

# New Yorkers Agree: Expand HAVP

The Housing Access Voucher Program Must Be Renewed and Expanded in the State Budget

SAMUEL STEIN

FEBRUARY 2026

## Introduction

Across New York State, [evictions](#) and [homelessness](#) are persistent problems. More than 8 percent of Bronx households were threatened with eviction filings in 2025. But evictions are not just a New York City problem—Schenectady, Albany, Erie, and Monroe counties all had higher eviction filing rates than the city’s biggest borough, Queens. In 9 New York counties, landlords filed eviction cases for more than 1 in 50 households, and in 27 counties, eviction filing rates were higher in 2025 than they were in 2019.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, as we reported last

year, homelessness rose dramatically across the state in the past decade, with the greatest growth among children in rural regions.

Drawing on responses from 4,000 adults across New York State, our 2025 Annual Survey of Housing and Economic Security adds new insights into housing insecurity around the state, as well as one potent tool to address it: the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP, originally co-sponsored by Senator Brian Kavanagh and Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal).

## Pervasive Homelessness

The Coalition for the Homeless estimates that in New York City, while approximately 100,000 people sleep in homeless shelters each night, more than 200,000 more are doubled or tripled up in overcrowded, informal housing arrangements or living precariously with friends and family (colloquially known as “couch surfing,” though that term is deceptively jovial given these arrangements are frequently unstable and involuntary).<sup>2</sup>

In our 2025 survey, we asked our respondents if they were “temporarily staying with friends or relatives,” “staying

in a shelter,” or “do not currently have a place to live.” Combining these responses together<sup>3</sup>, we find that an alarming **9 percent of Capital District respondents are homeless or housing insecure, as well as 5 percent in New York City and Long Island, and 4 percent in Monroe and Erie counties.** Among low-income respondents—those earning less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level in 2024—the results are even starker, with 19 percent homeless or housing insecure in the Capital District, 12 percent on Long Island, 10 percent in Monroe County and 9 percent in Erie County.

## Overwhelming Support for Expanded Rental Assistance

Ongoing rental assistance helps prevent evictions and facilitate exits from homelessness.<sup>4</sup> In 2025, after five years of advocacy by the Community Service Society and many other anti-poverty and housing organizations, New York State created a pilot “Housing Access Voucher Program,” funded for one year at \$50 million. While advocates and lawmakers requested a \$250 million allocation, which would have immediately [reduced homeless by 12.5 percent](#), the \$50 million pilot program is expected to help house nearly 2,000 households.

Our 2025 survey asked respondents around the state the following question:

“In this year’s budget, the State of New York created a pilot program called the Housing Access Voucher Program. It provides housing vouchers to people who are homeless to help them move into permanent housing and to low-income renters to help them avoid eviction and homelessness. Would you support or oppose expanding this program in next year’s budget?”

The results are clear: New Yorkers support expanding HAVP in the upcoming budget by overwhelming margins.

Among the 3,240 respondents who expressed an opinion, **91 percent said they support expanding HAVP.** Support is strong across regions, income levels, housing types, race and ethnicity, gender, and party affiliation, with the highest levels of support coming from tenants and Black or African American New Yorkers. Support is just as strong in the Capital District as it

		Support	Oppose
	All Respondents	91%	9%
Region	NYC	92%	8%
	Capital District	92%	8%
	Monroe	91%	9%
	Long Island	90%	10%
	Erie	90%	10%
	Westchester	87%	13%
Income level	<200% FPL	92%	8%
	200-400% FPL	93%	7%
	>400% FPL	90%	10%
Housing tenure	Renter	95%	5%
	Owner	89%	11%
Race/Ethnicity	Black or African American	96%	4%
	American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Indigenous	94%	6%
	White	91%	9%
	Hispanic or Latino/Latina	91%	9%
	Middle Eastern or Arab	91%	9%
	Asian	85%	15%
	Other	91%	9%
Gender	Male	91%	9%
	Female	91%	9%
Party Affiliation	Democrat	96%	4%
	Independent	89%	11%
	Republican	87%	13%

is in New York City. **Across all demographic groups examined, no less than 85 percent expressed support for expanding HAVP.**

## Recommendations

Pervasive homelessness and broad support for HAVP expansion across New York underscore the need for greater state-level rental assistance. In the face of rising economic insecurity and significant federal cuts to housing funding, New York needs more state-level tools to prevent displacement and expand access to permanent housing. **In the upcoming budget, the Legislature and the Governor must expand funding for HAVP to \$250 million.**

### ENDNOTES

1. New York State Unified Court System, Division of Technology & Court Research.
2. Coalition for the Homeless. "How Many People Are Homeless In NYC Altogether?" <https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/how-many-total-people-are-homeless-in-nyc/>  
Official homelessness counts, like the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-sponsored "Point In Time" surveys conducted around the country every winter, are essential tools for tracking the most visible forms of homelessness, but they do not capture the number of people living without a home of their own who are not on the streets or in formal shelters.
3. Consistent with prior research, we treat temporary doubling-up as an indicator of housing insecurity that falls outside official homelessness counts. See, for example, Molly K. Richard, Julie Dworkin, Katherine Grace Rule, Suniya Farooqui, Zachary Glendening & Sam Carlson (2022): Quantifying Doubled-Up Homelessness: Presenting a New Measure Using U.S. Census Microdata, Housing Policy Debate, DOI: 10.1080/10511482.2021.1981976. Available at: <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Quantifying-Doubled-Up-Homelessness.pdf>.
4. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Family Options Study: Short- and Long-Term Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families. Available at: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Family-Options-Study-Full-Report.pdf>.

**Survey Methodology:** For more than 20 years, the Community Service Society of New York has surveyed New Yorkers on housing, employment, benefits, finances, and policy views. The 2025 Annual Survey of Housing and Economic Security surveyed 4,000 adults statewide between September 9 and October 2, 2025. Surveys were offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Haitian Creole via online panels, email, phone, and text recruitment. The survey included residents from New York

City (2,000), Long Island (400), Westchester (400), the Capital District (400), Erie County (400), and Monroe County (400). Results were weighted by region to reflect the demographic composition of New York State adults. The margin of error is  $\pm 1.55$  percentage points. Federal poverty level bands were calculated for each responding using their 2024 household income, household size, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2024 poverty guidelines.

For more information, contact Samuel Stein at [sstein@cssny.org](mailto:sstein@cssny.org).