

While advocates push to expand access to a variety of government services and benefits for immigrants affected by COVID-19, many immigrants are already eligible for various health, food, and other types of assistance. This resource list covers the major programs, how to apply, and where to get questions answered (in various languages), including by The Legal Aid Society. On the last page, you can also learn more about how to get help with benefits questions and questions about an immigration rule called “public charge.”

## **Health Insurance and Health and Mental Health Care**

### **Health Insurance**

#### **New York State of Health Insurance:**

The New York State of Health is a website <https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> through which you can apply for health insurance in New York State. You do not have to be a U.S. citizen or green card holder to apply. Depending on your situation, including your immigration status, income, and where you live, the New York State of Health will tell you which types of insurance you are eligible for, including: **State-funded Medicaid (free), Essential Plan (no or low-fee), Qualified Health Plans (low fee available), Emergency Medicaid (free), and Federal Medicaid (free)**. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call 855-355-5777 to learn more. All of these types of insurance cover COVID-19 testing and treatment.

**Are you 65 years of age or older, receiving Medicare, are certified disabled, and/or receiving Social Security Disability (SSD), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Cash Assistance?** If yes, then to apply you must submit an application to the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA). There are two ways to get an application. You can print an application from <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4220.pdf>, and if you need to fill out a supplement, you can download it at <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4495a.pdf> or you can call the HRA Medicaid Helpline at 888-692-6116 and ask for an application to be mailed to you. Once you complete your application, you can submit it by fax to 917-639-0732 OR mail it to: HRA Medicaid Program, 785 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11238. There are also drop-boxes outside open HRA Medicaid offices where you can drop off your application.

### **Low-Cost or Free Health and Mental Health Care**

#### **H + H Options (NYC Health & Hospitals):**

H + H Options is a free or discount payment plan that makes health care services more affordable. H+H Options services are provided through NYC Health & Hospitals, the city’s public hospital system. There is no immigration requirement to qualify. Call 844-692-4692 (844-NYC-4NYC) to apply.

#### **NYC Care:**

New Yorkers in all five boroughs who do not qualify for or cannot afford health insurance are eligible for NYC Care. All NYC Care services are provided through NYC Health + Hospitals. With NYC Care, you can get a membership card to access health services, choose your own doctor, and get affordable medications. There is no immigration requirement to qualify. Call 646-692-2273 (646-NYC-CARE) to apply.

#### **New York City Well (Mental Health Support Line in Many Languages):**

Through NYC Well, you can receive free, confidential mental health support via phone, text, or chat, regardless of immigration status. Help is available in more than 200 languages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Receive NYC Well services by calling 888-692-9355.

## **New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) COVID-19 Emotional Support Line:**

The Emotional Support Helpline provides free and confidential support to New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status. The Helpline is staffed by volunteers, including mental health professionals, and helps callers who are experiencing increased anxiety due to COVID-19. You can reach the OMH Emotional Support Line at 844-863-9314.

## **Food Help and Food Benefits**

### **Free Food Help**

#### **Food Pantries & Community Kitchens:**

Food pantries and community kitchens throughout New York City provide free food to New Yorkers regardless of immigration status. Hours vary by location. **To locate food pantries and community kitchens:** Visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/contact/services/COVID-19FoodAssistance.shtml> or call 311. You can also call HRA's Emergency Foodline at 866-888-8777

#### **FREE Grab & Go Meals for Anyone Who Needs Help – Parents, Children, & Single Adults:**

Any New Yorker, regardless of immigration status, can get free meals for pick-up at more than 400 NYC public school locations. No registration, ID, or documentation is required. All New Yorkers can use this service, including single adults without children. **To find a pick up location:** Text “NYCFOOD” or “COMIDA” to 877-877. You can also visit [www.nyc.gov/getfood](http://www.nyc.gov/getfood) or [www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food) to find pick up locations.

