper utilization. Councilmember Reynoso also took the opportunity to speak to CFH Staff, including our very own Peer Outreach Specialist, Crystal Santana, who spoke of the positive impact that the outreach program has in communities where people face incredible challenges accessing quality lifesaving services.



CFH team with CM Reynoso at Peter Jay Sharp



CM Reynoso and CFH Chief Medical Officer Dr. Olasin

At CFH we provide primary medical and mental health care as well as specialty services such as podiatry, dentistry, health education, substance abuse evaluation and treatment and case management. Our patients most often have dual chronic medical issues and require a coordinated approach to health care delivery. Our peer outreach workers are adept at finding and connecting with our target population. They can communicate and build trust that others are unable to duplicate. Our outreach model is for multiple contacts with each new potential patient, including following up to get them to appointments, helping them with preventative and ongoing health care, and accessing appropriate social services, activities and trainings.

Bringing vulnerable people into health care is not just the right thing to do, it directly addresses the three major healthcare concerns in our society:

- it provides access to people not accessing primary and preventative health care
- it improves health care outcomes
- and it saves public resources by decreasing emergency room utilization

Not to mention the opportunity to unlock human potential and improve neighborhoods and quality of life.

Last year, our Peer Outreach program was able to reach more than 1,000 unstably housed individuals helping them to access ongoing medical and mental health care services and thanks to the incredible work of our Peer Outreach Specialists we are on target to increase that number this year. We have also augmented our technological capabilities and have been able to create strong relationships in neighboring communities to increase the impact of our program. Our mission is nothing less than changing the health care culture of our potential patients for the rest of their lives.

For many people experiencing homelessness, appropriately accessing health care is the first step in transitioning out of homelessness. We want to thank Councilmember Reynoso and his staff for understanding the immediate need for appropriate health care utilization and the value that programs like the CFH Peer-to-Peer Outreach model brings to underserved communities in NYC. The CFH Policy and Advocacy team will continue to meet with Councilmember Reynoso and his colleagues at City Council to help develop and support city programs and policies to effectively fight, prevent and end homelessness. We look forward to continuing that work.

Right to Counsel Success

One factor that has increased the number of people experiencing homelessness in New York City is the eviction of low-income tenants from their homes. Historically, a low-income tenant facing an eviction proceeding in Housing Court was at a serious disadvantage compared to their landlord because of one very important factor, landlords always had legal representation.

To counter this imbalance, in 2017, NYC became the first city to adopt the Right to Counsel (RTC), also known as Local Law 136, that established a right to free legal counsel in eviction cases. This major step forward in protecting low income tenants came after many years of advocacy by dedicated organizations and individuals supporting the rights of tenants facing the potential loss of housing. RTC provides tenants with household incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, \$50,200 annually for a family of four, with no cost access to attorneys. Legal representation for an individual facing an eviction proceeding helps to ensure a 'level playing field' for the tenant; something that was not available before RTC.



Source: <https://www.rtctoolkit.org/>

Recently, [the Community Service Society \(CSS\) published an analysis](#) of the first-year results of RTC. It concludes that the first phase of the program (with \$15M in funding for the first year) has been extremely successful. RTC initially targeted 20 of the City's 200+ zip codes. The 20 zip codes selected are high need areas of the city that have offered a clear picture of the impact of RTC. So the question is...Is having counsel important to protecting a poor tenant from eviction? The answer is a resounding YES! Navigating Housing Court procedures requires expert advice and understanding of often confusing and seemingly incomprehensible rules. Comparing RTC zip codes to non-RTC zip codes in just over one year has shown that **evictions declined more than five times faster in RTC zip codes** than in similar non-RTC zip codes. Legal counsel – a determinant factor. On top of that, the number of eviction cases filed in NYC's housing courts has started to drop--down almost 10 percent since 2014.

According to the City Office of Civil Justice (OCJ) – which oversees RTC, “56 percent of tenants facing evictions in RTC zip codes had attorneys...[and] of the approximately 22,000 New Yorkers represented by OCJ-funded attorneys in FY 2018, 84 percent were able to remain in their homes.” It is impossible to imagine that this result would have been possible without the presence of legal counsel protecting the rights of the households faced with eviction. Of course, other policies such as rent regulation, just cause evictions laws and code enforcement, etc. must be present in order to reduce evictions and increase housing stability, but RTC is a decisive step in preserving housing stability for low income tenants.

The Right to Counsel program is set to expand across the entire city by 2020. All told, it is predicted to potentially impact 784,000 households. The program's impact will be great and will be felt for years to come! In addition, the two principal sponsors of RTC, Council members Vanessa Gibson and Mark Levine, are fighting to expand the right to counsel to households with incomes up to 400% of the federal poverty level that would also include legal representation in appeal cases with Intro 1104. If you would like to take an even stronger stance in empowering tenants and preventing homelessness for New Yorkers struggling to afford the rising costs of living in New York City, join us in contacting your City Council representative to ask them to co-sponsor Intro 1104. You can find your representatives [here](#).



Honoring New Yorkers Overcoming Obstacles

Join us on Thursday, June 20th, at Broadway Presbyterian, 601 West 114th Street in Manhattan, as Care for the Homeless (CFH), in partnership with Broadway Community, Inc., holds its sixth annual Summer Solstice Success Celebration recognizing the “success stories” of New Yorkers who have overcome incredible obstacles while experiencing homelessness. The celebration will start with a meal at 4:30 p.m. followed by the program at 5:30 p.m.

The event will recognize the achievements of New Yorkers who have obtained and maintained stable housing, overcome health obstacles and had outstanding advocacy achievements in the campaign for better policies to

Honoring New Yorkers Overcoming Obstacles Cont'd ...



Councilmember Levine with Housing Success Awardees, Photo Credit: Steve Latimer

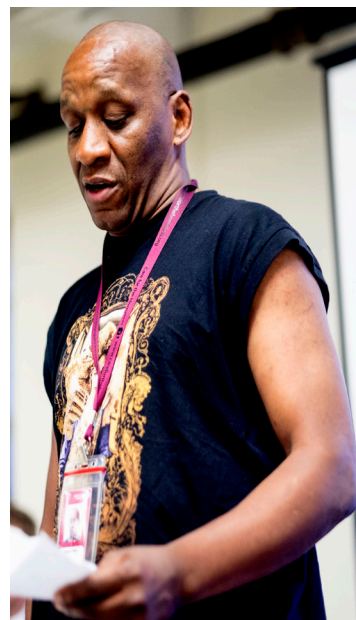
fight, prevent and end homelessness. We will also recognize our incredible CFH providers who have worked with our clients to achieve success. Also, the winner of CFH's annual Short Story of Success Essay Contest, will read their submission.

Join us for a celebration recognizing the success of our friends and neighbors. The celebration is free and open to all. It will feature a meal, musical entertainment and great times to be had by all. You can register [here](#).

