

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
NOTICE OF JOINT PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004**

**COUNCILMEMBER ANITA BONDS, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION**

&

**COUNCILMEMBER BRIANNE K. NADEAU, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

ANNOUNCE A JOINT PUBLIC OVERSIGHT ROUNDTABLE

on the matter of

Stronger Together by Assisting You (STAY) DC

(Government Witnesses Only)

on

Wednesday, June 2, 2021, at 9:00 AM
Via Zoom & YouTube

On Wednesday, June 2, 2021, Councilmembers Anita Bonds and Brianne K. Nadeau will hold a joint public oversight roundtable on the matter of STAY DC.

The District of Columbia was granted \$350 million in emergency rental assistance (ERA) funds through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. After convening and receiving input from the Saving DC's Rental Housing Market Strike Force, the Council, and other stakeholders, the Mayor announced the establishment of the STAY DC program on April 12, 2021. STAY DC is a financial assistance program for District of Columbia renters and housing providers who are looking for support to cover housing and utility expenses and offset the loss of income caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to federal guidelines, 10 % of the ERA funds can be used to cover the administration of the program and at least 90% must be used for direct financial assistance, including rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utilities and home energy costs arrears, and other expenses related to housing. Additionally, the federal guidelines require that \$130 million of the STAY DC funds be obligated by September 30, 2021, or the unused balance may be reallocated to other states by the federal government.

STAY DC has been in place for over a month, and the District received federal guidance on the expenditure of the funds from the U.S. Treasury on May 10. The District is still in the early stages

of distributing these funds. It is clear that the process can take up to 60 days or more, due to federal requirements to get the consent of both landlords and tenants. Furthermore, on Friday, May 21, 2021, the Council's Special Committee on COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery convened a public oversight hearing on "An Equitable End to Safety Net Protections Put in Place During the COVID-19 Pandemic." During this hearing, many witnesses expressed serious concerns about STAY DC, including, but not limited to, overly burdensome eligibility and documentation requirements, lack of outreach and education about the program, misinformation from helpline employees, and accessibility challenges related to the digital divide and language access.

The purpose of this roundtable is to provide representatives of the Executive an opportunity to provide updates on the implementation of the program and steps that have been taken to address challenges that were identified during the May 21 hearing and through other Council and stakeholder outreach. The roundtable will also provide an opportunity to discuss novel strategies and programmatic improvements that should be considered going forward to ensure that District renters need not fear mass evictions and utility shutoffs, housing providers are able to pay their mortgages, and the District gets on track to meet its spending obligations by the end of the fiscal year.

All Councilmembers will receive an individual Zoom invitation for the roundtable in a separate email. If a Councilmember does not have a separate link, please contact Sam Stephens at sstephens@dccouncil.us.

The roundtable can be viewed on the Committee on Housing and Executive Administration's official YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgy5EojaMYGtwicWSfg9NeA>.

If anyone has questions regarding the joint public oversight roundtable, please contact Sam Stephens at sstephens@dccouncil.us or (202) 793-1320.