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Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council  
Committee on Human Services  
April 30, 2026

Public Hearing:  
Department of Human Services Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

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## **Introduction**

Good morning, Chairperson Frumin and members of the Committee. My name is Makenna Osborn. I am a Senior Policy Attorney at Children’s Law Center, a resident of the District, and a tenant. Children’s Law Center believes every child should grow up with a strong foundation of family, health and education and live in a world free from poverty, trauma, racism and other forms of oppression. Our more than 100 staff – together with DC children and families, community partners and pro bono attorneys – use the law to solve children’s urgent problems today and improve the systems that will affect their lives tomorrow. Since our founding in 1996, we have reached more than 50,000 children and families directly and multiplied our impact by advocating for city-wide solutions that benefit hundreds of thousands more.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget for the Department of Human Services (DHS). Children’s Law Center recognizes that the District is under significant financial pressures and as a community, we must make difficult choices in the FY27 budget because our projected revenues cannot support the same level of spending as previous years. Children’s Law Center also knows that when costs rise and government resources tighten, the families we work with – predominantly Black and brown families with extremely low incomes— experience greater instability.<sup>1</sup> Over the past year, federal policy choices and local budget decreases have already reduced access to income supports, healthcare, food assistance, and rental

aid for low-income DC families and the foundation these safety net programs are supposed to provide has become increasingly fragile.<sup>2</sup> Instead of receiving the resources needed to access and maintain stability, DC families are being pushed further into crisis.

In this moment when a strong, coordinated local safety net is needed to mitigate the harm from federal program cuts and the rising cost of living, the Mayor's proposed budget moves in the opposite direction. It includes no new housing vouchers for families, cuts the amount of cash assistance families receive through TANF, and significantly decreases funding for the behavioral and mental health supports that help children learn and succeed.<sup>3</sup> And the impact of these proposed cuts will be borne by the same group of families, compounding their instability. The families who will be stuck in housing insecurity because there are no vouchers available to help them afford market rent, are the same families who will have less cash available to pay for their children's food, clothes, and transportation because of cuts to TANF. The children whose parents will lose income due to TANF cuts are the same children who will no longer be able to access adequate behavioral and mental health support if they need help.

While the District cannot control federal decisions, our leaders can control where we invest local dollars and how effectively we spend them. We urge the Council to take an intentional, holistic approach to the FY27 budget. When weighing decisions and tradeoffs, assess the collective impact of cuts to families with low incomes, and prioritize

funding the basic supports that keep DC children housed, healthy, educated, and connected to opportunity.

To that end, adequately funding the DHS programs that help families access and maintain housing security, meet their children's basic needs, and engage in school are some of the best investments the District can make for the well-being of DC children and the broader DC community, now and for years to come.<sup>4</sup> My testimony today will identify areas in DHS's budget where the Committee should focus on reversing cuts proposed by the Mayor and strategically increasing funding for programs that are essential to prevent further instability for low-income DC families. Specifically, I will detail why the Committee should prioritize 1) funding long-term housing vouchers for families; 2) reversing the Mayor's proposed cuts to TANF cash assistance; and 3) ensuring that DHS's Truancy Reduction Program becomes a permanent, reliable resource to support DC students and families facing barriers to regular school attendance.

**The Committee Should Fund New Housing Vouchers for Families to Preserve the District's Existing Voucher Level and Help Families Exit Rapid Re-Housing and Shelter to Long-Term Housing Stability in FY27**

