

# HOW...WHEN...WHERE



Information for homeless and relocated families in New York City  
November 2011

GUIDE TO FREE CLOTHING (page 4)

## LIFE AFTER ADVANTAGE – RENTERS SEEK ANSWERS

On a recent morning, men and women worried about losing their homes crowded into the Harlem storefront office of **HomeBase Palladia** to hear a lecture titled “**Life After Advantage.**” The speaker Romy Martin posed the question that was bothering every person in that audience: “What are my options when my subsidy ends?”

First, she gave them some hard facts:

Landlords that take the Advantage subsidy will receive their October payments and tenants will be required to pay their share. Then, she told them, “Depending on court actions, this may be your last month of subsidy. Regardless, the subsidy is coming to an end sooner rather than later. DHS has NO intention of restoring it or replacing it. This does not mean that your lease will terminate. If you have a lease, you will be responsible for paying the whole rent.”

A man in the audience asked, “Isn’t the city or state obligated to pay, too, having made an agreement? Haven’t they set money aside to pay for it?”

The speaker’s answer was “NO.” The money is not set aside.

Again the man spoke up, asking why not, and her answer was “I don’t know.”

This modest office in Harlem is one of 13 HomeBase offices managed by different non-profit groups scattered around the five boroughs of NYC (for a complete list, see

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### Why not share your family's experience with the other readers of **HOW...WHEN...WHERE?**

If your family is experiencing (or is threatened by) homelessness, tell us about it. A page or two would be enough. Information for Families Inc. will send a gift certificate of \$20 to each of the first ten people who submit their stories.

You can send your story three ways:

- in the regular mail to *Information for Families, PMB E5, 332 Bleecker Street, New York, NY 10014-2980*, or
- by email to [joanmcallister@verizon.net](mailto:joanmcallister@verizon.net), or
- by fax or conversation on the phone (212) 645-6940

If you don't want us to print your real name, just let us know. Give us a contact phone number or address so we can get back to you if we have questions.



*Young mothers at West End Intergenerational Residence practiced resume writing and interview skills in weekly Job Readiness workshops, culminating in a trip to a local employment fair.*

## NEW GUIDE TO PREVENTING SEXUAL ASSAULT

Following a string of sexual assaults across Brooklyn and Queens, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio has partnered with more than a dozen local elected officials and community organizations to release a guide providing information and safety tips to keep residents safe.

“My family lives in Park Slope, and these recent attacks have hit very close to home,” says de Blasio. “These are neighborhoods where people look out for one another, and that’s what these guides are about. We want to put the precautions and steps anyone can take to stop an assault into the hands of all New Yorkers.”

The new guide, called “How You Can Help Prevent Sexual Assault & Harassment,” offers practical advice on how to stay safe, including:

1. **Trust your instincts.** They are usually correct. If you suspect that you are being followed, stay away from lonely, quiet blocks and head for a store you know to be open. Don’t be afraid to contact the police if you question your own safety in a situation.
2. **Plan your route along well-lit streets** where there is a lot of foot traffic or establishments open at the time of

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below). Their main mission is to prevent homelessness. So Ms. Martin, having established there's no rescue in sight, gave her audience good advice about taking steps to protect their own homes.

## **I CANT AFFORD THE RENT – WHAT DO I DO NOW?**

If it is possible to increase your income this is a good time to do it. You could:

- Request additional hours at work
- Change jobs
- Make sure everyone in the household contributes to the rent
- Make sure all household members are receiving all benefits they are eligible to get
- Do budgeting; separate needs from wants
- Find a roommate

Other options:

- Consider moving to a more affordable space
- Explore other boroughs
- Apply for low income, affordable housing in lotteries every week at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)
- Follow up on NYCHA applications
- Check with DHCR to find out your legally registered rent in case the landlord wants to raise it

Meantime, the Legal Aid Society assures you the landlord cannot evict you without taking you to Housing Court. You should not leave your apartment to reapply at PATH just because your Advantage rent has not been paid. You should know that landlords sometimes look at a person's history in Housing Court before deciding to rent them an apartment. So, if you have never been sued before in Housing Court, you might consider whether to leave your apartment before being sued.