If you want to learn more about the Summer Solstice Success Celebration and are interested in bringing the celebration to your community, please listen to a webinar we conducted with the National Health Care for the Homeless Council titled "From Darkness to Light: Honoring Success and Resilience at the Summer Solstice" [here](#).

Tell Us Your Success Story

We are constantly inspired by the stories of real life heroes who have overcome obstacles in the fight against unstable housing. CFH is holding its sixth annual "Stories of Success" writing contest and we are looking for a 300-word story about success in overcoming a health challenge, in finding and maintaining stable housing or in advocating for better policies to fight, prevent or end homelessness. Contestants may also submit an essay about what they think success would look and feel like.



2017 'Stories of Success' Writing Contest Winner
Photo Credit: Arthana

If you have a story of success – or know someone who does – please consider submitting it into our contest. All entries must be submitted with the author's name and contact information. Submissions may be e-mailed to policy@cfhnyc.org or can be mailed or delivered to Nathalie at, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor, New York, NY, 10016 by Friday, May 31st. One winner will be selected by Care for the Homeless, will receive a prize and be asked to read their winning story at the CFH Summer Solstice Success Celebration on Thursday, June 20th at 5:30 pm at Broadway Community (601 W. 114th Street, Manhattan). Please find an informational flyer [here](#).

The Busy Advocate's May Calendar

Tue., May 7th, 11:00 a.m., Year of the Community Based Organization Rally, to call attention to the vital need for investments in human services in the FY20 City budget, City Hall Steps, New York, NY 10007.

Wed., May 8th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., May 13th, 9:00 a.m., House Our Future NY March, the march will begin outside of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development building and end at City Hall steps, 100 Gold Street, New York, NY 10038.

Mon., May 13th, 10:00 a.m., Executive Budget Hearing for the Housing and Buildings Committee*, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Sun., May 19th, 9:30 a.m., AIDS Walk NYC in Central Park, enter at 59th Street and 5th Avenue and follow the signs to the team tables.

Wed., May 22nd, 10:00 a.m., Executive Budget Hearing for the General Welfare Committee*, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., May 22nd, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, New York, NY, 10016.

Thur., May 23rd, 10:00 a.m., public testimony at 2:00 p.m., Executive Budget Hearing for the Finance Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., May 27th, Memorial Day.

Wed., May 29th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Thur., June 20th, 4:30 p.m., CFH 6th Annual Summer Solstice Success Celebration, celebrating the healthcare, housing, and advocacy successes of currently and formerly homeless New Yorkers. It will also feature live entertainment and a free meal. Broadway Community, 601 W. 114th Street, Manhattan, NY, 10026. You can RSVP [here](#).

**Please note that there will be no public testimony at these hearings.*

For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org

30 E. 33rd Street Fifth Floor

New York, NY 10016

(212)-366-4459



Reducing Eligibility to Life Saving Services

The current administration has continuously targeted federal benefit programs important to low-income Americans for drastic cuts. A new effort follows suit by proposing a change to how the 'poverty threshold' is to be calculated, which will decrease the number of people eligible for important federal benefit programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid. This would affect millions of extremely low-income individuals and families.

The current measurement called the "consumer price index (CPI)" has been used for a long time to set the the annualized increases in the official poverty threshold. The administration is considering using what is known as "the chained CPI", a different inflation measure that would result in a slower annual increase of inflation over

time. "Chained CPI" assumes that as the prices of goods go up, individuals substitute less expensive items, thereby reducing their overall expenses. Why is this important? The proposed change would mean that millions of people would eventually see their benefits either reduced or eliminated because their income would not qualify at the same level as the current measure. Its impact lies in determining who qualifies for such benefits as Medicaid, SNAP and other critical assistance programs in future years.

There are several issues with this proposal. To start, the current measurement of poverty is already flawed because it is based on a 58-year-old analysis of 64-year-old data on food consumption, with no changes other than adjusting the poverty line for inflation. Slowing down the rate at which inflation is measured only puts low income Americans at greater risk. Instead of taking benefits away from individuals and families already struggling to meet their basic needs, there needs to be a real conversation about the actual costs associated with paying for necessities that go beyond food, housing and health care. Low income families face high rates of food insecurity, difficulty paying rent and utilities, and much lower rates of health insurance coverage. Cutting low income individuals and families from life saving and life sustaining services, when they are already struggling to survive, would further increase hardship without addressing the real needs of millions of low-income Americans.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, some of the consequences of the proposed measurement change to health care eligibility over ten years would be the following:

- More than 300,000 children would lose comprehensive coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), as would some pregnant women. In addition, more than 250,000 adults who gained Medicaid coverage from the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) expansion would lose it.
- More than 150,000 consumers who buy coverage through the ACA marketplaces would lose eligibility for or qualify for reduced cost-sharing assistance, increasing their deductibles by hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

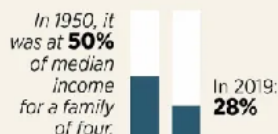
The actions of the current administration have rightly been deemed "...an attack on the poor." The proposals are counterproductive and empty of any true value. Pushing extremely low-income individuals out of desperately needed benefit programs must be halted and this ill-conceived action should be stopped before it begins.

This is how **YOU** can help. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is soliciting comments on these potential changes **RIGHT NOW**. Shrinking the poverty line of support simply denies people the assistance they need. It is critical that concerned individuals raise their voices in support of rejecting changes to regulations that can only hurt millions of our fellow Americans. The deadline to submit is June 21, 2019. You can submit your comments [here](#).

The Government Says You're Not Poor

The way we measure poverty means fewer people qualify for assistance.

The poverty line is based on 1950s data:



THE NATION.

Sources: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2019; 2019 infographic: Tracy Matzue Loeffelholz



Trump wants to count even fewer as officially poor:

After 10 years:

↓
300,000 children would lose Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program eligibility.

↓
250,000 seniors and people with disabilities would lose help paying for Medicare.

↓
150,000 would lose help paying for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

Speak up
take action

Join Us in Celebration

Care For the Homeless, in partnership with Broadway Community Inc., will hold its sixth annual Summer Solstice Celebration recognizing the success stories of New Yorkers who have overcome incredible obstacles while experiencing homelessness. The celebration will be held on Thursday, June 20th, at Broadway Presbyterian, 601 West 114th Street in Manhattan, beginning with a meal at 4:30 p.m., followed by the program at 5:30 p.m.

Join us as we recognize the success of our friends and neighbors in their achievements in obtaining and maintaining stable housing, overcoming health obstacles and reaching outstanding advocacy achievements in the campaign for better policies and programs to fight, prevent and end homelessness. We will also recognize our incredible CFH clinicians who work with our clients to achieve health successes all year around. We will also be announcing the winner of CFH's annual Short Story of Success Essay Contest.

