



People's Emergency Center

Nurturing Families, Strengthening Neighborhoods, Driving Change.

Policy
Brief

END HOMELESSNESS – INCREASE VOUCHERS! A RENEWAL OF HOUSING VOUCHERS BY CONGRESS IN 2017 IS NEEDED TO END HOMELESSNESS FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

Housing Vouchers prevent homelessness and housing insecurity while increasing stable and affordable housing. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities¹, an estimated funding amount of \$18.86 billion by Congress will be needed in 2017 to fully renew **Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers** for more than 100,000 families.

However, in December 2016, Congress froze funding for most federal programs until April 28, 2017 in a process called the “Continuing Resolution,” referred to as the CR. This prompted the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to notify agencies in January of a 5 percent reduction of funding for all housing vouchers.

If Congress does not pass a budget and extends the CR until the end of the fiscal year ending September 30, more cuts to the voucher program are expected.

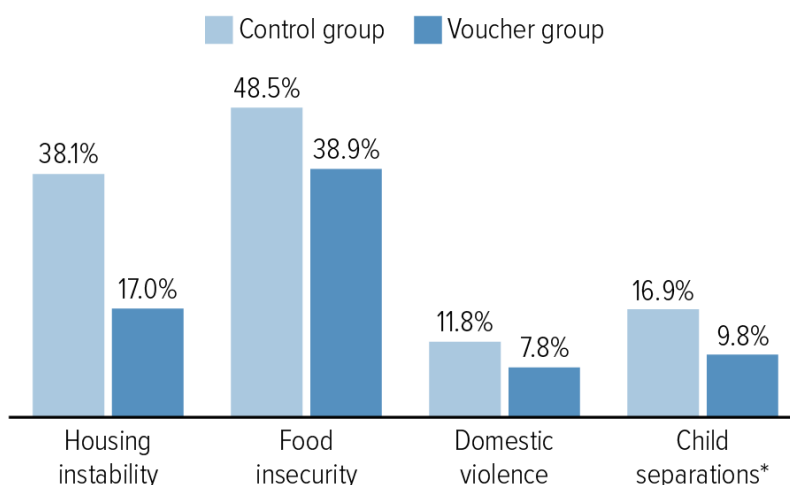
Why are housing vouchers important? Housing vouchers end homelessness and reduce hardship (see graph below). Vouchers are also proven to:

- Reduce food insecurity
- Reduce domestic violence
- Reduce child separations
- Address repeated or long term homelessness
- Protect children from cognitive and mental health problems.

If funding remains the same or is not increased, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities expects:

- Over 25,000 low-income residents will lose their housing vouchers, including more than 1,300 in Pennsylvania
- Housing voucher residents will struggle to pay their rent, especially in neighborhoods with increasing housing values and rents
- Families on waiting lists for housing may not be issued vouchers when other families exit the program.

Vouchers Reduce Hardship for Homeless Families



Note: The control group consisted of homeless families that were not offered vouchers or other assistance under the study.

*These data are the results reported 20 months into the HUD Family Options Study. All the other chart data are from the completed 3 year study.

Food insecurity = Someone in the household had inadequate access to food at some point during the year.

Housing instability = Family reported spending at least one night homeless or doubled up in the past 6 months or stayed in an emergency shelter in the past year.

Source: Gubits *et al.*, "Family Options Study 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families," Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Take Action

Contact your U.S. Senators and urge them *"To end homelessness, there should be a high priority on renewing all housing vouchers by Congress in 2017. Pass the HUD budget supported the House and Senate committees."*

Contact Senator Pat Toomey: <http://www.toomey.senate.gov/?p=contact>

Philadelphia, PA Phone: (215) 241-1090

Washington, D.C. Phone: (202) 224-4254



Contact Senator Bob Casey

<http://www.casey.senate.gov/contact>

Philadelphia: Phone: (215) 405-9660

Washington, D.C. Phone: (202) 224-6324



¹ Center for Budget and Policy Priorities: <http://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/substantial-funding-boost-needed-to-renew-housing-vouchers-in-2017>