Inspiring Faith

Homelessness Prevention: What We Know

July 1, 2025
2 pm – 3:15 pm.

Inspiring Faith

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Homelessness Prevention: What We Know

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Universal: Stop Generating Homelessness

Facts

- Rent is best predictor of homeless rates
- 8.5 million households with "worst case housing needs" up 70% between 2001 and 2021
- One in four eligible households receives a subsidy

Actions (as voting citizens)

- Increase supply of low-income housing
- Augment incomes
- Enforce Fair Housing laws
- Prohibit "source of income" discrimination

Upstream: Eviction Prevention

Evictions are disruptive, and make it hard to rent a new unit

BUT

Most people who get evicted do not become homeless
(Chicago study: reduced from 2% to 0.5%)

Many who become homeless have never had a place of their own

Upstream: Eviction Prevention

So continue eviction prevention

BUT

- Forget worthiness
- Look for higher risk groups
  - People at higher risk
  - Communities/landlords that generate more homelessness

Community vulnerability is one path to racial equity

Where Households Stay Before Entering Shelter

	Adult Only	Family	Youth < 25
Rent or own	13.1	20.3	5.4
Doubled	43.2	61.0	66.1
Incarcerated	11.6	0.6	9.2
Medical	18.5	2.1	8.6
Hotel	9.3	15.7	5.6
Foster Care			4.2

2022 AHAR Part 2. Excludes people already homeless, missing data

Other Upstream Programs

	Adult Only	Family	Youth < 25
Rent or own	13.1	20.3	5.4
Doubled up	43.2	61.0	66.1
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Medical	18.5	2.1	8.6
Hotel	9.3	15.7	5.6
Foster care			4.2

Other Upstream Programs

Population	Prevention target
Families	Work with schools/ communities to identify families who are: - Doubled up - Living in hotels
Adults and youth	Work with prisons/jails and medical facilities to create paths to housing
Youth	Additionally work with foster care system to create paths to housing

Identify People on the Brink

- Assess applicants for risk (e.g., NYC's HomeBase, Santa Clara Homeless Prevention System)
  - Use data, not hunches
  - Look for racial equity

- Use administrative records to identify people at high risk (e.g., LA's Homelessness Prevention Unit)
  - Need to find them and enroll them

- Combine either approach with community risk

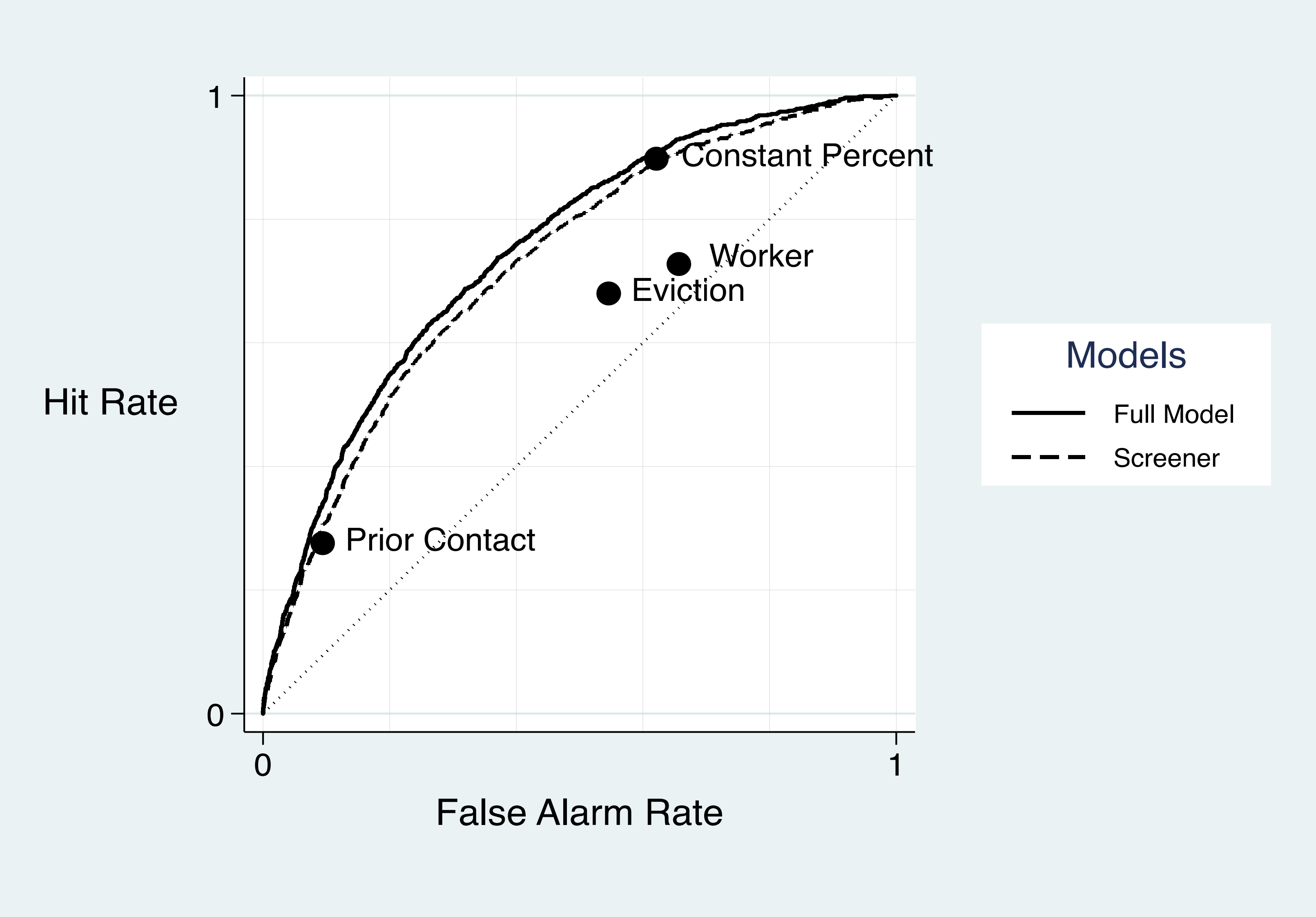
Models for Individual Risk

Trade off between:

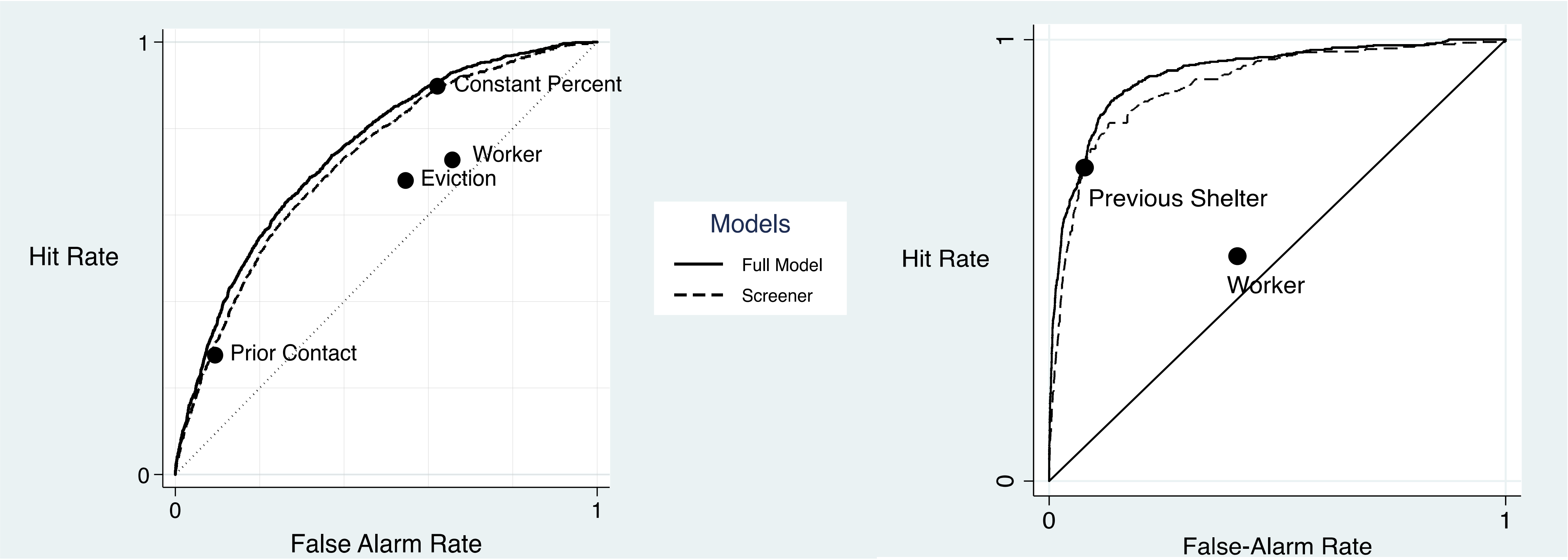
- ***hit rate*:** correct identification of risk
- ***false alarm rate*:** mistaken identification of someone as at risk

