

# HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS

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## e-news update

April 2019

### Dear Supporters and Endorsers of the Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign,

This has been a busy time for the Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign, with multiple communities stopping enforcement of and even repealing their criminalization laws and beginning to explore shelter, housing, and other alternatives! See stories below. Also, the Campaign continues to grow, with over 875 endorsements so far! [Keep encouraging your friends, colleagues, and elected officials to endorse.](#)

Follow on social media

#HNH  

If you have submissions for the next newsletter, please fill out [this Google form](#) by **May 17th**.

## Campaign Updates

### HNH Victory in Harrisonburg

Advocates from Occupy Harrisonburg (VA), are celebrating the tabling of a proposed anti-panhandling ordinance by their city council. After the group raised concerns on last month's HNH web convening, the Law Center directed them to our [messaging resources](#), which the group has used effectively in [rallies](#) and [tv interviews](#), the Law Center submitted a letter opposing the ordinance, and the group was able to turn out [great crowds](#), including directly-impacted individuals to testify against the ordinance. The proposal was voted down and now advocates are looking to implement more constructive approaches. This is exactly the sort of national support for local organizing the HNH Campaign was designed to produce, and we are thrilled for the success of our partners in Harrisonburg!

### Right to Counsel in Eviction for Low-Income Tenants Begins in NYC

The threat of eviction frequently hangs over low-income tenants, but [recent steps in New York City](#) may signal a change in how such matters are resolved—a change that offers tenants a better chance of maintaining their housing. A new program now gives low-income tenants the right to help from an attorney in fighting eviction cases. Those disputing an unjust eviction now have an improved chance of success, which benefits both the tenants and the

landlords, who will not need to turn over their tenancies, as well as the city as a whole, which is saving on homelessness services. Similar programs have already been adopted in Newark and San Francisco, and policymakers from across the country [have their eyes on the program](#), so it may see further adoption elsewhere if it proves successful.

## UN Human Rights Committee Calls for Homelessness to be Addressed

The Human Rights Committee of the United Nations has recently released their [list of issues prior to reporting \(LOIPR\)](#) for the fifth periodic report for the United States, and specifically calls out the issue of criminalization of homelessness in the text. In response to a submission by led by the Law Center and supported by HNH members the [Coalition on Homelessness of San Francisco](#), [Global Initiative on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights](#), [Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles](#), [National Health Care for the Homeless Council](#), [Public Interest Law Project](#), [Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness](#), and [Southern Legal Counsel](#), the Committee requests information from the U.S. regarding the measures it has adopted to end criminalization and implement alternatives to criminalization. The LOIPR also directly connects homelessness and the right to life, which at the international level includes concerns around the state's duty to protect individuals from, for example, the dangers of criminalization and the crisis of unsheltered homelessness. The U.S. must respond in the next year, and the Law Center will be monitoring for progress.

## "Housing Not Handcuffs" #IAskForHelpBecause Campaign Expansion

This month we began the second round of our #IAskForHelpBecause Campaign. In our first round of the campaign, we sent worked with organizations in 11 states to send letters to cities across the country informing them that their anti-panhandling laws were unconstitutional and asking them to repeal their ordinances. We saw success, with 70 cities (and counting) repealing, reviewing, or readdressing their panhandling laws without the need for litigation.

From our successful campaign, we learned that our method works. The Law Center will expand our efforts and success into all 50 states. Sending demand letters with the help of the Law Center and our pro bono partners can be both a manageable and effective process for our busy partner organizations. In just the first few days since the launch we have gotten responses from more than a 25 organization across 17 states interested in joining this round of the campaign. We are continuing our outreach efforts and hope to make this campaign even more successful than last year. To find out more information about joining the campaign or the success of the initial campaign contact [Pierre Collins](#).

Announcements

NATIONAL LAW CENTER  
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

# National Forum on the Human Right to Housing

June 5-6, 2019  
Washington, D.C.



[Register now](#) for the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty's annual **National Forum on the Human Right to Housing**! People who are currently or formerly homeless, attorneys, government officials, and advocates from across the country will gather in Washington, D.C., to organize and strategize on ways we can work to end the criminalization of people experiencing homelessness.

**Become a sponsor** of the National Forum and help students, individuals with limited income, and currently and formerly homeless people attend this important event. For more information about law firm and corporate sponsorship opportunities, contact Development & Communications Director Cassidy Waskowicz at [cwaskowicz@nlchp.org](mailto:cwaskowicz@nlchp.org).

## HNH One Pager

This [one pager](#) provides an overview of the HNH Campaign and outlines concrete ways for people to get involved. It also includes a fact sheet on the criminalization of homelessness. This tool is useful to share with people who are already familiar with homelessness issues and are looking for more information about the HNH Campaign.

## Campaign Branding

We encourage campaign endorsers to link relevant events to the national Housing Not Handcuffs campaign. Please see the guidelines for branding your materials [here](#).

**HOUSING**  
**NOT HANDCUFFS**

## In the News

[Chairwoman Waters Introduces Bill to End Homelessness in America](#)  
March 26, 2019

[Cities Can't Punish Homeless People for Sleeping On Street, Court Affirms](#)  
April 1, 2019

[Ruling protecting homeless who sleep in parks when they don't have options remains](#)  
April 1, 2019

[Homeless Persons Cannot Be Punished for Sleeping in Absence of Alternatives, 9th Circuit Decision Establishes](#)  
April 2, 2019

[Court rules again: Homeless can still legally sleep in public](#)  
April 3, 2019

[Federal court: Cities cannot criminalize homelessness](#)  
April 8, 2019

[Appeals court finds criminalizing homelessness unconstitutional](#)  
April 10, 2019

[Cities can't criminalize homelessness: Appeals court upholds ruling](#)  
April 12, 2019

[Homeless Persons Cannot Be Punished for Sleeping in Absence of Alternatives, 9th Circuit Decision Establishes](#)  
April 22, 2019

[You asked, we answered: Where are people experiencing homelessness allowed to live?](#)  
April 23, 2019

[Advocates Eye Legal Options as Homeless Are Ticketed Along River in Sacramento](#)  
April 23, 2019

Legal landscape fast-moving in Santa Cruz homeless camp evictions  
April 24, 2019

**NATIONAL LAW CENTER  
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY**

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on behalf of the Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign  
[housingnohandcuffs.org](http://housingnohandcuffs.org)