PROGRAM DETAILS

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP): ERAP provides financial assistance to people facing eviction, but the program quickly runs out of money every year, leaving thousands at risk of eviction.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): PSH provides housing and supportive services to people facing chronic homelessness. PSH provides housing stability and helps people manage other challenges, like mental health treatment and substance use disorder.

Rapid Re-Housing Reform Act: Rapid Re-housing (RRH) provides transitional housing for people facing homelessness but is badly flawed, and it expects participants to afford DC's high rents on their own within 2 years. The DC Council has introduced legislation to reform RRH, including preventing participants from being terminated if they don't have an affordable housing option.

Strengthen Rent Control: Rent control helps keep people in their homes but DC's program has many limitations, including that it only applies to buildings built before 1976 and allows rents to rise faster than inflation. Rent control should be extended to more buildings and DC should limit exceptions that allow large rent increases.

DC's Local Rent Supplement Program: LRSP provides vouchers so that tenants pay just 30% of their income for rent, making it the best affordable housing tool for people with extremely low incomes. A 2006 DC task force recommended 1,000 new vouchers per year, but the average has been 400, and even less than that in recent years.

Give SNAP a Raise Act: SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly food stamps) is in many ways the best food assistance program, but the benefit levels are too low and leave many with an empty fridge long before the end of the month. The DC Council passed legislation in 2022 to raise SNAP benefits by 10%, but it will need new funding to be in effect in 2024.

No Senior Hungry Act: The District passed legislation in 2022 to support seniors by requiring a citywide senior nutrition plan, improving food services at the Department of Aging and Community Services, easing application processes for food programs and more. But the bill has not been funded.

DC Child Tax Credit: Child poverty fell dramatically in 2021 thanks to a substantial expansion of the federal child tax credit. But that expired in 2022. DC should create its own Child Tax Credit modeled on the federal credit (but probably at a lower level). A bill to create a $500 child tax credit has been proposed but not adopted.

Help Families Exit TANF by Addressing the "Benefits Cliff": DC's TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) program provides around $750 a month for a family of 3, and benefits phase out entirely once a parent earns just $2,100 a month. This "benefits cliff" can discourage parents from looking for work or increasing their work hours. DC should delay any reduction in benefits for a year after someone finds a job and then phase out benefits slowly.

The Child Care Pay Equity Fund: The Pay Equity Fund, created in 2022, provides a salary boost of $10,000 or more to child care teachers as part of a long-term effort to ensure that child care staff are compensated on par with K-12 teachers. But the Pay Equity Fund does not provide a larger salary to experienced educators, nor does it include any other staff beyond teachers. These limits should be addressed.

Subsidized Jobs as a Transition to Living-Wage Work: Better access to living-wage jobs is a critical element of helping residents achieve economic security. Programs that place people into jobs offer a real work experience, provide needed income, and encourage employers to give workers a chance to get a foothold in the job market.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: CBT helps people recognize triggers for self-destructive behavior and offers techniques for responding differently. Culturally sensitive CBT, led by trusted community partners, can help disrupt the cycle of violence by helping people traumatized by violence in their communities and in their lives.