#### **NYC Food Delivery Assistance Program:**

New York City is helping New Yorkers during the COVID-19 crisis by delivering meals to those who cannot access food themselves, regardless of immigration status. If you cannot get food or get food delivered to you, you may be eligible for this service. You may also ask for delivery of food for family or friends in need. **To learn if you or others may be eligible, go to [www.nyc.gov/getfood](http://www.nyc.gov/getfood)** and select “NYC Food Delivery Assistance” to apply or call 311.

### **Food Benefits**

#### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):**

SNAP, commonly known as Food Stamps, provides benefits to buy food- to low-income people. Only some non-citizens are eligible for SNAP. Parents who are not eligible can apply for eligible household members, such as U.S. citizen children. **To Apply:** You can apply for SNAP online at ACCESS HRA by visiting [www.nyc.gov/accesshra](http://www.nyc.gov/accesshra). If you do not have access to the internet, call 311 or HRA's Infoline at 718-557-1399 and ask for help applying for SNAP.

#### **Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Program:**

The P-EBT program is an automatic, one-time \$420 per child food benefit for households with NYC public school children – regardless of income or immigration status. Households with children in private, parochial and charter schools will receive P-EBT if their school participates in the federal school lunch program. These households should call their school to confirm. **This is an automatic benefit. There is no need to apply.** Households already enrolled in SNAP or Cash Assistance benefits should have received the benefit through their EBT cards. Families of eligible children with Medicaid-only cases should have had benefits issued either to the Medicaid Common Benefits Identification Card (CBIC) of the parent or to the CBIC of the oldest child in school. Other families will be mailed a temporary EBT card along with instructions for activating the card and accessing the benefit. **To learn when these payments are being issued and answers to other questions, visit <https://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Pandemic-EBT.asp>** or call the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance at 800-342-3009.

#### **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC):**

WIC helps pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children up to age 5 buy food. Participants receive monthly checks or vouchers to purchase specific foods. All immigrants, regardless of status, can get WIC if they meet other criteria. **To apply:** Call the Growing Up Healthy Hotline at 800-522-5006. You can also call 311, and ask for help applying for WIC.

## Other Assistance for People Who Have Lost Income

### Tax Refund for 2019

The deadline for filing 2019 income taxes was July 15, 2020, but if you think the government owes you a refund, you can file now, and get your refund. The new deadline is October 15, 2020. Filing sooner may also help you access your Federal CARES Act Assistance payment more easily. **For help:** Call 311 and ask for tax preparation assistance.

### Federal CARES Act One-time Cash Payments:

Anyone with a valid Social Security Number (SSN) is eligible for a one-time cash payment from the government if they have income under certain amounts. The payment amount depends on the household composition, income, and the way taxes are filed:

- One adult household: up to \$1,200 as long as adjusted gross earnings are less than \$99,000.
- Two adult household: up to \$2,400, as long as combined adjusted gross earnings are less than \$198,001 (where file taxes jointly).
- Heads of tax households: up to \$1,200 as long as adjusted gross earnings are less than \$126,501.
- Children in household: \$500 each.

**To Apply:** Some people who filed taxes in 2018 or in 2019 will receive the payment automatically; others will need to supply information to get the assistance. For information, call the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Economic Impact Payment hotline at 800-919-9835 or visit: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payment-information-center>. **Note:** Due to a system error, some payments scheduled to be mailed as pre-paid debit cards on May 22, 2020 were not issued. If you live in New York, no action is required. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will issue your payment as a paper check to your address on file. Once your payment by check has been scheduled, the IRS will provide a new payment date, which you can view here: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment>

### Unemployment Insurance & Pandemic Unemployment Assistance:

If you have work authorization and lost your job, you may be eligible for unemployment assistance. New York State Unemployment Insurance (UI) is temporary income for eligible workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, and not just for COVID-19 related job loss. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is a special program that provides financial assistance for individuals who are unable to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic but who do not qualify for traditional UI. The maximum amount of UI and PUA is \$504 per week.

**To Apply:** Go to <https://labor.ny.gov/unemploymentassistance.shtm>. to learn who is eligible and how to file online (better than calling). If you do not have internet access or need assistance in a language other than English or Spanish, call the State Department of Labor at 888-209-8124.

