

Human Resources Administration (HRA) 2017 Policy Statement

Serving more than 3 million New Yorkers annually, the New York City Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (HRA/DSS) provides economic support and social services to families and individuals through the administration of major benefit programs including cash assistance, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits (food stamps), Medicaid, and Child Support Services. HRA also provides homelessness prevention, educational, vocational and employment services, assistance for persons with disabilities, services for immigrants, civil legal aid and disaster relief. For the most vulnerable, it provides HIV/AIDS Services, Adult Protective Services, Home Care and programs for survivors of domestic violence. HRA promotes equity for New Yorkers through its commitment to services that fight poverty and income inequality, prevent homelessness and promote employment. HRA increases economic security by facilitating access to benefits and to employment and educational programs. HRA also administers IDNYC, the country's most successful municipal identification program.

HRA helps to connect low-income New Yorkers, both employed and unemployed, to the services and resources that they need to remain in one of the most expensive cities in the world. Among those who do receive cash assistance, half are children, and nearly half of the adults are not subject to work requirements under federal and state law because they are seniors or people with permanent or temporary disabilities who have barriers to employment.

In addition to cash assistance, HRA provides key support through the following programs:

- 1.9 million New Yorkers receiving Medicaid through HRA and an additional 1.4 million receive Medicaid through the new State health insurance exchange;
- 1.7 million New Yorkers receiving SNAP food assistance and millions of meals served through food pantries and community kitchens;
- 730,000 New Yorkers receiving home energy assistance every winter; and
- 106,000 receiving one-time cash assistance each year to prevent evictions and utility shutoffs or provide assistance with other emergencies.

HRA also works closely with the New York City Department of Homelessness to prevent and alleviate homelessness. The two agencies share an integrated management structure with both HRA and DHS reporting to a single Commissioner of Social Services, Steven Banks. The result of the integrated management has been more seamless and effective client services, administrative and programmatic cost-savings and better day-to-day management across agencies. Each of the two agencies has an Administrator that directly manages agency operations and reports to Commissioner Banks. Grace Bonilla was appointed HRA Administrator in February 2017. Joselyn Carter was appointed DHS Administrator in July 2017.

CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICE

Cash Assistance

New York City, along with the other local social services districts in New York State, administers the Cash Assistance program on behalf of New York State. Income eligible children, their families and single adults receive cash benefits for basic needs. Payment levels are based on family size, rent costs, and eligibility for specialized grants based on individual circumstances.

Cash Assistance is funded with a combination of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant funds, New York State general assistance funds and City tax levy. Non-exempt clients receiving Cash Assistance must engage in work activities. HRA provides referrals to programs designed to assist clients to obtain job placements, workshops, training, resume services, and other support services. HRA extended the time to find appropriate child care arrangements from five to 15 days, with an additional five day extension for Cash Assistance applicants who must seek childcare in order to comply with engagement rules.

New York City residents not eligible for on-going assistance may also apply for one-time emergency grants when unforeseen circumstances prevent them from meeting expenses. Emergency grants may include rental assistance in cases of impending evictions; assistance with home energy and utility bills; disaster assistance including moving expenses; and the purchase of personal items for health and safety.

Employment and Training

HRA's new Employment Plan moves away from a one-size-fits-all employment approach to a new, more diverse, individualized approach. And following the December 31, 2014 approval by the State Office of Temporary Assistance and Disability Assistance (OTDA) of the HRA Employment Plan, HRA began developing and implementing significant employment program reforms. Since that time HRA has steadily rolled out programs and initiatives that are grounded in best practices and focus on achieving sustainable outcomes. The result is that an improvement in employment and training outcomes; more clients have an opportunity to achieve economic stability, secure employment, and move off the caseload and out of poverty.

HRA's new employment services model connects clients to individualized education, training, employment and other services that give them the skills and training they need to compete in a competitive job market and reach their maximum earning potential. Additionally, recently approved federal and state laws are providing clients with the opportunity to gain a high school diploma or college level education. As of August 2017 there were 5,710 HRA clients enrolled in a college or university and 12,594 HRA clients enrolled in a high school or an equivalent program.

