This pamphlet was created by The Bronx Defender's Civil Action Practice (CAP) to help individuals navigate the complex AND confusing process of accessing NYC shelters. CAP is dedicated to defending the rights of shelter residents and advocating for dignified conditions within shelters. Through legal advocacy, client-centered representation, and community education, CAP works to ensure due process, fairness and respect in the shelter system.

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SHELTER ACCESSIBILITY: HOW TO FIND AND ADVOCATE FOR SAFE SHELTERS



Navigating the shelter process, from eligibility and documentation to reporting and requesting safer housing—know your rights!

BXD

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GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

NYC's Right to Shelter is a legal mandate from the 1981 Callahan v. Carey settlement. It requires NYC to provide safe temporary housing to any unhoused person who needs it, regardless of immigration status or documentation

You may be eligible for shelter if you are experiencing:

- ✓ Eviction
- ✓ Documented medical reasons
- ✓ Government vacate order
- ✓ Domestic violence / Order of protection
- ✓ Primary tenant asking you to leave
- ✓ Overcrowded or unsafe housing
- ✓ Illegal apartment
- ✓ Discharge from institutions

When applying for shelter, you must provide:

- ✓ 2 years of complete housing history – missing information in timeline can lead to ineligibility. Proof of residence can be:
  - ✓ Eviction papers/Marshal's notice
  - ✓ Leases or rent receipts
  - ✓ Utility bills (Con Ed, phone)
  - ✓ Letters from landlords or friends/relatives you stayed with
  - School records or medical records showing address history

SINGLE ADULT (18+)

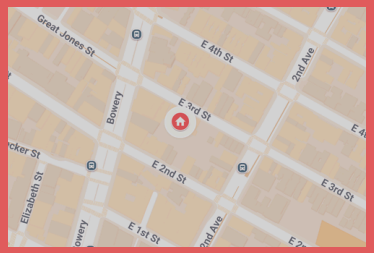
ELIGIBILITY

- Homeless due to physical, mental or social dysfunction
- Meets the "need standards" for cash assistance

INTAKE LOCATIONS

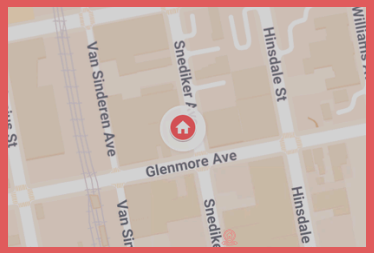
MALE-IDENTIFYING

8 E 3rd St,
New York, NY 10003
Open 24 hours

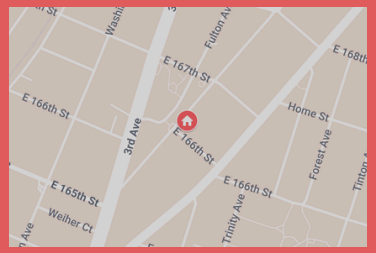


FEMALE IDENTIFYING

114 Snediker Ave,
Brooklyn, NY 11207
Open 24/7



1122 Franklin Ave,
Bronx, NY 10456
Open 24 hours



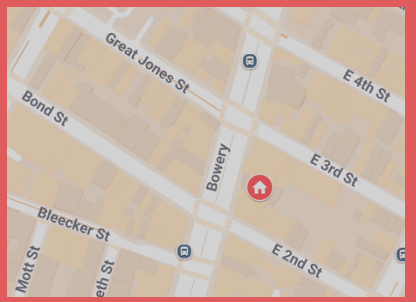
ADULT FAMILIES (18+)

ELIGIBILITY

- A single adult over 18 who wants to enter shelter with someone they are related to, partnered with, or dependent on:
  - Legally married couples
  - Domestic partners
  - Medical dependents
  - Adults who share a familial relationship AND have lived together for at least 180 days in the past year

INTAKE LOCATIONS

333 Bowery,
New York, NY 10003
Open 24 hours



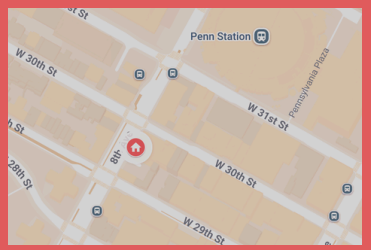
INDIVIDUAL WITH HIV/AIDS

ELIGIBILITY

- All NYC residents diagnosed with HIV or AIDS

INTAKE LOCATION

400 8th Ave 2nd fl,
New York, NY 10001
M–F, 9AM–5PM



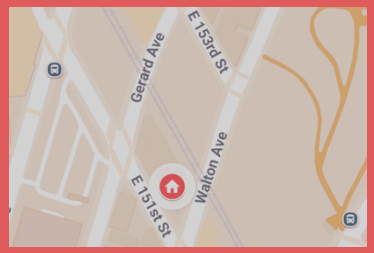
FAMILY WITH CHILDREN UNDER 21

ELIGIBILITY

- Families with children under 21
- Pregnant or parenting youth under 21
- No other housing available

INTAKE LOCATION

PATH Intake Center
151 E 151St,
Bronx, NY 10451
Open 24 hours



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

If you experienced domestic violence prior to entering shelter, go to PATH Intake Center and tell them you want a DV shelter.

PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

If you are a parent with a student living in a shelter, or a student yourself, you are covered under the McKinney-Vento Act and are entitled to these rights:

- The right to **stay at their current school** or **choose to attend their new zoned school**
- The right to **transportation** to and from school
- The right to **not be denied enrollment** because of their status or not having the right documents for enrollment

For transpoortation/OMNY cards and more resources, please contact a family/social worker or Student in Transitional Housing Education Coordinator at the PATH Intake Center

CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Your household composition affects your shelter placement and may impact the housing programs and public benefits available to you. If your household changes, notify your shelter as soon as possible. DHS asks that changes be reported within 30 days to help avoid delays in shelter transfers, housing opportunities, benefit eligibility, and other administrative issues.

Changes that Should be Reported Include:

- ✓ The birth or adoption of a child
- ✓ Marriage, separation, divorce, or reconciliation with a spouse or partner
- ✓ A child or other household member moving into or out of the household
- ✓ Changes in custody or guardianship
- ✓ The death of a household member
- ✓ A household member becoming incarcerated, hospitalized, or entering another institution for an extended period

How to Report a Change:

Notify your assigned shelter caseworker as soon as possible. Depending on the change, you may also be referred to a DHS intake center to determine whether your shelter placement or accommodations need to be updated.

You should be prepared to provide identification and documents that verify the change in your household. The documents required will vary depending on your circumstances. See the Suggested Document Checklist on page 9 for examples of documents that may be helpful.

YOUNG ADULT (AGED 16–24)

ELIGIBILITY

- Youth between the ages of 16-24

INTAKE LOCATIONS

BRONX

- The Door - Bronx Youth Center — (646) 230-1037

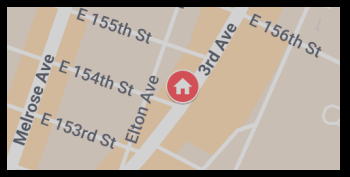
MANHATTAN

- Covenant House — (212) 613-0300
- The Door - Manhattan Youth Center – (212) 941-9090
- Ali Forney Center – (212) 206-0574
- Safe Horizon – Streetwork Harlem Center – - (212) 695-2220
- Safe Horizon – Streetwork LES Center – (646) 602-6404

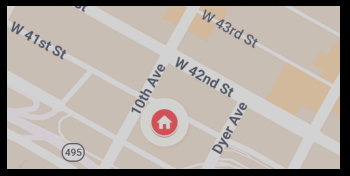
MAPS OF THESE SHELTERS ARE PROVIDED ON PAGE 8

MAPS OF YOUTH SHELTERS

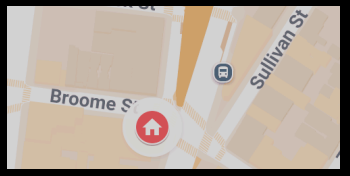
The Door Bronx Youth Center
2999 3rd Ave,
Bronx, NY 10455



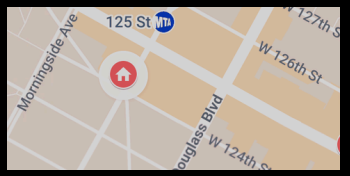
Covenant House
460 W 41st St,
New York, NY 10036



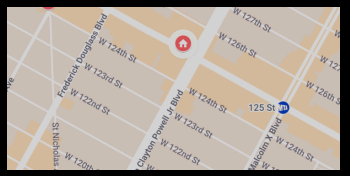
The Door - Manhattan Youth Center
555 Broome St,
New York, NY 10013



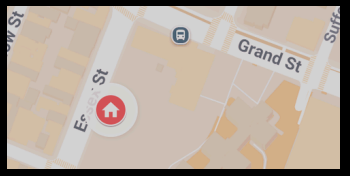
Ali Forney Center
321 W 125th St
New York, NY 10026



Safe Horizon Streetwork Harlem Center
209 W 125th St,
New York, NY 10027



Safe Horizon – Streetwork LES Center
32 Essex St
New York, NY 10002



DOCUMENTATION

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY ALL INTAKE

PLEASE BRING WITH YOU:

