



# 2019 - 2022 HABC Achievement Report

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## A Note from Our Executive Director

I am thrilled to present the Housing Authority of Bergen County's Achievement Report for the years 2019 – 2022. These achievements capture and highlight our COVID years and our collective endeavors and achievements in ensuring accessible, sustainable, and equitable housing solutions for our community.

Through these years, our team at the Housing Authority continued to uphold our commitment to providing decent, safe, and affordable housing for our residents and participants. We have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities, and made significant strides in fulfilling our mission. We have engaged with our community and increased our efforts to reach new heights, fostering stronger relationships within our communities, landlords and tenants. We conducted various outreach programs,

forums, and symposiums to better understand the evolving needs of our constituents, landlords and residents. Through strategic partnerships and innovative funding models, we have expanded our affordable housing inventory for the most vulnerable populations in Bergen County. This expansion has allowed us to accommodate more individuals and families seeking safe and stable housing. Leveraging technology, we've improved our services and streamlined processes to better communicate and assist our clients. Our digital platforms now offer easier access to housing applications and support services, enhancing user experience and efficiency. Our commitment to residents' well-being remains unwavering. We've introduced enhanced support programs focusing on education, health, and employment opportunities to empower our tenants. We continue to be the national standard bearer in homeless services, re-housing and supporting homeless households to remain housed.

Through training and development initiatives, we've equipped our staff with the necessary tools and knowledge to better serve our communities. Investing in our team's growth has been a priority.

As we move into the next year, our focus remains steadfast on furthering our impact and addressing the evolving housing needs of our community. We aspire to continue forging meaningful partnerships, exploring innovative solutions, and advocating for policies that support our mission.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each member of our team, our Board of Commissioners, our partners, stakeholders, and the community for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, we have made remarkable progress, but our journey towards equitable housing for all is ongoing. Thank you for your commitment, resilience, and passion in making a difference in the lives of those we serve. Let us continue our efforts with renewed enthusiasm and determination in the coming year.

- Lynn Bartlett

## Housing Authority Leadership



**Lynn Bartlett**  
Executive Director



**Michele Dilorgi**  
Deputy Director



**Vincent M. Bufis**  
Director of Operations



**Al Restaino**  
Finance Director



**Ramia Cepeda**  
Eligibility & Leasing  
Supervisor



**Shahin Rahvar**  
Director of Voucher  
Programs



**Donna Martini**  
Assisted Housing  
Supervisor

## About

The Housing Authority of Bergen County (HABC) was established in 1964 with the goal of providing housing opportunities for low income families and older adults. Almost all of our programs and activities are funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Our initial years of operation focused on the housing needs of older adults and disabled persons. Starting in 1975, we developed or were involved in the development of almost 500 units of housing for this population in Dumont, East Rutherford, Lyndhurst, and Palisades Park.

We are well known as an exceptionally creative housing authority and continue stepping outside of the traditional understanding of comparable agencies. In this way, we have been the contract manager for the Bergen County Housing Health and Human Services Center, a 90-bed emergency shelter, since its opening in 2009. In this capacity, our staff were instrumental in utilizing all



our resources and leading the efforts to mark Bergen County as the first in the nation to end chronic homelessness.

Additionally, we are the owner and operator of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Senior Citizen Activity Center in Hackensack, showcasing our commitment to providing for an aging population's socialization and nutrition within their community in addition to housing needs.

We are an extremely active and successful public housing agency. We presently assist over 4,500 households in making housing affordable to them. We are exceptionally proud of our past accomplishments and continue to be creative in developing programs that cover the continuum of assistance.

## Our Mission

Our mission statement is committed to creating and preserving affordable housing. We focus our efforts in the efficient management and maintenance of our affordable housing portfolio and rental assistance programs. We help those who are struggling with housing affordability, at any level, while providing housing opportunities for all with the ultimate goal of family self-sufficiency.