New York City Families

Sample Graph of Hit Rate vs. False Alarm rate for Families



NYC Families vs. Adults



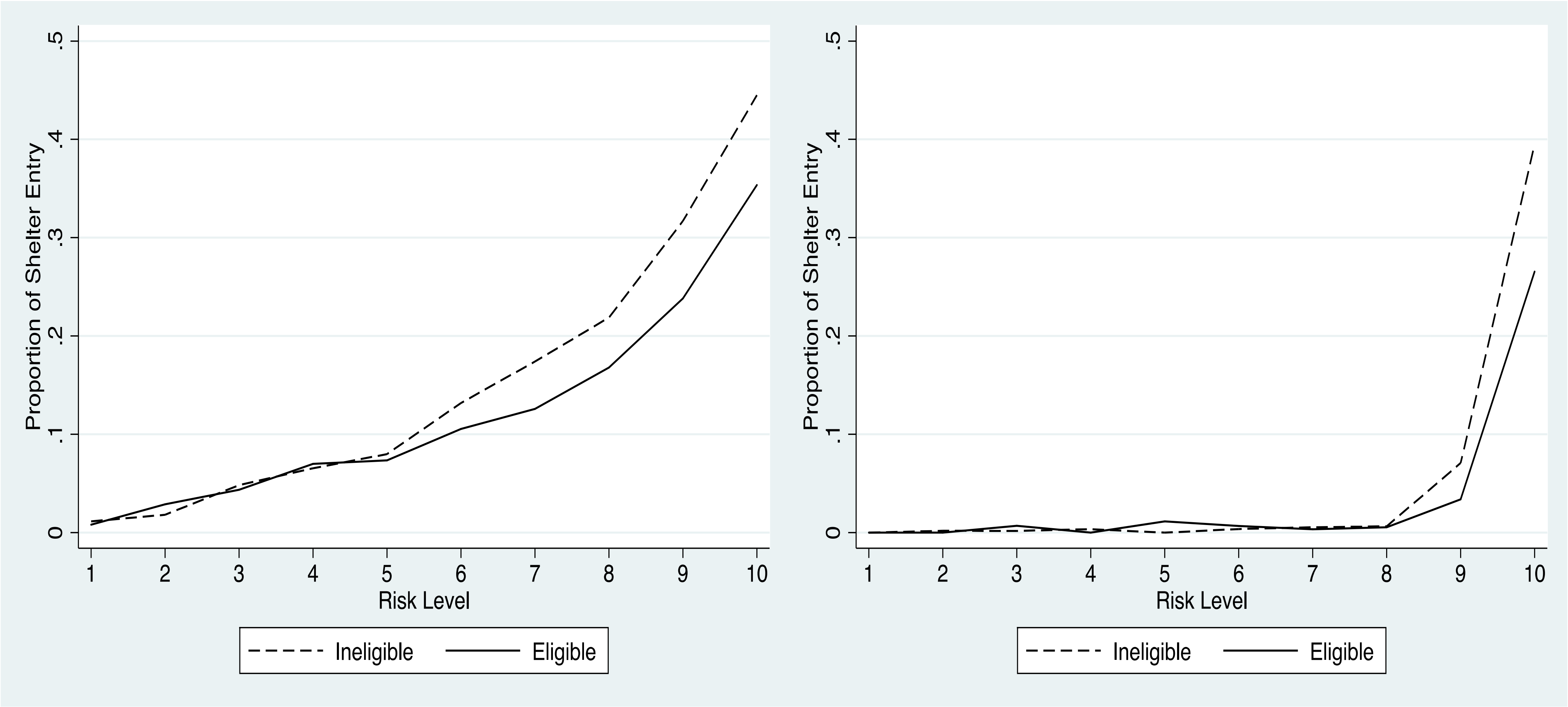
Families

Adults

What threshold of risk?

- Costs and resources
  - If cheap, offer services to more people
- Difficulty locating
  - Might want to go after the highest risk folks
- Shape of the model/ risk profiles

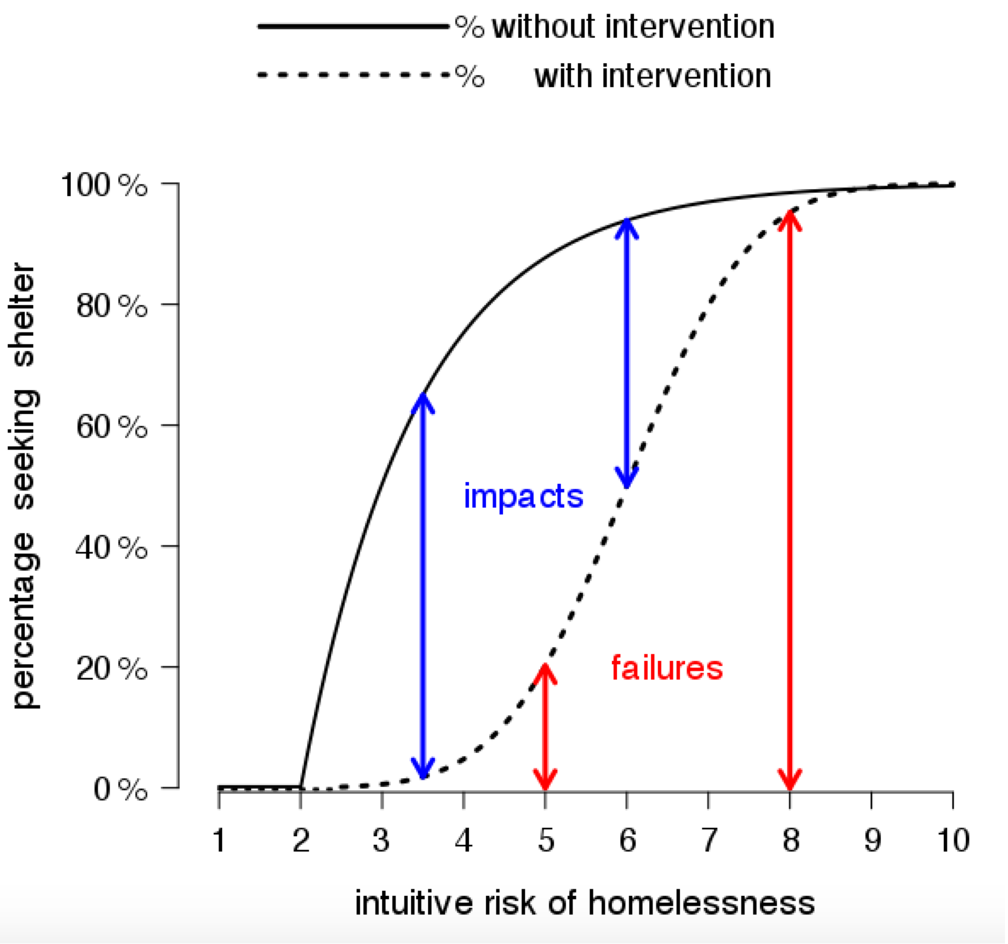
Different Profiles of Risk



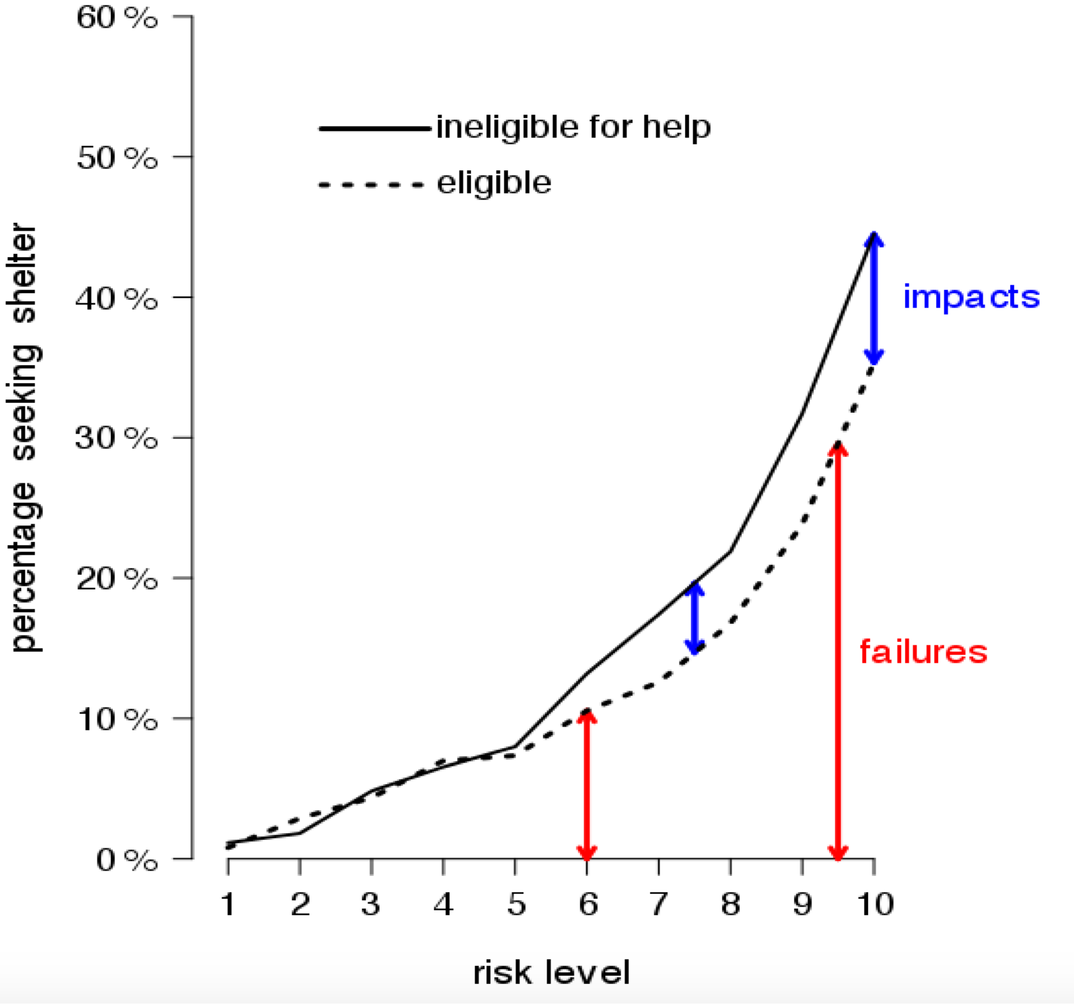
Families

Adults

Myth of Triage



Actual Data



Highest Risk → Highest Benefit

- Cash help for eviction – effects largest for households in bottom half of the income distribution
- Housing vouchers for welfare families – effects largest for households whose head was unemployed or whose TANF was running out
- NYC's Homebase prevention – largest effects for households who scored highest on a risk inventory

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Department of Social Services

2025 NAEH Conference-

Can We Prevent Homelessness?