Housing security —having a safe, healthy, and stable place to call home— has a profound impact on a child's health, development, and ability to learn.<sup>5</sup> Childhood housing insecurity is closely linked to adverse physical, mental, and behavioral health conditions;<sup>6</sup> developmental delays;<sup>7</sup> and lower levels of engagement in school;<sup>8</sup> all of which can increase a child's use of costly public services over their lifetime.<sup>9</sup> Vouchers

that provide families with deep, ongoing rental subsidies —like those administered by DHS through the Local Rent Supplement Program (LRSP), including Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) vouchers— are a vital resource for helping families experiencing housing insecurity afford rent in DC’s costly private market and a cost-effective investment by the Council.<sup>10</sup> Research shows that long-term housing vouchers are an effective tool not only for preventing family homelessness and reducing childhood poverty in the short-term, but also increasing a child’s access to opportunity and economic security into adulthood.<sup>11</sup> Local vouchers are an especially important resource for young heads of household who are not on DCHA’s waitlist for federally-funded Housing Choice Vouchers because the waitlist for the program has been closed since 2013.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, Children’s Law Center is deeply concerned that the Mayor’s proposed FY27 does not fund any new vouchers for families and leaves the District on track for a net loss of local vouchers in FY27, if not before the end of this Fiscal Year. There are two sources of a decrease in local voucher numbers that the Council would need to address to prevent this net loss. First, in FY26 DHS stopped turning over existing vouchers to new households when they are vacated.<sup>13</sup> DHS projects that they currently do not have the resources to re-match 326 PSH family vouchers that have turned over.<sup>14</sup> DHS estimates they would have needed an additional \$16 million in their FY26 budget to preserve those 326 vouchers.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, DC received over 500 federal Emergency Housing Vouchers

via the American Rescue Plan and has been using them for PSH rental subsidies, including for approximately 160 families currently in PSH.<sup>16</sup> Federal funding for these vouchers, was supposed to go through 2030 but will now end in 2026.<sup>17</sup> Children’s Law Center appreciates that DCHA amended its Administrative Plan to add a preference for impacted families to receive HCVP vouchers. However, that preference only applies if and when there are HCVP vouchers available. According to DCHA leadership, their HCVP vouchers are currently at 104% utilization and the agency does not expect to receive funding for additional vouchers from HUD in the next year.<sup>18</sup> In the DCHA FY27 budget hearing on April 29, Interim Director Wickliffe acknowledged that an HCVP preference is far from a guarantee and estimated that Council would need to add \$14 million per year to LRSP funding (shared between DHS and DCHA) beginning in FY27 to ensure that DC families with EHV subsidies can remain stably housed.<sup>19</sup>

With no funding for new local vouchers —let alone enough to maintain our existing stock— and no funding for new slots in other local rent subsidy programs, like DC Flex, under the Mayor’s proposed FY27 budget, hundreds of families will be exited from EHV and Rapid Re-Housing over the next year with no way to support market rent.<sup>20</sup> Hundreds more will be stuck in lengthy shelter stays, which will be more costly for the District and harmful to the future of DC children.<sup>21</sup> Minimally, Children’s Law Center urges the Committee to increase funding across the District’s local voucher programs in the FY27 budget to 1) replace the 326 family vouchers lost to DHS’s new

attrition policy during FY26 and ensure local family vouchers vacated in FY27 will be re-matched to new families; and 2) to ensure families currently housed with a federal EHV subsidy do not suddenly lose their rental assistance and housing stability when DCHA's allocated EHV funding runs out. Children's Law Center also recognizes that those changes will merely preserve the status quo and that investments in hundreds more new vouchers and/or other rental assistance resources would be needed to connect each family terminated from Rapid Re-Housing or entering shelter with long-term housing stability. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with this Committee and the Committee on Housing over the coming weeks to achieve the most efficient and effective distribution of funding across the District's rental subsidy programs to prevent as many DC children and families as possible from becoming homeless or being pushed out of the District entirely.

### **The Proposed Cuts to TANF in FY27 and FY28 Will Harm DC Children and Families and Increase Administrative Costs to the District Government**

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is the only cash-based assistance program in the District that supports families, including Children's Law Center clients, with little or no income to help pay for rent, utilities, diapers, clothes, transportation, and other essentials. Having available cash provides power, flexibility, and greater stability, especially during uncertain economic times. In FY24, 13,700 individual DC households with 25,370 children received TANF benefits.<sup>22</sup> In FY25 those

numbers rose to 18,442 individual households with 33,049 children.<sup>23</sup> TANF is a vital lifeline for these DC children and families.