Our facilities cover a diverse group of participants, including seniors, Veterans, people with disabilities, and families. We administer the largest Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program in the County, and one of the five largest in the State. This tenant-based form of subsidy is targeted to assist the County's most vulnerable populations: low and very low income families, Veterans, seniors, people with disabilities, and those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.



## Making Progress During Covid-19

During the early onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, HABC took action to protect our residents and staff. We continued to adapt as recommendations and new policies were brought forward.

To support social distancing in our offices and buildings, we purchased laptops and necessary software to enable employees to work from home. For staff working within our offices, we implemented heightened cleaning protocols to help keep everyone safe.



Bergen County and HABC staff deliver meals and supplies to residents.

Within our managed properties, we began a 7-day-a-week disinfecting schedule, focusing on keeping common areas and high-touch surfaces like elevator buttons and door handles clean.

Additional improvements included:

- Processing tenant certifications electronically by utilizing self-service kiosks, RingCentral, CallMax, and a secure dropbox at properties for tenants to safely and securely provide documents without coming into contact with any staff members.
- Deliveries of meals and masks to our residents, including those who participate in communal meal times.
- Installation of temperature and mask monitoring devices at building entrances.

Rental assistance payments were processed on time to ensure participating landlords received their monies. Once available, nearly 1,000 vaccinations were provided to interested households within our properties. Within our properties, from 2020 to 2021 only 50 total cases were reported.



A staff member assists a resident with submitting documentation during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Less Than 5%  
of Households  
Reported a Positive  
Covid-19 Test from  
2020-2021**



New self-service kiosks provided a safe way for residents to submit documentation during the pandemic.



Bergen County and HABC staff deliver meals and supplies to residents.



Bergen County and HABC staff deliver meals and supplies to residents.



A new cleaning routine was implemented to enhance overall cleanliness of high-touch surfaces.



## The Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County is the nonprofit development arm of the HABC.

### Completing Projects & Breaking New Ground

The Housing Authority of Bergen County through the nonprofit development affiliate, the Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County (HDC), continues to provide affordable housing for Bergen County residents.

The design is a three-story apartment building with elevator service, on-site parking, security cameras, and secured entry.

Common areas include a lobby, community room with a kitchen, game room, dining room, and laundry facilities with Energy Star commercial equipment. Nestled in the tranquility of suburban, northern Bergen County, the property also includes office space for property management and social services staff.

Our final endeavor was purchasing new properties in Hackensack that will eventually serve as our new home for HABC headquarters along with new affordable housing units.

In Saddle Brook, we completed and cut the ribbon on a new 30-unit development for seniors. Located across the street from Saddle Brook Senior Center, residents have easy access to programs and services.

We successfully financed and broke ground on the future of supportive housing, leading the way in New Jersey and the nation with a property that features 70 affordable apartments.



Progress is made on construction of new low-income senior, special needs, and veterans housing in Upper Saddle River.



Bergen County leaders cut the ribbon on our new senior housing facility in Saddle Brook.



## Updating & Improving Facilities

Throughout the pandemic, we continued making upgrades to our facilities. These improvements include maintenance of infrastructure, as well as cosmetic enhancements suggested by residents.

### Brookside Gardens

In the lobby, we installed new flooring and purchased new furniture. Hallways throughout the entire building were painted, as well as all the doors. The cosmetic improvements give the building a modern, airy feel.

### Mahwah & Ramsey

Each townhouse unit had a new boiler installed, ensuring families in the 66 units have access to heat in the winter and hot water.

### Carucci Apartments

We replaced the flooring and painted in all of the common areas and hallways. New furniture was purchased for the lobby and shared spaces, including the on-site senior activity center that provides communal meals for residents each day.

### Palisades Park, Hasbrouck Heights & Dumont

New flooring was installed in common areas and the hallways across these properties.



## Events

### Bus Tour

The Housing Authority invited all employees to tour properties owned and managed by HABC. Two buses provided the transportation for everyone to visit the properties, including our new development in Upper Saddle River. This provided an opportunity for everyone to see the impact of their work.