In November of 2016, HRA announced contracts for its new Employment Plan programs that will benefit more than 68,000 clients annually. These new contracts began in April 2017. The three programs are:

- YouthPathways, which targets New Yorkers aged 18-24 and will provide in-depth assessment, training, education, job placement and other services that are specifically focused on this population.
- CareerCompass, which assesses the skills and experience of clients 25 and over, helps them create a service plan, and matches them with employment, sector-based training, education, adult literacy, high school equivalency, or other programs as needed.
- CareerAdvance, which provides expert sector training, employment, and retention services in growth industries. CareerAdvance includes borough-based contracts as well as contracts specifically tailored to populations with special needs including homeless and formerly homeless New Yorkers and domestic violence survivors, those with previous involvement in the criminal justice system, those with limited English proficiency and immigrants, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) New Yorkers, and older adults.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance and Food Assistance Programs

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutritional support to low-income New Yorkers including individuals, working families, seniors and persons with disabilities by increasing their ability to purchase food. SNAP recipients use an electronic benefits card (EBT), which is used like a debit card, at participating grocery stores, supermarkets and farmers' markets. Nearly 1.7 million New Yorkers are enrolled in SNAP.

In order to connect more New Yorkers who qualify for SNAP, HRA launched a major SNAP/food stamps outreach campaign in April 2015 targeting the two largest unenrolled but eligible groups – seniors and immigrants. The centerpiece of the campaign is a marketing website, foodhelp.nyc, which includes videos featuring real SNAP clients sharing stories of how the program helped them, links to the newly redesigned ACCESS HRA site where people can apply, and an interactive map with the locations of food pantries, community kitchens and in-person SNAP application locations.

While HRA's doors remain open and New Yorkers are more than welcome to visit SNAP centers, or contact the agency via snail mail or telephone, HRA has introduced several technology-based initiatives to improve client service, enhance the speedy processing and recertification of SNAP applications, and to bring our service delivery model further into the 21st century. The goal of HRA's modernization effort is to create a self-directed service model that allows applicants and clients to transact with the Agency without the burden of having to physically come to an HRA location. Some of these technology and modernization efforts include:

An online application, available through the City's ACCESS HRA web portal that allows applicants to apply and recertify for benefits.

Self Service PC Banks at 15 of 16 SNAP enrollment centers Citywide that allow SNAP applicants and recipients to complete applications online, with staff assistance when necessary. PC Banks provide HRA customers with a fast and efficient way to apply for SNAP and have had a positive impact on wait time in HRA centers; and

An *On-demand* call center which allows clients to conduct their SNAP eligibility interviews on an on-demand basis at their convenience.

These innovation and modernization efforts allow HRA workers to spend more time helping clients when needed, rather than completing the scanning tasks, routing clients manually, and data entry.

Public Health Insurance Access

There are approximately 3.3 million New York City residents receiving Medicaid. HRA's Medical Assistance Program (MAP) is responsible for the enrollment and recertification of Medicaid-only (those not also receiving Cash Assistance) recipients.

As part of the New York State implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), most people applying for health insurance must do so through the New York State health insurance marketplace. As a result, new applicants are no longer reflected in the New York City Medicaid caseload and HRA will only be reporting the caseload that remains with the Agency.

Persons who receive cash assistance or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) will continue to apply through HRA or the Social Security Administration. HRA will remain responsible for renewals of all current Medicaid only clients, and for new health insurance applications for the disabled, aged and blind, Medicare Savings Programs, Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities, persons seeking access to the Excess Income Program and persons seeking coverage for long-term care. HRA also determines eligibility for other public health insurance programs, such as the Medicare Savings Program (MSP), also known as Medicare Buy-In, the Family Planning Benefit Program, the Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working People with Disabilities, and other waiver programs.