- An appropriate ID (see the "Acceptable ID" section on page 10)
- Social Security card
- Medicaid Card *if available*
- Most recent pay stub *if working*
- Proof of Residence

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Single Adult with Another Adult (18+):

- Documents showing relationship between you and the person(s) you are seeking shelter with:
  - Legally married couples must provide marriage certificate
  - Domestic partners must provide domestic partnership certificate
  - Medical dependents must provide medical documentation

Family with Children Under 21:

- Birth certificates, immunization, or school records
- Marriage/domestic partnership certificate (if applicable)

ACCEPTABLE ID

PHOTO ID



- ✓U.S. military photo ID
- ✓Out-of-state driver's license
- ✓U.S. State Department-issued passport or passport card
- ✓Foreign passport with a valid J-551 stamp or with a statement on visa
- ✓Permanent resident card T-551
- ✓Welfare/Medicaid card with photo
- ✓NY State or NYC pistol permit
- ✓Photo ID issued by local government agency
- ✓U.S. college photo ID + transcript
- ✓U.S. high school ID with photo + report card IDNYC (NYC ID card)

NON-PHOTO ID

- ✓Credit card
- ✓U.S. social security card
- ✓Property tax receipt
- ✓Birth certificate/baptismal certificate
- ✓U.S. health insurance/prescription card
- ✓U.S. utility bill (must include name & address)
- ✓U.S. insurance policy (in effect for more than 3 years)
- ✓Rent receipt from building owner or manager (with your name & address)
- ✓W-2 yearly income tax form
- ✓NY State professional license
- ✓NY state registration document (vehicle/boat)
- ✓U.S. pay stub (with name + address)
- ✓U.S. union card
- ✓Welfare/Medicaid card without photo

If you don't have ID issued by NY's Department of Motor Vehicles, you'll need to bring <u>one valid photo ID</u> and <u>one valid non-photo ID</u> from this list.



PLACEMENT PROCESS

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER INTAKE?

Investigation period (10 days)

- Temporarily placed for up to 10 days or more while DHS investigates your application

BOROUGH PLACEMENT

If you have a preference for a specific borough, it is best to **indicate it at intake.** When requesting your preference, it is helpful if you provide any documentation explaining your reasoning for it. Generally, DHS will try to accommodate requests arising from health, safety, or educational barriers.

PENDING/DENIED PLACEMENT:

Why might my application be denied?

- You have access to a viable place to stay
- You did not provide a complete two-year housing history
- You did not met the criteria for a family shelter placement
- Required documentation was not submitted or is incomplete

If you are denied shelter, you can:

- Request an In-House Conference
- Contact the Ombudsman Office at (800) 994-6494 and/or Fair Hearing Office at (800) 342-3334
- Reapply! Even if denied, you still have the right to reapply

SHELTER ADVOCACY

SHELTER TRANSFERS

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REQUEST A **VOLUNTARY TRANSFER, IF**:

- You or a family member has documented medical, physical, or educational needs
- Your family size increases and you require a larger shelter unit

INVOLUNTARY TRANSFERS

The shelter may involuntarily transfer you if you:

- Do not to comply with facility rules
- Use forbidden items
- Do not complete ILP tasks,
- Act disrespectfully towards staff.

You should receive a written notice 48 hours before transfer

ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFERS

Administrative transfers (e.g., shelter closed or over capacity) cannot be challenged.

ADVOCACY

STEPS TO CHALLENGE AN INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER

1. Find a shelter staff member and request a Pre-Transfer Hearing
2. Submit signed Request for Pre-Transfer Hearing to shelter director or case manager
3. Hearing held within 4–48 hours after notice; you must get at least 4 hours notice

If you lose the hearing you might be transferred, but you can request a Fair Hearing

NEED A SHELTER TODAY?

DROP-IN CENTERS

Open 24/7 | All welcome regardless of immigration status

- Bronx: The Living Room – 800 Barretto St
- Brooklyn: Gathering Place – 2402 Atlantic Ave
- Manhattan: Mainchance – 120 E 32nd St | Olivieri – 257 W 30th St
- Queens: Breaking Ground – 100-32 Atlantic Ave

If you are a current client with a shelter question, please call us at: (718) 838-7878

If you are experiencing eviction:
Bronx Defenders Housing Hotline:
(347) 842-1122

If your are experiencing a crisis or intimate partner violence:
Coalition for the Homeless Crisis Intervention Hotline:
(888) 358-2384

Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Hotline:
(800) 621-4673

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