The Mayor's proposed budget includes three major changes to the District's administration of TANF that could significantly decrease the amount of cash assistance these families receive starting in FY27: (1) ending cost-of-living adjustments for TANF benefits; (2) reinstating time limits for families receiving TANF for 60 months or more; and (3) increasing sanctions for families who are not meeting work readiness requirements.<sup>24</sup>

According to DHS estimates, the proposed cuts will directly harm at least 15,000 children in the District.<sup>25</sup> Under the proposed policy changes, many families could have their TANF benefits reduced at least 30% in FY27 and cut to \$0 in FY28.<sup>26</sup> If the changes take effect, a single parent with two children who currently receives around \$800 per month in TANF benefits could be receiving \$0 in less than two years.

The Mayor and DHS are not offering any viable support to help such families increase their household income outside of TANF to help make up for the decrease. Studies show that time limits and sanctions simply do not work to increase employment<sup>27</sup> and the Mayor's proposed FY27 budget would cut over \$11 million the TANF Training and Employment Program (TEP), the primary job training resource for DC families receiving TANF.<sup>28</sup> The effects of these deep and sweeping cuts would be devastating for children and families. Studies show that without sufficient TANF assistance for families,

communities see an increase in childhood hunger, family homelessness, absenteeism and worse school outcomes, and child neglect due to parental stress.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the long-lasting harm to children and families, Children’s Law Center is concerned regarding the implementation of the TANF policies will add significant administrative costs to DHS’s budget moving forward. DHS is already a strained and struggling agency, with a flawed computer system that often fails to process District residents’ applications, recertifications, or other paperwork in a timely and accurate manner. The District Access System (DCAS) – the benefits eligibility system – frequently fails to ensure benefits are maintained for DC residents across the myriad pre-existing programs within the District. Adding to these existing struggles, DHS is having to implement federal obligations for SNAP and Medicaid.<sup>30</sup> Implementing TANF time limits and increased sanctions will simply impose additional administrative responsibilities and associated costs.

Therefore, the Committee and DC Council to minimally restore funding for TANF to funding levels that reverse the FY27 and FY28 policy decisions with regard to COLA, time limits, and work sanctions. We want to ensure families continue to access critical cash supports during a time of significant change across other benefit programs.

**Making the Truancy Reduction Pilot a Permanent Program is a Good Step Forward, But the Committee Must Ensure Stability and Sufficient Resources**

As this Committee knows well, the challenges faced by DC students and families are not limited to the education sector. Students have complex lives in which school is

just one part. Research tells us that barriers to attendance fall into six domains of functioning: academic, social–emotional, mental health, physical health, family, and school & community.<sup>31</sup> However, barriers within each domain intersect in ways unique to individual students and their family circumstances. The Truancy Reduction Pilot Program housed in DHS has provided crucial insight into the specific attendance barriers driving absenteeism among DC students.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, DHS’s most recent report on the pilot program shows encouraging outcomes.<sup>33</sup> As such, we urge the Committee to ensure that DHS’s Truancy Reduction Program becomes a permanent, reliable resource to support DC students and families facing barriers to regular school attendance.

Given the broad array of reasons that students miss school, there will be no one-size-fits-all program or intervention that will “solve” chronic absenteeism in the District. Each student, family, school, and neighborhood will have their own unique combination of attendance barriers that require tailored interventions. We cannot offer appropriate interventions and supports without first knowing which barriers to attendance a child faces. We cannot effectively allocate resources without knowing which barriers are most prevalent in each specific school. And we cannot scale interventions and supports without knowing which interventions best address each of the most common barriers.

