



ICNY
Interfaith Center of New York



**NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER**

Housing Now: Faith Communities Call To Action **Resource Guide & Action Toolkit**

Faith leaders and their communities have long been at the forefront of our society's response to housing, particularly in marginalized communities. Now, they are taking on new roles in the current crisis by utilizing their houses of worship as temporary housing for those in need, as well as building new affordable housing sites on their house of worship land.

This toolkit provides information, action items, and resources to help faith-based communities join the movement for housing justice.

State of Housing In New York City:

- **One-third of the city's renters** are considered "severely rent-burdened", or spend over half their income on rent.
- In August 2021, the average rent in Manhattan reached **over \$4,000**.
- There is an extreme vacancy shortage among the city's more affordable units -- a **0.9% vacancy rate** for apartments renting between \$801 and \$1,499.
- In September 2022, there were over **60,000 homeless people** including nearly **20,000 homeless children**.
- In Queens alone, the City lost **over 20,000 Black homeowners** between 2005 and 2017, widening the racial wealth gap.

Take Action:

- 1) **Sign on!** Faith-based communities have a key role to play in housing justice. Sign onto a letter in support of an actionable legislative agenda for stronger tenant protections and deeply affordable housing through this link:

<https://hj4a.org/Faith>

- 2) **SAVE THE DATE:** On January 12, 2023, we will send the letter with all signatories to Governor Hochul along with an in-person press conference. To stay involved with this press conference, please sign onto the letter with the best contact information to reach you. If you have any questions, please contact Sumathy at sumathy@housingjusticeforall.org
- 3) **Dedicate a sermon to housing justice.** For more information, sign up here: [Dedicate a Sermon to Housing Justice \(google.com\)](#)

Resources:

General New York City and State Resources:

- [Housing Resources Portal](#): Searchable resource hub for rental support, learning about housing regulations, reporting issues, finding shelter, support against eviction or harassment, and financial resources for owners.
- [Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants](#): NYC Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants offers online resources and information to help NYC renters stabilize their housing situation. This includes those facing eviction, those in need of rent payment assistance and other issues.
- [NYC Housing Connect](#): Through Housing Connect, you can find and apply for affordable rental and homeownership opportunities.
- [Housing Ambassadors](#): HPD partners with community-based service providers in New York City who help people prepare and apply for Housing Connect affordable housing lotteries. Housing Ambassadors can provide information and assistance with the application process.
- [Family Justice Center](#): Provides free and confidential help to victims of domestic or gender-based violence. The assistance provided includes case management, economic empowerment, counseling, legal, and applying for housing.
- [Homes and Community Renewal](#): A site to submit complaints about defective conditions in the apartment, unlawful increase in rent, illegal fees, or if you did not receive a lease. Individuals can also request a rent history.
- [Rental Assistance Programs](#): Rental assistance programs help New Yorkers experiencing homelessness move out of shelter and into stable housing by providing monthly rent supplements.

- [New York City Housing Authority](#): NYCHA connects residents to opportunities in financial empowerment, business development, career advancement, and educational programs. With a housing stock that spans all five boroughs, NYCHA is a city within a city.
- [New York Housing Search](#) - A service to search for affordable and accessible housing throughout the state.

Homelessness:

- [Homeless Shelters](#): The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) homeless shelter system provides temporary, emergency shelter. You can also get assistance if you are about to become homeless. If you would like to speak to a counselor, 311 can give you the address of your local HomeBase office.
- [Coalition for the Homeless](#): This searchable database is an online version of the widely popular Coalition for the Homeless Resource Guide, with the most comprehensive catalog of emergency services in New York City.

Tenant Advocacy Hotlines and Legal Resources:

- Call 311 and ask for the [Tenant Helpline](#).
- [Met Council on Housing](#): Met Council can give brief answers to your rights as a tenant, and explain your options for dealing with a housing situation.