In addition, HRA will assist all clients seeking information about public health insurance and enrollment assistance by training select staff as Certified Application Counselors (CAC's) who can assist individuals in applying for health insurance via the Marketplace.

Expanding Access to Private and Public Health Insurance

Through its Office of Citywide Health Insurance Access (OCHIA), HRA works to expand access to health insurance for all New York City residents and small businesses. HRA partners with public and private organizations to provide outreach, education, enrollment assistance and training and conducts policy research and analysis to inform our efforts. HRA facilitates access to health insurance information and enrollment assistance for all New Yorkers, with a special focus on persons least likely to have health insurance including immigrants, freelancers, small business owners and workers, and young adults. Since 2001, HRA has helped to connect more than 904,000 New Yorkers to insurance.

Additionally, HRA helps people over 65 years old, living with a disability or visually impaired learn about and enroll in Medicaid programs. We also conduct outreach to youth on pregnancy prevention and provide teens with information and enrollment assistance about the Family Planning Benefit Program, a public health insurance option which can cover the costs of sexual and reproductive health care.

Child Support Enforcement

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) puts children first by helping both parents provide for the economic and social well-being, health and stability of their children. OCSE provides a range of services including locating noncustodial parents, establishing paternity and child support and medical support orders, collecting and distributing child support payments, and modifying and enforcing child support orders. Services are available to mothers, fathers or guardians, regardless of income or immigration status. Custodial parents receiving Cash Assistance (CA) are required to comply with OCSE pursuant to Federal and New York State statutes. All other custodial parents may apply for OCSE services by visiting an OCSE office located in Family Court. In FY 2017, there were over 282,000 cases with support orders and OCSE established approximately 18,640 new orders. Child support collections in FY 2017 totaled \$780.9 million, benefitting approximately 190,000 New York City children.

OCSE has also implemented various programs to assist low-income noncustodial parents in meeting their child support obligations by helping them prevent and lower child support debt owed to DSS, and helping to connect them to employment. OCSE's priority is to continue to increase awareness of the benefits of the program as an additional support to help raise low-income families out of poverty, remove barriers faced by noncustodial parents so that they can connect to their children and to encourage more custodial and noncustodial parents to participate in the program.

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ADMINISTRATION

HRA works with the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) among other City agencies and non-profits to assist families and individuals in need in obtaining and maintaining stable, affordable housing. The prevention programs HRA oversees include case management services like family mediation; educational advancement; employment; financial literacy services; early warning referrals from NYCHA, Adult Protective Services and City Marshals for tenants on the verge of eviction; and emergency grants and rental assistance to keep families and individuals in their homes and prevent and alleviate homelessness. As part of the HRA–DHS integration the Homebase program was moved from DHS to HRA to enhance coordination of preventive, aftercare and other support services in the community.

In April 2011, the City’s affordability crisis was exacerbated when the City and State ended the Advantage rental assistance program, which had offered subsidies for people in shelters if they took part in job training. In less than three years after the end of the program, the shelter population exploded by 38% – some 14,000 people.

In the face of these challenges, this Administration is taking a “prevention-first” approach. In addition to exponential increases in tenant legal services over the last few years, some of the most important prevention-related investments this Administration has made include:

- Providing a greater amount of emergency rental assistance so that rent-burdened New Yorkers at risk of eviction can stay in their homes. In the first three years of the Administration, 161,000 households received this help;
- Expanding the City’s nationally recognized Homebase program so that more New Yorkers can maintain housing in their community.
- Developing the Tenant Support Unit, which since its launch has reached more than 194,000 New Yorkers through its proactive outreach on critical services to prevent homelessness among renters facing housing-related problems; and
- Creating a new Homelessness Prevention Administration (HPA) within the Human Resources Administration (HRA) – of which the Office of Civil Justice is a part - that brings homelessness prevention, rental assistance, and early intervention all under one roof to improve program management and effectiveness.

