



Mission and History

The Coalition for the Homeless is the nation's oldest advocacy and direct service organization helping homeless men, women and children. We believe that affordable housing, sufficient food and the chance to work for a living wage are fundamental rights in a civilized society. Since our inception in 1981, the Coalition has worked through litigation, public education and direct services to ensure that these goals are realized.

Direct Service Programs

Every day, the Coalition for the Homeless helps more than 3,500 people who are suffering in extreme poverty. Our 11 frontline programs address immediate needs and help individuals and families overcome long-term barriers to employment and stability.

- **Grand Central Food Program** delivers 1,000 hot nourishing meals – 365 nights per year – to homeless and hungry people living rough on the streets, providing a gateway to vital benefits and services.
- **Eviction Prevention Program** rescues more than 800 families per year who are on the brink of homelessness by providing small, one-time grants – an average of \$1,000 per household – to those with impending evictions but who have the capacity to pay rent going forward.
- **Crisis Intervention** provides about 9,000 men, women and children per year with emergency grants for food, baby formula, work uniforms, school supplies, medication and transportation. We also connect them to shelter, housing, public benefits, substance abuse treatment, mental health programs, domestic violence counseling and job training.
- **Client Advocacy Program** engages long-term shelter residents who have severe mental and physical disabilities and helps them access vital government benefits – allowing these often shunned and forgotten men and women to finally transition into permanent housing.
- **Emergency Mail Program** provides roughly 1,500 homeless New Yorkers with a secure, reliable and discreet mailing address where they can receive private mail as well as important documents from government agencies and social service organizations.
- **Scattered Site Housing Program** ensures that individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS can thrive in safe and stable apartments with compassionate case management and access to continuous medical care.

- **Coalition Houses** offers private apartment living and case management for formerly-homeless individuals in three contiguous five-story brownstones on the Upper West Side.
- **Bridge Building** provides safe and affordable one- and two-bedroom apartments that allow formerly homeless mothers to create a safe, nurturing environment for their kids while fostering a strong sense of community.
- **First Step Job Training Program** gives homeless and low-income women the computer training, literacy, life skills, mentoring and networking opportunities – as well as the self-confidence – they need to secure living-wage employment.
- **Camp Homeward Bound**, the nation’s first sleep-away camp designed specifically for homeless children, gives 300 girls and boys each summer the chance to play, learn, grow and thrive at our beautiful, lakefront campsite in Harriman State Park.
- **Bound for Success** offers critical after-school and summer day-camp programs to homeless kids – who otherwise risk falling behind their classmates – by providing tutoring with homework, literacy and math skills as well as active, recreational fun.

Advocacy

- **Impact Litigation** - Our landmark litigation, *Callahan v. Carey*, established the legal right to shelter for homeless adult men in NYC and was the first crucial step in creating a safety net for our homeless neighbors. We have since won a string of legal victories, including extending the right to shelter to women and families; securing protective services for homeless children; requiring medically appropriate housing for people living with HIV/AIDS; and ensuring the right to vote for New Yorkers without homes.
- **Organizing and Shelter Monitoring** - The Coalition serves as the designated independent monitor of the City’s homeless shelter system, and maintains a constant presence to assess conditions and advocate on behalf of the tens of thousands of men, women and children in need of decent shelter. However, we believe that the most effective advocates are homeless people themselves, and so we facilitate grassroots organizing and provide a platform for those in shelters and on the streets to be heard.
- **Research, Analysis and Public Education** - By helping the public and policymakers fully understand the reasons for – and solutions to – mass homelessness in our city, we give New Yorkers the tools to help us fight for the proven and cost-effective housing-based solutions to this terrible crisis. The Coalition is the most trusted and credible source of information about homelessness in New York and is relied upon by elected officials, academics, service providers, the press and the general public. Our annual *State of the Homeless* report is widely used as the benchmark to gauge the City’s success or failure in addressing the catastrophe of homelessness.