

Bloomberg Won't Take Blame For Record Homelessness

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg doesn't dispute a recent report that homelessness has hit a high not seen in decades — with over 50,000 people a night staying in the city's shelters — but he refuses to accept criticism that his administration has failed to tackle the problem.

Instead, he says the state cut the key [Advantage rent subsidy program](#) , and that the Coalition for the Homeless, which released the report, backed that decision.

[Capital New York](#) reports that Bloomberg said this at a news conference earlier today:

We are having fewer people coming into the homeless system They are staying longer. Why? Because the state cut the Advantage program out. When they cut their money out, we also lost the federal monies. Without those subsidies, people don't move out. So if you want to reduce the population, you've gotta go and get those monies back. Keep in mind, it was the Coalition [for] the Homeless that wanted to kill that program and hurt the people in the shelters. So it's a little bit disingenuous for them to start talking about it.

Mary Brosnahan, president of the Coalition for the Homeless, responded in a statement:

Rather than taking responsibility for his Administration's failure, Mayor Bloomberg continues to blame everyone else for record homelessness in NYC. Today, he blames the State and, ludicrously, the Coalition for the Homeless, for ending Advantage – even though Advantage families were returning to shelter in record numbers. Last week, he blamed mentally-ill men and women suffering on our streets for not wanting help – even though he's still in court trying to make it more difficult for them to get into emergency shelter. He blames homeless families for trying to game the system – even though they clearly have nowhere else to turn.

The report also found that child homelessness is increasing, with over 21,000 children staying in shelters a night; that the length of stay in shelters for families is now over a year long; and that the number single adults in the shelter system is at a near record high.

Read the full report [here.](#)

Image of Bloomberg at today's news conference courtesy of the mayor's office.

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