Understanding that homelessness has a variety of causes for families and individuals and therefore requires different responses, since 2014, the Administration has implemented the following rental assistance programs designed to target different groups of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Homebase

Homebase programming is the most extensive and innovative homelessness prevention services network in the country. Homebase was a DHS initiative launched in 2004 by partnering with non-profit providers in the communities that most needed homelessness prevention services, opening offices that provided housing-focused case management and short-term financial assistance. Following the Mayor's 90-day review of homeless services and programs, Homebase was moved from DHS to HRA and expanded from 11 to 16 providers operating 23 locations across the five boroughs and program's funding was doubled. As a result of these increases Homebase reached 25,632 households in FY16, a 115% increase of households served compared to FY14.

Homebase ensures that New Yorkers who are experiencing a housing crisis with few financial resources have access to an extensive network of neighborhood-based services to assist and coordinate efforts and customize a stability plan, utilizing a full array of services, including:

- Services to prevent eviction
- Financial counseling and money management
- Assistance obtaining public benefits
- Legal Advocacy and Representation
- Education and job placement assistance
- Help relocating
- Short-term financial assistance

Later this year new Homebase contracts will begin, which expand community-based aftercare and other services for households moving out of shelter.

Those at risk of becoming homeless can call 311 or visit nyc.gov/homebase

Office of Civil Justice

Pursuant to legislation signed by the Mayor, the Office of Civil Justice (OCJ) was created as a unit of HPA with the mission to administer HRA's civil legal services contracts, which provide free quality legal assistance to thousands of low-income tenants facing eviction, displacement, harassment or mistreatment by unscrupulous landlords and a range of other civil legal needs. Referrals to legal services organizations under this program serve a critical homelessness prevention need for families and individuals at risk of eviction who require legal assistance in dealing with their housing crisis.

For FY17, OCJ administers over \$100 million dollars in civil legal service contracts, in areas including eviction and other housing issues, veterans' legal needs, issues facing domestic

violence survivors, consumer debt issues, and employment law. OCJ also oversees a range of programs that provide legal assistance to immigrant New Yorkers to prevent deportation, apply for citizenship or asylum, address exploitative working conditions, combat trafficking and domestic violence and assist unaccompanied minors with the immigration legal process.

OCJ also manages the contracts for the Anti-harassment Tenant Protection Program, which protects tenants from displacement and stabilizes neighborhoods that are being rezoned for the Mayor's affordable housing and neighborhood development plan. Through the Anti-Harassment Tenant Protection Program, in neighborhoods across five boroughs designated for rezoning, the City provides access to legal assistance for community residents identified as victims of tenant harassment in order to prevent displacement, keep families and individuals in their homes and maintain affordable housing.

Earlier this year, Mayor deBlasio, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and the City Council announced that the City is dedicating an additional \$93 million at full implementation for a comprehensive program to provide access to legal representation to all low-income tenants facing eviction proceedings in Housing Court earning up to 200% of the federal poverty line and brief legal assistance for all tenants facing eviction in court whose income is above that level. In total and once the program is fully implemented in five years, the City will spend \$155 million annually to cover the costs of the initiative. The Mayor signed the Universal Access to Counsel legislation in August of 2017.

Rental Assistance Programs

LINC

The Living in Communities (LINC) Rental Assistance programs were created to help move families out of shelter and into stable housing.

- LINC I – for families in shelter who are working full-time but are unable to afford stable housing on their own to relocate from the City shelter system.
- LINC II – for families in shelter who are identified within vulnerable populations and who need additional assistance and supports to relocate from the City shelter system and become securely housed in the community.
- LINC III – assistance for families recently affected by domestic violence to relocate them from the City shelter system – these families will be selected from both HRA domestic violence shelters and families in DHS shelters who HRA has certified as survivors of domestic violence.
- LINC IV - rental assistance to single adults and adult families in shelter that include either a senior (60+) or an adult with a disability, and are unable to afford stable housing on their own to relocate from the City shelter system.