The celebration is free and open to all. It will feature a meal, musical entertainment, a "Wall of Success" exhibition inviting anyone in attendance to contribute their own story of success, advocacy information and great times to be had by all. You can register [here](#).

Sponsored by
Care For the Homeless,
Broadway Community
and our Client Leaders

SUMMER SOLSTICE SUCCESS CELEBRATION

Thursday, June 20, 2019

Meal will be served at 4:30 p.m.
Program will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Join us for live musical entertainment,
celebration, story-telling, and a meal

Broadway Presbyterian
601 West 114th Street
(corner of 114th and Broadway)

Directions: 1 Train to 116th St., M4, M60 or
M104 Bus to Broadway Ave/116th Street, and
M11 Bus to Amsterdam Ave/W 114th St.

Free and Open to All

Please note: this location is not handicap accessible RSVP at <https://sscelebration2019.eventbrite.com>

Celebrating the
health care,
housing and
advocacy successes
of currently and
formerly homeless
New Yorkers

Targeting Immigrants, Producing Terrible Outcomes

Care For the Homeless is opposing a proposed rule published by the Trump administration and urging all advocates to consider filing an official comment in opposition to the rule that would evict 25,000 immigrant families from public housing, including over 55,000 children. On May 10, 2019, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a draft rule that would significantly change HUD's regulations by restricting eligibility for federal housing assistance based on immigration status. It would also impose new documentation requirements for U.S. citizens and individuals 62 years of age or older who will be at risk of eviction and homelessness if they cannot prove their citizenship.



Source: Hildalsolis.org

The proposed rule prohibits "mixed status" families from living in federally subsidized units. "Mixed status" families are households made up of members that are eligible and not eligible to receive housing subsidies through HUD based on their immigration status. "Mixed status" families can currently live together because the assistance is prorated so that the subsidy is based on the portion of eligible household members in the unit. Its important to note that an "ineligible" immigrant doesn't mean that they are undocumented. Immigrants can have legal status and still not be eligible for public housing and Section 8 programs.

HUD claims that the agency proposed the rule out of concern for long wait lists for public housing. A claim that is contradicted by HUD's own analysis acknowledging the terrible consequences of the proposed rule that include:

- A deficit in the HUD budget ranging from \$193 million to \$227 million to provide housing subsidies to the replacement households (made up of all eligible members)
- HUD would have to reduce the quantity and quality of assisted housing in response to higher costs

For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org

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Targeting Immigrations, Producing Terrible Outcomes Cont'd ...

- HUD expects that the fear of the family being separated would lead to prompt evacuation by most mixed family households
- Homelessness for those families unable to find alternate housing

Despite the rationale, the proposed rule is not about keeping undocumented immigrants from benefitting from federal housing assistance, because the law already prohibits them from accessing these subsidies. Rather it's another attempt on a long list of attacks against immigrant families that are struggling to pay for basic necessities. It instills fear in immigrant communities and creates a dangerous dialogue of victim blaming without offering any real solutions to desperate problems. The real issue is the lack of funding to ensure that every family that applies for housing assistance can receive a safe, accessible and affordable place to call home. Evicting people during the height of a housing crisis is a misguided and cruel policy.

Another policy that affects immigrant communities is the "public charge" rule that was proposed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and is expected to go into effect this summer. This rule expands the types of benefits that could be considered in a "public charge" determination which include essential programs such as Medicaid, SNAP and public housing making it more difficult for low and moderate-income immigrants to get a green card, extend, or change their temporary status in the US.

To further the impact of the new definition of "public charge", Reuters reported on May 3rd that the Department of Justice (DOJ) plans to issue a proposed rule related to deportation on "public charge" grounds. Under current law DHS cannot deport/remove someone for using public benefits. However, the DOJ can deport, in very narrow circumstances, on the grounds of "public charge". It is expected that the grounds of deportability will continue to be narrow. But, the real consequences of these types of changes is the chilling effect that it will have on undocumented and documented immigrants that will no longer access important lifesaving and life sustaining services such as Medicaid, SNAP and public housing when they need them the most. This will result in terrible outcomes and will end up costing more in public resources.



Join us in voicing your opposition to the change proposed by HUD that would affect "mixed status" families. **YOUR COMMENTS MATTER!** You can submit comments to HUD explaining why this rule would have a negative impact on your, your family, and your community. The deadline to submit comments is July 9, 2019. You can submit them [here](#). You can also go to <http://www.keep-families-together.org/> for any additional resources.

The Busy Advocate's June Calendar

Thur., Jun 6th, 10:00 a.m., Oversight meeting on Safety and Security in NYCHA by the Public Housing Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Thurs., Jun 13th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed, June 19th, 10:00 a.m., Oversight meeting on Mental Health Services for LGBTQ+ Youths by the Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction Committee, City Hall Committee Room, New York, NY, 10007.

Thur., June 20th, 4:30 p.m., CFH 6th Annual Summer Solstice Success Celebration, celebrating the healthcare, housing, and advocacy successes of currently and formerly homeless New Yorkers. It will feature live entertainment and a free meal. Broadway Community, 601 W. 114th Street, Manhattan, NY, 10026. You can RSVP [here](#).

Tue., Jun 25th, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., NY Proiary Election, Get out and vote!

Wed., Jun 26th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Sun., Jun 30th, Last day to enact New York City budget for 2019-20 (starts July 1, 2019).



Submit Comments by July 9th!

Join CFH in opposing a draft rule published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that would significantly change HUD's regulations by restricting eligibility for federal housing assistance based on immigration status.

The proposed rule prohibits "mixed status" families from living in federally subsidized units. "Mixed status" families are households made up of members that are eligible and not eligible to receive housing subsidies through HUD based on their immigration status. "Mixed status" families can currently live together because the assistance is

prorated so that the subsidy is based on the portion of eligible household members in the unit. It's important to note that an "ineligible" immigrant doesn't mean that they are undocumented. Immigrants can have legal status and still not be eligible for public housing and Section 8 programs.

HUD claims that the agency proposed the rule out of concern for long wait lists for public housing. A claim that is contradicted by HUD's own analysis acknowledging the terrible consequences of the proposed rule that include:

- A budget deficit of about \$200M in order to provide subsidies to the replacement households
- **A reduction in the quantity and quality of assisted housing**
- The evacuation by most mixed family households, affecting an estimated 100,000 people, including 55,000 children, because of the fear of separation
- **Homelessness for those families unable to find alternate housing.**

Despite the rationale, the proposed rule is not about keeping undocumented immigrants from benefitting from federal housing assistance, rather it's another attempt on a long list of attacks against immigrant families that are struggling to pay for housing and other necessities. It instills fear in immigrant communities and creates a dangerous dialogue of victim blaming without offering any real solutions to desperate problems. The real issue is the lack of funding to ensure that every family that applies for housing assistance can receive a safe, accessible and affordable place to call home. Evicting people during the height of a housing crisis is a misguided and cruel policy.

