



CONNECTING THE DOTS

Bridging Systems for Better Health



POLICY AND ADVOCACY AT THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS: FEDERAL LANDSCAPE

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HEALTH AND HOUSING ARE INTRINSICALLY LINKED

Why? Because Housing Can:



Reduce over-institutionalization (nursing homes, mental health facilities)



Address overuse of crisis care (emergency rooms, detox, 911)



Stabilize chronic conditions due to homelessness



Correct unsafe or unhealthy housing or neighborhood conditions



Improve mental health



Reduce incidences of alcoholism, drug abuse, family violence

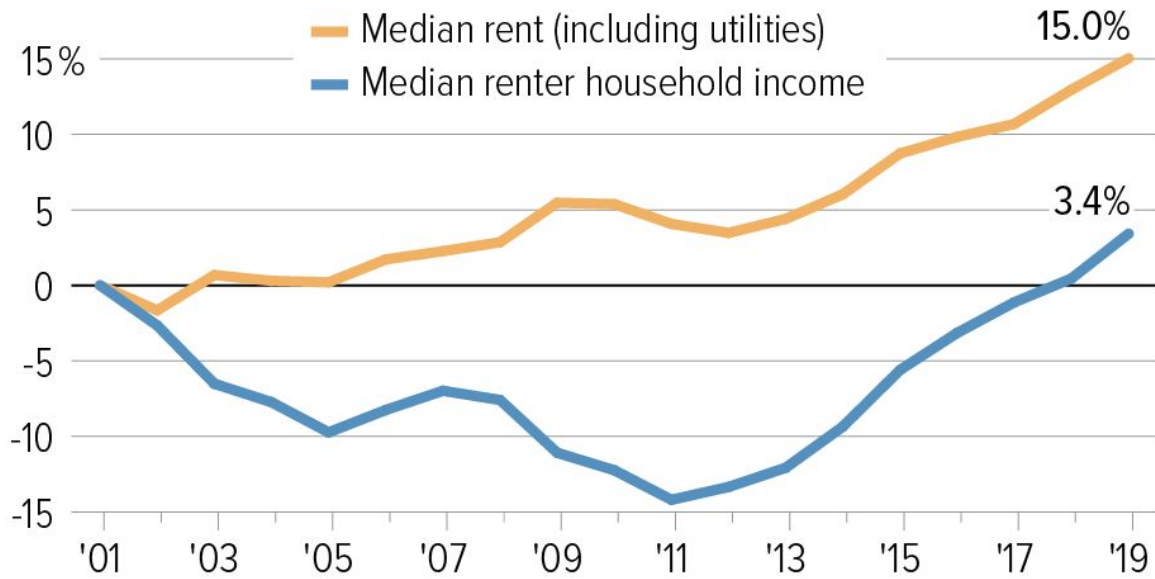


Reduce incarceration

HOUSING IS BECOMING LESS AFFORDABLE

Renters' Incomes Haven't Caught Up to Housing Costs

Percent change since 2001, adjusted for inflation

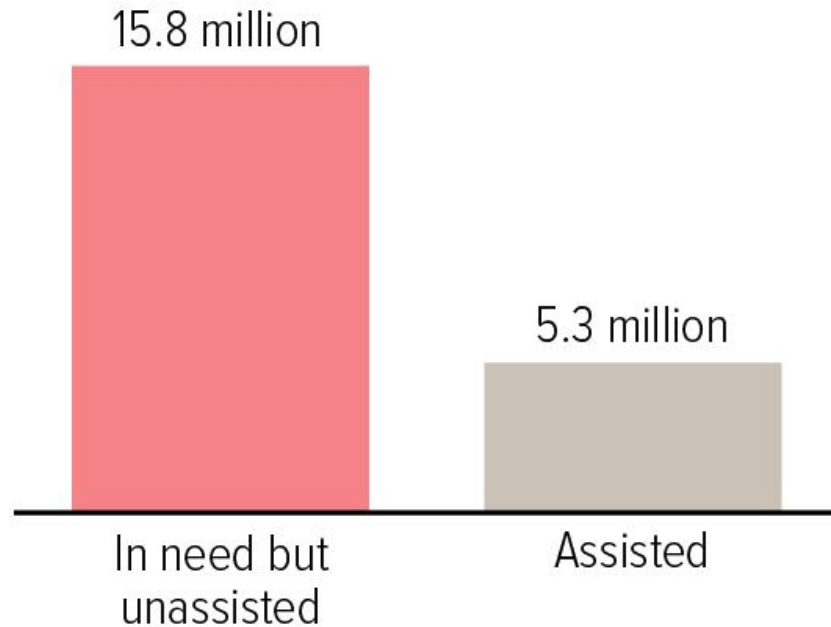


Source: CBPP tabulations of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey

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VAST UNMET NEED FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE

