

**Testimony from NYCHA's Executive Vice President of Property Management  
Operations Daniel Greene  
Security Measures for NYCHA's Vacant Apartments  
Committee on Public Housing  
Friday, April 10, 2026 – 10 a.m.  
250 Broadway, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Hearing Room 2**

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 morning. I am Daniel Greene, NYCHA's Executive Vice President of Property Management Operations. I am pleased to be joined by Deputy General Counsel Daniel Kiss and other members of NYCHA's leadership team.

NYCHA is a vital resource of affordable housing in our city, and we strive to ensure that as many New Yorkers as possible can benefit from a safe, stable, and truly affordable home. At the same time, the community's safety and wellbeing is another top priority which drives our work. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss NYCHA's collaboration with our law enforcement partners to promote security around our vacant apartments – which we have made progress with in recent years – as well as our efforts to turn over apartments as expeditiously as possible to provide residents with safe and healthy homes. A key indicator of our progress in this area is that we have increased the number of move-ins by 76 percent since 2023.

**Safety and Security Is a Top Priority**

As a landlord, our ultimate goal is to provide safe and secure homes for the hundreds of thousands of families we serve. Our approach to promoting safe communities is multi-faceted and involves three core elements: 1) investing in infrastructure that enhances building security, such as CCTV cameras, exterior lighting, and layered access controls at building entrances; 2) collaborating with law enforcement agencies such as the NYPD, the NYC Department of Investigation (DOI), local district attorney offices, and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice; and 3) partnering with residents through initiatives such as Resident Watch to collaboratively address public safety.

Over 1,100 residents participate in the volunteer Resident Watch program, helping to patrol their developments and foster safety, security, and community pride in collaboration with property management staff. And NYCHA, including our Office of Safety and Security, is in

constant communication with the NYPD; nine dedicated NYPD Police Services Areas (PSA) cover NYCHA developments. Additionally, more than 21,000 CCTV cameras are installed at NYCHA developments citywide.

### **Effective Collaboration with Law Enforcement Partners**

We have taken significant steps forward in recent years to ensure safety around our vacant apartments. And we have been working with our law enforcement partners – including the DOI and NYPD – for the past several years to address security issues. In fact, the DOI’s recent report on vacant apartments resulted from our partnership, much of its data collected during the course of our work together. And thanks to the close working relationship between the NYPD Housing Bureau’s Reclamation Unit and NYCHA’s Law Department and Property Management, about 635 vacant apartments have been recovered from unauthorized occupants since 2023.

We acknowledge that there is always more to do. And so, we have accepted all five of the recommendations outlined in the DOI report, and we will continue to work with the DOI and NYPD to foster safety and security for the entire community.

The DOI recommendations that we will implement involve:

- Conducting monthly inspections of vacant apartments;
- Evaluating the feasibility of alternative locksets or security technologies;
- Requiring Resident Watch volunteers to report suspected unauthorized inhabitants or illegal activity;
- Immediate verification by Property Management of any such reports from Resident Watch; and
- Deploying additional funding we receive to reduce the time it takes to refurbish vacant apartments.

### **Turning Over Vacant Units, As Safely and Expeditiously as Possible**

I’d now like to provide some clarity on why there are vacant apartments at NYCHA as well as our efforts to turn over apartments that are safe and free of environmental hazards as quickly as possible.

Out of NYCHA's approximately 146,000 public housing apartments, there are currently 6,294 vacant apartments with turnover in progress plus 612 matched vacant units. This equates to a 4.7 percent vacancy rate, which is lower than the national public housing vacancy rate of 6.06 percent.

NYCHA has substantially increased the number of move-ins: in 2025, there were 4,702 move-ins, which represents a 76 percent increase over 2023. And we have reduced the time it takes to turn over a vacant apartment – which is currently 340 days, down from 395 days in March 2025.

Despite a lack of federal support and the need to constantly balance competing priorities, we do prioritize apartment turnover work. And in doing so, we have truly made strides to foster safe and healthy communities by addressing, for instance, the long-entrenched issue of lead paint. The turnover work includes removal of environmental hazards like lead and asbestos as well as the completion of vital repairs and renovations after a tenant leaves. Residents stay in their NYCHA apartments for an average of 25 years, so apartment turnover is a key and necessary opportunity to complete critical and required health and safety work in the apartment – as well as skilled trades work such as carpentry, plastering, and painting. And the work needed is usually considerable: the total capital needs across NYCHA's portfolio amount to approximately \$80 billion.

It takes up to six months to get an apartment ready for a new tenant. Local Law 1 requires landlords to perform lead abatement of certain components upon apartment turnover, and we go even further: NYCHA's policy is to abate all components to make an apartment lead-free for the next resident. When an apartment turns over, we conduct a lead inspection (if the apartment hasn't already been inspected for lead). If lead paint is identified, the apartment is scheduled for abatement. Additionally, an asbestos investigation is performed at apartments with damaged floor tiles or textured ceilings.

Compliance with a variety of lead and asbestos abatement-related requirements and regulations is not only time consuming but is also costly – the average cost to turn over an apartment is about \$52,000 (\$25,000 for asbestos abatement, \$17,000 for lead abatement, and \$10,000 for general renovations). However, the time and cost involved in apartment turnover means that

every resident will move into a refreshed apartment that is safe and free of environmental hazards.

Another reason for vacancies is that we fulfill thousands of resident requests each year to transfer to another apartment for a variety of reasons, including domestic violence and other emergency situations. On average, nearly 60 percent of our move-ins each year are from transfers – so another apartment becomes vacant every time a resident transfers. In addition, some apartments are held for residents who need to temporarily relocate when their apartments undergo major renovation and modernization work – that is, our efforts to invest in, strengthen, and preserve our buildings and improve residents’ quality of life.

We continue to work with our partners in all levels of government to obtain every available resource to get New Yorkers into our deeply affordable apartments. We appreciate the City’s ongoing support, including its funding for the Vacant Unit Readiness program – the City has made over \$222 million available to NYCHA for this program for fiscal years 2026 through 2030.

### **Commitment to the Community**

All of our work is driven by our mission to provide safe homes and foster safe communities. While the obstacles are many, we are making progress, thanks to partners like the DOI, NYPD, and City Council. We appreciate our collaboration and are always looking at ways we can continue to transform as an organization and better serve New Yorkers and New York City.

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