When federal agencies want to create a new policy, they must publicly publish the details of the proposed new policy (often called a "proposed rule") and allow stakeholders 60 days to submit comments (called a "public comment period"). **Why does this matter, and why should you comment?** The agency must review the comments and—ideally—take into consideration the feedback received. Final rules can be challenged in court, which may halt or delay their implementation. And comments submitted during the public comment period are often used in the court proceedings.

Join us in voicing your opposition to the change proposed by HUD that would affect "mixed status" families. **YOUR COMMENTS MATTER!** You can submit comments to HUD explaining why this rule would have a negative impact on you, your family, and your community. The deadline to submit comments is **July 9, 2019**. You can submit them [here](https://www.Keep-Families-Together.org/). You can also go to <https://www.Keep-Families-Together.org/> for any additional resources.



Source: www.Keep-Families-Together.org

Speak up
take action

What Does Success Look Like?

“ ‘Formerly homeless.’ Those last two words, so simple, so sweet. When I say them, it sounds victorious; they mean success--in spite of unbelievable hardship--success that can be keenly sensed in the simplest things:

Success is opening the mailbox and seeing a utility bill bearing your name.

Success is putting out regular trash on Tuesdays and recyclables on Fridays.

Success is boiling water on YOUR stove, in a glass kettle that you paid \$1 for at the Everything Goes thrift shop.

Success is buying TWENTY pints of Haagen-Dazs (because they're on sale for \$2 each and you have 20 "\$1 OFF" coupons).

Success is having a freezer for all that ice cream!

Success is coming home--Wait, repeat that: Success is coming home..."



Photo Credit: Jeremy Amar and Karen Smul

This is an excerpt of the poignant story that our Success Story Writing Contest Winner, Mr. M.A. Dennis shared on June 20th at CFH's sixth annual Summer Solstice Success Celebration, in partnership with Broadway Community. This uplifting event recognized an outstanding group of people who overcame incredible odds to achieve success in obtaining and maintaining housing, overcoming health care challenges, and advocating for policies to prevent and end homelessness.

We want to recognize our honorees. Our Housing Awards went to three former Susan's Place residents: Ms. Zuleyka Cordero, Ms. Kymaleeka Devine and Ms. Maggie Barlow. Our Health Care Awards were presented to the Kabore family, the

Caprio family, Ms. Patricia Green, Ms. Debra Obeidat, Ms. Vanessa Phillips, Mr. Douglas Wykle and Ms. E. J. Bryant-Mazauskas. The Advocacy Award was presented to the Chair of the CFH Consumer Advisory Board, Ms. Ava Conner, recognizing her incredible leadership in advocating for issues affecting people experiencing homelessness.

Lastly, our Success Story Winner, Mr. M.A. Dennis, who received a heartfelt response from the audience after reading his story that is being shared widely due to its incredible message. Our wonderful service providers were also recognized for their contributions. Thank you Betty Lee, Dr. Andrea Littleton, Luis Fernandez, Dr. Richard Lee, and FNP Joy Favuzza-Taylor.

Congratulations to all of our participants who allowed us an opportunity to celebrate their individual stories of success and reminded us that we must continue advocating for increased access to life saving services and opportunities for stable housing for our fellow New Yorkers if we want to end homelessness in New York City.

At the event we had an interactive Wall of Success where attendees could share their own stories of success. One participant shared that after being in shelter for 5 years they moved in to an apartment where they have been for 11 years! Another person shared their story of loss and how they have worked to regain the strength to successfully attain employment.

Participants also had the opportunity to visit our Advocacy Table to get information about current campaigns, register to vote or sign up to receive future advocacy alerts.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE THAT MADE THIS EVENT A SUCCESS.

For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org

30 E. 33rd Street Fifth Floor

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(212)-366-4459

Statewide Rent Regulations Reform



CFH is marching for affordable housing

On Friday, June 14, the New York State legislature enacted a set of sweeping rent regulation reforms that will have a dramatic effect on rent increases on stabilized apartments throughout the State. The reform package promises to strengthen tenant protections that have been eroded year after year and contributed to a vast number of evictions and for many, homelessness.

While the final package that was passed, and almost immediately signed by Governor Cuomo, did not give tenant advocates all of the provisions of the nine bills that were under consideration, much that is positive for tenants was accomplished. We can hopefully look to additional, future reforms that will increasingly protect tenants and consequentially prevent homelessness.

Some of the most important new provisions include:

- Repeal of the 'vacancy bonus' often referred to as an 'eviction bonus'. This provision gave landlords the right to start charging up to 20 percent more for rent stabilized apartments every time they turned over a new tenant. This 'bonus' has long been bitterly condemned as a landlord incentive to try and force a tenant out.
- Vacancy decontrol – before the new reforms, landlords could deregulate vacant rent stabilized apartments once their rent reached a set dollar amount (most recently, \$2,733) or more a month. Consider the plight of the older tenant, often retired and living on a fixed income whose rent has climbed over the years to the 'magic' dollar limit and finds his or her rent skyrockets overnight to a market rate of say, \$5,000 per month (it has happened!) What has been the result? Loss of a long-term home? The possibility of homelessness?
- The state will now be required to inspect and audit building improvements to ensure inflated maintenance costs are not passed on to tenants, an often-heard complaint in the past.
- A common practice has been 'preferential rent'. This has also ended. Using it allowed landlords to raise rents substantially on rent stabilized tenants if the initial lease charged below the maximum legal rent.
- The reforms now allow municipalities around New York State to set up rental protections like those in New York City. Something that was not permissible in the past.

One provision that did not pass at this time would have mandated landlords statewide to show "good cause" before beginning eviction proceedings or refusing to renew a lease and would have restricted excessive rent hikes. Who knows: this very favorable tenant protection may reappear in the future? We hope so!

The Busy Advocate's July Calendar

Tue., July 9th, 8:00 - 9:30 a.m., A Panel discussion on Legislative Changes, Rent Stabilization and Tenant Rights seminar series hosted by New York Housing Conference, NYU Furman Hall, 245 Sullivan Street, Room 216, New York, NY 10012. Register [here](#).

Wed., July 10th, 1:00 p.m., Oversight meeting on Third Party Transfer Program by the Housing and Buildings Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Tue., July 23rd, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., July 24th, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, 30 E. 33rd Street, 5th floor conference room, New York, NY, 10016.



National Health Center Week

I Value My Community Health Center Because:



August 4 -10 is National Health Center Week (NHCW), a time to recognize and celebrate the tremendous contribution community health centers make in delivering health care services to people most in need. This includes about 295 federally qualified health center providers delivering services to over 890,000 unstably housed consumers annually.