New York City- Context

- New York City population approximately 8.5 million people
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
  - Human Resources Administration (HRA)
    - Administers 15 major public assistance programs- cash assistance, SNAP, child support, Universal Access/Right to Counsel, etc.
    - **Homebase, homelessness prevention services- contracted by HRA**
  - Department of Homeless services (DHS)
    - Provides temporary shelter and supports transition to permanent housing, addresses street homelessness, supports homelessness prevention
    - About 85,000 individuals in shelter (daily avg across single adult, adult family, families with children)

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NYC Scope of Services HRA/DSS

- The New York City Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (HRA/DSS) is dedicated to fighting poverty and inequality by provider New Yorkers in need with essential benefits

- HRA connects over 3 million New Yorkers to a variety of benefits and services designed to meet their social service and economic needs. HRA is committed to serving all New Yorkers regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, language proficiency or disability status.

- HRA provides free language services in 23 languages as well as ASL.

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Core Benefits and Programs:

- Cash Assistance
- Employment Services
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medical Insurance
- Child Support Services
- Homelessness Prevention And Services
- Home Energy Assistance Program
- Fair Fares

Assistance for the Most Vulnerable New Yorkers:

- IDNYC
- HIV/AIDS Services Administration
- Home Care Services
- Adult Protective Services
- Domestic Violence Services
- Community Food Connection
- Burial Assistance

Challenges to Prevention

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Targeting- precise targeting would be ideal	Who is at most risk of homelessness? Are services addressing those populations?
Scale- resources to serve all with need and risk	Are resources allocated effectively? Does data provide the necessary information and is it used to target resources? How can “prevention” be applied even further upstream?

DSS Homelessness prevention

- **EMERGENCY RENT ARREARS:** DSS/HRA has provided emergency rent arrears benefits to an average of nearly **56K** households annually, helping rent-burdened New Yorkers at risk of eviction stay in their homes.
- **OFFICE OF CIVIL JUSTICE** – oversees the City's civil legal services programs including Universal Access (free legal services, established by Local Law, provided to any City resident facing eviction, regardless of income or immigration status). Since 2014, OCJ has provided legal services ranging from brief advice to full representation in over **356K** cases made up of an estimated **858K** New Yorkers.
- **HOMEBASE** – HRA contracts with non-profit providers for homelessness preventions services to assist households in the community to avoid shelter entry. Homebase serves 30,000 households annually. The programs support households in the community enroll for rental assistance and provides as-needed aftercare support for households receiving HRA subsidies. Over 95% of families enrolled in homebase avoid shelter entry in the next year.
- **DIVERSION AT DHS SHELTER INTAKE** – DHS combines numerous strategies to help prevent families and individuals who apply from needing shelter. This includes helping identify short-term housing options, mediating prior housing situations, travel assistance, or a referral for a CityFHEPS shopping letter.

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Homebase homelessness prevention services

NYC initiative to address highest risk of shelter entry

Implemented to target resources to avoid shelter entry

Provide support to households after shelter exit to maintain stability in community

Historical context – discussion in CAMBA presentation

HRA contracts with 7 community-based providers who operated 26 locations across the 5 boroughs of NYC-Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island. Annual budget for all Homebase contracts is $62 million

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Data and Research

- Data informed development of homebase programming and specifically the Risk Assessment (RAQ) tool used to assess risk of shelter entry.
- RAQ score informs eligibility for homebase services.
- 2013 evaluation of Homebase services noted that this intervention reduced shelter applications in half.
  - Shelter entries in communities with a homebase office had lower rates of shelter entry
  - Demonstrated reduced cost, savings of $1.37 for each dollar invested (city tax levy).
  - 2020 follow up evaluation conducted by DSS found similar results.

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Homebase Services

Homebase providers have direct access to HRA to assist clients who have benefit related issues

Coordinate mediation with other household members/primary tenant

Mediation with landlords

Resource support- flexible funding ($4.5 million FY’24) to address presenting needs (furniture, rent/utility arrears, gift cards, transportation, etc.)

Long-term planning- financial education, assessment for increase to income

Rental Assistance

Continuum of Homebase services

- Eviction prevention
- Short term emergency funding
- Assistance obtaining and maintaining public benefits
- Financial counseling
- Landlord and Family mediation
- Employment services/referrals
- Linkages to community resources
- Apartment search assistance
- Rental assistance (eligibility, application, and renewal)

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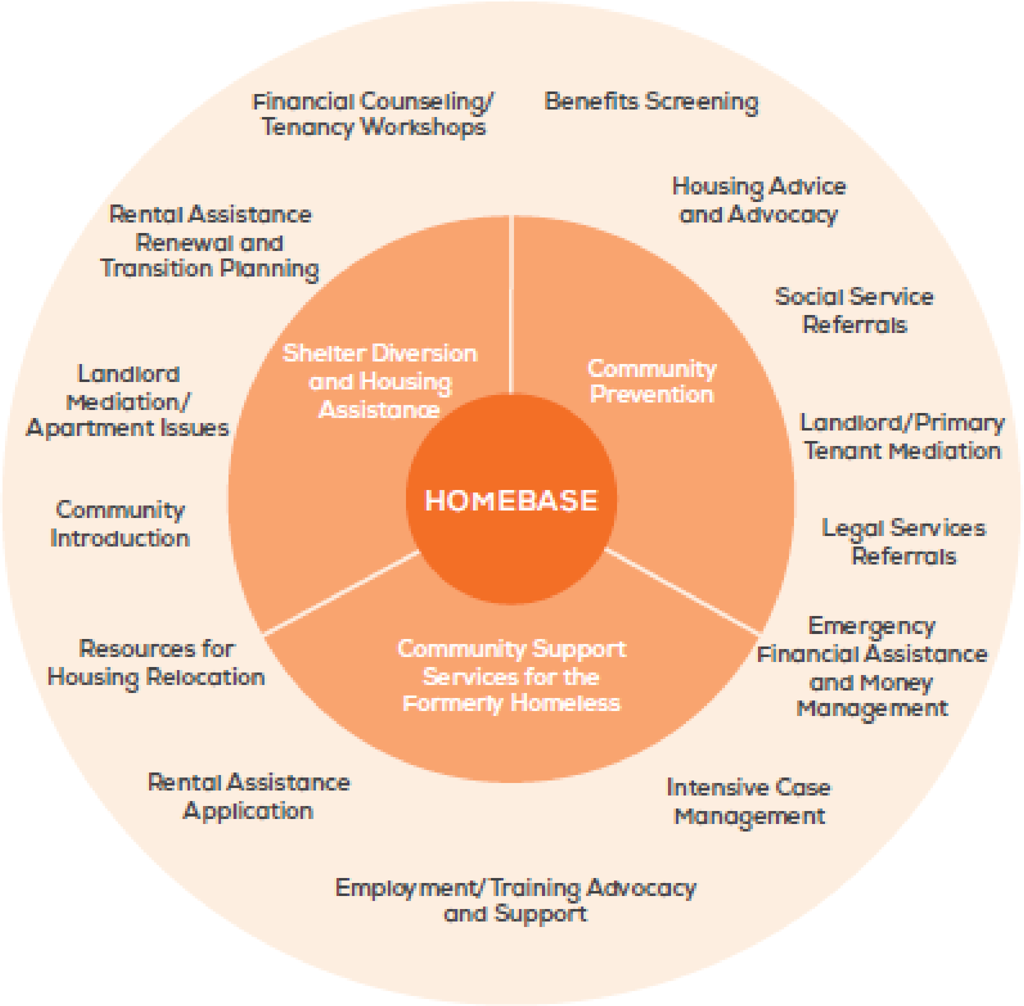
Homebase Prevention Services

SCOPE OF HOMEBASE PREVENTION SERVICES



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Homebase Eligibility

- Homebase serves families with children, adult single/families.
- All households are assessed for eligibility based on program requirements.
  - Income /Benefits
  - Risk of homelessness (RAQ)

- ***Community Prevention***
  - *The household's total income must be at or below income threshold based on household type. FWC- 200% FPL; Adult Households- 30% AMI*
  - *Households that meet criteria for community subsidy can be enrolled by Homebase.*
- ***Aftercare***
  - *All households eligible if exited from DHS Shelter with rental assistance subsidy or other subsidized housing (NYCHA, Section 8, etc) or community resident with rental assistance subsidy.*

