

Testimony from NYCHA's Executive Vice President of Leased Housing Lakesha Miller
Administration of Section 8 and Emergency Housing Voucher Program
Committee on Public Housing
Monday, September 29, 2025 – 1 p.m.
250 Broadway, 8th Floor Hearing Room 1

Chair Chris Banks, members of the Committee on Public Housing, other distinguished members of the City Council, NYCHA residents, community advocates, and members of the public: good afternoon. I am Lakesha Miller, NYCHA's Executive Vice President of Leased Housing. I am pleased to be joined by Brian Honan, Executive Vice President of Intergovernmental Affairs, and other members of NYCHA's team. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the Authority's Section 8 program, including our administration of Emergency Housing Vouchers.

The Housing Choice Voucher and Emergency Housing Voucher Programs

For half a century, NYCHA has helped low-income New Yorkers rent housing in the private market thanks to the federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, also known as Section 8. The Section 8 rental subsidy allows families to typically pay no more than 30 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward rent. NYCHA pays the remaining amount to the owner of the home on the family's behalf. NYCHA administers the largest Section 8 program in the country: We currently serve about 110,000 households – over 223,000 residents – who rent homes from approximately 27,000 participating landlords. More than half of our participants are children and seniors. The average household income is about \$23,000, and families pay an average of \$472 in monthly rent. Program eligibility is based on a family's gross annual income and size of their household.

The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program is also administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was established four years ago to help our most vulnerable families and individuals gain stable and affordable housing, including people who are experiencing homelessness or are victims of domestic violence. NYCHA currently serves more than 5,400 EHV participants.

Transitioning EHV Participants to the HCV Program

This past March, HUD announced that it is ending the EHV program. However, HUD is allowing public housing authorities across the nation to transition current EHV households to the traditional HCV Section 8 program. NYCHA will begin transferring all of our EHV participants to the HCV program, because we want to support at-risk families and keep them stably housed. EHV participants will continue to receive the same benefits – their rental subsidy will not be impacted – and the program rules and requirements will remain the same. They will benefit, however, by moving from a time-limited program to one that is not time limited.

To accommodate this, NYCHA must temporarily pause voucher issuance and outreach to applicants on the general HCV waitlist. Applicants who have not yet received a voucher will be returned to their original position on the waitlist – they will not be removed from the waitlist. Once outreach and voucher issuance restarts, NYCHA will contact households according to their spot on the waitlist. There is no impact to current voucher holders.

Serving Voucher Holders

My colleagues and I have been working hard to prepare administratively for this transition and ensure there is no interruption to the vital assistance that every EHV participant receives. Our team also provides invaluable support to Section 8 voucher holders beyond the powerful foundation of a monthly rental subsidy. For instance, our Housing Navigation Unit helps voucher holders find housing in the private market; our inspections team makes sure that voucher holders are living in safe, decent housing; and we arrange for any valid reasonable accommodations as well as transfers to other housing authorities. The Family Self-Sufficiency Program helps Section 8 residents build their assets while they pursue financial independence through education, job training, and money management. And many of the other valuable academic advancement and workforce development programs offered by NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability are available to Section 8 voucher holders in addition to public housing residents.

We also support the landlords who participate in the program, who likewise benefit from the guaranteed monthly rental subsidy payments; for example, our free online property management tools help landlords manage their Section 8 portfolio.

A Vital Lifeline

As we have reported in previous Council hearings, we continue to monitor the news coming out of Washington and will continue to adapt to the fiscal realities. No matter what happens, our top priority is providing decent, affordable housing to the families we serve, and we remain steadfast in pursuit of our mission.

NYCHA's work, including its administration of Section 8 vouchers, is a critical lifeline for so many New Yorkers. We appreciate the Council's support as we continue to navigate the challenges and the changes, and we look forward to continuing our vital work together.

Thank you. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.