

Resolution on
Housing Insecurity (Stress) and Court System Burdens
for Tenants in CB9, NYC

Whereas, housing insecurity remains a pervasive and escalating concern among residents within Community Board 9, New York City, leading to substantial mental stress and undermining the stability of the community;

Whereas, numerous tenants grapple the daunting challenge of navigating complex legal systems, often without adequate resources or knowledge, exacerbating their mental stress and sense of vulnerability;

Whereas, the requirement for multiple, repetitive court appearances places an undue burden on tenants, compounding their mental stress and often resulting in missed work, financial strain, and disruption of family life;

Whereas, the mental stress induced by housing insecurity and protracted legal processes can disproportionately lead to enduring psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, and a sense of hopelessness among affected tenants;

Whereas, children and families, particularly those in vulnerable socioeconomic positions, are disproportionately impacted by the mental stress and instability caused by housing insecurity and related legal challenges;

Whereas, the extended duration of court proceedings often orchestrated by landlords serves to further intimidate and mentally stress tenants, dissuading them from pursuing rightful claims and justice;

Whereas, the lack of sufficient legal and emotional support services for tenants exacerbates their mental stress, leaving them to face complex legal battles and housing insecurity without adequate assistance;

Whereas, the current legal framework and housing policies inadequately address the escalating mental stress and challenges faced by tenants, necessitating immediate and compassionate action;

Now, therefore,

Be it Resolved that Community Board 9 urgently call for the measures outlined previously, with a heightened focus on mitigating the mental stress experienced by tenants and providing robust support systems to navigate housing insecurity and legal challenges.

Be It Resolved, that Community Board 9 supports and urgently calls for the full funding of Right to Counsel in Housing Court and the placement of Human Resources Administration representatives in every courthouse to facilitate housing program payments on behalf of tenants.

This resolution reaffirms the commitment of Community Board 9 to the mental well-being and stability of its residents, recognizing the critical need to address housing insecurity and the associated mental stress with urgency and empathy.

ADDENDUM

User Cases

Tenant Facing Eviction and Legal Battles:

- Scenario: Marianne, a single mother of two, is facing eviction due to unforeseen financial challenges. She lacks knowledge of legal procedures and struggles to find affordable legal representation. The resolution can provide her with the support needed to navigate the legal system, easing her mental stress and ensuring a fair resolution.

Low-Income Family in Need of Affordable Housing:

- Scenario: The Diallo family newly immigrant from West Africa, with three children, is currently living in overcrowded conditions due to the lack of affordable housing options. They find it challenging to understand the available resources and navigate the complex application processes for affordable housing programs. The resolution can advocate for improved access to information and streamlined processes, reducing the mental stress on families like the Rodriguezes.

Elderly Tenant Facing Housing Insecurity:

- Scenario: Hobart Johnson of Hamilton Heights. He has been experiencing long Covid symptoms. He is an elderly resident on a fixed income and is experiencing housing insecurity as his rent increases. He is unfamiliar with tenant rights and feels overwhelmed by the prospect of potential eviction. The resolution can address the specific needs of elderly tenants, advocating for targeted support services and policies to protect vulnerable individuals like Mr. Johnson.

User Personas

Tenant Advocate - Sarah Thompson:

- Background: Sarah is a community organizer with a passion for social justice. She works tirelessly to support tenants' rights and advocates for fair housing policies.
- Needs: Sarah requires clear and actionable resolutions to present to local authorities. She needs data and evidence to support her advocacy efforts and ensure the best outcomes for tenants in the community.

Legal Aid Attorney - David Patel:

- Background: David is a legal aid attorney dedicated to assisting low-income individuals with housing issues. He juggles multiple cases and needs efficient ways to navigate the legal system on behalf of his clients.
- Needs: David requires legal reforms that simplify the court process and alleviate the burden on tenants. Accessible resources and support systems can enhance his ability to provide effective legal representation.

Community Board Representative - Alex Jones:

- Background: Alex is a representative of Community Board 9, responsible for understanding and addressing the needs of the community. They need to ensure that the resolution aligns with the community's values and can be effectively communicated to residents.
- Needs: Alex requires a resolution that is comprehensive, empathetic, and practical. It should resonate with the diverse needs of the community and provide a clear path for implementation and communication.