While the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) reports annually on attendance rates in the District, their data do not reflect the drivers of student absenteeism.<sup>34</sup> However, the individualized family engagement undertaken through the

DHS Truancy Pilot has provided crucial insight into why DC students miss school and what sorts of interventions best support families in overcoming their barriers to regular school attendance.

Therefore, we were glad to see the proposed FY2027 Budget Support Act of 2026 (BSA) would create a permanent Truancy Reduction Program. DHS's new report on Year 2 of the pilot version of this program offers encouraging signs. In particular, the year-over-year comparisons found that 71% of students "who were truant at this time last [school year] are no longer truant in the same time in the current [school year]."<sup>35</sup> Moreover, of the 91 students who were referred to the pilot in both years, 43% were moved to a less intensive intervention. Perhaps most notably, some families who had declined services last year, "were able to recognize their student's issue as significant and accept case management" the second time around.<sup>36</sup> The work to address barriers to attendance will not be quick. However, the data from the DHS pilot show that persistence in our outreach and support of students and families can work.

Even where the Year 2 report shows worsening attendance, the pilot provides crucial insight to the Council regarding the needs of DC students and families.

"The students whose attendance declined experienced significant life issues while in the program that negatively impacted their attendance. **One student's parent experienced a mental health crisis**, which caused the student to be out of school for an extended period. **Another student has housing instability which negatively impacted their mental health** and attendance. **Another student experienced significant housing and**

**transportation instability** and also changed schools during their time in the program.<sup>37</sup>

These are exactly the kinds of cases that the DHS Truancy Program should be identifying. These are DC students with serious barriers to attendance for which the District can offer supportive services. Notably, these are not cases in which school-based interventions could have addressed the students' barriers to attendance. Without the truancy pilot, these students likely would have been referred to the Court Social Services Division of the Superior Court (CSSD) and to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).<sup>38</sup> From there, OAG would decide whether to prosecute the student for truancy or refer them to "community-based interventions that address underlying barriers to attendance and connects them to strength based, prosocial activities."<sup>39</sup> Frustratingly, this process sends students to the exact same services that they would have gotten through the pilot - except now they have passed through the juvenile legal system.

The Truancy Reduction Program alone will not be able to meet the needs of all the students referred to them. As the program grows, so must the programs that directly address the students' unmet needs. Children's Law Center continues to be supportive of the Truancy Reduction Program as an intervention that seeks to address the unmet needs of students and families as opposed to more punitive responses.<sup>40</sup> We urge the Committee to preserve the proposed investments in DHS's youth truancy work and support making the DHS truancy pilot a permanent, reliable resource for DC students and families.

## Conclusion

As the Council considers amendments to the Mayor's proposed budget, Children's Law Center welcomes the opportunity to work with the Committee to protect and build upon the District's investments in keeping DC children safe and healthy in stable families.

Thank you and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

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<sup>1</sup> Children's Law Center, Who We Are, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/who-we-are/>.

<sup>2</sup> Anna Bailey, Cuts to Health Care, Food Assistance, and Income Support to Fund Tax Cuts for the Wealthy Would Worsen Housing Instability and Homelessness, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, (2025), available at: <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/cuts-to-health-care-food-assistance-and-income-support-to-fund-tax-cuts-for-the-wealthy-would>; Upcoming Changes to SNAP Benefits, Legal Aid Society, available at: <https://www.legalaiddc.org/legal-info/snap-big-beautiful-bill>; Elizabeth Short, D.C. is preparing to implement new SNAP work requirements. Here's what to know, Street Sense Media, (March 13, 2026), available at: <https://streetsensemedia.org/article/d-c-implements-new-snap-work-requirements/>; Legal Action Center, The Impacts of HR 1 on Medicaid and SNAP, (December 2025), available at: <https://www.lac.org/resource/the-impacts-of-hr-1-on-medicaid-snap>; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute, (Mar. 25, 2025), available at: <https://www.dcfpi.org/all/dc-fiscal-year-2026-budget/>.