In New York City, Care for the Homeless (CFH) is the oldest and largest provider of health care services exclusively to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Since 1985, CFH has provided high-quality, client-centered health care services to our city's most vulnerable population, regardless of insurance coverage, ability to pay or immigration status. Today our 24 Federally Qualified and state licensed Health Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens serve over 7,000 individuals – 85% of them with incomes below the poverty threshold - in about 36,000 medical encounters annually.

We know homeless is both a cause and an aggravating factor for many diseases and medical and mental conditions. The accompanying exposure to weather and violence, the risk of communicable diseases and the stress of homelessness are all barriers to good health.

We believe health care is a basic human right and we are dedicated to providing high-quality medical and mental health care. During NHCW we recognize and celebrate the life-changing, and sometimes life-saving, work our physicians, nurse practitioners, medical assistants, social workers, and health educators do every day. We also advocate for continued support from Congress for the Community Health Center Fund that is set to expire on September 30th. Without the funding, the incredible work that our services providers do would not be possible. To find out how you can help please visit the Health Center Advocacy Network [here](#).

“Homelessness Started in 2016”

In recent interviews, President Trump discusses homelessness as a phenomenon that started a mere two years ago in major metropolitan areas. These types of misinformed and inaccurate statements are common in the current administration. As advocates, we must work to inform the public on the real causes of homelessness to avoid stigmatizing individuals and families experiencing homelessness due to factors far beyond their control.

Homelessness is a nationwide problem that is caused by systemic factors such as the ever-decreasing availability of truly affordable housing, stagnant wages, discrimination, poverty system

failures and much more. It did not suddenly appear, rather it has been a growing concern and will continue to increase if we do not pursue better policies to prevent and end it.



Source: <https://aapci.org/site/homeless-stats-in-america/>

“Homelessness started in 2016” cont’d ...

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) releases a report every year that highlights barriers to reducing homelessness, [Out of Reach \(2019\)](#) and [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes 2019](#). The reports examine the availability of affordable homes in America for our nation’s extremely low-income (ELI) renters and the reality of affording rent at current wages.

In The Gap, the supply of affordable homes is shown to be completely inadequate to meet the needs of ELI citizens whose household incomes are at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income (\$32,010 for a family of four). No state or major metropolitan area is found to have an adequate supply of affordable housing. For example, New York state only has 37 affordable and available rental homes per 100 ELI renter households.

Out of Reach focuses on the hourly wage a worker employed full time and their ability to rent a modest home without spending more than 30% of income on housing at fair market rent. In New York City a household must earn \$30.76 an hour to afford a 2-bedroom apartment or work 111 hours a week at minimum wage. These reports show that the availability and affordability of homes nationwide is a growing problem, and one of the biggest drivers of homelessness.

There are no easy answers to the problems of homelessness, but adequate and affordable housing is a vital step towards solving the problem. Stigmatizing vulnerable people and offering nothing in the way of viable solutions is a dangerous tactic that fuels misinformation and can have long term consequences on the small victories homeless advocates have sustained through the years. In NYC we will continue advocating for the House Our Future New York campaign asking Mayor Bill de Blasio to increase the availability of affordable housing units for people experiencing homelessness to 30,000, with 24,000 of those being new construction. If we want to make a decisive impact on the rising numbers of homelessness, truly affordable housing units are an integral part of that equation.

The Trauma of Homelessness



Join Care For the Homeless as we kick off our Policy Seminar Series on **Tuesday, October 1st from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 26 Federal Plaza, 6th floor Conference Room Center**. The topic will be the “Trauma of Homelessness”. 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 Olatin** (CFH Chief Medical Officer), and **Frances Pierre** (Suffolk County Department of Social Services Commissioner).

There is comprehensive research and data available that explains the systemic causes of homelessness, which helps inform policies

aimed at mitigating its effects. Less explored are the long-term consequences that the trauma of experiencing homelessness has on individuals, on families and on society. In this seminar we want to bring together a diverse panel to discuss how current programs/services look to address the effects of trauma and identify any service gaps in NYC. 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. You can register [here](#).

The Busy Advocate’s August Calendar

Sun. – Sat., Aug. 4th - 10th, National Community Health Center Week, recognizing the vital work healthcare providers, like those at Care for the Homeless, do every day! Find more information [here](#).

Wed., Aug. 7th, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., CFH Voter Registration Drive at Broadway Presbyterian, 601 W 114th St, New York, NY 10025.

Tues., Aug. 13th, All Day, Health Care for the Homeless Day, this day celebrates health centers that work to meet the basic health care needs of people without homes, eliminate health disparities, and end homelessness. Care for the Homeless and the NYC Providers of Health Care for the Homeless will honor a number of Health Care Heroes, including CFH’s Dentist Dr. Mark Makiling, and the work our health care providers do everyday.

Wed., Aug. 14th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Aug. 28th, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Annual Picnic, Riverbank State Park.



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:

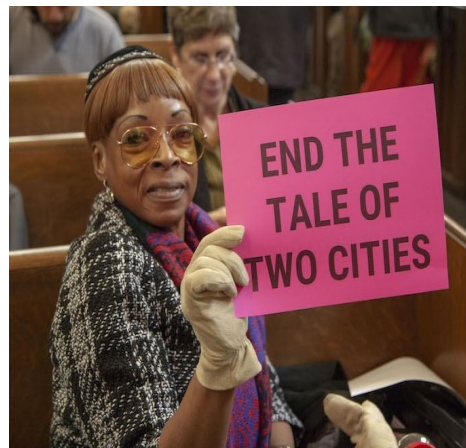
- Long-term funding for health centers, greater than the two years we are currently funded at;
- An increase to the Community Health Center Fund that would allow for new sites, more staff and providers, and expanded services; and
- Passage of an extension bill before the September 30th deadline.

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](https://www.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.

Public Charge: Will Immigration be Limited to Rich?



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 Olatin** (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.

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.

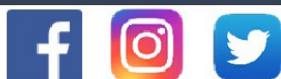
Tue., Sept. 24th, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., It's National Voter Registration Day! CFH is holding a voter registration drive at Susan's Place, 1921 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453.

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 homelessness. 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



For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org

30 E. 33rd Street Fifth Floor

New York, NY 10016

(212)-366-4459



"The Trauma of Homelessness" Seminar



Photo Credit: Karen Smul

In what ways does experiencing homelessness increase the likelihood of trauma? How can service providers develop programs that are trauma informed and can mitigate the long term effects of experiencing homelessness? This topic was the focus of the first Care For the Homeless Policy Seminar, "The Trauma of Homelessness", held on Tuesday, October 1st at 26 Federal Plaza in Manhattan.

We began the Seminar with our MC, Delise Du Pont Blenman, Chair of the Board of Directors at CFH. She introduced Barbara Andrews from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families who gave the opening remarks. Ms. Andrews discussed important points about the impact of homelessness on families with children, the largest demographic residing in the DHS shelter system.

George Nashak, CFH Executive Director, was the moderator for the panel.