You may be eligible for rent arrears under a rent program called FEPS (“Family Eviction Prevention Supplement”). The FEPS program is available only to **households with minor children with active cash public assistance cases** who have been **sued by their landlord in a court case** that can result, or did result, in their eviction and one of the elements in the case is/was that **excess rent is/was owed**.

In addition to facing a nonpayment or holdover case in housing court, you may also meet these requirements if:

- you were evicted within the past 6 months and are in the shelter system,
- you were evicted in the past year and are doubled up,
- you left your apartment due to a government vacate order, or
- you left your apartment because of a foreclosure proceeding.

Your rent must fall within the rent caps for your household size. The rules of FEPS are extremely complicated. Legal Aid suggests you call HomeBase to talk about your options (see list below).

Or walk in to the Crisis Intervention Program of the Coalition for the Homeless at 129 Fulton Street, lower Manhattan. Arrive by 8 am Monday through Friday to be sure you will be seen the day you come in.

If you are being evicted, call the Legal Aid office in your borough.

Bronx (718) 991-4600

Brooklyn (718) 722-3100

Manhattan (212) 426-3000

Queens (718) 286-2450

Staten Island (347) 422-5333

**Moving out of the shelter system? Keep this list handy in case you need help in your new community.**

### **HOMEbase OFFICES IN NYC**

#### **HELP I/HomeBase**

775 Crotona Park North  
Bronx, NY 10460  
(781) 299-8473

#### **HELP II/HomeBase**

1780 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, NY 10457  
(347) 226-4540

#### **Bronxworks HomeBase**

1130 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, NY 10456  
(718) 293-0727

#### **Catholic Charities HomeBase**

2155 Blackrock Ave.  
Bronx, NY 10472  
(718) 414-1050

#### **CAMBA HomeBase**

1117 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11213  
(718) 266-7323

#### **CAMBA III HomeBase**

648 Bay Street  
Staten Island, NY 10304  
(718) 282-6473

#### **CAMBA II HomeBase**

2211 Church Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11226  
(718) 940-6311

#### **Partnership for the Homeless**

**HomeBase**  
100 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11207  
(718) 875-0027

#### **Palladia HomeBase**

2276 Third Ave.  
New York, NY 10035  
(917) 492-1019

#### **Catholic Charities HomeBase**

87-80 Merrick Blvd.  
Jamaica, NY 11432  
(718) 674-1000

#### **Bushwick I HomeBase**

90 Beaver Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11206  
(718) 210-1627

#### **Bushwick II HomeBase**

1432 Pitkin Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11233  
(718) 221-4404

#### **Bushwick III HomeBase**

1475 Myrtle Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11237  
(718) 295-3738

your walk. If you are going to an area that you're not familiar with and it is late at night, walk with others or consider taking a car service or taxi. If you notice a streetlight that is not working in your area, you can call 311 to file a service request.

3. **Utilize community resources.** Hollaback! provides a website ([nyc.ihollaback.org](http://nyc.ihollaback.org)) and iPhone and Droid apps that allow you to anonymously share your story and view harassment and assault cases in your neighborhood that may not have been reported to the police. If you don't feel safe, non-profit organizations such as RightRides Safe Walk/Safe Slope or the Brooklyn Bike Patrol are available to escort you home in the evening and late-night. The Center for Anti-Violence Education also offers effective and empowering self-defense courses (see details below).
4. **Be alert and aware of your surroundings.** When walking home at night, keep your head up so you can see your surroundings. Work to present strong eyes and body language. Don't wear headphones or display other inviting targets like cell phones, hand-held electronic games, or expensive jewelry. Carry your bag close to your body, tucked in the bend of your elbow, so you can let it go if you have to.
5. **If a motorist bothers you while you are walking, turn around and walk in the opposite direction of the car.** Do this as often as necessary.
6. **Have your house key in your hand before you reach the door.** Keep your keys in your hand until you are safely inside for added protection.
7. **If you are coming home late at night, consider taking a taxi, car service or asking a friend for a ride – even if it's a short distance.** If you take a taxi or someone drops you off at home, ask the driver to wait until you are safely inside.
8. **Don't be afraid to yell and make a scene.** Attackers often expect us to be silent. Use a loud voice to draw attention and to let the attacker know you will not be an easy target.
9. **If you witness sexual harassment or assault, don't be afraid to intervene, safely:**
  - During the act of harassment, ask the person who is being harassed "Is this person bothering you?" That question alone may deter a harasser who believes no one will intervene. If they say yes and the harasser does not leave or persists harassing, tell the harasser to stop or call for assistance (from police, a transit authority worker, or other people nearby).
  - During the act of harassment, cause a distraction that will cause the harasser to stop. This may include asking the harasser for directions or for the time.
  - After the harassment, ask the person who was harassed if they are OK, and if there is anything you can do to help. If there is – help them out.
  - After the harassment, offer to escort the harassed individual to the police station or another safe location.

