

ANHD Principles & Priorities for Rent Relief

Core Principles:

- We must address the needs of all of our communities' vulnerable populations. We are all too aware that those most in need of support are often shortchanged, and that several recent federal programs have deliberately excluded undocumented immigrants, who are among the most severely impacted in the current crisis. Any approach to rent relief must center and address the needs of vulnerable and marginalized populations, including undocumented immigrants, those who work or worked in the informal or cash economy, non-English speakers, people without internet access, the unbanked, etc.
- New York's renters live in a broad range of housing – basement apartments, rented rooms, rent stabilized, unregulated, and subsidized apartments, small homes, public housing, etc. In some types of housing, leases are uncommon, and tenants are month-to-month, or not all residents are included on the lease. Renters across this broad range of housing types still need support and relief to avoid eviction and maintain safe and stable housing situations for as many people as possible.
- Our communities include homeowners and limited equity coop shareholders as well as renters. We will not allow different members of our community to be pitted against each other, and we cannot withstand a repeat of the foreclosure crisis, which stripped so many black and brown families of their assets, displaced homeowners and tenants alike, and left our housing market open for predatory investors to swoop in. Any approach to rent relief must address the needs of vulnerable homeowners alongside renters so that all can weather the current crisis and come out prepared to rebuild our communities to be stronger and more equitable.
- We must support existing affordable housing, and the community-based institutions that own and manage it. In many neighborhoods, the only truly – and permanently – affordable housing is owned and managed by non-profit, mission-oriented developers based in and accountable to the local community. These housing providers operate on razor-thin margins, because they maximize the subsidies they receive in order to set rents as low as possible and provide resources and services for their tenants and the broader community. This housing is a public good and precious community resource and must be supported so that affordable housing and the organizations that provide it remain sustainable.

Additional Priorities:

- Resources should first go where they're needed most
- Accessibility is key – we must learn from past experiences and ensure that bureaucratic hurdles do not block relief for those at risk of losing their homes.
- Time is of the essence – we cannot afford an extended time period to create and implement whatever administrative frameworks will be necessary. Tenants,



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homeowners, and non-profit affordable housing providers cannot afford to float the difference between their incomes and their bills.

- Accommodate all family structures – our communities include diverse family structures. As much as possible, a rent relief framework should take into account that family networks are not limited to grandparent-parent-children linear relationship and that the individuals are financially responsible for rents outside of their household.
- Restrict predatory activity – Rent relief could provide aid and resources to those in need during this crisis. However, the availability of financial opportunity is also an opportunity for predatory landlords, overleveraging, and harassment. We cannot allow much needed relief resources to flow to bad actors and leave our communities open to exploitation and displacement.