The panelists were 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). All brought insightful perspectives to the conversation and lent their expertise on issues such as family homelessness, street homelessness, substance use disorders, adverse childhood experiences and the lived experience of homelessness.

NYC Council Member and General Welfare Committee Chair, Stephen Levin, delivered inspiring closing remarks about current legislation meant to address homelessness in NYC.

Policy is an essential component of the work that CFH does. We believe that bad policies created homelessness and therefore, better policies could end it. We conduct several public education events throughout the year and this Seminar is an integral part of that effort. Convening elected officials, advocates, services providers, academics and people with the lived experience of homelessness gives us a platform to discuss opportunities to not only respond to the immediate crisis of homelessness but contribute to long term solutions. The goal is to develop policies and procedures that will guide the delivery of well-rounded services which is an important component in the path to ending homelessness. Please keep an eye out for our next Seminar in the Spring of 2020.

A big thanks to all our speakers and the organizations who provide essential services for our neighbors most in need. Thank you to everyone that attended the Seminar. The discussion touched on several important issues and ones that we hope to continue developing to ensure that no one in NYC has to endure the trauma of experiencing homelessness.

CFH Responds to a Recent IBO Report

The Independent Budget Office (IBO) recently released a study that looks at the impact of shelters on housing values in Manhattan. The data covered the years between 2010 and 2018 and looked at the sales of condominiums and one to three family homes. The findings of the report have been widely criticized by homeless service providers, advocates, elected officials and the community. One of the most egregious impacts of this report is not the content itself, but the message it sends to critics of homeless services in different neighborhoods of NYC and the NIMBYism sentiment that goes along with it.

Our Executive Director, George Nashak, released the following statement: "Its alarming to see the IBO analysis of the alleged impact of homeless shelters on values be reported without a critical evaluation of its deeply flawed methodology. The study is based on a correlational analysis that, as we all know, does not by itself convey causation. No consideration is given in the analysis to potential intervening variables: for example, both the shelter and the housing unit might be located on a block with depressed housing values – a real possibility since the budgets to acquire shelters are very limited. The analysis also makes such egregiously false statements (to choose only one example: that shelters have no social services and supportive housing programs have intensive social services) that we must question any conclusions it reaches. The author demonstrates no



Source: CityLimits.org

CFH responds to a recent IBO report cont'd ...

understanding of the facts yet draws profound conclusions. The IBO also fails to account for why this 'effect' allegedly occurs. Are we to believe that many purchasers of housing in Manhattan conduct a scan for nearby shelters before making an offer on a property? An uncritical acceptance of its conclusions will contribute to the stigmatization of people experiencing homelessness and the services designed to assist them."

Even with the flawed methodology this report was still released, and to what end? Every day the City is trying to address its affordable housing crisis. On top of it being the right thing to do, it must adhere to a legal mandate to provide temporary emergency shelter to every man, woman, and child who is eligible for these services. This is a crucial safety net for many individuals who are unable to maintain stable housing due to a variety of intervening factors. All this report will do is increase the stigma that people experiencing homelessness already face every day. A better alternative is to report on policies that help us address the homelessness crisis, not hinder it.

The Link Between Health Care and Social Needs



A recent study by university-based investigators and the New York City Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence (CIDI) focused on the impact of emergency departments (ED) visits/ hospitalizations immediately preceding and immediately after shelter entry. The study, ["When Crises Converge: Hospital Visits Before and After Shelter Use Among Homeless New Yorkers"](#), was conducted in NYC as it has the nation's largest municipal shelter system and one of the largest homeless populations in the nation. The goal of the study was to identify any trends that could inform health care providers and homeless service providers on possible points of intervention to prevent someone from becoming homeless. It also gives insight in to the adverse health consequences of housing instability.

Researchers included only adults, defined as people eighteen and older, who were first time users of the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter system. If an individual had experienced more than one shelter stay during the study period, only the first stay was included. It was determined that in the year before

shelter entry, 39.3 percent of first-time adult shelter users had an ED visit or were hospitalized before shelter entry and 43.3 percent in the year following shelter exit. Most striking, was that the number of hospital visits—particularly visits to the ED—began to increase in the months leading up to shelter entry, peaking on the day of shelter entry.

There are practical implications of the findings relevant not only to New York City but to other areas throughout the United States. The health care system is in the position to help prevent homelessness by tracking the number of ED visits in a set period of time, which can indicate housing instability. If ED visits are increasing over weeks it is possible that medical providers can work with social service organizations on interventions or intensive case management to help prevent first-time shelter use. The benefit to the individual, in terms of reduction of anxiety and stress can easily be imagined. The benefit to the hospital may include reduction in the amount of hospital visits, thus reducing costs to the hospital.

Hospitals should also take steps to ensure that patients have access to appropriate and accessible outpatient follow-up care upon discharge. Where a patient enters a hospital after having already lost housing, it is noted that shelters are often used as "defacto aftercare facilities" that show the gaps of the discharge system. Medical respite programs are offered as one alternative to discharge to a homeless shelter. Other alternatives need to be developed to meet the needs of the individual.

We at Care For the Homeless know how intricately linked health care and homelessness is. Health care systems are becoming more interested in addressing the social needs and health care needs of an individual and this study shows how interwoven they can be. Closer collaboration between these two systems is a benefit to both the individual patient and to the health care system in the future. Most importantly, this cross collaboration can have a significant impact in preventing homelessness, an important tool in the fight against homelessness.

The Busy Advocate's October Calendar

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Tue., Oct. 8th, 1:00 p.m., Oversight meeting addressing the mental health needs of Immigrants in NYC by the Mental Health, Disability, and Addiction Committee, and the Immigration Committee, City Hall Committee Room, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Oct. 16th, 10:00 a.m., Joint Committee Hearing on oversight of Leadfree NYC and enforcement of NYC's lead laws by the Health, Housing & Building, and the Public Housing Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Thur., Oct. 17th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Oct. 23rd, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, CFH Conference Room, 5th Floor, 30 East 33rd Street, New York, NY.

Wed., Oct. 30th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org

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Major Endorsements For Affordable Housing!



It has been almost two years since the House Our Future NY (HOFNY) campaign launched. A campaign led by advocates, service providers, elected officials and people with the lived experience of homelessness asking Mayor De Blasio to increase the number of truly affordable housing units purposefully built to move people out of shelters. Currently, the administration has benchmarked 5% of the Housing New York 2.0 plan be set aside for people experiencing homelessness, which is only 15,000 units, most of which will be preservation units. HOFNY is asking that the woefully inadequate number be raised to 10% of the total plan, or 30,000 units, with a heavy emphasis on new construction units (24,000 total). In the two years we have held marches, town halls, overnight vigils, press conferences, advocacy days and numerous conversations with elected officials to garner

support for a policy that would make a significant impact in reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness in NYC.

