

Guiding Principles for RTC Implementation



Legislation:

1. **Right to Counsel:** Having legislative language that creates an enforceable right.
2. **Seniors and People with Disabilities Everywhere:** Adding seniors and people with disabilities to the phase in plan, regardless of zip code.
3. **Cover All Types of Proceedings that Lead to Eviction:** Covering any proceeding in which the merits of an eviction case are being determined. *For example, administrative hearings, Article 78 judicial review for termination of tenancy in NYCHA, HPD and NYS HCR buildings; and covering ejectment actions in civil and Supreme Court, and covering court and administrative appeals*
4. **Early Notice & Coverage:** Covering representation at the earliest feasible moment and using a variety of mechanisms for tenants to access representation before going to court. *For example – court postcard and notice of petition should include referral to local legal aid provider. Additional protections for tenants who default.*
5. **Advisory Committee:** Creating an Advisory Committee that can monitor the implementation process, and an ombudsman/woman who can work to troubleshoot, advise, etc. *For example, what process will they use to choose zip codes?*
6. **Community Engagement in Multiple Languages:** Require outreach, education and community engagement in multiple languages that involves neighborhood based groups that can do outreach and education and coordinate materials and engage community members in assessing and providing input on the implementation process.
7. **Sufficient Rate:** Paying sufficient rates so that providers can provide high quality services to clients and develop appropriate models for the provision of high quality services including multi- disciplinary teams (attorneys, paralegals and social workers).
8. **Preserve Current Programs:** Hold current city-funded housing-related legal services harmless and ensure that current funding for existing programs providing affirmative litigation, building-wide work, populations or zip codes currently serviced are not eliminated.

Other Key Advocacy Principles Related to Implementation:

1. **Prioritize Neighborhoods At Risk of Displacement:** Implementation should prioritize neighborhoods with high displacement pressures, looking at indicators such as the number of evictions, the amount of rent stabilized housing and the number of people entering into the shelter system.
2. **Provide Appropriate Space in the Courts:** Work with the courts to ensure that appropriate space is available for RTC practitioners to meet with eligible tenants.
3. **Coordinate With Law Schools:** Coordinate efforts with NY law schools to build a pipeline of qualified, talented and dedicated attorneys.