

## POST-RELEASE

## CONTACT

### PRESS CONFERENCE:

Wednesday, October 18 at 12 PM  
Foundation Plaza, City Hall Park

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## **“Unlock NYC Launches the Serial Discriminators List to Combat Housing Discrimination.”**

### **Advocates, fair housing attorneys, and government agencies gather to denounce “Serial Discriminators” for perpetuating the homelessness crisis**

New York, NY – Addressing New York City's escalating homelessness crisis, Unlock NYC unveils the Serial Discriminators List to tackle housing discrimination head-on. On October 18, 2023, advocates, fair housing attorneys, and government agencies will gather at City Hall Park to publicly name and shame dozens of **“serial discriminators”** for perpetuating the homelessness crisis. The inaugural Serial Discriminators List is compiled of 23 real estate entities across New York City that have been reported more than ten for allegedly discriminating against voucher holders between 2018 and 2023. **The report is accessible at the following link: <https://weunlock.nyc/serial-discriminators/>**

Source of income (SOI) discrimination, the practice of denying housing to tenants with rental assistance vouchers, is the most pervasive form of illegal housing bias in New York City. Over 500 New Yorkers contributed to the creation of the Serial Discriminators List by collectively sharing more than 1,800 reports related to SOI discrimination across all five boroughs. One of our esteemed partners, Neighbors Together, played a crucial role in this effort. **Neighbors Together member Jasmine Miller-Smith**, who has been impacted by source of income discrimination, emphasized this issue by stating, “Source of income

discrimination is a social injustice that denies equal opportunities to those in need of a home. It's time to break these barriers and build a more inclusive society."

Spearheaded by the tech nonprofit Unlock NYC, the Serial Discriminators List was compiled thanks to a user-friendly chatbot designed to facilitate reporting and documenting incidents of SOI discrimination for voucher holders. Reports submitted through the chatbot were shared with Unlock NYC's esteemed referral partners, including the Fair Housing Justice Center, the New York State Attorney General's Housing Protection Unit, and the NYC Commission on Human Rights, which are dedicated to combating housing discrimination. In expressing their commitment to this initiative, the **Fair Housing Justice Center** stated, "Housing providers who flout fair housing laws using techniques such as ghosting, automated messages, and unfairly restrictive income requirements must be held to account. We are proud to partner with organizations like Unlock NYC in the fight against rampant source of income discrimination in New York."

At the forefront of the Serial Discriminators List are corporate landlords Philip and Marc Goldfarb from Goldfarb Properties, as well as Jonathan Wiener from Chestnut Holdings, each entity having been reported for suspected SOI discrimination 31 times. The Goldfarb portfolio includes 26 properties, primarily situated in the Bronx, the Rockaways (Queens), and Manhattan. Earlier this month, Goldfarb Properties was [defeated in a federal lawsuit](#) demonstrating how the company's income requirements discriminate against voucher holders. "With recent legal wins against discriminators like Goldfarb Properties, an increased SOI discrimination budget for the upcoming year, the public release of Unlock's Serial Discriminator List, and our continued persistence as a city, we will set a new standard: to empower voucher holders everywhere while condemning and deterring voucher discrimination once and for all," said **Kamilah Newton, mother of two, CityFHEPS voucher holder, and activist-in-residence with Unlock NYC.**

Source of income discrimination is akin to a modern-day form of redlining, perpetuating systemic inequalities in fair housing. This discriminatory practice highlights a clear intersection between racial disparities and housing justice, as marginalized communities continue to face unjust barriers to secure stable housing. "We are proud to join voucher-holders to call attention to source-of-income discrimination and expose the landlords and real estate brokers who have consistently been reported to engage in this harmful practice," said **Bennett Reinhardt, Advocacy Coordinator and Neighborhood Organizer, Open Hearts Initiative.** Source-of-income discrimination compounds our

record homelessness crisis, prevents homeless neighbors from the stability and security that comes with permanent housing, and perpetuates false narratives that New Yorkers who hold vouchers (either homeless or at risk of homelessness) are less likely to pay their rent and be good tenants. Our volunteers and chapter members, who live and work in neighborhoods across the city, believe that we are all safer and better off when homeless New Yorkers have permanent housing. We are proud to have voucher-holders as neighbors and call on the real-estate industry to stop source-of-income discrimination immediately. It's the right thing to do and it's the law."

Impacted New Yorkers, grassroots organizations, government agencies, and fair housing attorneys are standing together to send a message: discriminators will not be tolerated.

**New York Attorney General Letitia James**, in support of this collective effort, emphasized, "Landlords and brokers who unjustly deny voucher holders will face repercussions. No New Yorker should have to worry that their source of income could dictate whether they have a place to rest their head at night. For a landlord to deny housing based on an individual's source of income is not only illegal, but also reprehensible. As we continue to face a housing crisis here in New York, my office is committed to putting an end to this immoral and discriminatory practice. I am proud to be working with our government and advocacy partners statewide to stop serial discriminators from taking advantage of unsuspecting New Yorkers, and am grateful to Unlock NYC for continuing to raise awareness and increase transparency regarding this important issue."

Unlock NYC, together with their partners, would like to extend a cordial invitation to all members of the press, advocates, and community members to join them at the Serial Discriminators List Press Conference, which will be held outside City Hall on October 18, 2023, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