Cross system coordination

- **Department of Corrections**
  - Homebase staff at Rikers Island (NYC jail complex) to support discharge planning
- **Public Housing- NYCHA**
  - Homebase aftercare support for social service referrals
- **Community Health Centers/hospitals**
  - Referrals to Homebase for support services and workshops
- **HRA staff consultants on site/virtual to support the Homebase offices**
  - Assist with rental arrears requests
  - Trouble-shoot benefits issues and start applications
- **Collaboration with Administration for Children's Services (ACS)**
  - Increase the knowledge of HRA and Homebase services among ACS preventive service providers (PPRS) and Homebase staff
  - Subsidy eligibility for young people exiting out-of-home care to permanency
  - Improve coordination across programs to ensure that households with housing instability are linked to Homebase services

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NYC Continuum of rental assistance

FHEPS- fighting homelessness and eviction prevention supplement

- City/State funded
- 14k households active with subsidy

CityFHEPS- funded via city tax levy dollars

- 56,870 households active with subsidy
  - 17k originated from community
  - 40 k originated from shelter

EHV- HRA allocation via state/city

Initiatives and programming

- Shelter intake diversion
  - DSS initiated a special diversion program for families with children presenting at DHS intake. If they have a community resource, i.e. “double up”, referral to homebase for assessment to support the double-up, including potential rental assistance subsidy.
  - Diversion at Homebase
    - Similar to the DHS shelter diversion- at the Staten Island CAMBA homebase the program can assess a household for the diversion to provide the subsidy letter without necessity to present at DHS intake.

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Thank you!

Questions?

FOLLOWING THE DATA: HomeBase's 20+ Years of Targeting Families & Singles at Risk of Homelessness

Evolution of Predictive Targeting Methods (2004-2025)

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https://www.camba.org/homebase

www.CAMBAHomeBase.org

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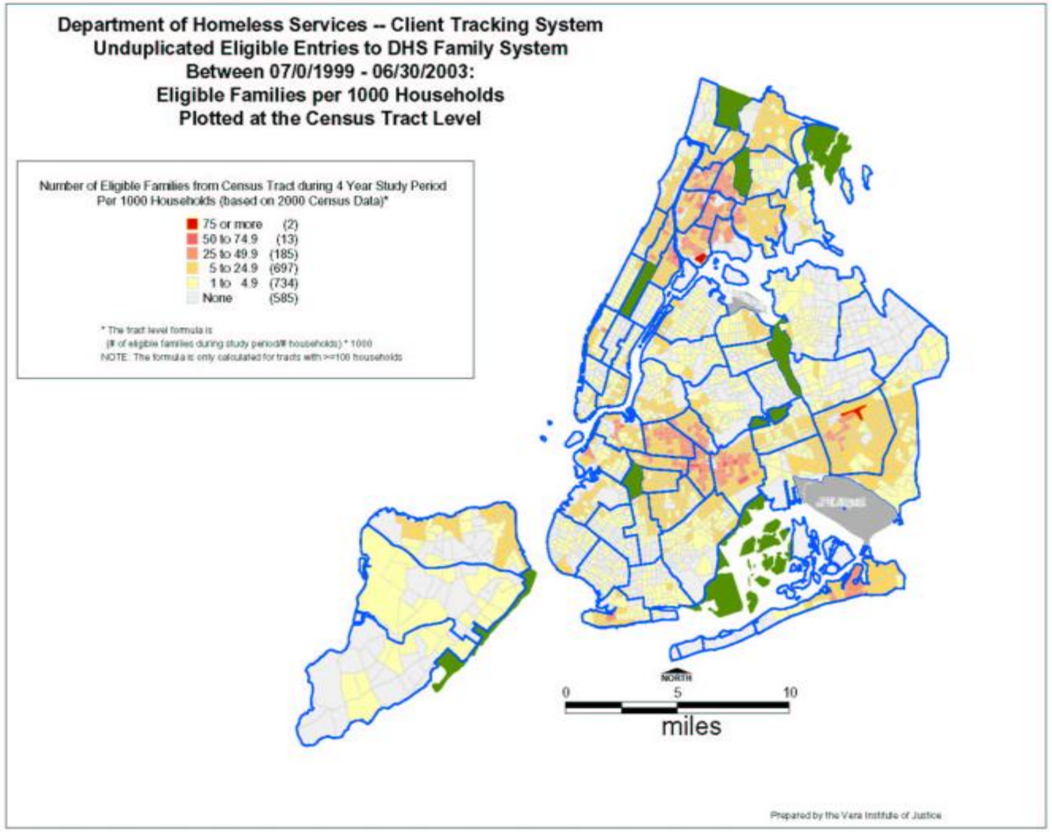
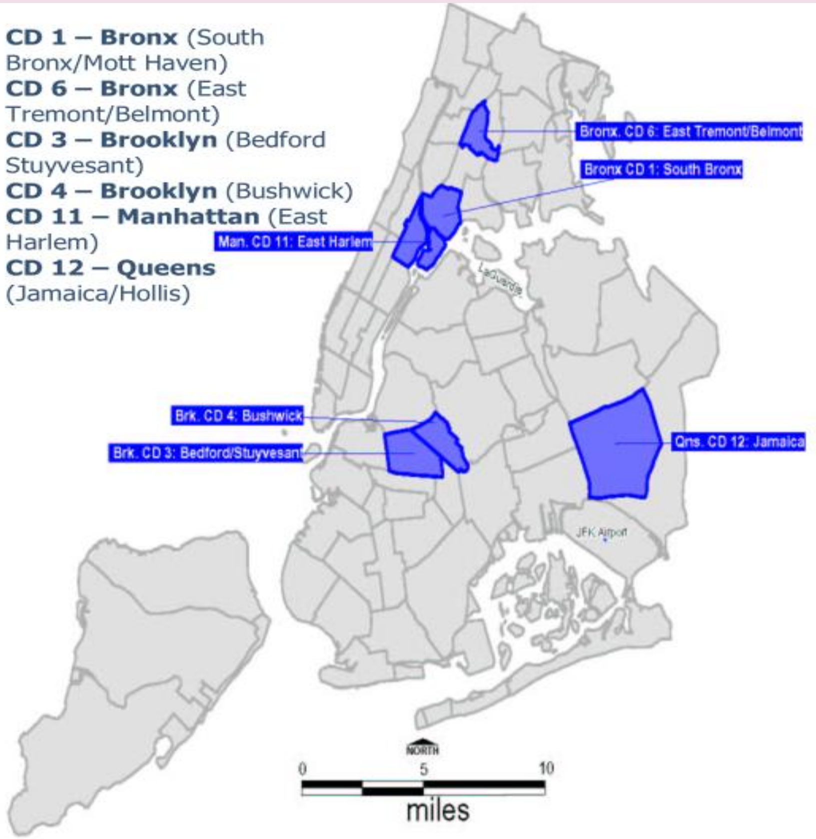
Early Eligibility

- ✓ Families with children
- ✓ Basic Income requirements 200% FPL
- ✓ Crisis based referrals



CD 1 – Bronx (South Bronx/Mott Haven)
CD 6 – Bronx (East Tremont/Belmont)
CD 3 – Brooklyn (Bedford Stuyvesant)
CD 4 – Brooklyn (Bushwick)
CD 11 – Manhattan (East Harlem)
CD 12 – Queens (Jamaica/Hollis)



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PREVENTION ASSISTANCE TEMPORARY HOUSING (PATH) INREACH

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES PAGE: 1
HOMELESS FAMILY EMERGENCY SHELTER SYSTEM 07/07/2006 09:28

INTAKE CENTER ARRIVALS
Referral Date: 07/06/2006
Referral Source: All Intake Center
Sorted By: Prevention Community Districts (111,201,206,303,304,412)

Case #	Soc Sec #	Birth Date	Fam Comp	Org CD	Intake Center	Actual Arrv Date/Time
1234567891		06/29/1983	1/1	111	PATH	07/06 18:47
1234567891		03/05/1975	1/0	111	PATH	07/06 23:03
1234567891		01/27/1987	1/1	111	PATH	07/06 17:57
1234567891		05/14/1983	2/1	111	PATH	07/06 19:13
1234567891		10/09/1986	2/1	111	PATH	07/06 17:19
1234567891		11/11/1964	1/2	111	PreApp	07/06 20:29
1234567891		09/30/1984	1/1	111	PATH	07/06 14:04
1234567891		04/21/1983	1/1	111	PATH	07/06 11:17
1234567891		03/14/1977	2/0	201	PATH	07/06 14:51
1234567891		10/17/1961	2/0	206	AFIC	07/06 13:39
1234567891		04/05/1973	1/3	206	PATH	07/06 09:13
1234567891		12/27/1977	2/3	206	PreApp	07/06 20:15
1234567891		03/11/1985	1/0	206	PATH	07/06 17:20
1234567891		03/23/1987	2/1	303	PATH	07/06 16:56
1234567891		11/12/1987	1/3	303	PreApp	07/06 19:15
1234567891		04/11/1981	1/1	303	PATH	07/06 18:20

