



A protest against PACT privatization at Riis Houses in March 2024. Residents protesting charged NYCHA officials with conspiring to kick residents out of their homes, and for criminal neglect when they denied the drinking water at Riis was unsafe.

Letter from the Editor: Privatization Is on the Doorstep at Riis Houses With an Illegitimate “Resident Vote,” NYCHA Moves on Privatization at Riis

By: RANDY, DARE TO STRUGGLE

When we talk to NYCHA residents about the government’s attempts to get rid of public housing, we hear a common reply: “They’ve been trying to do that for years.” While this is true, it’s also true that NYCHA has succeeded in recent years in putting thousands of residents under private management through the misnamed Permanent Affordability Commitment Together, or PACT.

Under PACT, private developers take over the property management of NYCHA buildings. Residents are forced to sign a new lease and receive a Section 8 voucher. Private companies take control of NYCHA developments, with the power to raise rent, downsize families into smaller units, and evict residents. Since 2016, NYCHA has converted nearly 40,000 units to PACT, all of which have been hostile takeovers in which residents had no say over getting transferred to private management.

Statistics show there are higher evictions at PACT developments, and we’ve seen ourselves that repairs from private companies are often low-quality and no better than NYCHA’s repair jobs.

Jacob Riis Houses in the Lower East Side is one of the next developments that NYCHA and their real estate partners have in their sights to privatize. Since December 2023, NYCHA and the Riis Houses tenant association have been peddling pro-privatization propaganda to residents. They hold meetings where PACT representatives smugly lecture and condescend to residents when they raise concerns, insisting that

privatization is all upside. They call this their “robust resident engagement process,” which all culminates in a voting process starting this month.

Riis residents will have two options to vote for: (a) PACT privatization, and (b) staying in Section 9 public housing with no new funding for repairs. Both options ensure that NYCHA will continue to disrespect residents and ignore their demands. But by staging a vote, NYCHA and the TA are trying to create the illusion of resident choice, even as they try to rig the vote in PACT’s favor.

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“PACT is the best program to meet our needs at Riis Houses,” said Daphne Williams, the TA president at Riis, in *The NYCHA Journal*. “I understand people might be afraid of change under PACT, but rumors of losing your home due to PACT are untrue.” This is misleading. Data from a recent city comptroller report show that PACT evictions were 475% higher in 2024 compared to the rest of NYCHA. According to *The City*, landlords at PACT developments served eviction proceedings to one in six apartments in 2023. In all likelihood, if PACT comes to pass, families who have lived for generations in their apartments on Avenue D will face increased evictions.

It’s easy to be PACT’s biggest fans

when you’re not going to be one of the people who is ass-out after a private landlord starts ramping up evictions. But we shouldn’t expect better from the TA, who for years have organized food pantry to benefit their clique first, and who will loyally defend NYCHA’s mismanagement while blaming Riis residents for disrepair. How can we trust that the same people who have abandoned Riis residents to suffer unclean drinking water and crumbling infrastructure suddenly have the best interests of residents at heart?

With privatization coming to pass around the city at an accelerating rate, we know who’s really pulling the strings behind the scenes. It’s real estate developers—ones like L+M Development Partners and Related Companies—that compel government agencies like NYCHA to do their bidding.

From waterfronts in the Lower East Side and Brooklyn, to rapidly gentrifying pockets of Queens and the Bronx, the projects are the frontlines of urban cleansing in NYC. Thousands of Black and Latino families in NYCHA face displacement by hazardous apartment conditions and rising costs of living. The question is whether we can find the ways to resolve conflicts among residents, overcome nihilism, and win people over to fighting for their homes and each other. The disrespect residents face must end.

As NYCHA escalates its privatization push at Riis Houses, we’re plotting how to punch back. Get in touch with Rogue Residents and Dare to Struggle to join our mobilizations against NYCHA and the private developers that are circling Riis like sharks.



FDNY fights an apartment fire at a NYCHA development in the Bronx. Photo by Dean Moses

THOUSANDS OF NYCHA RESIDENTS SUFFER NO HEAT OR HOT WATER IN POLAR VORTEX

By: BEN, DARE TO STRUGGLE

Last month was the coldest January NYC has seen in years. A polar vortex brought bitter cold to the city, and thousands of NYCHA residents were left without heat or hot water in their homes in the midst of the cold snap.

