

The Problem

With pandemic-era supports receding, the number of U.S. residents living in poverty is increasing. This trend is especially pronounced in D.C., where child poverty rose to 28.1%—about 36,000 children—marking the largest year-over-year increase in more than a decade. In 2024, nearly a quarter of D.C. children—22.77%, or about 28,562—lived in poverty. Overall, 17.3% of residents, more than 116,544 Washingtonians, were affected. By 2026, 16.5%—105,077 residents—remain in poverty.

The District continues to rank among the highest in the nation, tied for fifth in child poverty for children ages 6 to 17.

The Solution

Guaranteed income (GI) provides regular, direct cash payments to eligible individuals with no restrictions. Unlike universal basic income, which distributes payments to everyone regardless of need, GI is targeted—delivering support to those who need it most.

Evidence from multiple pilot programs shows that guaranteed income helps stabilize households and gives recipients the flexibility to meet their needs. In D.C.'s THRIVE pilot, participants primarily used funds for housing, food, transportation, and debt reduction.

Results are consistent across the country. In Stockton, CA, a pilot program increased full-time employment and improved health outcomes. In Flint, Michigan, GI support led to better health outcomes for mothers and infants. Nationally, the 2021 expansion of the Child Tax Credit—an unconditional cash benefit—contributed to a historic decline in child poverty.

The evidence is clear: Economic security shouldn't be a gamble. Guaranteed income makes it possible.

WHO WE ARE

The DC Guaranteed Income Coalition (GIC) is a growing network of leaders, organizations, and residents working to make guaranteed income a permanent policy in the District. By advancing cash solutions, building evidence through pilots, and amplifying impacted voices, we are shifting public perception and driving policy change—toward a D.C. where financial stability is a right, not a privilege.

Too often, families lose critical support when they receive cash assistance—what experts call the “benefits cliff.” GIC works to change that by advocating for policies that protect benefits and ensure all eligible residents can access support.

Join the DC Guaranteed Income Coalition in the fight for economic dignity.

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A PROJECT OF MOTHER'S OUTREACH NETWORK

DC GUARANTEED INCOME COALITION



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OUR PLATFORM

1. Support the District Child Tax Credit

Passed into law through the DC Decoupling Tax Legislation in 2026

2. Strengthen benefits protection

The DC Council has already acted to protect guaranteed income recipients from the loss of many benefits through the EITC Expansion Clarification Amendment Act of 2022. However, the Act did not address housing benefits.

We also demand that the DC Housing Authority write a guaranteed income exclusion into their Moving to Work plan, so that housing benefits can be protected.

3. Invest in multiple guaranteed income pilots targeting specific populations

Though it has already been well established that guaranteed income has enormous benefits for low-income individuals and families, more research is needed to understand its particular impacts on specific populations. Specific outcomes of interest include the impact on violent crime, children's educational outcomes, and families involved in the child welfare system.

We call on the DC Council to invest \$13.5 million to fund rigorously evaluated guaranteed income programs—providing cash to 750 households for 3 years at \$500 a month—operated by 5 to 10 participating organizations serving populations, **such as unhoused youth**, that face diverse social and economic circumstances.

Additionally, we seek a Hold Harmless Fund of \$6.75 million—enough to provide \$250 per month to 750 households for 3 years—to support pilot participants whose other benefits may be reduced or lost because of this income.

DC GIC has supported several successful pilot programs in D.C., including:

- **Guaranteed, Together:** The first-ever intergenerational GI program for students and families at the Social Justice School
- **CashRx:** A direct cash assistance program targeting social determinants of health.
- **MotherUp:** a research pilot to assist mothers experiencing poverty and involvement with the child welfare system.
- **My Sister's Place RISE Trust:** an emergency cash transfer program for survivors of domestic violence.
- **Let's Go DMV:** a three-year cash program assisting hospitality workers impacted by COVID-19.

4. Expand and improve upon a new version of Strong Families, Strong Futures

DC's only publicly-funded guaranteed income pilot was *Strong Families, Strong Futures*, a direct cash assistance program supporting new and expecting mothers in Wards 5, 7, and 8 that was launched in 2022 and ended in 2025, with an initial grant of \$1.5 million. Although SFSF concluded payments to its first cohort in 2023, the DC Council allocated \$1.5 or \$1 million of funding for various years of the program during its time.

We call on the DC Council to open SFSF to residents of all wards and to commission a robust evaluation of SFSF that would explore the theory that providing cash positively impacts perinatal and infant health outcomes.

5. Support Federal Tax Credits

Rep Gwen Moore's (WI-4) WRCR (H.R.1468 - WRCR Act of 2023) would enact needed reforms to the federal EITC, such as regarding caregiving and higher education as work, and changing the EITC to have a 100% phase in rate.

Visit bit.ly/EITCForCaregiversAndStudents for more information on the WRCR.