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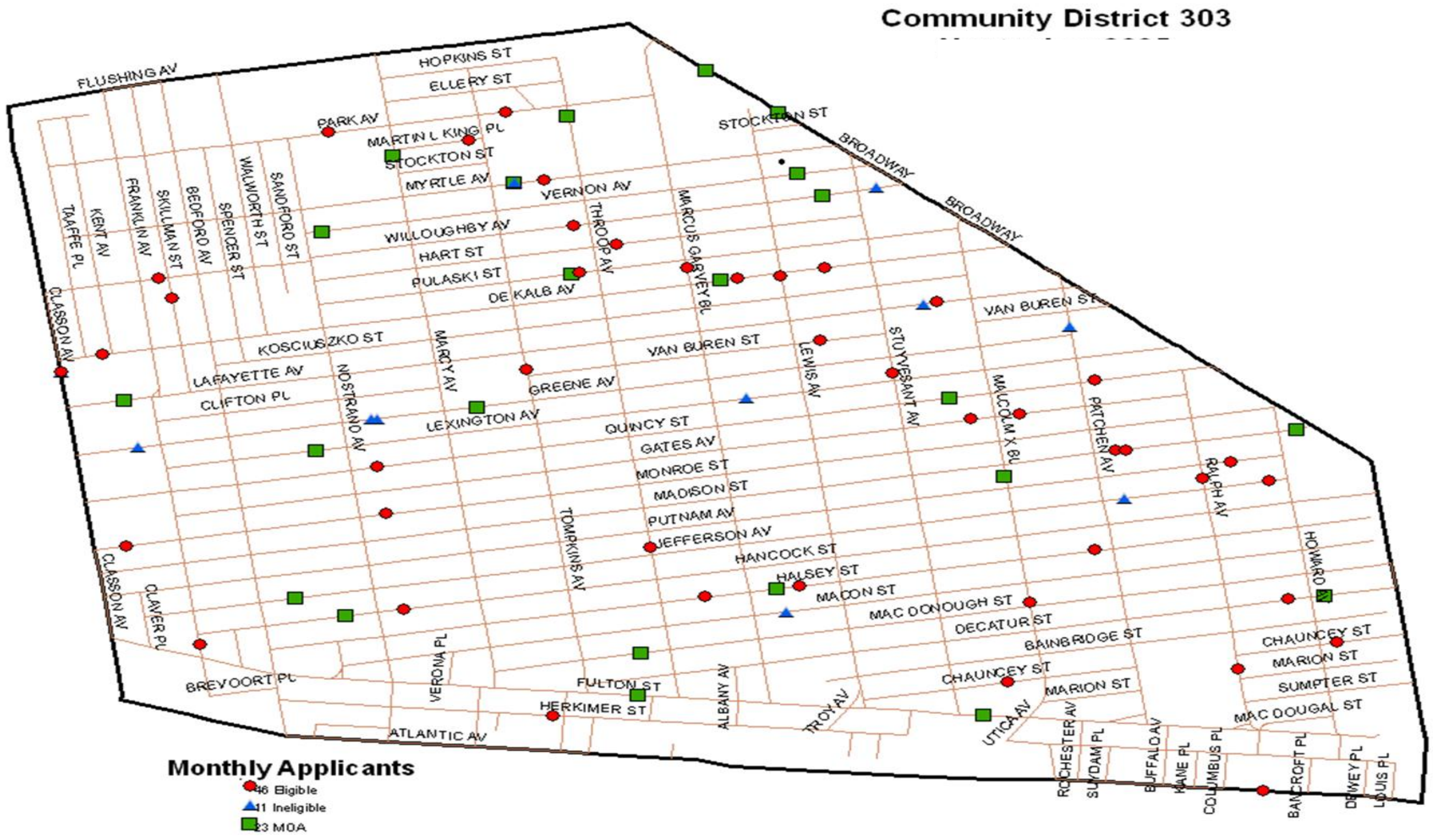

Early Model

Recognition

Growth Metrics- $10 Million funding boost, expanded to 9 locations serve 3000 families

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American Recovery & Reinvestment Act 2009

51.5 million

New Targeting Strategy

- Diversion services at shelter entry
- 311 Directly linked to HomeBase
- Increased capacity by thousands

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The Game Changing Study 2010-2014

- **Conducted by:** Abt Associates in partnership with the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia
- **Commissioned by:** New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS)
- **Study Period:** Enrollment occurred in **2010–2012**, with follow-up through 2013
- **Evaluation Type:** Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)
- **Sites:** 11 HomeBase service areas across NYC
- **Sample Size:** Over **5,000 families** screened; about **2,400 enrolled** in the study and randomly assigned to treatment or control groups

Key results in large numbers:

- 22.6 fewer shelter nights per family
- 8.9% reduction in shelter entry
- $1.06 saved per $1 invested
- Faster shelter exits 120 vs 233 nights

Scale Achievement: 14,300 households annually
Evidence badge: Scientifically Proven Effective

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Targeting Expansion and Refinement 2014-2017

- Continue Scaling up $46 Million/24 locations
- Eligibility Expanding
  - ✓Single Adults and Adult Families
  - ✓30% Area Median Income Adults and Adult families
  - ✓200% Federal Poverty Level Families with Children
  - ✓Post shelter/Institution Discharge Targeting
  - ✓System-wide coordination with data integration

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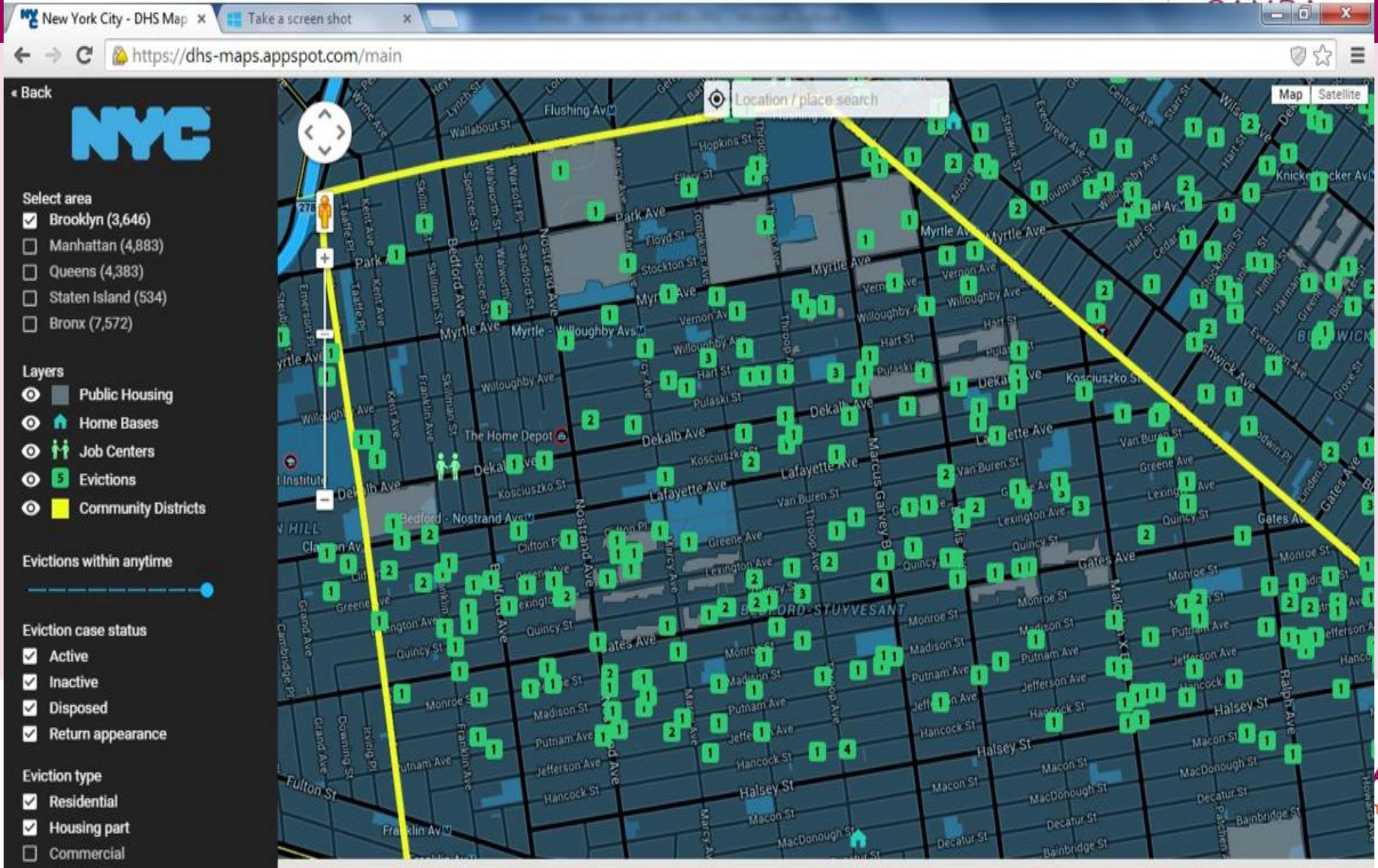
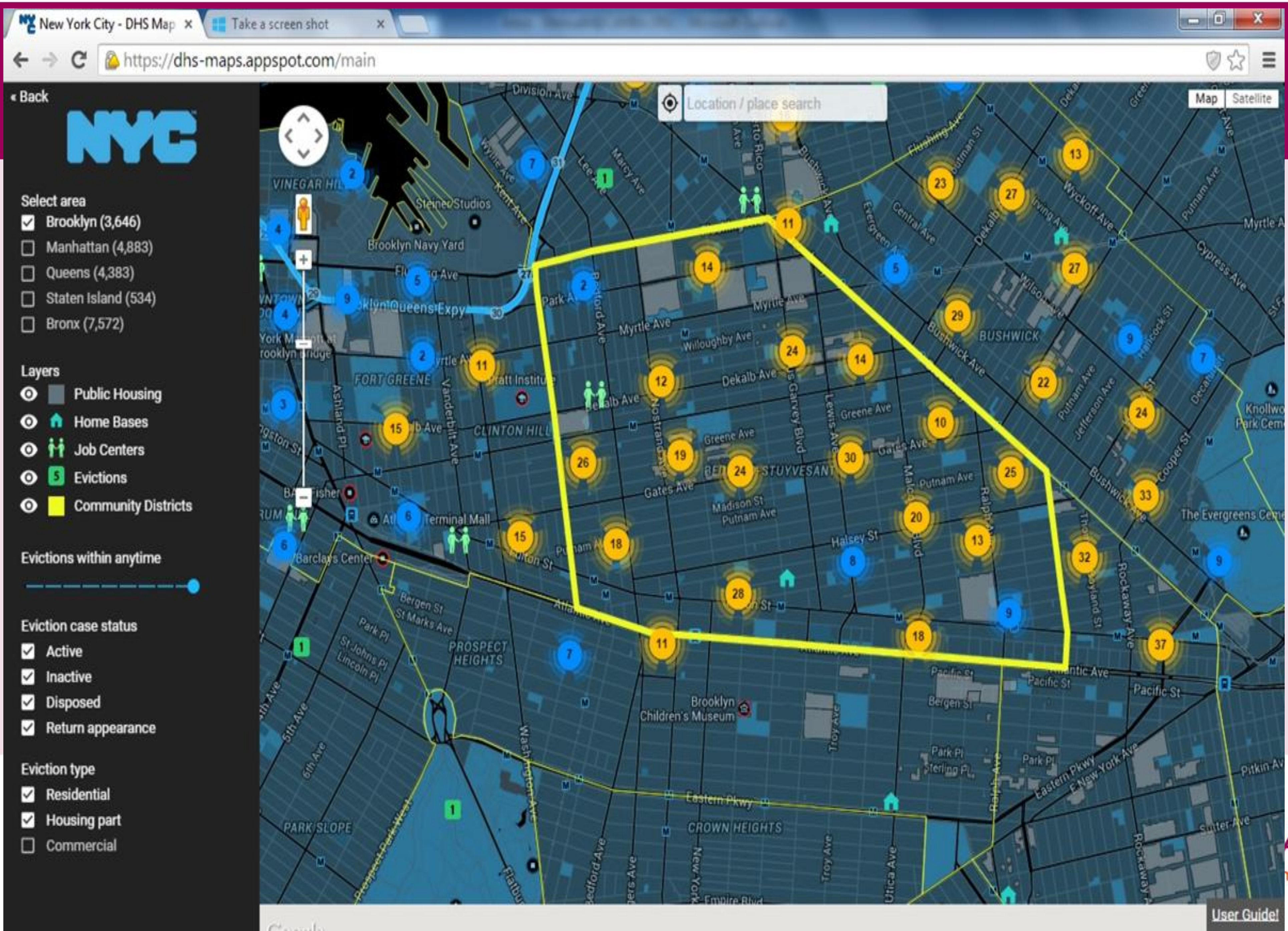
ARRACHNO Insight Application