212-979-0611

Monday, 1:30-8pm

Tuesday, 5:30-8pm (new)

Wednesday, 1:30-8pm

Friday, 1:30-5pm

- [Legal Service Providers](#): The nonprofit law offices listed are contracted by New York City's Office of Civil Justice (OCJ)/ Human Resources Administration (HRA) to provide free legal services to New York City tenants facing eviction and other housing-related issues, including legal services under NYC's right-to-counsel law. For more information about free legal services for tenants in NYC, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/rtc>

- NYCHA Related: If you are a tenant living in a building owned and managed by NYCHA and are not happy with the work done in your apartment or have a concern about specific conditions or practices at NYCHA, please go to this link and file a complaint with NYCHA. [Compliance Department](#).
- If you are a tenant living in a building owned and managed by NYCHA as well as those owned by NYCHA but converted to private management through the PACT/RAD programs and your issue is specific to mold or leak and you have already contacted your property manager and are dissatisfied with the response you may reach out to [Mold and Leak Ombudsperson Call Center \(OCC\)](#) or call OCC via phone: 1-888-341-7152.

Youth Housing Resources:

- [Ali Forney Center](#): The mission of the Ali Forney Center is to protect homeless Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning youths from the harms of homelessness and empower them with the tools needed to be independent.
- [Crisis Service Programs](#): These DYCD-funded programs provide emergency shelter and crisis intervention services for young people between the ages of 16 and 20 or between the ages of 21 through 24 for Homeless Young Adult (HYA) sites.
- [Youth Drop In Centers](#): Drop-in centers in all five boroughs offer a safe place for youth ages 14 – 24 to hang out, charge your phone, find clothing and food, and take care of other needs. You can also get a range of services, from health care to job support (most drop-in centers offer these after an intake conversation with staff).

Housing Development for Faith-Based Institutions:

- [LISC NY - New York Land Opportunity Program for Mission-Driven and Faith-Based Organizations](#): LISC New York City has partnered with Mission-Driven Organizations (MDOs) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) to promote community and economic development for many years. MDOs and FBOs often provide much-needed services to their communities.

The LISC NYC NYLOP focuses on helping MDOs and FBOs use these resources to develop affordable housing on their vacant or underutilized property. LISC NYC is soliciting interest from up to 10 MDOs or FBOs who have an interest in developing their property. After an initial review and screening process, we will invite organizations with the best chance of success to submit a formal application to participate in the program. LISC NYC will review responses to the

formal application to select at least three organizations to proceed with developing conceptual plans. Once these plans are completed, LISC NYC will choose at least one organization from this cohort to issue a Request for Proposals to select a Master Development Partner to partner with the MDO or FBO to bring the conceptual plan to fruition.

- [Enterprise Community Partners](#): The Faith-Based Development Initiative (FBDI) provides houses of worship the knowledge and tools to develop underutilized land into affordable homes and community facilities.

Additional Resources:

- [Pathways to Social Housing](#): Without a major intervention, our current housing and lending policies create an environment for further waves of gentrification and displacement. This report outlines an alternative future, sketching out 20 policies that directly address this vulnerability. These policies would work in tandem to shield our housing from the worst aspects of speculative investment and put New York on a path to social housing transformation.
- [East New York Community Land Trust](#): The East New York CLT is an organization of community leaders and activists dedicated to preserving affordability for future generations and providing a vehicle to create generational wealth. The CLT seeks to own land and lease the land to the owners of the buildings and other uses on the land.
- [Churches United for Fair Housing \(CUFFH\)](#): CUFFH is a grassroots organization that works towards community empowerment through community organizing, youth engagement and by providing sophisticated social services.
- [Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy](#): Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) is a member-led, grassroots organization fighting for racial and economic justice in the Bronx.
- [Fair Housing Toolkit](#): The Fair Housing Justice Center has created this comprehensive Fair Housing Toolkit to assist diverse faith communities to promote fair housing and create more open, welcoming, equitable, and inclusive communities. The toolkit can be used as an educational resource about our nation's history of segregation, current fair housing issues, and fair housing rights. It also identifies ways in which people of faith can become more involved in promoting fair housing.
- [Metro IAF – NYC](#) - For All Housing Organizing Inquiries or Manhattan or The Bronx membership questions - Robbie Block, Sr. Organizer Manhattan Together and South Bronx Congregations, 510-828-3535. For any Brooklyn or Queens

Membership questions - Rob English, Lead Organizer, East Brooklyn
Congregations and Queens Power, 443-756-7833.