<sup>3</sup> Mayor's Proposed FY2027 Budget Department of Human Services and Department of Behavioral Health. While this testimony speaks extensively to the cuts to vouchers and TANF with relevant sites. It is important to note that the FY2027 Budget for Department of Behavioral Health cuts the school-based behavioral health program by \$6.1M and crisis responses by almost \$700,000. See Proposed FY 2027 Budget and Financial Plan, Volume 4 Agency Budget Chapters – Part 3, Department of Behavioral Health, p. E-25.

<sup>4</sup> Numerous studies have shown that investments in eviction and homelessness prevention generate larger savings across other budget areas and benefits to communities. See William N. Evans et al., *The Impact of Homelessness Prevention Programs on Homelessness*, 353 Science 694 (August 12, 2016), available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Impact-of-homelessness-prevention.pdf> (Study on temporary financial assistance to those at risk of homelessness in Chicago found average cost of assistance was \$10,300 and average estimated societal benefits was \$20,548); EY, *CommonBond Communities: Social Impact Measurement of CommonBond's Eviction Prevention Activities*, (Aug. 2018), available at: <https://commonbond.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CommonBond-Social-impact-report-Final.pdf> (Study of eviction prevention programs in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin found that for every \$1 spent on eviction prevention, the states realized an average \$4 social return on investment); Stout, *Cost-Benefit Analysis for Philadelphia Right to Counsel for Low Income Tenants Facing Eviction*, <https://www.stout.com/en/experience/cost-benefit-analysis-for-philadelphia-right-to-counsel> (Study found that the City of Philadelphia would receive a benefit of over \$12 for every \$1 spend on providing legal representation to low-income tenants facing eviction). See also Dan Threet, Mackenzie Pish et al., *Costs of Covid-19 Evictions*, Nat'l Low Income Hous. Coal. & Univ. Ariz. James E. Rogers Coll. L. (Nov. 19, 2020), available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf>

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<sup>5</sup> See Sonya Acosta, “Stable Housing is Foundational to Children’s Well-Being,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Feb. 15 2022), available at: <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/stable-housing-is-foundational-to-childrens-well-being>; Megan Sandel et al., “Housing as a Healthcare Investment,” Children’s Health Watch (Mar. 2016), available at: <https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/Housing-as-a-Health-Care-Investment.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> See Megan Sandel et al., *Unstable Housing and Caregiver and Child Health in Renter Families*, Pediatrics, Vol. 141(2) (February 2018), available at: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article-abstract/141/2/e20172199/38056/Unstable-Housing-and-Caregiver-and-Child-Health-in?redirectedFrom=fulltext>; Abigail Gaylord et al., *Impact of Housing Instability on Child Behavior at Age 7*, Int’l J. Child Hum. Dev. 287 (2018), available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8442946/#R8>; Kimberly Rollings, *Housing and Neighborhood Physical Quality: Children’s Mental Health and Motivation*, 50 J. Env’t Psych. 17 (2017), available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S027249441730004X?via%3Dihub>.

<sup>7</sup> See Mitigating Homeless Children’s Risk for Developmental Delay, Healing Hands: A Publication of the HCH Clinicians’ Network Vol. 13 (2) (April 2009), <https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Apr09HealingHands.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Housing insecurity often involves relocating schools when a family moves or enters shelter, which can be disruptive to a child’s education. This disruption paired with increased stress and food insecurity, means that housing insecure children are less likely to attend school, have a harder time learning when they are there, and reach lower educational attainments. See Brendan Chen, *How Housing Instability Affects Educational Outcomes*, Housing Matters: An Urban Institute Initiative (February 28, 2024), <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-housing-instability-affects-educational-outcomes>; Robert Collinson et al., *The Effects of Eviction on Children*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 33659 (April 2025), available at: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w33659>.