### Picnic

Annually, HABC hosts a company picnic at Van Saun Park. Games, food, and, most importantly, Mr. Softee is enjoyed by everyone, as we reflect on the year's accomplishments, new hires, and special occasions.

### Holiday Party

The annual holiday party returned once again, following the Covid-19 Pandemic. A dinner including company highlights, employee longevity, peer recognition awards, and special comments from Board members highlighted the night.

### DEI Event

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is very important to the Authority. A special event was held at Bowlero in Wallington, where all employees were invited to spend time with their colleagues, eat, bowl, and take in a DEI training provided by Jackie Lue Raia. HABC understands how important DEI training is to building a safe and equitable workspace for all employees.



## HABC Receives Moving to Work Designation

On January 27, 2022, we were selected by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for admission to the Landlord Incentive Cohort of the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program. Our authority was one of 29 agencies selected by the federal agency.

The new program allows us more administrative flexibility in testing innovative, locally-designed strategies to increase housing choices for low-income families. We continue to explore opportunities to enhance our efficiency and further meet the demand for safe, affordable housing in Bergen County.



## Our Impact

Over the four year period, we saw some of the highest new housing admissions in our Authority's existence. We continue working to support the demand for housing in Bergen County and are steadfast in our commitment to providing a safe place to live for our residents.



	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Housing Choice Voucher</b>	323	137	118	283
<b>Multi-Family</b>	25	20	15	17
<b>Project Based Vouchers</b>	153	56	46	162
<b>Total New Admissions Per Year</b>	501	213	179	462

With so many new admissions, our vacancy rates also hit historical lows. This achievement is a testament to the Authority's hardworking staff who helps families and individuals move in to new homes each week.

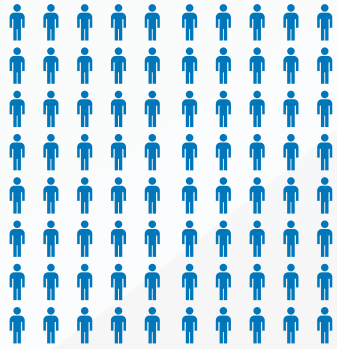


## 2019-2022 Housing Choice Voucher Data

In the past four years, our staff has worked diligently to serve Bergen County residents. Despite some of the most challenging circumstances in our history, we continued supporting housing choice across our properties.

