



Immediate Release

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Severe Shortage of Affordable Housing in Colorado: Families with the Lowest Incomes Suffer Most

[The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#), an annual report on affordable housing shortages, was released today by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). The report finds a national shortage of 7.3 million affordable and available rental homes for the lowest-income households. Nationwide, there are just 34 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 of the lowest-income renter households. Seventy-four percent of the poorest renter households are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their incomes on housing, with little left over for other basic necessities. Extremely low-income renters are more likely than all other renters to be seniors, people with disabilities, and people of color. These populations are also overrepresented in homelessness nationally and here in Colorado.

[Here in Colorado](#), things are even more dire than the national landscape. There are only 27 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 households with extremely low incomes. Facing a shortage in Colorado of 119,782 affordable and available rental homes, 76% of these renters are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their incomes on housing.

Cathy Alderman, Chief Communications and Public Policy Officer for the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless added, "The housing crisis in Colorado continues year after year, and it will continue until we have strategic and long-term local, state, and federal investments that benefit the lowest-income households first and foremost. Measures that prioritize upper-middle- or middle-class housing will not resolve the crisis and might even make it worse."

Although the state and federal government took unprecedented actions to protect the lowest-income renters during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, those actions were temporary. The loss of these transformative changes to safety net systems in the U.S. including healthcare coverage under Medicaid, Medicare, and CHP+, SNAP (food stamps), expanded tax credits, and eviction protections creates a precarious environment for people with low incomes and places the most vulnerable groups at greater risk of health issues, food insecurity, and homelessness.

Lawmakers in Colorado have opportunities in the 2024 session to prevent evictions and create a housing landscape that can counter the unsustainable conditions here in the 8th least affordable state in the country. Some key legislation supported by the Coalition this session includes:

- HB24-1098, [Cause Required for Eviction of Residential Tenant](#)
- HB24-1099, [Defendant Filing Fees in Evictions](#)
- HB24-1322, [Medicaid Coverage Housing & Nutrition Services](#)

“Even with a strong economy and stabilizing rents, homelessness has increased to its highest level ever recorded, and millions of the lowest-income and most marginalized households are at risk,” said NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel. “We know what works to end housing insecurity and homelessness – what we lack is the political will to invest in these solutions at the scale needed. More than ever, Congress should act quickly to enact bold legislation to ensure rental assistance is universally available, build and preserve homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes, create tools to prevent eviction and homelessness, and strengthen renter protections to keep renters stably housed.

[Learn more about the housing crisis in Colorado in this report.](#)

More information about *The Gap* is available by visiting: <https://nlihc.org/gap>

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About the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

The mission of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless is to work collaboratively toward the prevention of homelessness and the creation of lasting solutions for people experiencing and at-risk of homelessness throughout Colorado. The Coalition advocates for and provides a continuum of housing and a variety of services to improve the health, well-being and stability of those it serves. Since its founding, the organization has earned state and national recognition for its integrated healthcare, housing, and service programs.

About NLIHC

The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice. Founded in 1974 by Cushing N. Dolbeare, NLIHC educates, organizes, and advocates to ensure decent, affordable housing for everyone. Our goals are to preserve existing federally assisted homes and housing resources, expand the supply of low-income housing, and establish housing stability as the primary purpose of federal low-income housing policy.