- Contact the police to report the harassment.

The guide also lists several organizations and community resources that provide preventative services and support for victims of sexual attacks:

**Right Rides – Late night ride home Escort Service**

Area: Four boroughs/45 NYC neighborhoods.

Contact: 888-215-SAFE (7233)

[www.rightrides.org](http://www.rightrides.org) / [info@rightrides.org](mailto:info@rightrides.org)

**We Make Us Better – Volunteer ride-home Escort Service**

Area: Park Slope, Utica Avenue subway station

Contact: [WeMakeUsBetter@gmail.com](mailto:WeMakeUsBetter@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/pages/We-Make-Us-Better/180406855303565](http://www.facebook.com/pages/We-Make-Us-Better/180406855303565)

**Brooklyn Bike Patrol – Volunteer ride-home Escort**

Area: Southern Park Slope and Prospect Heights

Contact: 718-744-7592 / [rocket55j@aol.com](mailto:rocket55j@aol.com)

**Safe Slope – “Safe Walk” Initiative, Volunteer ride-home Escort Service**

Area: South Slope, Greenwood Heights and Windsor Terrace

Contact: 347-709-8852 / [safeslope@gmail.com](mailto:safeslope@gmail.com)

**Center for Anti-Violence Education**

Contact: 718-788-1775 / [www.caeny.org](http://www.caeny.org)

The Center for Anti-Violence Education offers free and low-cost violence prevention and self-defense classes for youth, women, LGBTQ communities and survivors.

**Hollaback!**

Hollaback!, a non-profit dedicated to ending public sexual harassment and assault, provides a website and iPhone and Droid apps that allow you to anonymously share your story. The organization also offers a map of harassment and assault cases in your neighborhood.  
[nyc.ihollaback.org](http://nyc.ihollaback.org)

**The Coalition for Gender Equity in Schools**

The Coalition for Gender Equity in Schools provides workshops for youth, by youth, which help participants identify sexual harassment, develop skills to address it, and learn about their right to a safe school as outlined in Title IX.

Contact: 718-857-1393 / [coalition@ggenyc.org](mailto:coalition@ggenyc.org)

Download the full guide at:  
[advocate.nyc.gov/safercommunities](http://advocate.nyc.gov/safercommunities)

*“How You Can Help Prevent Sexual Assault & Harassment” was produced in partnership with City Council Members Julissa Ferreras, Vincent Gentile, Sara Gonzalez, Brad Lander, and Peter F. Vallone, Jr.; State Senators Eric Adams and Velmanette Montgomery; Assembly Members James Brennan, Joan Millman, and Felix Ortiz*

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# HOW...WHEN...WHERE GUIDE TO FREE CLOTHING

Here is a list of churches and community groups that give out clothing, free except where noted (Some also give out food, but you should call about dates and times of food programs). You might want to look for a program close to home, because some warn that their donated clothing may not be worth subway fare to you.

## BRONX

### St. Ann's Church of Morrisania

295 St. Ann's Ave. at 140th St.  
(718) 585-5632

Clothing is placed in bin outside; take as you please

## BROOKLYN

### St. John the Baptist Church

75 Lewis Ave, Bed-Sty  
(Willoughby St. entrance)  
(718) 455-6864

Mon, Wed, Thurs 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Need written referral & ID

### Salvation Army

252 86th St.  
(718) 238-2991

Call for appointment

## MANHATTAN

### Bowery Mission

227 Bowery  
(212) 674-3456

Tues and Fri 1:30-3 pm (Men only)

Come to pick up referral no later than 1 pm

### Cathedral Community Care

#### Cathedral of St. John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Ave.  
(212) 316-7581

Tues and Thurs 10 am to 1 pm

No written referral except for professional clothes (skirts, suits, ties, dress shirts)

