



# Housing Authority of Cook County

## NEWS

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Contact: [mbond@thehacc.org](mailto:mbond@thehacc.org)  
(312) 542-4691

### **HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY UPDATES SUBURBAN MAYORS' HOUSING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABOUT HUD BUDGET CUTS**

*Low-Income Families, Homeless, Veterans, Seniors & Disabled at Risk*

**(Cook County)** – Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) Executive Director Richard Monocchio today addressed members of the Suburban Mayors Housing Committee in Oakbrook to discuss the impacts that HUD budget cuts will have on public housing authorities across Illinois. Monocchio was also joined by Bob Palmer, Policy Director for Housing Action Illinois.

Monocchio stated that HUD budget cuts will have an irreversible impact to HACC's affordable and low-income housing communities, rent subsidies, and human service program. He informed the group that the HACC is already implementing cost savings measures within its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

Eighty-five percent of HUD's budget goes to rental assistance, where most of the cuts are targeted. The HACC serves more than 17,000 families which means that more than 800 vouchers will need to be eliminated based on current HUD funding levels. The remaining families with vouchers could also see a 50 percent increase in the rent portion, and/or a reduction in bedroom unit size as a result of the revised payment standards.

A reduction in rental subsidies means that families may pay more rent for fewer bedrooms. For example, a family of three that qualifies for a three bedroom unit would only receive rental assistance for a two bedroom unit.

"The HUD budget blueprint is disastrous to our core mission of housing affordability and accessibility especially when one in four of all renter households who live below the poverty line end up with about \$5 per day left over to spend, after using 70% of their income on rent," said HACC Executive Director Richard Monocchio. "We are now faced with implementing cost savings contingency plans to minimize any disruption so that we can keep families housed. Otherwise, thousands of households will be at risk, and the burden will be even greater," Monocchio said.

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## Add One/ HUD Budget Cuts

The HACC currently has 13,058 vouchers of which 5,900 are families with children. Six-thousand remain on the waiting list and includes seniors, veterans, disabled and homeless. Today Monocchio stated that no vouchers will be issued and the waiting list will remain closed.

The HACC projects it will lose at minimum close to \$8 million from its operational budget. Future development projects will remain in a holding pattern and capital repairs will lag behind. Rents will increase and subsidies will decrease even further with fewer affordable units available.

Eliminating Community Development Block Grants, Low Income Housing Tax Credits and the HOME Investment Partnership diminishes the agency's ability to preserve and rehabilitate existing housing stock that already provides affordable housing to seniors and the disabled. Without the support of these grants and funding formulas, Cook County stands to lose more than 700 units of affordable housing for low-income and extremely low income communities, making it nearly impossible to build and operate rental housing that is affordable.

The HACC will also be forced to eliminate critical human service and workforce training programs that promote resident self-sufficiency. Youth after school programs, childcare services and education opportunities for low-income children and families will also be eliminated.

These funding eliminations are in addition to the reported funding cuts of \$1.3 billion to the Public Housing Capital Fund, \$600 million to the Public Housing Operating Fund, and \$300 million to tenant-based rental assistance vouchers. The Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate will begin to hold hearings and markups on the FY18 budget in the coming months.

Today's meeting was also an opportunity for the group to get involved in advocacy outreach efforts, and to educate their constituents about the challenges ahead.

The Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA) has been instrumental in putting together an ad-hoc coalition of housing and community development stakeholders, city lobbyists and advocates to jointly push back against the draconian funding cuts and program eliminations. The coalition will be making its case with Congress.

For more information about the Housing Authority of Cook County, please visit us at [www.thehacc.org](http://www.thehacc.org); [www.facebook.com/theHACC](https://www.facebook.com/theHACC) or [www.twitter.com/theHACCtweets](https://www.twitter.com/theHACCtweets).