- LINC V – for single adults and adult families in shelter who are working, but are unable to afford stable housing on their own to relocate from the City shelter system.
- LINC VI – assistance for families with children and children adults to move out of shelter and reunify with host families consisting of friends or relatives.

CITYFEPS

The CITYFEPS Rent Supplement Program can help eligible families with children at risk of entry to shelter and those already in shelter to secure permanent housing. Potentially eligible families will be connected with CITYFEPS providers (community-based organizations), which will assist the family in completing an application and locating housing.

The amount of the CITYFEPS rental assistance will depend on the household income and the number of people in the household. If the number of people on Public Assistance changes or the income changes this could affect the CITYFEPS rental assistance. The CITYFEPS rental assistance can also be discontinued if the household no longer has an active public assistance case or no longer has a child under 18 years of age or under 19 years of age who is a fulltime student regularly attending a secondary school, or the equivalent level of vocational or technical training.

SEPS

The City’s Special Exit and Prevention Supplement (SEPS) Program can help eligible individual adults and adult families (families without children) at risk of entry to shelter and those already in shelter to secure permanent housing. Potentially eligible individual adults and adult families will be connected with SEPS providers (community-based organizations), which will assist the household in completing an application and locating housing. For households in shelter, New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) housing specialists and case managers will also be available to provide assistance.

The general rent levels for the City’s rental assistance programs are based on household size as follows:

Household Size	Maximum Rent Level
1	\$1213
2	\$1268
3	\$1515
4	\$1515
5	\$1956

FEPS

The New York State Family Eviction Prevention Supplement is intended to help with preventing homelessness by supplementing the State Public Assistance shelter allowances for families. FEPS was started in 2005 as a program to provide ongoing rental assistance for up to five years to families receiving Public Assistance. The program can also assist with rental arrears up to \$7,000. The New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) administers the FEPS program. Applications are processed by authorized legal services offices and community-based organizations. When a FEPS case is approved by OTDA, the Human Resources Administration (HRA) makes the approved rent payments directly to the landlord.

In 2017, a settlement agreement was reached with New York State (and will be finalized in September) which will result in increases in rent supplements for families facing the threat of homelessness due to eviction. Under the terms of the settlement agreement a family of four, will be eligible to receive a rent supplement of up to \$1515 to rent a two-bedroom apartment. The current limit for the program was \$900 for a family of four, a cap that had not been changed since 2004. The settlement agreement also promises relief for domestic violence survivors. Under the previous FEPS program families fleeing an apartment out of fear of an abusive spouse or partner were ineligible for the State rent supplement program unless they were also being sued in housing court, which was not generally the case. The City and State will implement this new program in November/December 2017.

HRA HOME TBRA

The HRA HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance program is a United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-funded rental assistance program run by the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) under the oversight of the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). HRA HOME TBRA helps eligible families in shelter and chronically street homeless people with disabilities afford the cost of rent. The application period for this subsidy is now closed.

Pathways Home

Pathways Home is a program that enables families and individuals to move out of shelter by moving in with family members or friends (“host families”). Pathways Home can assist clients to move from shelter back to the community as quickly as possible by providing monthly payments to a host family for up to 12 months. The program provides monthly payments to host families of up to \$1200, \$1500 or \$1800, depending on household size.

SPECIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA)

HASA is the most comprehensive program of its kind in the country, assisting New Yorkers with AIDS or HIV illness to live healthier and more independent lives. HASA services include specialized intake and needs assessments. For eligible clients, HASA provides direct linkages to cash assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, homecare services, and homemaking—homecare services available to the children of a HASA client; ongoing intensive case management; emergency and permanent housing services and placements; vocational counseling, job training, and placement. HASA also offers assistance with clients' applications for federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI); and referrals to community-based resources for additional services.

In 2015, New York State enacted a new 30% rent cap program for eligible persons living with HIV/AIDS. Under the law, HASA's rental assistance program aligns with federal low-income housing programs so that eligible clients with income pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent. Starting in August 2016, New Yorkers no longer need to have HIV-related illness to receive HASA services. All NYC residents with AIDS or HIV illness who meet financial need requirements are eligible.

