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Dear Friends of THC,

You have probably seen the recent newspaper coverage, and so you know that DC is in the midst of a homeless family shelter crisis. (See links below.) The largest family shelter in the district, DC General, is full to capacity, housing 280 families. Another 470 families are living in hotels and recreation centers around the city. The current total of 700 homeless families is expected to increase by 300 by the end of the hypothermia season— this means that 1,000 families in Washington, DC will be homeless within the next 2 months.

Please note that while THC is working to address the crisis through our daily work as well as in consultation with the Department of Human Services, The Community Partnership, and legal, and policy advocates; we are not engaging in public, political or media discussion.

It has been a busy two weeks of hearings and planning meetings, but I wanted to take a moment to update you on what is going on to address this dire family shelter situation. Since optimistically [testifying](#) last Monday at the Public Oversight Roundtable on Shelter Provisions for Homeless Families, it has become clear that the Administration is still formulating its response. It is expected that the Mayor will announce plans next week, but to this point a community wide response has not been prepared.

To continue to support this effort to get families into housing as swiftly as possible, I met at the Episcopal diocesan convention with fellow Episcopalians, Linda Kaufman from the 100k Homes Campaign, and Emily

Guthrie from St. Margaret's to figure out what can be done. Here are some ways for you to respond proactively to this crisis:

1. **Help us increase the number of affordable housing units.** Talk with landlords, small and large, anyone with space property available to offer cheaper housing options for the medium and longer term in Washington, DC. THC will be mounting an intensive public outreach and communications effort to increase the number of units made available to families in the rapid rehousing program.
2. **Advocate** for more focus and attention on the family housing crisis and on medium and longer term solutions. Tell your council member that this is a priority for you.
3. **Raise awareness.** Spread the word to everyone you know by bringing up this issue in person and online. For talking points or new information, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @thcdc or @maryrandolph
4. **Pray** for the homeless families suffering, for service providers who are trying to serve the families and address the crisis, and for all in our city in positions of leadership who must have the strength and courage to act.

Finally, I will be in New Orleans next week at the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference on Family and Youth Homelessness and will bring back strategies to help end our crisis in DC by following the successful path many communities across our country have forged.

Thank you for your continued support and energy in this fight to end family homelessness in DC. Please call or email me with any questions or comments at pdonaldson@thcdc.org

Blessings to all,

Polly Donaldson

Executive Director, Transitional Housing Corporation

Recent Articles on Family Homelessness:

[In the District, affordable housing has to be the answer to rising homelessness 02-11-14](#)

[D.C. homeless crisis puts in play Gray's record as city steward 02-10-14](#)

[D.C. Mayor Vincent Gray discusses homeless 'crisis' 02-10-14](#)





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