16 Million Households Needing Federal Rental Assistance Do Not Receive It Due to Funding Limits



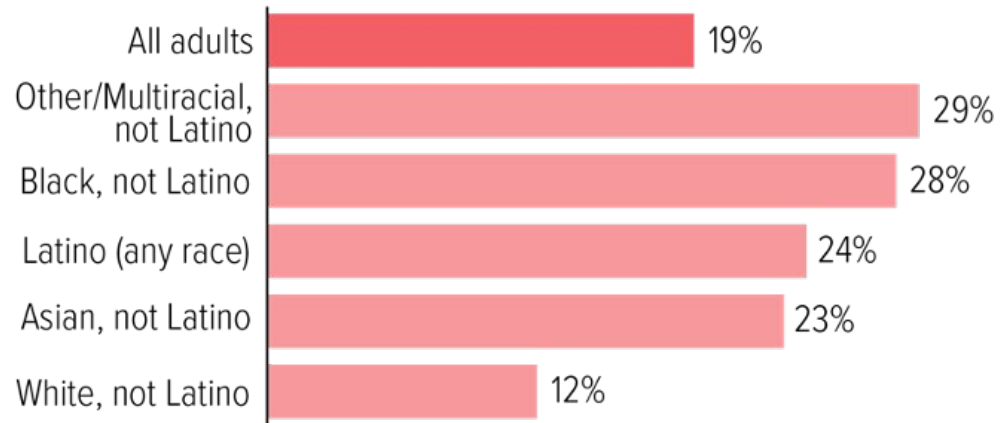
Note: In need = households earning 80 percent or less of the local median household income and paying more than 30 percent of monthly income for housing and/or living in overcrowded or substandard housing.

Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) custom tabulations of 2017 American Housing Survey and CBPP tabulations of HUD and Agriculture Department data.

COVID MAKES MATTERS WORSE

Nearly 1 in 5 Renters Not Caught Up on Rent During Pandemic, With Renters of Color Facing Greatest Hardship

Share of adult renters saying their household is not caught up on rent



Note: Other/Multiracial, not Latino = people identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or more than one race. Chart excludes renters who did not respond to the question.

Source: CBPP analysis of Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey tables for December 9-21, 2020

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CLOSING THE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY GAP: SOME PRINCIPLES

- First help the people with **extremely low incomes**
- Policies should ensure true **affordability**, promote **stability**, provide access to housing that is **healthy and safe**
- Policies should empower renters to live in the **neighborhood of their choice**
- Policies should advance **equity and inclusion**, and reverse the existing patterns of racial inequities and exclusion

SOME ESSENTIAL HOUSING POLICY TOOLS

Rental assistance (e.g., housing vouchers, operating subsidies)

- Fills gap between household income and rents or operating costs, ensuring affordability even for those with little or no income

Capital subsidies (e.g., National Housing Trust Fund, LIHTC, Public Housing Capital Fund)

- Support the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing

FEDERAL POLICY: COVID & ECONOMIC RECOVERY

What Housing Policies and Investments are Already in Place to Respond to COVID-19?

- CDC Eviction moratorium extended through the end of March 2021
- \$25 billion in short-term, emergency rental assistance
- State fiscal relief: many states have used these funds to create short-term rental assistance

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE VEHICLES FOR COVID & ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Opportunities to expand long-term rental assistance

COVID-19 and
Economic “Rescue”
Package

COVID-19 and
Economic
“Recovery” Package

Fiscal Year 2021
Appropriations

WHERE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL POLICY MEET: OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE ACCESS TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST



Easing federal, state and local restrictions on renters with substance use disorders



Easing federal, state and local restrictions on renters with conviction records



Updating federal, state and local policies to ensure people with vouchers can live in the neighborhood of their choice



States leveraging Medicaid to cover housing-related services for people who need supportive housing—Ex: WA and MN

PARTNERSHIP CAN LEAD TO IMPROVEMENTS

- ✓ Improving access to community-based services and treatment
- ✓ Creating easy access to public health services
- ✓ Delivering home-based care (elderly, people with disabilities, people with chronic physical or mental health conditions)
- ✓ Reducing housing and neighborhood environmental hazards
- ✓ Investing in building, renovating, preserving affordable housing
- ✓ Avoiding incarceration

But interventions won't be scaled or reach those with the lowest incomes without a major expansion of rental assistance.

MEDICAID AND SDOH

Medicaid can...

pay for a range of services that help enrollees find or maintain stable housing

Health plans and providers should...

invest in affordable housing development projects while recognizing the need for a communitywide investment in the social determinants of health

partner with state and local agencies and community-based organizations to build stronger connections with other systems

Health care stakeholders must...

advocate for deeper investment in chronically underfunded affordable housing programs

HEALTH AFFAIRS BLOG

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Medicaid Doesn't Pay For Housing. Here's What It Can Do To Help Meet Enrollees' Social Needs

Hannah Katch, Peggy Bailey

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