### Cash Assistance from the New York City Social Services District/Human Resources Administration (HRA):

Certain immigrants and/or their family members are eligible for Cash Assistance from HRA. Cash Assistance is a low, monthly grant that helps pay for basic expenses. **To Apply:** You can apply online for cash assistance at ACCESS HRA at [www.nyc.gov/accesshra](http://www.nyc.gov/accesshra). If you do not have access to the internet, call 311 or HRA's Infoline at 718-557-1399 and ask for help applying for cash assistance. **Note:** For those immigrants who are subject to the immigration rule called "public charge," receiving Cash Assistance is a negative. See Page 4 for information about public charge and where to get answers to questions.

## Other Help

**Homelessness Prevention through Project Parachute:** Project Parachute is a new program that helps households that are behind on rent where no one has immigration status. You may be eligible for services if you are low-income, want to remain stably housed in your community, and are at imminent risk of entering the New York City shelter system. Contact the HomeBase that serves your zip code to receive help. For more information, call 311 or visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/homebase.page>.

**Burial Assistance:** HRA assists individuals in need of financial assistance to meet funeral expenses for a deceased,

low-income New York City resident. HRA will pay up to \$1,700 toward burial expenses, but total burial expenses cannot exceed \$3,400. All applications are reviewed regardless of immigration status. **To apply:** You can apply for Burial Assistance online at ACCESS HRA by visiting [www.nyc.gov/accesshra](http://www.nyc.gov/accesshra). If you do not have access to the internet, call 311 or HRA’s Infoline at 718-557-1399 and ask for help applying for Burial Assistance.

**Internet Access:** Spectrum public Wi-Fi hot spots throughout the city are free and accessible to the public. Xfinity Wi-Fi hot spots are also free to the public. **For information:** call 311.

**Remote Learning:** Families, regardless of immigration status, can access information on remote learning, activities for students, and iPad distribution online at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home>.

## Need Help with Access to Benefits and Public Charge Questions?

### Access to Benefits

The Legal Aid Society provides free assistance in getting, keeping, and using government benefits and public assistance such as SNAP, SSI, SSD, Medicaid, Medicare and other health insurances. **You can call the Access to Benefits Helpline (A2B) at 888-663-6880 Monday through Friday 10AM – 3PM.**

### Public Charge Help

**Worried about how using any of the benefits in this flyer will affect your immigration status/ Have “public charge” questions?** “Public charge” is an immigration rule that generally applies to people seeking to get lawful permanent resident (“LPR” or “green card” status) through a family member. Many non-citizens are not subject to Public Charge. Many public benefits and resources, including most of those included in this resource sheet, do not count under the public charge rule. (see chart below). *If you are uncertain about whether you are subject to the Public Charge rule or whether certain benefits or resources count under the rule, please call The Legal Aid Society’s Immigration Helpline at 844-955-3425 Monday to Friday 9AM – 5PM.*

**\*\*If you need testing and treatment for COVID-19, seek medical care.**

**Testing and treatment for COVID-19 will NOT raise your risk for being found a public charge.\*\***

Type of Benefit	Benefits and Services that do NOT Count for Public Charge	Benefits and Services that do Count for Public Charge
Health Insurance and Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State-Funded Medicaid</li> <li>• Essential Plan</li> <li>• Child Health Plus</li> <li>• Qualified Health Plans</li> <li>• Emergency Medicaid</li> <li>• H+H Options</li> <li>• NYC Care</li> </ul>	Federal Medicaid  BUT, Federal Medicaid does NOT count for children under 21 or individuals who are pregnant or who have had a baby in the past 60 days.
Food Help and Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Pantries &amp; Community Kitchens</li> <li>• Grab &amp; Go Meals</li> <li>• NYC Food Delivery Assistance Program</li> <li>• WIC</li> <li>• P-EBT</li> </ul>	SNAP or Food Stamps
Assistance for People Who Lost Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax refund</li> <li>• NYC CARES payments</li> <li>• Unemployment Insurance</li> <li>• Pandemic Unemployment Assistance</li> </ul>	Cash Assistance from HRA
Other Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burial Assistance</li> </ul>	