

# Zoë LaCombe Johnson

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## Writing Samples + Report Design

### [Fair Chance for Housing FAQs](#)

**Starting January 1, 2025, people with conviction records have new protections when they apply for housing in New York City.**



#### THE FAIR CHANCE FOR HOUSING LAW PROTECTS YOUR RIGHT TO NEW BEGINNINGS.

Housing providers can **no longer consider**:

- Felony convictions older than 5 years, and
- Misdemeanor convictions older than 3 years

And they must conduct an **individualized review** of applicants who have more recent convictions.



**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!**

Do housing providers have to tell applicants if they're running a background check?

+

### [Fair Chance for Housing 1-Pager](#)



The Fair Chance for Housing Law protects your right to find a home in NYC if you have a conviction record.

Housing providers can **no longer consider**:

- Felony convictions older than 5 years, and
- Misdemeanor convictions older than 3 years

And even if a conviction falls within the 3 or 5-year period, they still have to do an individualized review.



When can housing providers run a background check?

If a housing provider chooses to use a background check, they must first review all relevant factors except for criminal history (for example, the applicant's credit score, income, tenant history, pets). The housing provider pre-qualifies the potential tenant (or buyer in case of a home sale) and offers them a lease (or accepts their offer in a sale). They can then opt to conduct a background check (but they don't have to).

If you meet the requirements to rent or purchase, they must:

- Pre-approve you for the apartment or house.
- Hold the unit open while running the background check.

Do housing providers have to tell applicants if they're running a background check?

Yes. If a housing provider chooses to run a background check, they must:

- Get your permission to do it.
- Give you a copy of the NYC Fair Chance Housing Notice.
- Send you the background report they receive.

NOTE! The maximum you may be required to pay for a background check is \$20. Instead of paying, you are allowed to provide a background check report conducted within the last 30 days.

**You have rights during a background check**

Can the applicant fix errors or provide evidence of rehabilitation?

Yes. The applicant has up to 5 business days after receiving the background check to follow up with the housing provider to correct any inaccuracies or present any supplemental information.

The housing provider cannot revoke the offer and must keep the housing unit open during this time.

### [Fair Chance for Housing Social Media Toolkit](#)

#### Sample Post 1:

📢 ATTENTION New Yorkers with past convictions: NEW NYC housing protections kick in January 1st! Know your rights, challenge unfair denials, and don't let old mistakes block your path forward. #FairChanceForHousing #HousingRights

Learn more: [fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights](http://fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights)

#### Sample Post 2:

📢 MORE HOUSING RIGHTS! MORE NEW BEGINNINGS!

A conviction record shouldn't mean a lifetime of housing insecurity. NYC's got your back starting Jan 1st with new protections that give people a real chance at new beginnings. #FairChanceForHousing #HousingRights

Your past doesn't determine your future. Learn more: [fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights](http://fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights)

#### Sample Post 3:

NEW LAW ALERT 📢

People with past convictions in NYC: You now have stronger housing rights starting Jan 1st. Landlords can't automatically deny you housing based on your record. #FairChanceForHousing #HousingRights

Know your rights: [fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights](http://fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights)

#### Sample Post 4:

BIG NEWS: No more shutting people out of housing because of old convictions.

Everyone deserves a home, everyone deserves a chance for new beginnings. New protections start January 1st. 📢 #FairChanceForHousing #HousingRights

Know your rights: [fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights](http://fairchancehousing.org/know-your-rights)

## Community Voices Heard 2024 Annual Report

COMMUNITY VOICES HEARD


2024 Annual Report →

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2024 ANNUAL REPORT

COMMUNITY VOICES HEARD

# YEAR IN REVIEW: 30 YEARS OF CVH



## → MOBILIZING FOR HOUSING JUSTICE



### Tenants Went on Rent Strike and Won

In March, 38 CVH members in East Harlem announced: they're suing their landlord.

Their landlord had stolen tens of thousands of dollars worth of tenants' security deposits and ignored rent-improving violations, including a hole in the roof and a blocked fire exit. So, we teamed up with Legal Services NYC to file a lawsuit.

Working with Community Voices Heard, tenants went door-to-door to inform their neighbors about their rights, held regular building meetings, and formed a tenant union. This culminated in a successful 11-month rent strike.

Their landlord no longer has control of the building, and the City will appoint an administrator to act under Court Order. We are now working with tenants to call for a preservation deal – so they never have to live under another slumlord again.



## Community Voices Heard 2025 State Policy Platform

2025

COMMUNITY VOICES HEARD

STATE POLICY PLATFORM

↓

We are the largest Black & brown-led membership organization in New York fighting for financial security, civic engagement, and truly affordable housing.



Across our state and nation, Black families and communities of color face constant disinvestment and neglect. CVH's platform is a bold vision that centers Black women, Black families, and all families of color in the fight for real economic, racial, and social justice.

### STATEWIDE RIGHT TO COUNSEL (A1493/S2721)

#### The Problem

Every year, landlords try to evict hundreds of thousands of tenants across New York. Even more landlords count on the threat of eviction to intimidate tenants from standing up for their rights. A Statewide Right to Counsel law would ensure that ANY tenant in ANY form of housing – including public housing – ANYWHERE in New York would be entitled to a free attorney to defend themselves. Almost all landlords have attorneys representing them in housing court. This bill would rebalance the power dynamic between tenants and landlords and keep people in their homes.

#### The Solution

- ✓ Pass **Statewide Right to Counsel (S6678 / A7570)** to strengthen Right to Counsel in New York City and guarantee the right to a free lawyer to ALL tenants facing eviction across New York State.
- ✓ Fund its implementation fully with **\$260 million in the fiscal year 2025 budget**, and funding scaled up over time.