### East 7th St. Baptist Church

205 E. 7th Street  
(212) 473-0044

Thurs 9 to 11 am

No referral or ID needed except for business attire

### Ephesus 7th Day Adventist Church

101 W. 123rd St. at Lenox Ave. (2nd door, ring bell)  
(212) 662-5536

Tues 11:00 am to 1 pm

Summertime 11 am to 2 pm

No referral or ID needed

### Holy Ghost Pentacostal Faith Church for all Nations

13-15 E. 125th Street  
(646) 873-0281

12 noon to 5 pm Monday-Saturday

### Metro Baptist Church

410 W. 40th St.  
(212) 594-4464

Winter only, starting Nov. 15.

Tuesday, signup starts at 10 am, pickup at 1 pm  
ID requested

### Middle Collegiate Church

50 E. 7th St.

(212) 477-0666

Sunday 9 to 10 am

### New York City Rescue Mission

90 Lafayette St. near Canal

(212) 226-6214

Call Tues or Wed. before 12, pickup Wed 3 to 5 pm

No referral needed

MEN's clothing only

### Riverside Church

120th St at Riverside Drive

(212) 870-6700

Thurs 9:30 to 11:30 am

Call ahead for availability and hours; referral needed

### St. Luke's Lutheran Church

308 W. 46th St.

(212) 246-3540

1st Monday each month (except Labor Day)

11:30 am to 1 pm

ID needed

### St. Paul's House

335 W. 51st St.

(212) 265-5433

Tues 10 to 10:30 am

No referral needed

If you need referrals to sources of free clothing, go to The Coalition for the Homeless at 129 Fulton Street, Lower Manhattan.

## IS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR YOU?

### CARY'S STORY: A LONG TREK TO HOME

Cary's nightmare has gone on for almost a year and a half. A victim of domestic violence, mother of an autistic son, she lost her job and her home and bounced from PATH to three different hotels, leaving each for medical reasons. Along the way she was smart enough to seek help from elected officials including the borough presidents of the Bronx and Manhattan (you may have read her story in our January-February newsletter).

Finally Cary and her son wound up in a Tier II family shelter where staff pitched in to help by filing an application for supportive housing for Cary and her little boy.

Keep your fingers crossed for them.

### THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Supportive housing started back in the 1980s to give housing plus supportive services to individuals with all sorts of problems who had been living on city streets – and the idea caught on in NYC and across the country. Now in this city alone there are 25,000 units of supportive housing – that is, permanent affordable housing for both individuals and families with services on site. Tenants pay no more than a third of their income in rent.

Who is eligible for supportive housing? While early tenants might have been suffering from a mental illness, these days supportive housing is also used by many others including homeless veterans, youth aging out of foster care, people with debilitating conditions like HIV/AIDS and substance abuse, and victims of domestic violence.

Being chronically homeless or at risk of being chronically homeless may qualify you for supportive housing, too. That's defined differ-

ent ways but if you've been in the shelter system for a long time – or you've been in and out of it for a long while -- you should look into supportive housing.

Everyone agrees there's never enough supportive housing to go around. But that's no reason not to check it out. As Susan Smith of CUCS (Center for Urban Community Services) says "There is always a waiting list but if you wait to apply when there are vacancies it's already too late."

In New York, a Federal law called NINYIII funds the most recently built supportive housing in this state. It limits this housing to only two classes of families:

400 units are set aside for chronically homeless families with head of household suffering from mental illness (NINY111D) and 750 units set aside for families with the head of household suffering from some serious disorder such as substance abuse or HIV/AIDS.

But in NYC older units of supportive housing also are offered by non-profit organizations to families with a whole range of problems. Apartments sponsored by Women in Need (212 695-4758) serve women who are victims of domestic violence and young mothers who have aged out of foster care. Palladia Inc. (212) 979-0100 has housing for women leaving prison among others.

If you think you might qualify for supportive housing, talk to your caseworker or housing specialist. You will need their help to complete and submit to the Department of Homeless Services what's called a pre 2010E assessment. If DHS approves, your application will move on to the Human Resources Administration for approval.

For more information about supportive housing, call CUCS at (212) 801-3300 or check out the CUCS website at CUCS.org where you'll find a list of available supportive housing of all sorts.