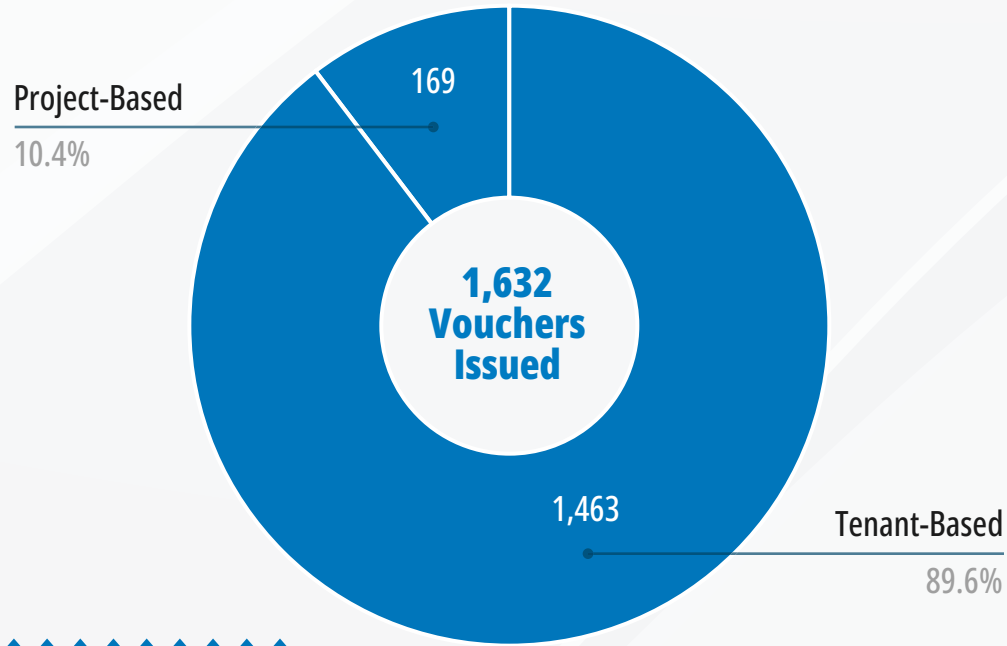
**8,023**

Individuals Served



**4,034**

Households Served



Our HCV Wait List was opened twice in the past four years. The first time was approximately a year before the pandemic from January 14-18, 2019. The second occasion was from May 16-20, 2022.

In October 2018, we awarded 35 Mainstream vouchers that are tenant-based rental assistance for households experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. We provided another 11 in June 2020.

One year later in June 2021, we awarded 58 Emergency Housing Vouchers which were funded through the American Rescue Plan. These provide tenant-based rental assistance for homeless, at-risk, recently homeless, or fleeing domestic violence households.

## Celebrating

# Retirements

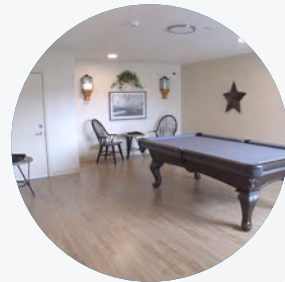
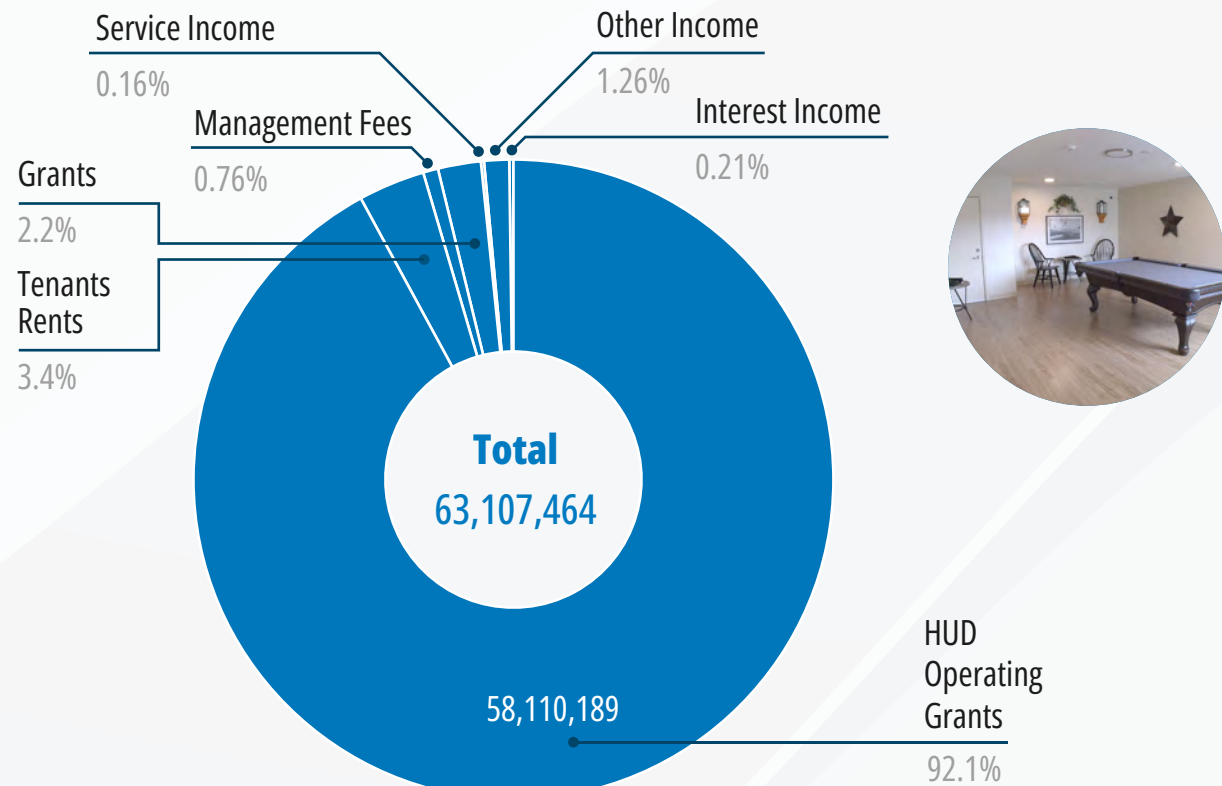
Congratulations to members of our staff who have retired!