Domestic Violence Services

The Office of Domestic Violence (ODV) provides emergency shelter, transitional housing programs and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their children. ODV directly operates one emergency domestic violence shelter, and has fiscal and program oversight responsibility for 53 private emergency residential programs, and eight transitional housing programs for survivors of domestic violence. The ODV administers contracts for 9 community based non-residential DV programs, and HRA's Domestic Violence Liaison Unit covers all HRA Job Centers. The HRA Alternative to Shelter Program provides a specialized safety system for DV survivors who can safely remain at home; and the HRA Domestic Violence Aftercare Program provides case management services for NYCHA DV residents approved for emergency housing transfers; and NOVA (No Violence Again) Social Workers provide assessment services at DHS Intake sites for families, adults and singles. In addition, ODV leads a nationally recognized domestic violence primary prevention effort, the Teen Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP); 37 Teen RAPP social workers are located in over 90 high schools and middle schools citywide.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) are provided to persons who are 18 years of age or older, without regard to income, who are mentally and/or physically impaired, lack the ability to meet their essential needs of food, shelter and healthcare or are being physically, sexually or

emotionally abused, financially exploited or neglected and have no one willing and able to assist them responsibly.

Once an adult is determined to meet the APS eligibility criteria, a case plan is developed to ensure that the client receives the services necessary to allow them to remain safely in the community. These services include obtaining Social Security benefits, cash assistance, SNAP, Medicaid or personal care. APS also assists clients who are facing evictions, either by requesting a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) to represent the interest of the client in court, applying for rent arrears, or identifying alternative living arrangements. In some cases APS also acts as representative payee for Social Security benefits. In addition, APS can provide practical support such as arranging for heavy-duty cleaning of a client's residence.

For clients who cannot be assisted on a voluntary basis, APS can pursue a legal action for the appointment of an Article 81 guardian when appropriate.

Referrals to APS may be made by calling the APS Central Intake Unit Referral Line at 212-630-1853, between 9 AM and 5 PM, Monday through Friday, or by completing a web referral at any time by using the following link: <https://a069-apscri.nyc.gov/cris/>

Referrals to APS can be made by:

- Friends, relatives, neighbors, and other concerned individuals within the community.
- Medical and social work personnel.
- Private and governmental agencies, and courts

Services may include:

- Referral for psychiatric and/or medical examination.
- Assistance in obtaining and recertifying Medicaid and Home Care services.
- Assistance in obtaining and recertifying Social Security Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits.
- Financial management of social security benefits.
- Heavy-duty cleaning services.
- Identification of alternate living arrangements.
- Assistance in obtaining governmental entitlements.

Home Care and Long-Term Care

The Home Care Services Program (HCSP) offers Medicaid-funded, non-institutional long-term care programs that enable the frail, the aged and the disabled to remain in the safety of their homes rather than institutions.

Under New York State Medicaid Redesign (the reorganization of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act) most Medicaid-eligible people who are 21 or older and on Medicare and have a medical need for assistance in their home, must receive that care through the Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) program, administered by New York State.

HRA's HCSP continues to provide housekeeping services to people of any age, with or without Medicare, who have a medical need for housekeeping services. HCSP provides home attendant services only to Medicaid eligible people under the age of 21; to participants in waiver programs (e.g., the Traumatic Brain Injury or Nursing Home Diversion and Transition waiver programs, Care-at-Home programs through the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities OMRDD, etc.); and to consumers who are older than 21, do not have Medicare and are participating in the surplus program.

In 2013, The Long Term Home Health Care program (LTHHCP) also transitioned to Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) as part of Medicaid Redesign. LTHHCP participants under the age of 65 who are not receiving Medicare may enroll in Mainstream Managed Care. HCSP continues to administer the Care-at-Home Program which is designed specifically for severely disabled children (under 18 years old), and provides an array of services, including home attendant service, physical, occupational and speech therapy, home modifications, and other medical services.

