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People stand in line as Coalition for the Homeless delivers supplies to homeless people as part of their weekly distribution in New York City, on January 4, 2018. // Amr Alfiky/Reuters

PERSPECTIVE

Nonprofits Can't Help Homeless People When Cities Pay Them Late

When cities like New York and San Francisco pay late on contracts to homeless services providers.

The relevant comment we placed is below



Eternalbem → EIKitePics · a month ago

100%

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Kahnotcca · a month ago

This title should be re-worded to say "non-profits providing any government sponsored services" can't help "the communities they serve" when government doesn't pay them on time.

Friendly reminder - non-profits are asked to magically pay their employees, admin costs, rent etc out of their own funds, while contracts and payment are held up for months, sometimes years, without much thought from the government agencies that many non-profits don't have money like that to float their work over long periods of time. These are not private firms with excess capital! And, they also are many times paid much less for the same services that private consultants are paid by the same agencies. And I'm not just talking about direct service work, I'm talking about all the different contracted work farmed out to various organizations that the government won't do directly - admin of programs, program design, etc. Its a huge burden.

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Debra Johnson · 4 days ago

Given the long term effects of being homeless (not just on the homeless person, but on society as a whole), nonprofits need to prioritize. They did originally exist to help the needy after all. I don't doubt they want to help, they might just not know how. Whoever works with nonprofits and has power over them, watch out for when they're struggling. I unfortunately don't know enough how finance and business works to give more detailed suggestions, but I do know the consequences of homelessness on society. If you're in danger of being evicted and possibly homeless, please read up on the eviction process and on your rights!

<http://www.evictionny.com>

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<http://www.evictionny.com>



Thundermutt · a month ago

Hmm. Maybe the non-profits could raise reserve funds from private and philanthropic donors? Or perhaps foundations with huge endowments might make low-interest mission-related loans?

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Linlal → Thundermutt · a month ago

Why wouldn't you just focus on solving the problem which is late payment by the City? Any money they would raise from other sources to cover the shortages from the City is still money taken from front-line services one way or another. The interest they would pay on a loan has to come from somewhere inside the agency.

Does the Mayor's office have the same trouble getting the money that's been allocated to them to run the office? Somehow, I