Thank you for your many years of dedicated service to Bergen County residents.

Name	Title	Years of Service
John Andreula	Field Maintenance Assistant	11
Colin Burke	Field Superintendent	28
Gail L. Carnevale	Accounting Specialist	38
James Giel	Regional Property Manager	23
Marianne Hisen	Assisted Housing Specialist	23
Joy Lannaman	Field Tenant & Social Services Coordinator	2
Georgios Stavrou	Procurement Coordinator	19
Ann Stein	Assisted Housing Specialist	11
James Wolbert	Assisted Housing Specialist	16

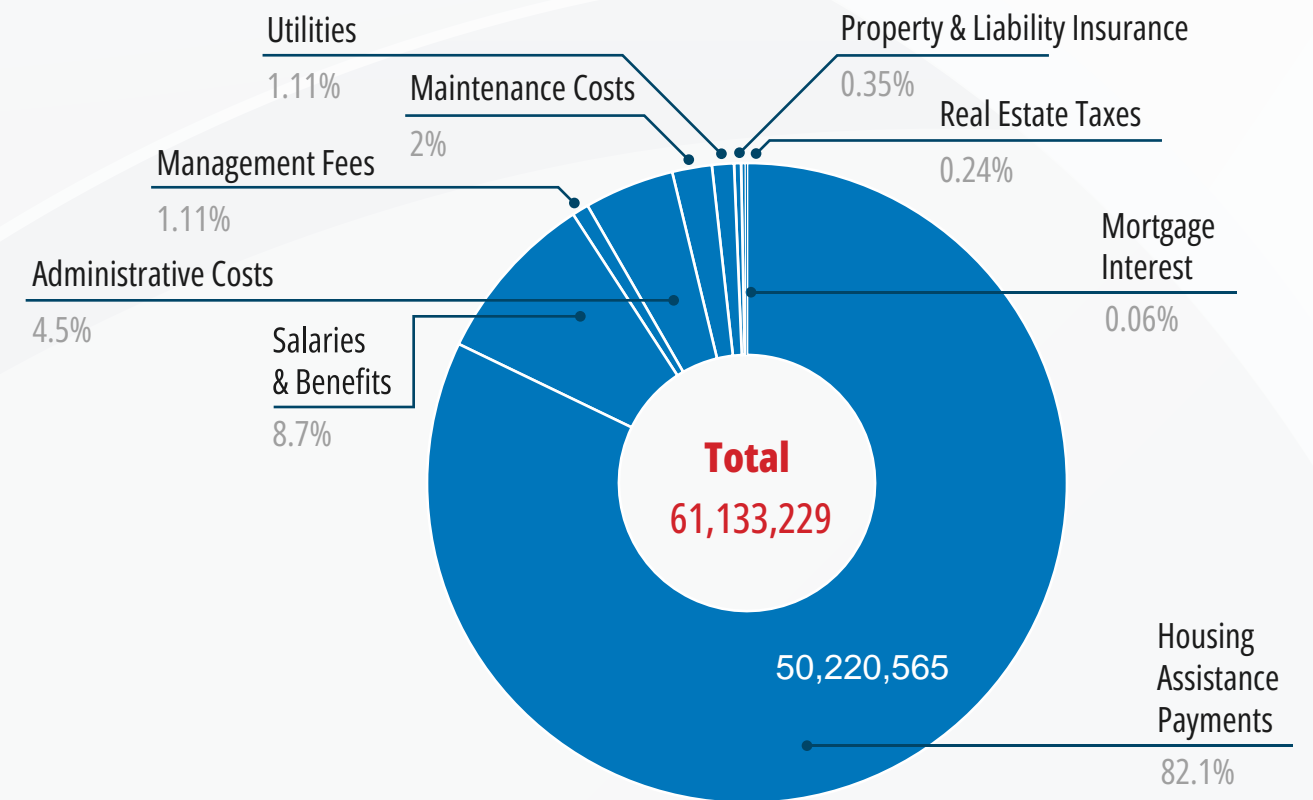


## Housing Authority of Bergen County Financials



### Income

Grants	1,368,981	2.17%
HUD Operating Grants	58,110,189	92.08%
Interest Income	131,709	0.21%
Management Fees	476,986	0.76%
Other Income	797,725	1.26%
Service Income	98,331	0.16%
Tenants' Rents	2,123,543	3.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,107,464</b>	



### Expenses

Administrative Costs	2,778,280	4.54%
Housing Assistance Payments	50,220,565	82.15%
Maintenance Costs	1,225,129	2.00%
Management Fees	513,060	0.84%
Mortgage Interest	35,447	0.06%
Property & Liability Insurance	214,242	0.35%
Real Estate Taxes	146,655	0.24%
Salaries & Benefits	5,322,519	8.71%
Utilities	677,332	1.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,133,229</b>	

### HABC Full Yearly Earnings

FYE 2020	510,419.00
FYE 2021	637,899.00