<sup>9</sup> Families and children that experience housing insecurity, especially eviction or homelessness, are more likely to use services like shelter and emergency health care, need educational supports in school, and become involved in the criminal legal system.” See Hannah Chimowitz and Adam Ruege, *The Costs and Harms of Homelessness*, Community Solutions (September 25, 2023), <https://community.solutions/research-posts/the-costs-and-harms-of-homelessness/>; *Stable Homes Make Healthy Families*, Children’s Healthwatch, What If? Series (July 2017), <https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/CHW-Stable-Homes-2-pager-web.pdf>; Susan M. Snyder et al., *Homeless Youth, Strain, and Justice System Involvement: An Application of General Strain Theory*, Children and Youth Services Review Vol. 62 (March 2016), available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740916300251>.

<sup>10</sup> Numerous studies have shown that investments in eviction and homelessness prevention generate larger savings across other budget areas and benefits to communities. See William N. Evans et al., *The Impact of Homelessness Prevention Programs on Homelessness*, 353 Science 694 (August 12, 2016), available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Impact-of-homelessness-prevention.pdf> (Study on temporary financial assistance to those at risk of homelessness in Chicago found average cost of assistance was \$10,300 and average estimated societal benefits was \$20,548); EY, *CommonBond Communities: Social Impact Measurement of CommonBond’s Eviction Prevention Activities*, (Aug. 2018), available at: <https://commonbond.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CommonBond-Social-impact-report-Final.pdf> (Study of eviction prevention programs in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin found that for every \$1 spent on eviction prevention, the states realized an average \$4 social return on investment); Stout, *Cost-Benefit Analysis for Philadelphia Right to Counsel for Low Income Tenants Facing Eviction*, <https://www.stout.com/en/experience/cost-benefit-analysis-for-philadelphia-right-to-counsel> (Study found that the City of Philadelphia would receive a benefit of over \$12 for every \$1 spent on providing legal representation to low-income tenants facing eviction). See also Dan Threet, Mackenzie Pish et al., *Costs of Covid-19 Evictions*, Nat’l Low Income Hous.

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Coal. & Univ. Ariz. James E. Rogers Coll. L. (Nov. 19, 2020), *available at:*

<https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> See Will Fischer, *Research Shows Housing Vouchers Reduce Hardship and Provide Platform for Long-Term Gains Among Children*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (October 7, 2015), <https://www.cbpp.org/research/research-shows-housing-vouchers-reduce-hardship-and-provide-platform-for-long-term-gains> (long-term housing vouchers sharply reduce homelessness, housing instability, shelter stays and lift families above the federal poverty line); Daniel Gubits et al., *Family Options Study: 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families*, Abt Associates and Vanderbilt University (prepared for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development), p. 122-123 (October 2015), <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Family-Options-Study-Full-Report.pdf> (compared to no intervention, rapid re-housing programs, and project-based transitional housing, significantly increased families' housing stability over a three year period, reduced adult psychological distress, reduced school moves, and increased food security); Raj Chetty et al., *The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment*, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 106(4): 855-902, 2016, [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/lkatz/files/chk\\_aer\\_mto\\_0416.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/lkatz/files/chk_aer_mto_0416.pdf) (using a long-term voucher to move to a lower-poverty neighborhood before the age of 13 increases college attendance and earnings in adulthood and reduces single parent rates).

<sup>12</sup> See Meagan Flynn, *They Waited Decades for Housing Aid. Will Changes Finally Bring Relief?*, *The Washington Post* (April 26, 2023), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/04/26/dcha-housing-waiting-list/>.

<sup>13</sup> *FY25 Post-Hearing POH Questions With DHS Responses*, response to Q6, *available at:*

<https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/2243>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> See Department of Human Services, *2025 Performance Oversight Responses*, response to Q110(a), *available at:* <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/DHS-Combined-POH-Responses-3.3.2025.pdf>; District of Columbia Housing Authority, *Public Notice: Emergency Housing Vouchers* (August 5, 2021), <https://www.dchousing.org/wordpress/public-notice-emergency-housing-vouchers/>.