To build on these efforts, one year ago, Bronx Councilmember Rafael Salamanca proposed a bill, Intro 1211, that would mandate all development projects that receive city subsidies to set aside 15% of their units for our homeless neighbors. In January of this year, Councilmember Salamanca received support from 34 councilmembers giving the bill a veto proof majority. And last week, at a press conference at City Hall, Speaker Corey Johnson endorsed the bill, along with Comptroller Scott Stringer and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. All resounding endorsements for legislation that would put us well on the path towards constructing 24,000 new affordable housing units for homeless New Yorkers. The administration has pushed back against this legislation, but Salamanca has proven that it works. In his district he has been able to get developers to set aside 121 units of affordable housing in eight projects. A number that puts us well on the path to achieving the HONFY goal.

As Comptroller Stringer said, "the only way to solve this crisis is for the administration to finally recognize that you cannot manage the homelessness crisis, you've gotta fix the homelessness crisis." We know that bad policies created homelessness, thus better policies can end it. As advocates, we must push elected officials to believe that with the right policies, directed at the right interventions, we can end homelessness. De Blasio has often said that he is "comfortable" with his current affordable housing plan. "Comfortable" with over 60,000 individuals living in shelters and thousands more living on the streets and doubled up. Instead what he should be "comfortable" with is taking a decisive approach to realizing that truly affordable housing is a key component to ending homelessness. As a City we must commit to increasing the standard of living for the thousands of homeless adults and children living in our shelters and on our streets.

If you want to ask the Mayor to support this campaign, you can send him a letter at, City Hall, New York, NY 10007 or submit a letter online [here](#). If you want to join the House Our Future Campaign, follow [this link](#) and sign up for up to date information as we continue our fight end homelessness!

Domestic Violence and Homelessness

Domestic violence has long been recognized as a leading cause of housing instability for families in the United States. Last month, during domestic violence awareness month, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer issued an in-depth [report](#) looking at the rise in domestic violence (DV) incidents and subsequent housing insecurity in New York City. The report looks at data from 2014 to 2018 that shows an upward trend of DV as the leading cause of homelessness for families residing in the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters. Notably, the report offers several policy recommendations aimed at strengthening protections for

Domestic violence and homelessness cont'd ...

survivors in order to increase housing stability and prevent homelessness.

According to the report, in fiscal year (FY) 2018, DV accounted for 41% of families entering the DHS shelters, up from 30% in FY 2014 (this number does not include the separate 2,514 DV shelter beds run by the Human Resources Administration (HRA)). In this same period the number of families entering shelters annually due to DV rose by 44%. The demographics are overwhelmingly young women of color, often with children, who have limited income and education and, as a result, find it difficult to support a family and retain housing. Also, the neighborhoods of origin accounting for the most DHS shelter entries due to DV are from the Bronx and Brooklyn, 38% and 30% respectively.

New York City has robust services and protections for survivors of DV. But, as the numbers show, the current protections are not enough to address the growing need. Furthermore, a lack of safe alternative housing is a barrier and consequence of leaving an abusive situation and is made even worse with the scarce availability of affordable housing in NYC.

The report offers recommendations intended to build on current programs and strengthen protections for survivors of DV to ultimately help prevent homelessness. Some of the recommendations are the following:

- Increasing financial assistance offered to survivors to access stable housing, including supportive housing placements. This includes creating a "Survivor Housing Stability Fund", targeted at survivors who may not have immediate access to financial resources.
- Increasing the capacity of the HRA DV shelter system in order to ensure that those who need confidential emergency shelter in service rich facilities can access it. Also, extending the time limit of 180 days in DV shelters in order to prevent families from having to move into the DHS shelter system, or into unsubsidized housing.
- Strengthening legal protections for survivors, including an early lease termination policy which currently applies only to survivors who have obtained an order of protection. The current legal requirements are onerous and unnecessarily complex and often beyond the abilities of those who must struggle to comply.
- Expanding the Family Justice Center model to target communities with the highest level of DV survivors entering and DHS and HRA shelter facilities. Also, expanding the right to counsel to capture the zip codes of origin for the families entering the shelter system in order to help prevent homelessness.

The report offers a well-developed and lucid examination of the problems and the numerous barriers currently facing survivors of DV. It offers a series of logical and important modifications and changes to current law that would be of great value and importance to DV survivors. Modifications that would lead to significant reductions in the population of DV survivors experiencing homelessness.



Remembering Our Neighbors We Lost in 2019



Photo Credit: Sharlene Morris

Care For the Homeless (CFH) and Urban Pathways (UP) will be holding our annual Homeless Persons' Memorial Day (HPMD) observance, a nationwide solemn day of remembrance and mourning for our neighbors who passed away in New York City in 2019 without stable housing. The observance will be on Thursday, December 18th at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, 7 West 55th Street in Manhattan. The Memorial will start with a meal at 4:30 p.m., followed by the program at 5:30 p.m. It is free and open to the public.

Our Homeless Persons' Memorial Day remembers and honors those who have paid the ultimate price for our collective failure to adequately address homelessness. Since 1990, HPMD commemorations have been observed in at least 180 cities in the United States to raise awareness of the profound health impact that homelessness has on people living without a stable place to call home. For some of those individuals, their passing might not be acknowledged, were it not for HPMD.

For more information please contact at: policy@cfhnyc.org or at www.careforthehomeless.org
30 E. 33rd Street Fifth Floor New York, NY 10016 (212)-366-4459

Remembering our neighbors we lost in 2019 cont'd ...

Service providers, elected officials and people with the lived experience of homelessness will participate in this very touching program. We will read the names of those who have passed, light a candle in their honor, play music and read eulogies. Anyone who would like to add a name to the list can email policy@cfhnyc.org. We will also feature a "Wall of Remembrance," where participants can honor those they lost in 2019. There will also be an "Advocacy Center," where attendees can learn about policies that address the systemic failures that cause homelessness and what we can do to fix them. Please [RSVP here](#) to join us as we remember those that we lost in 2019.

Take Action: Unity for Community Health Day



At the end of the federal fiscal year, Congress voted to continue funding for important federal programs at fiscal 2019 levels until November 21st, which includes the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF). We are now nearing the November 21st deadline and funding for Community Health Centers (CHCs) is once again threatened, jeopardizing the operation of federally funded 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.

Negotiations are ongoing and leaders in Washington D.C. are already discussing the possibility of passing another short-term

spending package to fund the government through the beginning of next year in order to avoid a government shutdown. It is too soon to know what this will mean for our efforts to push for robust long-term funding for the Community Health Center Fund, National Health Service Corps, and Teaching Health Centers Program before the November 21st deadline. But, to continue advocating for the important services that CHCs provide in vulnerable communities, CHCs will be participating in a "Unity for Community Health Day" on November 12th, by visiting our Congressional members' local offices and asking for long term funding for CHCs.

You can also all your Congressional representative to advocate for long term funding for CHCs! You can contact your Representatives by calling the Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or emailing them through the Health Center Advocacy Network found [here](#).

