

# Community Guide to **HRA Public Benefits** for **Immigrants**



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## For more information

you may consult the following resources:

- **HRA's Website:** [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra)
- **HRA Infoline:** 718-557-1399
- **NYC 311**
- **ACCESS NYC:** [www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC](http://www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC)  
(Benefits screenings and applications – Available in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Haitian-Creole, and Korean)
- **Language Gateway:** <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ig/html/home/home.shtml>  
(NYC program information in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian)
- **New York State Immigration Hotline:** 212-419-3737

Please be aware that the purpose of this guide is to provide the public with basic information about HRA programs. To determine eligibility for HRA's programs, please contact the programs through the numbers/websites in the guide.

## Child Support Enforcement

Ensures that the parent without custody (the non-custodial parent) pays to support his/her children. Services include locating the non-custodial parent, giving him/her a legal notice to appear in court, helping to establish paternity, child support and medical support orders in Family Court, and collection and enforcement of those orders. This poverty reduction program can help keep families financially independent and decrease the need for other assistance.

### Eligibility Criteria

- No citizenship/immigration status requirements for eligibility.
- No income requirements for eligibility.
- For more information call 311, HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399 or the NYS Child Support Hotline at 1-888-208-4485 or go to: [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra) and [www.newyorkchildsupport.com](http://www.newyorkchildsupport.com)

## Home Energy Assistance Program and Utility Assistance Program

Helps low-income homeowners and renters pay bills for heating fuel, equipment and repairs. Assists families or individuals who are elderly, blind, disabled, mentally impaired or those living in a neglected or hazardous environment who need financial assistance for their energy bills.

- U.S. citizens or people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Eligibility is based on income.
- HEAP Hotline at 718-557-1399.
- HEAT LINE (Homebound service) at 718-557-1399.
- For Utility Assistance: All clients are referred by utility companies.

## Burial Assistance

HRA may provide up to \$900 in financial assistance for New York City residents to help with expenses for a funeral that does not cost more than \$1700. This amount includes burial of the ashes after cremation.

- Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis and is based on many different factors.
- All claims must be submitted within 60 days of death. An in-person interview is required most of the time.
- Call HRA's Burial Claims Unit for additional information: 718-473-8310.

# What services are available

## to New York residents regardless of immigration status?

Many immigrants in New York City are able to use a wide range of services. The list below includes services that are available to New York City residents regardless of immigration status. Some of these services are provided by HRA; others are not. There may also be other services available to immigrants that are not in this brochure.

To find out more about the services below, call 311.

### Safety and Well-Being

- Police and fire protection
- Poison control hotline
- Consumer fraud protection through the Department of Consumer Affairs
- Protection of the Commission on Human Rights against discrimination
- Department of Parks and Recreation services and facilities
- Public transportation

### Health & Human Services

- Children under 19 are eligible for health insurance under the State's Child Health Plus program
- Adults may be eligible for coverage for the treatment of emergency medical conditions under the Medicaid program

- Emergency medical care, including ambulance service
- Prenatal care for pregnant women through the Medicaid program
- Women who received Medicaid for prenatal care can receive free planning services after their pregnancy ends through the Family Planning Extension Program
- Health care is available at public hospitals (NYC's Health and Hospital Corporation, or HHC) and federally-qualified community health centers
- Domestic violence support services
- Immunizations
- HIV testing and counseling
- Emergency shelter
- Food assistance services
- Child welfare and foster care services
- School breakfast and lunch programs
- Senior services and senior center programs of the Department for the Aging

### Education

- Public school education
- Public library services and special events

# Frequently asked questions

## about HRA services available to immigrant clients

### How can I apply for City services if I don't speak English well?

Free interpretation services are available at all City agencies, including HRA. Federal, state and local laws protect your right to get services even if you do not speak English well. Types of free language services: (1) Interpretation services over the phone are available at HRA sites in over 170 languages. (2) Bilingual staff may interpret where possible. (3) Face-to-face interpreters can be sent to clients who are unable to leave their home. (4) Translated documents: Many City documents are translated into six languages (Arabic, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian and Spanish), as required by Local Law 73.

### Will HRA report my personal information to the immigration authorities?

HRA will not report your personal information to anyone, except if required by law. NYC Executive Order 41 protects the confidentiality of anyone seeking City services. HRA staff will only ask for your immigration status if it is required to determine eligibility or if it is required by law.

### If I receive temporary cash assistance, will it affect my immigration case\*?

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

(USCIS) says that receiving cash assistance or SSI may or may not have a negative impact on your immigration case. It depends on your situation.

### If I receive food stamps, will it affect my immigration case\*?

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) says that receiving food stamps or other food assistance will not affect your immigration case.

