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## **CITY WOULD SAVE \$5.7 BILLION BY ENDING SHELTER STAY LIMITS AND EXPANDING CITYFHEPS, NEW BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS SHOW**

*Recommendations Would Combat Homelessness While Saving City Billions*

**NEW YORK, NY** – Earlier today, Win, the largest provider of transitional and supportive housing for families with children, shared detailed recommendations with the Mayor and City Council outlining common sense budget priorities for fiscal year 2025 that would save the City over \$5.7 billion if included in the City’s budget.

Current City policy like shelter stay limits and limited housing voucher access continue to unsustainably perpetuate the homelessness crisis, while wasting billions in taxpayer funds. If adopted in full, Win’s recommendations would provide the City a total net savings of \$5.78 billion dollars while creating a more hospitable path to permanent housing for thousands of families living within the shelter system.

“At a time when the City is strapped for cash and facing a growing homelessness crisis, the need for commonsense, cost-saving policy has never been clearer,” said **Christine C. Quinn, CEO & President of Win**. “Ending shelter stay limits and expanding housing vouchers are the kinds of simple solutions that will combat homelessness and save taxpayers billions. As the City negotiates a budget for fiscal year 2025, a coordinated slate of solutions to the crisis we face is absolutely critical.”

### **Budgetary Policy Recommendations for FY25**

**Expand Access to Housing Vouchers, Regardless of Immigration Status:** New York City should expand the CityFHEPS housing subsidy to households regardless of immigration status. The move would provide a pathway to permanent housing for more families, increase shelter capacity, and divert costs.

Housing vouchers for noncitizens would cost the City \$673 million per year, whereas providing emergency shelter for this population costs \$3.58 billion dollars annually. Expanding voucher eligibility could result in \$2.9 billion in annual savings.

**Continue to Push for the Full Implementation of CityFHEPS Expansion:** City Hall should adopt Local Laws 99, 100, 101 and 102 of 2023, which expand eligibility to the CityFHEPS voucher would help more than 92,000 New Yorkers gain and maintain housing.

The legislation, passed by the New York City Council in July 2023, would relieve the current strain on the shelter system and save over \$730 million per year by reducing the number of people housed in the shelter system.

**Pass Intro 210 and End the 30- and 60-Day Shelter Limits:** The City should pass Intro 210, which would prohibit the Department of Social Services or any other city agency from imposing length of shelter stay restrictions in a shelter of any type, including shelters operated by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), Health and Hospitals (H+H), Emergency Management (NYCEM), Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

Current policy forces migrants out of shelter, perpetuating homelessness and potentially costing the City an additional \$2 billion per year in negative consequences, according to a May 2024 Independent Budget Office report.

**Fully Fund and Implement Local Law 35:** The City should implement Local Law 35 to provide clinical mental health services for families in shelter. The full implementation of this law would ensure families in shelter have the clinical mental health services they need to address their trauma and lead to financial returns through better health and employment outcomes.

Win estimates that the rollout of Local Law 35 would cost \$13,338,303.99 to service the approximately 4,500 families at the City's 30 largest families with children shelters. Based on a 2016 World Health Organization report, every \$1 spent on scaling up treatment for anxiety provided \$4 in returns through better health and improved employment capacity. As such, we anticipate that the investment to fully implement Local Law 35 would result in net savings of \$40,014,911.7

**Increase Funding for Childcare (Promise NYC):** The city should baseline \$25 million in funding for Promise NYC, which will help migrant families and deliver significant returns on investment for the City.

Research shows that high quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a 13% return on investment annually, meaning that the \$25 million investment would result in net savings of \$1,170,000.

**Reform the Supportive Housing Application:** The City should reform the supportive housing application process to broaden eligibility requirements so that vacant units can be filled quickly by those in need. This includes mainstreaming the application process by reviewing the Coordinated Assessment and Placement System and utilizing the Access HRA system.

Decades of research show that supportive housing provides unparalleled stability while also saving municipalities money through reduced reliance on costly emergency services. It has also helped decrease chronic homelessness by 30%. However, there are significant inefficiencies in the City's supportive housing application and administrative system.

According to the 2024 Mayor's Management Report, last year, 4,042 individuals experienced street homelessness, while approximately 2,200 supportive housing units sat vacant. A 2020 New York State Department of Health study found that providing supportive housing to chronically homeless individuals produced a net savings of \$3,500 per person compared to the status quo model. If the City addresses its administrative hurdles and prioritizes filling all its vacant units, it can save at least \$7,700,000.

**Fund Right to Counsel in Housing Court:** The City should increase funding for Right to Counsel to support the nearly 140,000 eviction filings brought before the court last year. Increasing funding for the right to counsel in eviction proceedings will decrease the rate of eviction in NYC and help with combatting the homelessness crisis.

It is estimated that funding for the right to counsel will prevent eviction for 9,316 families who would otherwise be evicted. Assuming 20% percent of evicted families would enter a homeless shelter, as previously suggested in a report done by CSS citing the New York City Department of Social Services eviction-to-shelter-eventually rates, right to counsel could prevent eviction and shelter entry for 1,863.2 families or around 5,590 individuals, resulting in a total cost savings of \$105,556,864.

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Win is the largest provider of family shelter and supportive housing in the nation, operating 14 family shelters and 9 supportive housing facilities across New York City, as well as more than 100 supportive housing units in the Bronx and Brooklyn. In the past year, Win served nearly 9,200 homeless people – including more than 5,000 children – helping them to break the cycle of homelessness. Housing instability can stymie a child's healthy socio-emotional and cognitive development, with implications for mental health, behavioral health, and success in life. Through Camp Win, an immersive summer-long program, and other programming, Win works to provide a safe, engaging environment for children in shelter.