The Busy Advocate's November Calendar

Tue., Nov. 12th – Unity for Community Health Day, a national movement where we visit congressional district and state offices on November 12 to ensure Congress understands why community health centers, like CFH, are so important.

Thur., Nov. 14th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Fri., Nov. 15th, 8:15 a.m., City Law Breakfast with NYCHA Federal Monitor, 185 West Broadway, Second Floor, New York, NY 10013. You can [RSVP here](#).

Nov. 16th – 24th, Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, observed annually to address the problems of hunger and homelessness.

Wed., Nov. 20th, 8:30 - 12:30 p.m., Homeless Service United Symposium, a panel discussion on improving effectiveness of housing subsidies and increasing affordable housing for homeless New Yorkers, 320 Park Avenue, 35th floor, New York, NY, 10022. You can [RSVP here](#).

Tue., Nov. 26th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Nov. 27th, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., CFH Consumer Advisory Board Meeting, CFH Conference Room, 5th Floor, 30 East 33rd Street, New York, NY.

Thur., Nov. 28th, Thanksgiving.

Sun., Dec. 1st, World AIDS Day.



Call-In to Support Health Center Funding!

#REDALERT4CHCS

12.20.19



**HEALTH
CENTER
Advocacy
NETWORK**

Source: Fourthstreetclinic.org

We must remain laser focused on three important asks:

- Long-term funding for health centers, greater than the two years we are currently funded at;
- An increase to the CHC Fund that would allow for new sites, more staff and providers, and expanded services; and
- Passage of an extension bill before the December 20th deadline.

The Health Center Advocacy Network is hosting a call-in competition. Let's represent for health centers in New York City and call our Congressional representatives to make long term funding for CHCs a priority in their negotiations. Our consumers are counting on us to keep the pressure on our elected representatives. Instructions to call in are [here](#). We have until Friday, December 6th to represent NY in this competition! But don't let that stop you from calling in after this date, any contact with our representatives will go a long way in keeping our ask front and center.

Recognizing Manhattan Community Board 4

For the last three years, *Coalition for the Homeless* has presented a Compassionate Communities Award meant to highlight the extraordinary efforts of community members who treat their homeless neighbors with kindness and respect, rather than the knee-jerk resistance that often occurs when a shelter opens nearby. This year CFH nominated Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) in order to recognize their partnership in fostering a collaborative dialogue with several community stakeholders in preparation for the opening of our new women's shelter in the area. MCB4 represents a community that understands the value and necessity of providing services to our most vulnerable neighbors and we are delighted that they were recognized with the award this year.

CFH Executive Director, George Nashak, said, "In our current environment of fear of homeless people and intolerance of homeless services, it is a great pleasure to recognize Manhattan Community Board 4 and the neighbors of CFH's west midtown women's center with the Compassionate Communities Award. Our experience with the west midtown community was the opposite of NIMBY. They constructively worked with CFH as partners to ensure that our program and the surrounding community can co-exist, understanding that they are participating in improving the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors. The board, staff, and clients of CFH will always remember the warm welcome we received."

MCB4 continues to be an integral component of our community engagement efforts by participating in our quarterly Community Advisory Board meetings, a forum that updates the community on the operation of the shelter as well as encourages feedback from all those involved. Also, one of the community board members, Delores Rubin, has started conducting financial literacy classes for the women at the shelter in order to teach financial skills such as

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Source: Coalitionforthehomeless.org

saving, budgeting, banking and credit. All important tools that ensure independence for the residents after they exit the shelter system.

A big thank you to MCB4 for welcoming Care For the Homeless into their community. If you would like to read more about MCB4 and the award, please click [here](#). Also, AmNY wrote a piece that can be found [here](#).

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day



As we approach the winter solstice, the start of winter and the longest night of the year, communities across the United States observe Homeless Persons' Memorial Day (HPMD), a solemn day of remembrance for people experiencing homelessness that passed away that year. At these memorials, we remember those who have passed away, and we strengthen our resolve to work for a world where no life is lived or lost in homelessness.

During these memorials, we want to raise awareness about the trauma and the severity of experiencing homelessness. Many studies have confirmed the relationship between a lack of housing and increased mortality rates. People experiencing homelessness are 3-4 times more likely to die prematurely as compared to the general population, losing an average of 20 years as compared to their housed counterparts. The difficulty of getting rest, maintaining medications, eating well, staying clean and staying warm prolong and exacerbate illnesses, sometimes to the point where they are life threatening. Conditions among people

who are homeless are frequently co-occurring, with a complex mix of severe physical, psychiatric and substance use problems. High stress, unhealthy and dangerous environments, and an inability to control food intake often result in visits to emergency rooms and hospitalization which worsens overall health.

Our HPMD program is a concerted effort by Care For the Homeless and Urban Pathways to involve service providers, advocates, people with the lived experience of homelessness, elected officials, and community members in compiling a list of unstably housed individuals who lost their lives in 2019. **For many cases, this Memorial will be the only commemoration they get.**

We want to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness, a crisis that we have the tools to end with the right policy changes. The memorial focuses attention on collectively recommitting efforts to prevent and end homelessness. Understanding that any solutions to end homelessness must be grounded in greater access to affordable housing and supportive services to help individuals not only meet their basic needs but thrive in their community.

Please join us as we memorialize those have passed away this year without stable housing on Wednesday, December 18th at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, 7 West 55th Street in Manhattan. The Memorial will start with a meal at 4:30 p.m., followed by the program at 5:30 p.m. It is free and open to the public. You can RSVP [here](#).

Care For the Homeless is a leader in advocating for high-quality patient-centered health care, robust human services and affordable housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

If you would like to support CFH's Policy and Advocacy work, please consider donating by clicking the button below and choosing "Strengthen Policy and Advocacy Work."

[Please Click Here to Donate](#)

The Busy Advocate's December Calendar

December is the Health Observance and Awareness Month

Mon., Dec. 9th, 10:00 a.m., Oversight joint meeting on the City's Effort to Prevent and Address HIV and Hepatitis by the Health and Hospital Committee, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Tue., Dec. 10th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Thur., Dec. 12th, 10:00 a.m., Oversight joint meeting on Senior Affordable Housing by the Housing and Building and Aging Committees, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Wed., Dec. 18, 4:30 p.m., Homeless Persons' Memorial Day, join us as we commemorate those who passed away this year while unstably housed. Meal begins at 4:30 p.m., program begins at 5:30 pm. Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church: Bonnell Hall, 7 West 55th Street, New York, NY 10019. RSVP [here](#).

Thur., Dec. 19th, 1:30 p.m., NY City Council Stated Meeting, City Hall Council Chambers, New York, NY, 10007.

Mon., Dec. 31, New Years Eve.

Tue., Jan. 1, Happy New Year, Welcome 2020.