While HCSP is not responsible programmatically for MLTC clients, HRA continues to be responsible for the Medicaid eligibility application and recertification for participants in all Medicaid funded community-based long-term care programs including MLTC, Care at Home, Assisted Living Programs and personal care services.

Emergency Utility Intervention Services

The federally funded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps low-income homeowners and renters pay bills for heating fuel, equipment and repairs. HEAP assists eligible households with grants to pay their energy and/or heating costs through regular or emergency benefits, which do not have to be paid back. In order to better assist homebound clients with accessing HEAP benefits, HRA established the Heat Line Program which pairs homebound clients with caseworkers who will visit their homes and help them complete the HEAP application.

The Utility Assistance Program (UAP) is a state mandated program that receives referrals from utility companies on behalf of customers faced with the termination of service prior to a shutoff. The notification must be made 15 days prior to disconnection if the utility company is aware that families or individuals meet one of the following criteria: elderly, blind, or disabled individuals, and if they suspect impairment or the presence of neglect or hazardous situation. UAP staff makes home visits to confirm that households meet the criteria listed above. UAP

staff will also offer customers financial assistance for their energy bills as well as assistance in obtaining extensions from the utility companies.

Emergency Food Assistance Program

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) provides administrative funding, food, and technical assistance to over 480 community kitchens and food pantries citywide. EFAP staff regularly monitors the operations of these programs in order to ensure adherence to HRA guidelines. More than 10 million pounds of food is distributed each year through this program.

WeCARE

The Wellness Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation and Employment (WeCARE) program assists clients with health and mental health barriers to employability. Clients referred to this program receive comprehensive bio-psychosocial assessments that include general and specialty medical examinations. Individualized service plans are developed based on assessments. These service plans may include case management services, linkages to treatment, diagnostic vocational evaluations, vocational rehabilitation, and job placement and retention services. Individuals with long-term disabilities receive assistance in applying for federal disability benefits.

INVESTIGATION, REVENUE, AND ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Fraud Prevention and Investigation

The Investigation, Revenue, and Enforcement Administration (IREA) is HRA's investigative arm charged with protecting the integrity of HRA's public assistance programs. IREA identifies, investigates and collects improper payments stemming from fraud, waste, or abuse. Specifically, its work includes eligibility verification reviews for cash assistance clients, recipient Add fraud investigations, recoveries of overpayments via liens and collection efforts, and audits and investigations of Medicaid providers. IREA has pioneered a range of investigative practices that are data-driven and rely on front end detection and predictive modeling to identify fraud.

IDNYC

IDNYC, the largest municipal identification program in the country, is directly operated by DSS through a joint initiative with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor's Office of Operations. Since its launch, more than one million New Yorkers have obtained their IDNYC. IDNYC maintains 22 permanent locations with four or five additional pop-up enrollment sites, at any given time, across the five boroughs. Earlier this year, the IDNYC command center launched which will serve as a mobile enrollment center.

IDNYC benefits every city resident, including the most vulnerable communities—the homeless, youth, the elderly, undocumented immigrants, the formerly incarcerated and others who may have difficulty obtaining other government-issued ID. Among other benefits, IDNYC cardholders can access services and programs offered by the City and gain access to all City buildings that provide services to the public. IDNYC also provides a dynamic series of benefits to cardholders, including a free one-year membership at many of the City's leading museums, zoos, concert halls, and botanical gardens.

How to Apply:

Applying online allows applicants to fill out the required paperwork before their appointment at an enrollment center.

Applicants will need to:

- Gather documents;
- Fill out the online application;
- Select documents;
- Make an enrollment center appointment; and
- Review information before submitting your online application.

Applications at an enrollment center must be completed within 30 days of submitting this online application.

Individuals unable to complete any part of the online application can apply in person by filling out an application at an enrollment center. To make an enrollment center appointment visit the IDNYC appointments page or call 311.

To learn more about HRA programs and services, call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/hra.