<sup>17</sup> Tushar Gurjal, *HUD Announces End of Funding Timeline for EHV's*, National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) (March 7, 2025), <https://www.nahro.org/news/hud-announces-end-of-funding-timeline-for-ehvs/>.

<sup>18</sup> Remarks by DCHA Interim Executive Director Wickliffe, DC Council Committee on Housing, DCHA Budget Oversight Hearing (April 29, 2026), starting at 4:11, *available at:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tffH6jMITio>.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> In FY25 (the most recent year for which complete data is available), 888 DC families entered shelter and 588 were able to exit shelter to Rapid Re-Housing and 88 exited to a long-term voucher. See Department of Human Services, *2025 Performance Oversight Responses*, response to Q40(d,e), *available at:*

<https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/DHS-Combined-POH-Responses-3.3.2025.pdf>. Under the proposed FY27 budget, which maintains a significant decrease in Rapid Re-Housing capacity first instituted in FY26 and includes no new local vouchers, very few of those 709 families that exited via Rapid Re-Housing or a voucher would have a viable means of exiting shelter. Additionally, DHS reported that it expected to enter at least 444 families in Rapid Re-Housing during FY26. *Id.* at Q44(a). As DHS is operating Rapid Re-Housing with a strict 12-month time limit, we can anticipate that those 444 will be exited from Rapid Re-Housing at some point during FY27 and years of evidence shows that most of them will not be able to independently support market rent when exited. See Makenna Osborn,

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Testimony Before the DC Council Committee on Human Services, Public Hearing: Performance Oversight of the Department of Human Services (March 5, 2025), pp. 2-6, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/DHS-Performance-Oversight-2025-Childrens-Law-Center-Written-Testimony-03.05.2025.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Families that experience eviction and homelessness are more likely to use public services like shelter, the healthcare system, educational supports, and the legal system. Numerous studies have shown that investments in eviction and homelessness prevention generate larger savings across other budget areas and benefits to communities. See William N. Evans et al., *The Impact of Homelessness Prevention Programs on Homelessness*, 353 Science 694 (August 12, 2016), available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Impact-of-homelessness-prevention.pdf> (Study on temporary financial assistance to those at risk of homelessness in Chicago found average cost of assistance was \$10,300 and average estimated societal benefits was \$20,548); EY, *CommonBond Communities: Social Impact Measurement of CommonBond's Eviction Prevention Activities*, (Aug. 2018), available at: <https://commonbond.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CommonBond-Social-impact-report-Final.pdf> (Study of eviction prevention programs in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin found that for every \$1 spent on eviction prevention, the states realized an average \$4 social return on investment); Stout, *Cost-Benefit Analysis for Philadelphia Right to Counsel for Low Income Tenants Facing Eviction*, <https://www.stout.com/en/experience/cost-benefit-analysis-for-philadelphia-right-to-counsel> (Study found that the City of Philadelphia would receive a benefit of over \$12 for every \$1 spend on providing legal representation to low-income tenants facing eviction). See also Dan Threet, Mackenzie Pish et al., *Costs of Covid-19 Evictions*, Nat'l Low Income Hous. Coal. & Univ. Ariz. James E. Rogers Coll.L. (Nov. 19, 2020), available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/costs-of-covid19-evictions.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> FY2024 DHS Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q171, available at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/706>.

<sup>23</sup> FY2025 DHS Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q201, available at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/2104>.

<sup>24</sup> Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Support Act of 2025. SUBTITLE G. TANF BENEFITS.

<sup>25</sup> The agency reported that 7,838 or 50.9% of TANF households are currently at 60 months or more on TANF. Note the agency should also provide how many children are in each of those households. FY2025 DHS Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q209, available at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/2104>.

