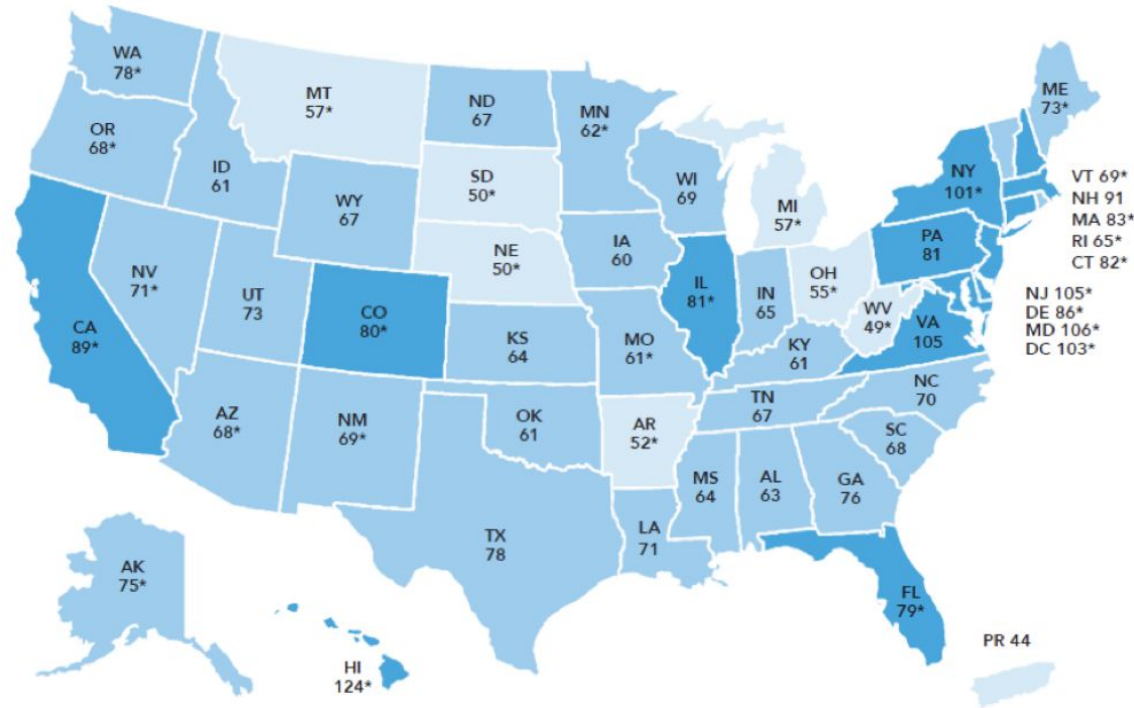


How Grassroots Organizing and Medical-Legal Collaboration Brought Us the Right to Counsel

Connecticut Medical Legal Partnership Conference

Thursday, April 7, 2022

An affordable housing crisis: rental costs are out of reach



Hours needed at minimum wage to afford a one-bedroom unit

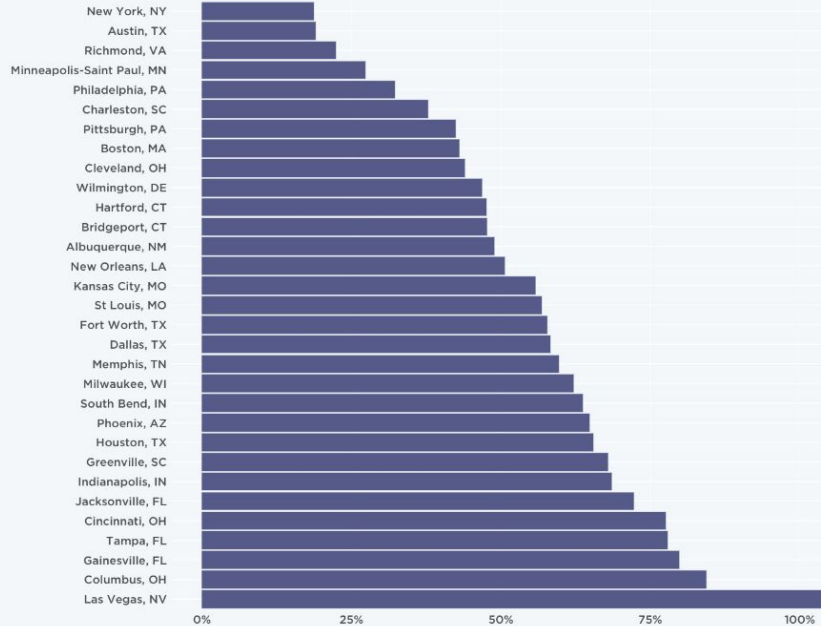
60 hours per week or less 61 to 78 hours per week 79 hours per week or more

