

May 8th, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of the State of New York
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Eric Adams
Mayor of the City of New York City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Kathy Hochul and Mayor Eric Adams,

As New York City's healthcare workers, we are writing to express our deep concern about the impact of the limits on access to shelter for both new migrants and unhoused New Yorkers. We are reminded daily in our practice that stable shelter is *absolutely necessary* for human health and life. While we are relieved that the right to shelter has been preserved, the denial of shelter to new arrivals without extenuating circumstances after an initial 30-day placement and the limitation of shelter stays to 60 days for families with children is harmful.

Over the past two years, we've seen firsthand how a lack of stable housing for migrants and unhoused New Yorkers has contributed to their [systemic exclusion from life-saving healthcare](#) and disproportionate dependence on [emergency rooms](#). 30 and 60 day stay limits also cause children to experience interruptions in schooling, and children who are forced to move due to factors such as eviction [are more likely to lose access to health-affirming benefits such as WIC and Medicaid](#), further harming those already subjected to the cruelty of a shelter eviction. For migrant children whose families cannot access such benefits and who have already [suffered severe trauma](#) prior to their arrival in the US, the current policies only compound this trauma.

We are also deeply worried about the impact of your administration's implementation of the right to shelter settlement on migrants and on homelessness overall in New York City. After your initial adoption of the 30- and 60-day policies, there have been highly visible and alarming [increases of new arrivals who were left to sleep in public spaces](#) or find their own makeshift arrangements. Even among those who may receive another shelter placement, individuals and families must suffer the physical and emotional toll of eviction. Further, the lack of a stable address [creates nearly insurmountable barriers](#) for individuals to follow up on their applications for work authorization and benefits.

The only long-term solution to alleviate the number of those in need of shelter is stable employment, with which new arrivals can afford their own housing. Yet, shelter limits hinder the ability of new arrivals to obtain work authorization by leaving them without a mailing address to receive documentation. As more people are denied shelter, more will be forced to sleep on the streets and in the subways. These policies jeopardize the physical and mental wellbeing—and the very lives—of new arrivals and unhoused New Yorkers. **Housing is healthcare**, and it is critical to the health of these individuals that they are provided stable and humane temporary shelter before being effectively assisted in their transition to permanent housing.

Our organizations stand ready to work with you on long-term solutions to these crises facing our neighbors, including appropriate Federal funding, a comprehensive plan to preserve and develop affordable housing, and obtaining work authorization for new arrivals. As we engage in these necessary efforts, **we implore you to uphold the right to shelter for *all* New Yorkers and eliminate harmful shelter stay limits.**

Sincerely,

Your healthcare workers.

New York Doctors Coalition

Doctors Council

Committee of Interns and Residents

1199SEIU

New York State Nurses Association

New York Shelter for All in Need Equally