<sup>26</sup> <https://childrenslawcenter.org/our-impact/systemic-reform/tanf-is-still-a-lifeline/>.

<sup>27</sup> See US Government Accountability Office, *Medicaid Demonstrations: Information on Administrative Spending for Georgia Work Requirements*, (September 3, 2025), available at: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-25-108160.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Department of Human Services, TANF, available at: <https://dhs.dc.gov/service/temporary-cash-assistance-needy-families-tanf>.

<sup>29</sup> Lucie Schmidt, Lara Shore-Sheppard, Tara Watson, "The Effect of Safety Net Programs on Food Insecurity," National Bureau of Economic Research, (October 2013), available at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w19558>; Ali Zane, Cindy Reyes, and LaDonna Pavetti, "TANF can be a critical tool to address family housing instability and homelessness," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, (July 19, 2022), available at: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/income-security/tanf-can-be-a-critical-tool-to-address-family-housing-instability-and>; Chelsea Coffin and Hannah Mason, "Patterns and predictors of chronic absenteeism in D.C.'s middle and high schools," D.C. Policy Center, (October 14, 2025), available at: <https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/patterns-and-predictors-chronic-absenteeism-dc-middle-and-high-schools/>; Kate Coventry, "When Every Dollar Counts: Child Poverty Has Lasting Negative Effects, But Even Small Income Boosts Help," DC Fiscal Policy Institute, (February

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<sup>30</sup> Upcoming Changes to SNAP Benefits, Legal Aid Society, available at: <https://www.legalaiddc.org/legal-info/snap-big-beautiful-bill>; Elizabeth Short, *D.C. is preparing to implement new SNAP work requirements. Here’s what to know*, Street Sense Media, (March 13, 2026), available at: <https://streetsensemedia.org/article/d-c-implements-new-snap-work-requirements/>; Legal Action Center, *The Impacts of HR 1 on Medicaid and SNAP*, (December 2025), available at: <https://www.lac.org/resource/the-impacts-of-hr-1-on-medicaid-snap>.

<sup>31</sup> See Christopher A. Kearney, et al., *School attendance problems and absenteeism as early warning signals: review and implications for health-based protocols and school-based practices*, 8 *Frontiers in Educ.* (August 30, 2023), available at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/educ.2023.1253595/full>.

<sup>32</sup> See DC Department of Human Services, “Truancy Reduction Pilot Program: 2026 Mid-Year Report, Year 2,” (March 2026), p. 19, available at: [https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/page\\_content/attachments/Truancy%20Reduction%20Pilot%20Program%202026%20Mid-Year%20Report.pdf](https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/page_content/attachments/Truancy%20Reduction%20Pilot%20Program%202026%20Mid-Year%20Report.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*, at 24.

<sup>34</sup> See, e.g., OSSE, *District of Columbia Attendance Report: 2022-23 School Year*, supra note 12, Appendix B, p. 38-44, available at: [https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/2022-23%20Attendance%20Report\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/2022-23%20Attendance%20Report_FINAL_0.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> DHS, “Truancy Reduction Pilot Program: 2026 Mid-Year Report, Year 2,” supra note 32, p. 24.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*, at 28.

<sup>38</sup> See DC Code § 38–208.

<sup>39</sup> District of Columbia Office of the Attorney General, “Keeping Kids in School: Connecting Youth with Intervention Services,” available at: <https://oag.dc.gov/public-safety/keeping-kids-school> (last accessed May 5, 2026).

<sup>40</sup> Compare Danielle Robinette, Children’s Law Center, *Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, Public Hearing on Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy*, (Nov. 12, 2024), p. 3, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/testimony-chronic-absenteeism-and-truancy/> with Danielle Robinette, Children’s Law Center, *Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee of the Whole, Public Hearing on B25-0740, B25-0754, B25-0758, and B25-0791*, (June 26, 2024), p. 17-21, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/testimony-public-hearing-on-student-absenteeism-and-discipline/>.