*This state's minimum wage exceeds the federal minimum wage

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition.
Out of Reach, 2015

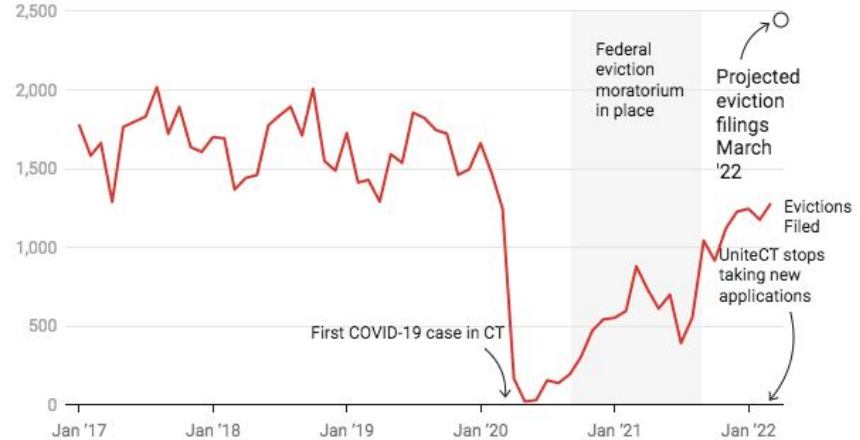
An epidemic of evictions...

Figure 1. Eviction filings in 2021 in ETS cities, relative to historical average



Eviction filings in CT, 2017-22

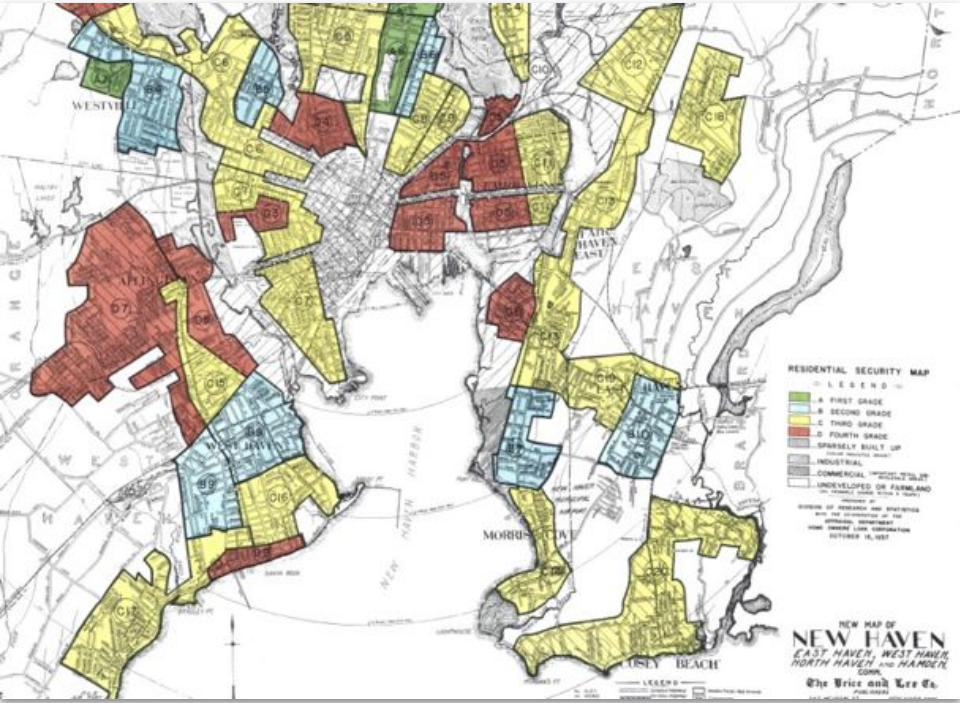
If evictions are filed at the same rate through the rest of March, Connecticut will see the highest number of filings in a month since at least 2017. Hover over the line to see the number of filings by month.



March 2022 data is current as of March 16. The earliest data available is from January 2017.

Chart: Ginny Monk / Connecticut Mirror • Source: Connecticut Fair Housing Center • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

The eviction crisis is a racial justice crisis...



Here in Connecticut...

Eviction Filing Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Per 100K Population*

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average
Black	1,196	1,141	1,094	367	491	858
Hispanic/Latino	776	765	748	245	338	574
American Indian or Alaska Native	635	631	576	194	306	468
White	345	333	322	108	167	255
Multiracial	227	223	212	71	103	167
Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	179	179	175	59	93	137

* Estimated with Table P2 from 2020 Census Redistricting Data

Table: CTData Collaborative • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Eviction is a **health harming** legal need...