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System Coordination Home- Stat Integration 2015

HOME STAT

HOMEBASE

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Administrative Evolution 2017

Organizational Shift: DHS → HRA under Department of Social Services

Strategic Implication: Broader social services integration

Targeting Benefit: Access to wider data ecosystem

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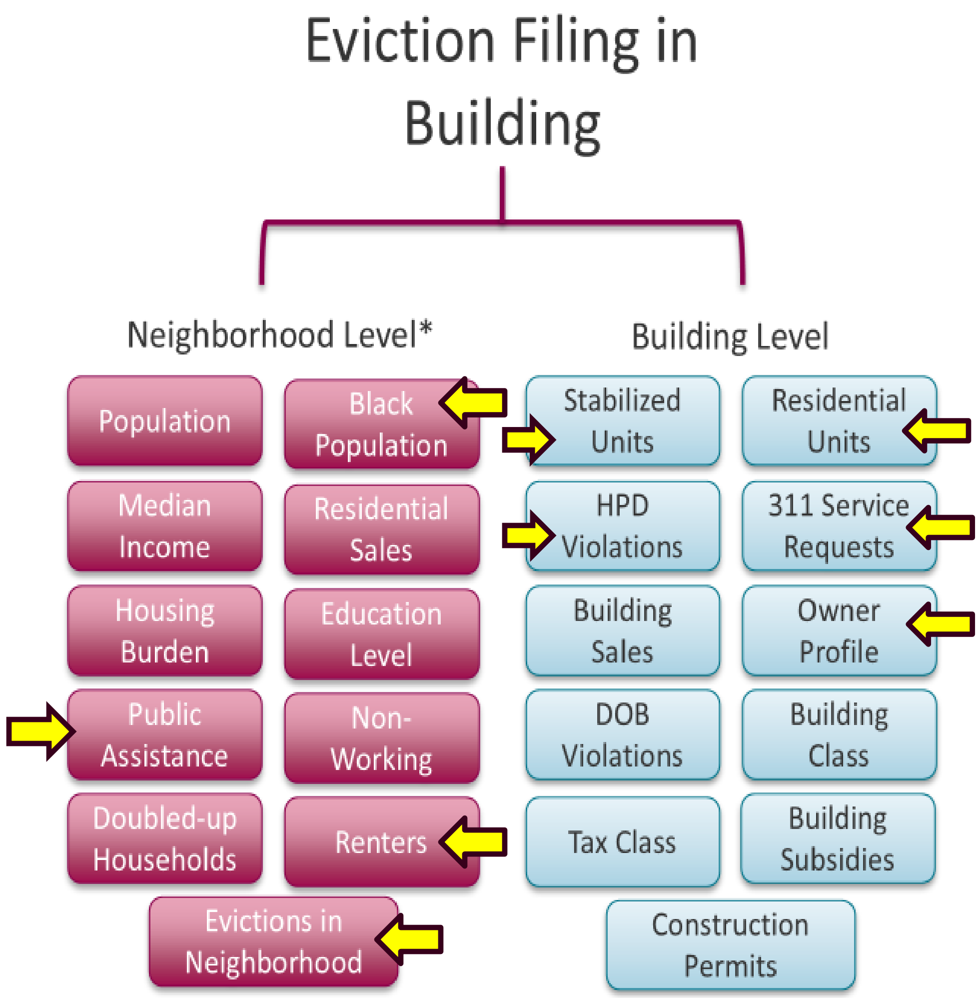
Possibilities for Future Targeting

PREDICTING DISPLACEMENT IN BROOKLYN

Research suggests that the neighborhood and building you live in impacts your risk of shelter entry.

- **53,000 Registered Residential Buildings**
- **175 Variables**
  - 10 year timespan
  - Two geographic scales
- **Data Sources:**
  - American Community Survey
  - NYC Open Data (311, HPD, DOB, DCP)
  - Department of Finance Tax Map (map PLUTO)
  - Eviction Filings
  - Civic Tech/Activists (Housing Data Coalition)
  - Department of Finance Rolling Sales Data
  - John Krauss Rent Stabilized unit scrape
  - Who Owns What (JustFix.nyc)



*Census Block & Census Tract

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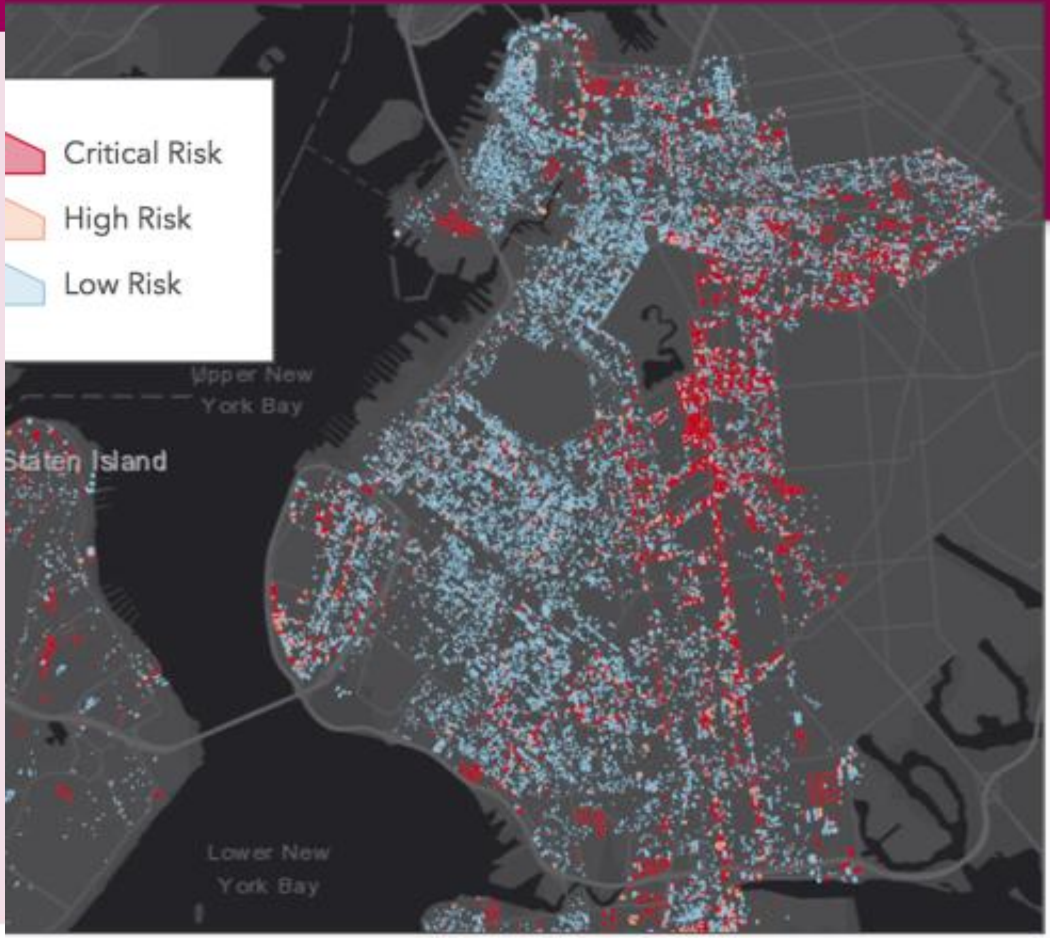

