Coalition for the Homeless
State of the Homeless 2006

Part I:
Homelessness in the New Century:
The Worst Decade Since the Great Depression

Part II:
Reform the Flawed “Housing Stability Plus” Program

January 24, 2006
Part I: At Halfway Point, the Worst Decade for Homelessness Since the Great Depression

- Number of Homeless New Yorkers 44 Percent Higher than 1990s
- Number of Homeless Children 55 Percent Higher than Last Decade
- Long Shelter Stays for Homeless Children and Families
- City Creates Fewer Apartments for Homeless New Yorkers

> Detailed on Pages 4-13
Part II: Reform the Flawed “Housing Stability Plus” Program

- Reduces Rental Assistance 20 Percent Annually
- Requires Families to Stay on Welfare – Blocks Transition from Welfare to Work
- Endangers Many Families – Gives Taxpayer Dollars to Slumlords
- Allows Unscrupulous Brokers and Landlords to Demand Illegal Side Payments from Vulnerable Families

> Detailed on Pages 14-22
At Halfway Point, the Worst Decade for Homelessness Since the Great Depression

- At the midpoint of the decade, the number of homeless New Yorkers in shelters is 44 percent higher than in the 1990s.
- Despite recent moderate declines, since June the New York City homeless shelter population has leveled off at nearly 32,000 people per night.
- Homeless families still make up three-quarters of the shelter population, and families now stay in shelters for nearly a year.
- Amidst cutbacks in Federal housing programs and soaring rents citywide, further declines in homelessness are doubtful absent dramatic policy reforms by Mayor Bloomberg.
State of the Homeless 2006
Current Decade’s Homelessness Crisis

Halfway Through the Decade, Homelessness
Up 44 Percent from the 1990s

Average Number of Homeless People Residing in Municipal Shelters Each Night (1980s Data from 1983-1989)

- 1980s: 23,295
- 1990s: 22,611
- 2000-2005: 32,609
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Family Homelessness Dramatically Higher

Number of Homeless Families 52 Percent
Higher than Last Decade

Average Number of Homeless People Residing in
Municipal Shelters Each Night (1980s Data from 1983-1989)

- 1980s: 3,947
- 1990s: 5,034
- 2000-2005: 7,640
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More Homeless Children in New York City

Number of Homeless Children 55 Percent
Higher than the 1990s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Average Number of Homeless People Residing in Municipal Shelters Each Night (1980s Data from 1983-1989)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>9,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>8,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2005</td>
<td>13,616</td>
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</table>
Fewer New Apartments Created for the Homeless

Dramatic Reduction in the Number of New Apartments Created for Homeless Households
After moderate declines, the shelter population has leveled off at nearly 32,000 people per night since June 2005.
State of the Homeless 2006
Family Homelessness in the New Century

Number of Homeless Families
53 Percent Higher Over Five Years

After moderate declines in 2004, the number of homeless families has stagnated at nearly 8,000 families per night.
State of the Homeless 2006
Long Shelter Stays for Homeless Families

Homeless Children and Families Now Stay in Shelters for Nearly One Year

Average Number of Days Homeless Families Reside in Municipal Shelters

- 1995: 216
- 1996: 238
- 1997: 297
- 1998: 277
- 1999: 268
- 2000: 298
- 2001: 325
- 2002: 298
- 2003: 325
- 2004: 338
- 2005: 350
16 Percent More New Yorkers Experienced Homelessness During Past Four Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Unduplicated Number of Individuals Who Resided in Municipal Shelters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2002</td>
<td>82,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2003</td>
<td>95,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2004</td>
<td>104,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2005</td>
<td>98,239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outreach Teams Contacted 18 Percent More Street Homeless People Over Four Years

- FY 2002: 100,219
- FY 2003: 107,961
- FY 2004: 121,491
- FY 2005: 118,628
Overview of “Housing Stability Plus”: A Flawed Program in Need of Reform

- Since June the New York City homeless shelter population has leveled off at nearly 32,000 people per night. Reductions in homelessness in 2004 and early 2005 were due to the City’s use of Federal housing programs, such as Section 8 vouchers, which have been cut back by the Bush Administration.

- In the past year, the City has failed to meet its own targets for housing placements through “Housing Stability Plus.” Many reputable landlords are wary of participating in a program that cuts housing assistance for families every year.

- Without reforms, “Housing Stability Plus” creates a revolving door to homelessness for thousands of poor families.
“Housing Stability Plus”:
The Major Flaws in Need of Reform

1. Reduces Rental Assistance 20 Percent Annually
2. Requires Families to Stay on Welfare
3. Endangers Many Families, and Gives Taxpayer Dollars to Slumlords
4. Allows Unscrupulous Brokers and Landlords to Demand Illegal Side Payments from Vulnerable Families
1. Shrinking Housing Assistance for Needy Families

- The “Housing Stability Plus” program reduces families’ rent supplements by 20 percent every year, and then ends it after five years.

- Most families will be unable to shoulder this annual “rent hike.”

- Many families will be forced to return to the shelter system, creating a “revolving door.”
State of the Homeless 2006
HSP Flaws: Declining Rental Assistance

"Housing Stability Plus" Program Reduces Housing Assistance Every Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maximum Monthly Rent Subsidy for a Family of Three Under the &quot;Housing Stability Plus&quot; Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>$925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>$820</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>$715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>$610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>$505</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Requires Families to Stay on Welfare

- “Housing Stability Plus” requires families to stay on welfare.
- Under HSP rules, families lose their rental assistance if they secure employment.
- City and State officials have refused to create a “work support” component for HSP, harming families striving for self-sufficiency.
- HSP rules also exclude people with Social Security, disability and veterans benefits.
3. Endangers Families and Subsidizes Slumlords

- “Housing Stability Plus” subsidies are paid to many landlords already cited by the City for dangerous housing code violations.

- In a recent survey, 41 percent of HSP buildings met the City’s own criteria for an “unsatisfactory” building.

- City officials have so far refused to require repairs and re-inspections before homeless families move into HSP apartments.

- Dangerous housing conditions are a major cause of homelessness.
41 Percent of "Housing Stability Plus" Subsidies Go to "Unsatisfactory" Buildings

Source: NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, violations database. Based on a Housing Here & Now survey of 274 HSP buildings. According to the City, “unsatisfactory” buildings have three class “C” or “B” violations per housing unit.
4. Illegal “Side Deals” Demanded of Poor Families

- Many “Housing Stability Plus” families have been forced to pay illegal “side deals” – payments over the legal rent – by landlords and brokers.

- Some illegal “side deals” amount to hundreds of dollars each month from NYC’s poorest families.

- City and State officials have so far refused to crack down on “side deals.”
“Housing Stability Plus”: A Reform Plan for the Mayor

1. Eliminate the Annual 20 Percent Reduction in the Value of the Rent Supplement
2. Allow “Housing Stability Plus” Recipients to Work
3. Prohibit Substandard Housing from Receiving Subsidies
4. Ban Illegal “Side Deals” and Brokers/Landlords Who Engage in Them

For details on the “Housing Stability Plus” reform plan, visit www.coalitionforthehomeless.org.
Data Sources

Homelessness data: NYC Department of Homeless Services.

Housing data: Mayor’s Management Report, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Housing Here & Now.

Acknowledgments


For more information, please visit www.coalitionforthehomeless.org.