FYE 2022	2,171,983.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,809,882.00</b>

*HABC Spent on Rehab, Acquisition of Property*

## HABC Board of Commissioners



**Daniel Ortega**  
**Chair**

Community Affairs, Engineers Labor  
Employer Cooperative 825



**Peter Caminiti, Sr.**  
**Vice Chair**

Caminiti Associates, President  
(Retired)



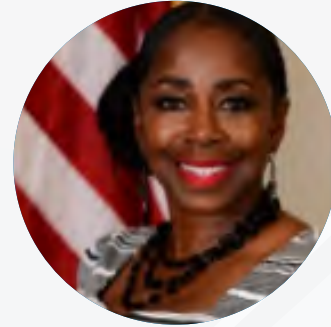
**Harvey Sohmer**  
**Commissioner**

Borough of Fort Lee Councilmember



**Son K. "Andy" Min**  
**Commissioner**

Borough of Palisades Park  
Councilmember



**Joanne English Rollieson**  
**Treasurer**

President/CEO/Broker, English Realty



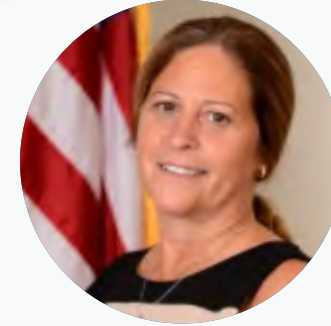
**Danielle Peterson**  
**Commissioner**

## HDC Board of Trustees



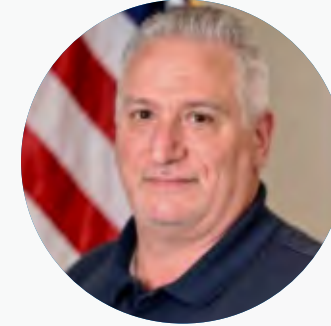
**Al Restaino**  
**President**

Administrator, Borough of Fort Lee



**Diane Scriveri**  
**Vice President**

Executive Vice President/  
Chief Lending Officer  
Freedom Bank



**Michael Apicella**  
**Treasurer**

Certified Tax Collector



**Pete Caminiti**  
**Trustee**

Caminiti Associates, President  
(Retired)



**Daniel Ortega**  
**Trustee**

Community Affairs, Engineers Labor  
Employer Cooperative 825



**Joseph Rutch**  
**Trustee**

Administrator, Borough of Cliffside  
Park



**Harvey Sohmer**  
**Trustee**

Councilmember, Borough of Fort Lee



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