Every winter, NYCHA residents are slammed with outages and left without basic necessities. NYCHA’s service disruptions tracker showed that an entire development in the Bronx, housing over 2,600 people, experienced unplanned outages. In Manhattan, over 1,000 units were without heat, affecting 3,682 residents.

In NYC, landlords are required to maintain a minimum temperature of 62 degrees, but the temperature at NYCHA developments regularly drops below this threshold. This issue worsens

NYCHA’s winter heating solution: If you have a gas stove and a clean pot, you turn the pot upside down over the burner to warm your kitchen.

every winter while the city officials responsible for the safety of these residents are never held accountable.

Residents struggle to use a variety of

alternative tactics to keep themselves and their families warm, including electric heaters and even leaving the

**2600+ IN THE BRONX
3600+ IN MANHATTAN
WITHOUT HEAT OR HOT WATER FOR
THE COLDEST MONTHS OF THE YEAR**

stove on. These workarounds create life-threatening conditions in people’s homes. Desperate attempts to keep warm in freezing conditions can cause carbon monoxide poisoning and lead to fires.

In the winter of 2022, residents of Jacob Riis Houses in the Lower East Side of Manhattan came together to demand the gas and electricity be turned back on before the new year. Through a series of protests and ultimatums, they successfully put pressure on NYCHA to fix the outages.

As cold weather advisories persist, it is unconscionable to leave residents without access to heat or hot water. NYCHA is not providing safe and dignified housing for the thousands of residents, and the agency is entirely unwilling to repair the underlying issues causing these outages. To that end, residents must band together and demand NYCHA fix the heat to prevent more deaths.

THE RESIDENT CORNER

Interview with Marisol, a resident of Edenwald Houses in the Bronx

By: ANDREW, DARE TO STRUGGLE

Marisol, a long-time Edenwald resident, spoke with me about her frustrations with C+C Management. C+C took over management of the NYCHA development in 2023 through PACT.

After recently being located to a temporary apartment, C+C is now insisting Marisol move back to another building where she feels unsafe due to a friend being assaulted. This building also does not have an elevator, which is a huge strain for Marisol due to her disability (she uses a cane to walk). Since requesting to stay in her current apartment, C+C has threatened eviction and is taking her to housing court in March, even though she owes no rent.

This is one of dozens of cases of mistreatment we have heard since C+C took over Edenwald. We learned from another resident that after a temporary relocation, she returned to a downsized one-bedroom, forcing her to share a bedroom with her adult daughter.



“Renovated” buildings at Edenwald Houses have dust-covered floors. Kids have resorted to playing basketball with crates because of fenced-off parks.



When asked to return to her previous apartment, Marisol told C+C that she did not feel safe in that building. Instead of accommodating her concerns, C+C has either dismissed her or been completely unresponsive.

Beyond the eviction threats, between October and December 2024, housing caretakers allowed non-residents to live in Marisol’s original apartment without her knowledge. Her neighbors called both 911 and C+C to inform them of the squatters, but C+C told Marisol to return to her apartment.

C+C was awarded \$784 million to

complete comprehensive repairs at Edenwald. Residents were shown model apartments of what they could expect from the renovated units. The reality has fallen far short of these promises. Marisol’s unit is one example of many apartments that did no improve after the so-called repairs.

Private developers use a variety of tactics to intimidate and humiliate residents, which is all part of the playbook to gentrify throughout the city. With cases like Marisol’s, we must stand with residents in housing court and at their front door to fend off landlords trying to kick them out.

HAVE SOMETHING TO REPORT?

To share your experiences with NYCHA, email daretostrugglenyc@protonmail.com or follow along on Instagram at [@daretostrugglenyc](https://www.instagram.com/daretostrugglenyc)

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To join the fight against public housing privatization, email rogueresidents@protonmail.com or follow along on Instagram at [@rogueresidents](https://www.instagram.com/rogueresidents)