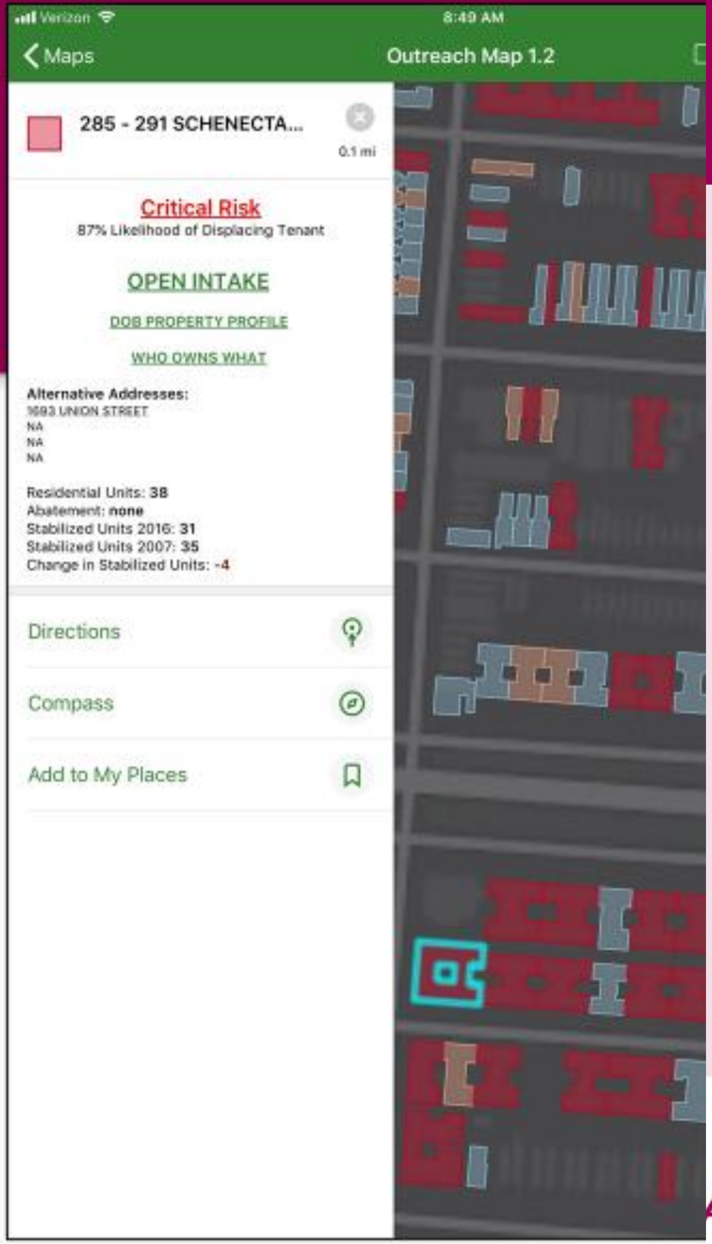

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Results & Key Insights

Impact

- **Doubled after-hours Know Your Rights attendance** since targeted canvassing began
- **16% increase in enrollments** compared to previous year
- **50%+ enrollment rate** from canvassed buildings (1/3 were high risk cases)

Critical Findings

Displacement Patterns:

- Specific landlord portfolios disproportionately file evictions
- Rent-stabilized units aren't necessarily safe - landlords incentivized to displace these tenants
- **Racial disparity**: Strongest correlation between historically marginalized populations and neighborhood eviction rates

Next Steps

- Expand model accuracy across building types and boroughs
- Target bad actor landlords and their portfolios
- Integrate building risk scores into client assessment tools
- Address unregistered buildings in prevention strategy

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Established a Formal Referral Process with Frequent Referral Sources to help us triage better

Answer the six questions below. If any are marked “yes” proceed to #2.

1. Has the client received an eviction notice or been asked to leave by a landlord? ___ Yes ___ No
2. Has the client applied to shelter in the last three months? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Does the client have severe discord with their landlord or the primary tenant? ___ Yes ___ No
4. Does the client’s apartment have serious repair issues? ___ Yes ___ No
5. Does the client have a City housing subsidy (LINC, FHEPS, CITYFEPS, SEPS, HOME TBRA,
SECTION 8)? ___ Yes ___ No
6. Are you requesting a Homebase referral for a reason not included above, such as rental arrears or relocation? ___ Yes ___ No

Explain:

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Peak Scale Operations 2019-Present

$53 million annually

Over 30,000 households served per year

COVID-19 Adaptation

Targeted outreach to newly unemployed

New Tools:

Emergency rental assistance and emergency Section 8 vouchers

- Virtual and In-person Prescreens and Assessments
- Virtual Inspections
- City Rental subsidies
- Know Your Rights sessions
- Project Parachute partnership with the Enterprise Foundation

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The Evolution & Impact

Three-stage evolution:

- 2004: React to Crisis
- 2010: Target Individuals Evidence-Based
- 2020: Prevent Community

Impact progression: Reactive → Proactive → Predictive

Core transformation: Following Data → Staying Ahead of Data

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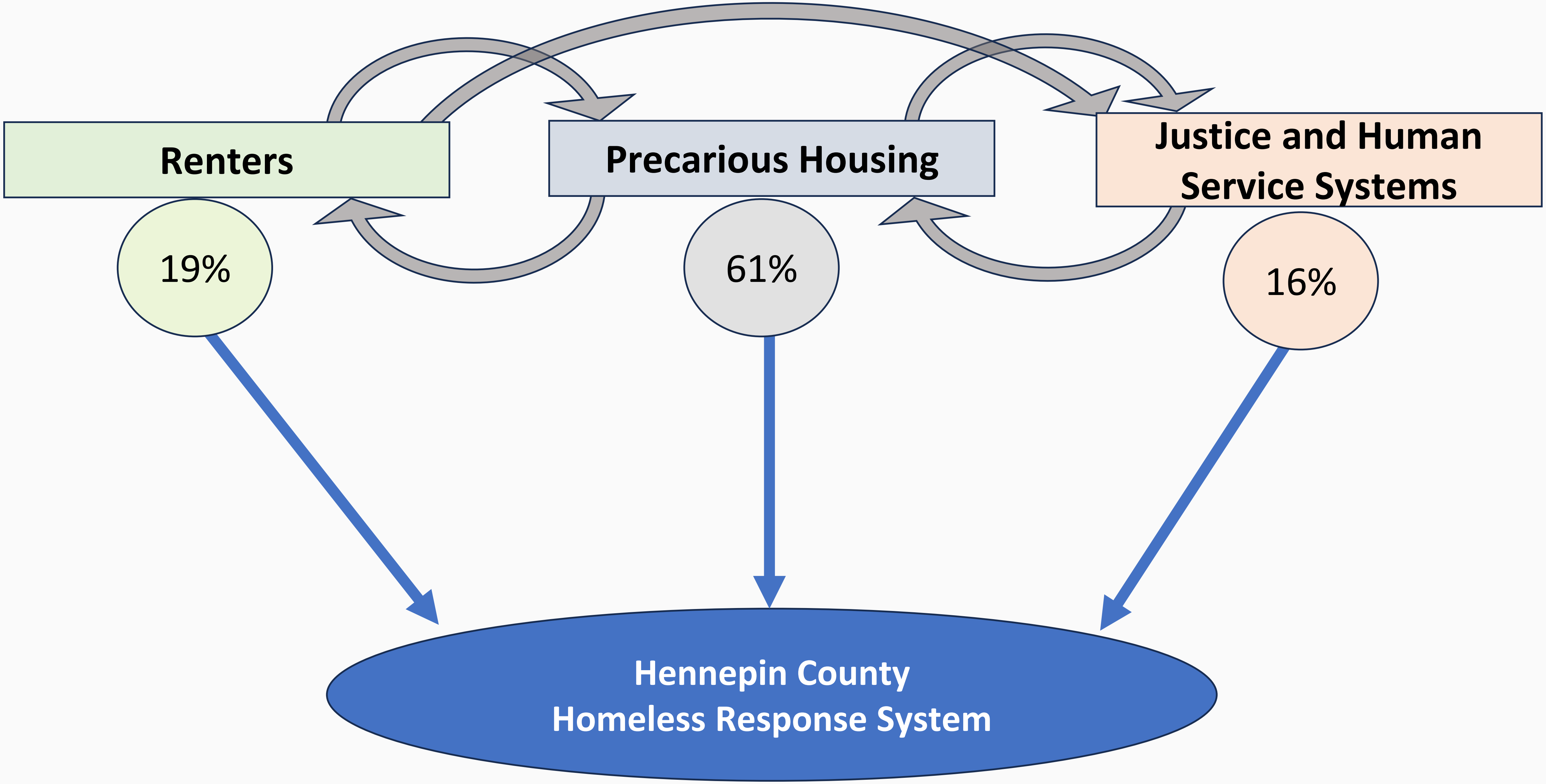
Hennepin County Homelessness Prevention

Who, what and how?