### CLEAN HANDS ACT (A1853/S6769)

#### The Problem

Thousands of tenants across the state face unlivable conditions in their homes, but landlords are slow to make repairs and threaten tenants who stand up for themselves. This bill would prohibit landlords from suing a tenant for eviction if there are ANY state, city, or local building or housing code violations in the tenant's apartment or common areas of the building. It would mean that only landlords with "clean hands" could sue – drastically curtailing landlords' ability to sue tenants for eviction and giving tenants leverage to fight for repairs and exercise their right to withhold rent.

#### The Solution

- ✓ Pass the **Clean Hands Act (A1853/S6769)**, to curtail landlords' ability to sue tenants for eviction if the landlord has any violations and give tenants leverage to fight for repairs.



2025



### INVEST IN OUR NEW YORK

#### The Problem

The New York State budget must put the needs of middle and working class, low-income New Yorkers first. New York has one of the largest economies in the world. The ultra-wealthy profit from living and doing business here, but they don't pay taxes on most of their wealth. It's time that the ultra-rich pay their fair share of taxes, just like the rest of us.

#### The Solution

- New York must make corporations and the ultra-rich pay their fair share of taxes by:
- ✓ Enacting a progressive tax system (**S2059 Jackson / A3115 Meeks**)
  - ✓ Strengthening corporate tax laws (**S1980 Hoyman/Segal / A3690 Kelles**)
  - ✓ Closing loopholes and ensuring billionaires pay taxes on stock investments (**S2162 Rivera / A2576 Kim, S1570 Ramos / A3252 Kelles**)
  - ✓ Taxing large inheritances (**S2782 Brisport / A3193 Solages**)



Community Voices Heard · Feb 7, 2024 · 3 min read

**PRESS RELEASE: Over 100 CVH Members Rally to Save Public Housing and Prevent Evictions by Taxing the Ultra-Rich**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release: Over 100 Community Voices Heard Members From Across the State Rally for Money to Save Public Housing and Prevent Evictions by Taxing the Ultra-Rich



Senator Cordell Cleare speaks in support of CVH members' platform

What's Coming Up

Save the Date: CVH Lobby Day!

**CVH 2025 LOBBY DAY**

**Demands:** Demand tenant protections! Rally for economic dignity! Fight for a better New York State!

**Sign Up:** [cvhaction.org/events](https://cvhaction.org/events)  
Transportation will be provided!

**TUES, FEB 4TH ALBANY, NY ALL DAY**

In the wake of the recent election results, we MUST hold our elected officials accountable. Join members from across the state to meet with our representatives in Albany and fight for our 2025 platform.

When: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 – all day  
Where: Albany, NY – transportation will be provided from NYC, Yonkers, and the Hudson Valley!

[Register here](#)

What We're Reading

**Rampant Lack of Oversight Led to NYCHA Contract Corruption, Comptroller Audit Finds**  
From *The City*

[Read](#)

**Data proves what we already know: NYC rents are rising faster than wages**  
From *Gothamist*

[Read](#)

**The 2024 Power of Diversity: Women 100**  
From *City & State*

[Read](#)

**Coalition for the Homeless blog post: New York City Plans to Stop Homeless People From Sheltering in Subway**

NEED HELP ?

DONATE

# Today's Read: New York City Plans to Stop Homeless People From Sheltering in Subway

Posted on February 22, 2022 by Zoë Johnson

On February 18, 2022, Mayor Eric Adams and Governor Kathy Hochul announced a plan to remove people who shelter in the subway system, including stricter enforcement of transit system rules and a zero-tolerance policy for sleeping on the trains.

But, as the Coalition's [View From the Street](#) report found, people only stay on the subway because they have no better place to go, and increased policing will push people further away from services.

Outreach is not meaningful without housing and services tied to it. However, the Mayor's plan only briefly acknowledges the need to add low-barrier shelters, streamline the process for accessing supportive housing, and expand mental health services – and instead emphasizes aggressive police enforcement and involuntary mental health treatment.

In a recent [article in The New York Times](#), [Andy Newman](#), [Dana Rubinstein](#), and [Michael Gold](#) highlighted some of the plan's flaws:

[Preview](#)



## Social Media Content Creation

### Take Action Graphics



### False/Fact Graphics





**FALSE:**

**“THIS TAKES AWAY LANDLORDS' RIGHTS TO SCREEN THEIR TENANTS.”**

**FAIR CHANCE FOR HOUSING**

**FACTS:**

Removing a discriminatory practice does not infringe on landlords' rights.

NYC law currently prohibits discrimination in housing based on actual or perceived: age, race, color, disability, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, creed, national origin, citizenship status, family status, marital status, partnership status, lawful source of income, and lawful occupation.

None of these things take away landlords' rights!

“PEOPLE ARE DENIED RENTAL HOUSING BECAUSE NEGATIVE INFORMATION IS REPORTED THAT BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE: OUTDATED INFORMATION REMAINS ON REPORTS; AND INACCURATE OR MISLEADING DETAILS ABOUT ARRESTS, CRIMINAL RECORDS, AND EVICTION RECORDS ARE NOT CORRECTED NOR REMOVED FROM REPORTS.”

—CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU REPORT

**FAIR CHANCE FOR HOUSING**

## Infographics

**\$3 billion**  
Value of U.S. background check industry

**2,534**  
Number of background screening companies

**Background checks are a big business & screen out qualified, reliable tenants.**

**FAIR CHANCE FOR HOUSING**

**750,000**  
NYC residents have a criminal record.

That's nearly **11%** of the adult population.

**80%** are Black or Latinx.

**JUSTICE IS RACIAL JUSTICE.**

**HOUSING IS RACIAL JUSTICE.**

**FAIR CHANCE FOR HOUSING**

## Video Editing



[Watch here](#)



[Watch here](#)