- [New Destiny Housing](#) - Provides housing options for domestic violence survivors by building affordable housing and improving access to housing resources.
- [Homes and Community Renewal \(HCR\)](#) – A site to submit complaints about defective conditions in the apartment, unlawful increase in rent, illegal fees, or if you did not receive a lease. Individuals can also request a rent history.
- [Reliant Realty](#) - Provides affordable housing opportunities
- [CVR New York](#) - Provides resources for affordable housing and information related to Housing and Urban Development programs.
- [Chhaya Community Development Corporation](#) - was founded to address the housing and economic needs for low-income South Asian and Indo-Caribbean New Yorkers.
- [Habitat for Humanity New York City and Westchester County](#) - transforms lives and communities by building and preserving affordable homes with families in need, and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing.
- [Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement](#) - committed to the holistic revitalization of Harlem. We provide economic development and empowerment opportunities to help Harlem residents rebuild and sustain their community.
- [Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing](#) - Inspired, strengthened and sustained by faith, the Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing is committed to confronting the unconscionable and unacceptable reality of homelessness in New York City.
- [New York Disaster Interfaith Services](#) - faith-based federation of service providers and charitable organizations who work in partnership to provide disaster readiness, response, and recovery services to New York City.
- [New York State Council of Churches](#) - provide tools for community organizing and legislative actions for faith-based organizations.
- [Project Hospitality](#) - an interfaith effort, committed to serving the needs of hungry and homeless people. We serve people with special needs — people living with HIV and AIDS, people using substances, people living with mental illness — with an array of on-site professional services.
- [Tirdof: New York Jewish Clergy for Justice](#) - the home for Jewish clergy to organize with our neighbors and allies for a New York City with freedom, opportunity, and dignity for all.

- New York State Council of Churches is sponsoring a conversation on immigration on January 17 from 7:00 to 9:00 on zoom. Panelists The Reverend Dr. Chloe Breyer, Executive Director, Interfaith Center of New York, Ravi Ragbir, New Sanctuary Coalition, Angela Castrillo-Vilches and Kayla Kelechian of New York Immigration Coalition, and Representatives for Health Care for All among others. Click here to register <https://www.nyscoc.org/event/7-pm-online-webinar-on-immigration>.
- Join the New York State Council of Churches, Interfaith Center of New York and a growing list of sponsors for Ecumenical and Interfaith Advocacy Days on February 27 and 28th. This year advocacy day will be in person in Albany and focus on immigration and housing. It will be an excellent follow up from the Marshall Meyer Retreat. Click here to register and get more details <https://www.nyscoc.org/event/new-york-state-ecumenical-and-interfaith-advocacy-days>. You can also watch this page for a growing library of recorded seminars on a variety of social justice topics which will be of use as we enter the 2023 state legislative session.
- If you are a house of worship which is interested in repurposing your property to build affordable housing, we urge you to follow a specific set of steps and obtain professional assistance. The Interfaith Affordable Housing Collaborative can walk you through the steps before engaging the City and a developer. We also offer forgivable pre-development loans to pay for a lawyer and an architect to exclusively represent the congregation along with other predevelopment costs to prepare a Request for Proposals before signing any development agreement with a developer; Go to WWW.IAHCNY.org for more information about the pre-development process and the assistance we offer. Please contact Peter Cook at 508-380-8289 or Pcook@NYSCOC.org or Marc Greenberg at 917-913-0098 or marc@iahh.org