Renters
Precarious Housing
Justice and Human Service Systems
19%
61%
16%
Hennepin County
Homeless Response System

Prevention strategies

Renters

- Tenant resource hotline
- Legal representation
- Dedicated rent assistance
- Access at critical touchpoints
- Connection to other resources

Precariously housed

- Families with school-age children
- Foster youth

Justice and Human Service involved

- Training
- Housing is “everyone’s business”
- Targeted tools

Diversion strategy

Shelter diversion hotline

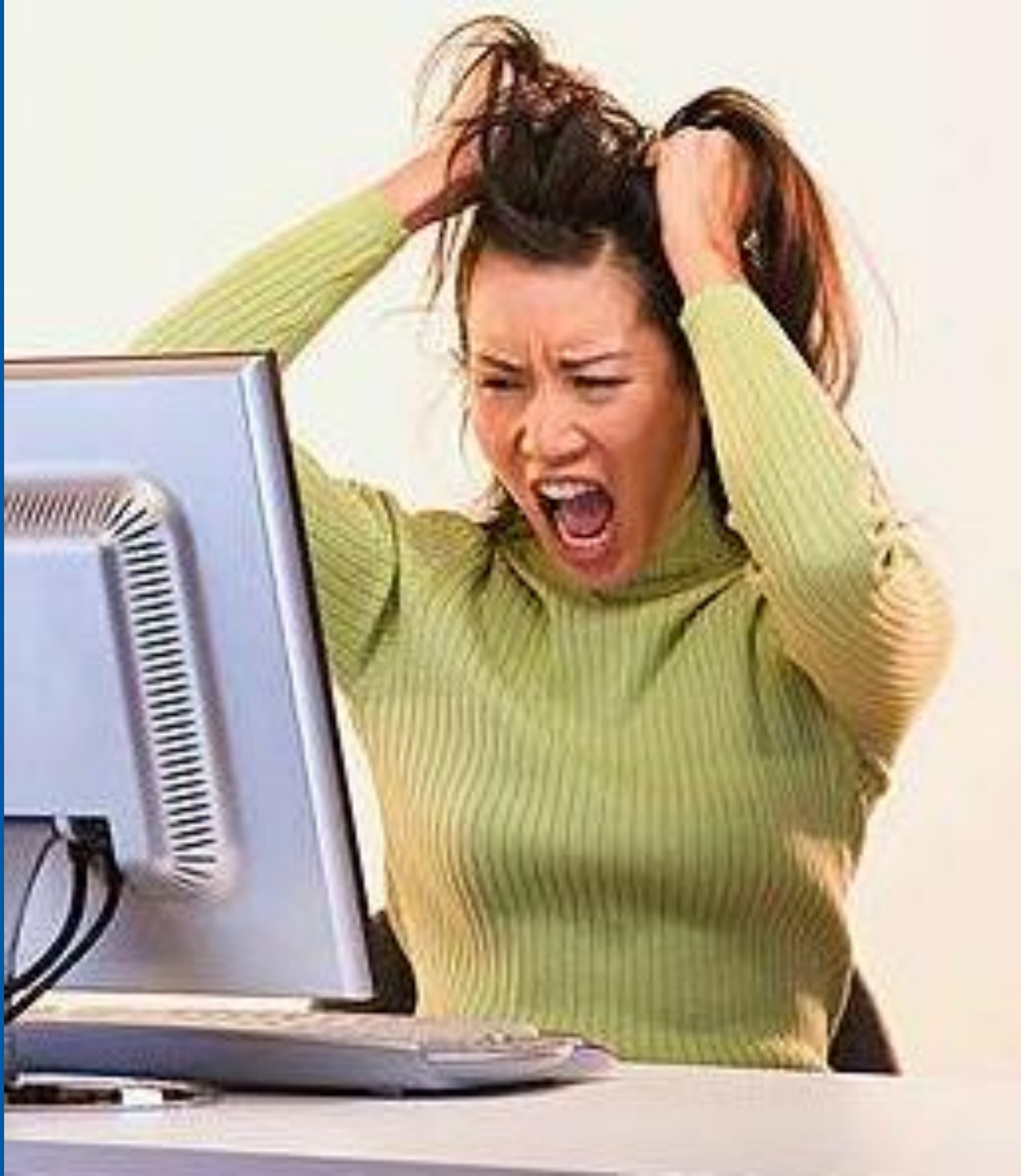
- Creative conversations
- Community resources
- 1-2 contacts

Future plans

- People leaving institutions
- Older adults
- Predictive analytics

Where do you start?

- Involve people with lived experience
- Build and maintain partnerships
- Be ready with a plan
- Advocate and educate



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Trajectory of homelessness prevention in Hennepin County

2016 – 2017

Minneapolis Eviction Study.

Publication of "Evicted", by Matthew Desmond.

2020

Infusion of federal COVID funding.

Eviction moratorium.

2021

Legal representation for all.

Continued Federal ERA.

2023

State-level one-time and ongoing investments.

State level tenant protections enhanced.

Centralized ERA system launched.

2024

US Interagency Council on Homelessness releases first prevention framework.

2025

Coordinated ERA across housing and human services.

Expanded strategic vision for homelessness prevention.

Opportunities to do More to Prevent Homelessness/Take Aways

- **Examine your own community's homeless service data.** Where are people entering shelter/unsheltered homelessness from? What was there last living arrangement? What agencies/programs have they been connected with in the past? This can inform how to target prevention initiatives to reach high risk households.

- **Support and inform eviction prevention/homeless prevention interventions** in your own community. Are interventions reaching those at greatest risk? Are those at greatest risk of homelessness even eligible? Are programs informed/assessed with an equity lens?

- **Scale up diversion/problem-solving**.

- **Evaluate your own homeless service program performance.** What are the rates of returns to homelessness from various program interventions/providers (Rapid Re-housing and PSH) in your community? What policies/initiatives can be implemented to improve performance & reduce returns to homelessness?

- **Ensure housing supports are in place for former foster youth**. Dedicated 5-year housing subsidies are available for at-risk and homeless youth age 18-25 with a foster care history – each PHA can access up to 50 vouchers a year. MOST PHAs are NOT accessing this resource for population w/extremely high risk of homelessness. Learn more: Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Voucher Program - National Alliance to End Homelessness

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- **Explore role TANF funds/agencies can play to stabilize and meet emergency housing needs of families.** TANF funds can be used to provide short-term support to help families avoid a crisis that is unlikely to recur without enrolling in TANF cash assistance programs. Dedicated TANF funds (and case management!) could stabilize families facing housing crises (and re-house homeless families).

- **Work with schools and homeless school liaisons** to develop a targeted prevention strategy to identify and assist doubled up families and those residing in motels with acute housing needs.
- **Support Basic Income/Cash Transfer/Shallow Subsidy Initiatives.** Researchers are investigating how increasing people's income can prevent homeless episodes by reducing gap between people's incomes and the cost of housing. Increasing household incomes through easing access to cash assistance programs and increasing benefit levels could have a similar buffering effect.

- **Promote robust legal protections for tenants** and expand access to advocacy and mediation support**.**

- **Investigate and promote the use of DV Housing First** to provide opportunities to reduce homelessness for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking.

- **Seek out opportunities to reduce evictions/involuntary exits from assisted housing.** Understand how many families/households lose access to public housing/subsidized housing in your community. How does it compare to other localities? What can be instituted to prevent involuntary loss of assisted housing, including for reasons such as delays in meeting paperwork requirements or inability to find alternative housing?

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- **Support initiatives that assist returning citizens.** Some states/localities are piloting approaches to ease transitions for those exiting legal system institutions by providing housing support. A few states have also received waivers that enable them to pay for in-reach into criminal systems to aid in the transition and service connections for returning citizens with Medicaid funds.

- **Continuously assess for equity in program access and outcomes.** Homelessness, housing loss and housing instability disparately impact different groups. Are interventions reducing or exacerbating existing inequities? In fraught political times, some groups will be distrustful of accessing social service help. What strategies and new partners can be formed to minimize their barriers to accessing assistance?

- **Build capacity of social service partners to prevent homelessness.** Many potential community partners (hospitals, health care providers, mental health/behavioral health providers, community service programs, etc.) have numerous individuals and families on their caseloads who are at high risk of homelessness. Building the capacity of such partners to identify and intervene with those on their caseload experiencing housing crises could facilitate early intervention to prevent deepening housing instability while also improving their own programmatic goals for the people they serve.

- **Be an advocate.** Systemic reforms that will prevent and end homelessness require investments that close the gap between the cost of housing and people's income. Advocate at the national, state and local level more affordable housing and increasing household incomes.