Photo credit: Matthew Desmond. Forced Out. *The New Yorker*. February 18, 2016

Eviction And Health: A Vicious Cycle Exacerbated By A Pandemic

[Gracie Himmelstein](#), [Matthew Desmond](#)

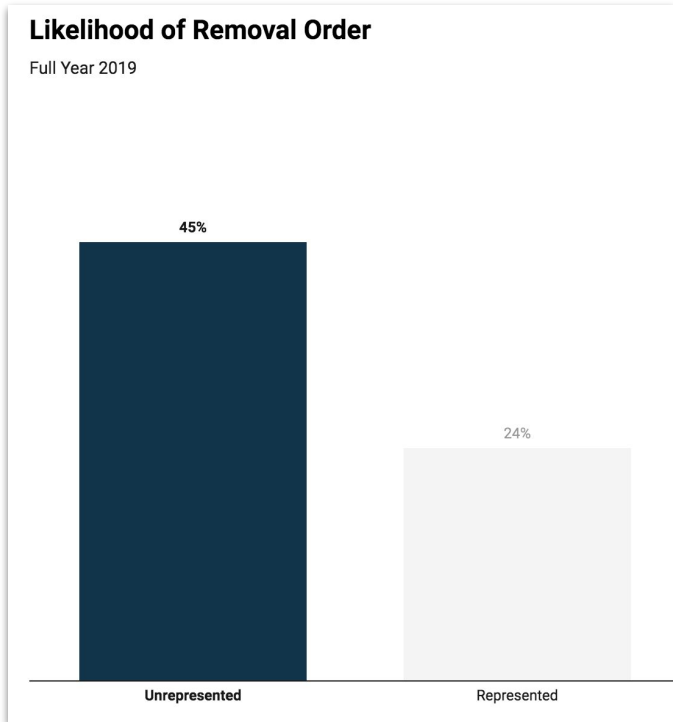
The COVID-19 pandemic has put an increasing number of people at risk for eviction, which is associated with many adverse health outcomes and contributes to health inequities. Emergency and long-term interventions are needed to address this public health crisis.

APRIL 1, 2021

10.1377/hpb20210315.747908



The eviction crisis is also a legal issue...



Why Right to Counsel

- Unrepresented tenants nearly twice as likely to experience a removal order.
- Only 7% of tenants who appear in court have representation compared to more than 80% of landlords.
- White tenants more likely to have representation than tenants of color.

Where Right to Counsel

- 8 cities and counting since 2017
- In 2021: CT, MD, WA

How Did We Win Right to Counsel in CT?

Connecticut Right to Counsel Coalition

- Lead by the Central CT DSA in partnership with over 40 different organizations
- In 7 months, coalition and allies successfully advocated for the passage of a statewide bill with \$20 million of federal ARPA funds for the first two years

Key campaign elements

- RTC petition and coalition building
- Educational materials & information sessions
- Phone banks
- Public hearing testimony guide & workshops
- Op-eds written by a diverse set of coalition members
- Letter from 125 medical professionals urging Gov. Lamont to use federal relief funds for Right to Counsel



Implementing a Right to Counsel for Tenants

- Connecticut is just the *second state* to implement Right to Counsel!
- Rolling out across the state as attorneys are hired and trained
- Currently open to tenants in 15 zip codes and all U.S. military veterans statewide

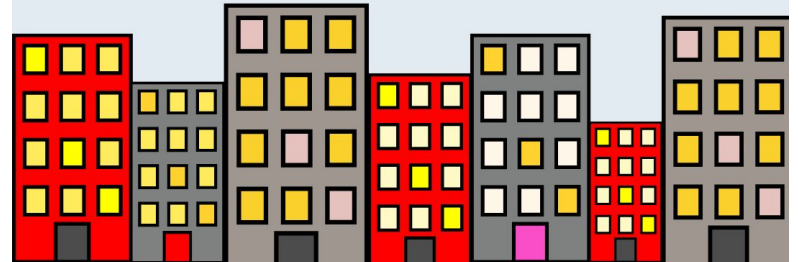
Free legal representation available in these **zip codes** (& more coming soon!):

Bridgeport: 06610 Waterbury: 06710

Hartford: 06105 / 06106 / 06112 / 06114 / 06120

New Haven: 06511 / 06513 / 06519

New London: 06320 Willimantic: 06226



How to Access Right to Counsel

- Tenants receive a notice about the Right to Counsel program with the Notice to Quit and the Court Summons
- Tenants can call **1-800-559-1565** to request an attorney
- Visit www.EvictionHelpCT.org for current zip codes and more resources



**You are facing the loss of your home or housing subsidy.
We are here to help.**



The State of Connecticut created a **Right to Counsel** program (CT-RTC) to provide *free legal representation* to income eligible tenants facing eviction or loss of housing subsidy. The program will begin in a few communities on January 31, 2022 and grow over time.

To find out if **FREE LEGAL REPRESENTATION** is available where you live and if you qualify call **1-800-559-1565** or visit **www.EvictionHelpCT.org**

What Comes Next?

The fight isn't over! We need to ensure the program is equitably implemented + awarded permanent funding in 2023.

- Sign up to get involved in the campaign
 - tinyurl.com/3677k6as
- Spread the word about RTC rollout in your community
 - Fliers, social media graphics, and more: linktr.ee/CTRRTC