### If I receive Medicaid, will it affect my immigration case\*?

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) says that receiving health care benefits, including Medicaid, will not affect your immigration case. USCIS says that receiving long-term care in a nursing home or another institution may or may not affect your immigration case; it depends on your situation.

### If you are undocumented, can you still apply for benefits for your citizen or non-citizen children who may be eligible?

Yes.

\* HRA is not the Agency that decides if receiving benefits will affect your immigration case; USCIS decides this. HRA strongly recommends that non-citizens speak with a lawyer to understand how receiving public benefits may affect immigration cases.

## Domestic Violence Support Services

Provides emergency shelter and support for victims of domestic violence and their children. All programs provide a safe environment as well as counseling, advocacy and referral services.



### Eligibility Criteria

- No citizenship/immigration status requirements for eligibility.
- If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, such as physical violence, sexual violence, threats, verbal abuse, or stalking, please call NYC 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-621-HOPE or 311.

## Adult Protective Services

Arranges for services and support for physically and/or mentally impaired adults who are at risk of harm. Helps resolve the risks faced by eligible clients, and enables them to live independently and safely within their homes and communities.



- No citizenship/immigration status requirements to qualify for certain services.
- You must be at least 18 years of age and mentally and/or physically impaired.
- You must be unable to manage your own resources; carry out day-to-day activities; or protect yourself from abuse, neglect, exploitation or other hazardous situations without assistance.
- You must have no one who is willing and able to assist you responsibly.
- No income requirements for eligibility.
- To make a referral to APS for yourself or for someone else, please call the APS Central Intake Unit at 718-557-1399.

## Home Care

Offers access to Medicaid-funded long-term care programs to help eligible elderly or disabled people remain safely at home, rather than in a nursing home or other institution.



### Eligibility Criteria

- U.S. citizens or people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Must be eligible for Medicaid.
- Some programs also consider your available resources.
- Eligibility for Medicaid-funded home care is different depending on the program, and is based on doctor's orders, and a medical and social assessment.
- Call 311 or HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399.
- For more information or for an application go to: [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra)

## HIV/AIDS Services

HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) clients receive ongoing case management as well as home and hospital visits; individualized service planning; link to cash assistance, Medicaid, food stamps and help applying for SSI/SSD benefits; emergency, transitional and non-emergency housing and rental assistance; home care and homemaking services; employment and vocational services; information and referrals to community-based agencies; counseling for clients and their families on daily living skills and available support systems; guardianship and permanency planning for families with children; and burial assistance.

- No citizenship/immigration status requirements for certain services.
- You must have been diagnosed with clinical symptomatic HIV illness as defined by the New York State AIDS Institute or with AIDS as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and present medical documentation to verify HIV/AIDS status.
- Call the HASA ServiceLine at 718-557-1399 (Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm).
- For applications to this program, please visit: [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra)

# Programs, Services, and Benefits

## at the Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services

*Note: The term "certain immigration statuses" includes many different types of immigration statuses. New Yorkers should contact the individual program through the numbers provided to check eligibility.*

### Temporary Cash Assistance

A cash grant that includes money towards housing, energy costs, and other expenses. Adults under the age of 60, who do not have disabilities or other barriers to employment and who are receiving temporary cash assistance, must either be working or enrolled in HRA-approved work activities for 35 hours per week.

### Eligibility Criteria

- U.S. citizens or people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Eligibility is based partly on: your income, your resources, and the number of people living with you.
- In many cases, clients who receive temporary cash assistance must either be working or be enrolled in HRA-approved work activities, such as job training and education. Eligible families may also receive support services such as child care.
- To find a Job Center located near you: [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra)
- Call 311 or HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399.

### Food Stamps / Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Helps low- and moderate-income New Yorkers, including working families, the elderly, and the disabled buy healthy and nutritious food, even if they earn money, own a house, own a car, have a bank account or have private health insurance. Food Stamp recipients use an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to buy food.

- U.S. citizens or people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Eligibility and benefits are based partly on: your income, expenses, and the number of people living with you.
- Check your potential eligibility and apply online: [www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC](http://www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC) or [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov)
- You can also mail in your food stamps application: Mail Application & Referral Unit (MARU), P.O. Box 24510, Brooklyn, NY 11201.
- For more information about Food Stamps, call 311 or 1-800-342-3009 (and press "1" for food stamps).
- Download an application online: [www.nyc.gov/hra](http://www.nyc.gov/hra)



## Emergency Food Program (Food Pantries)

More than 500 food pantries in NYC offer bags of food and soup kitchens offer prepared meals.

## Public Health Insurance Programs

Low-income individuals and families, pregnant women, children, persons over 65 and people with disabilities may be eligible, even if they earn money, own a house, own a car, have a bank account or have private health insurance. Persons and families receiving SSI are automatically eligible. Those receiving cash assistance also qualify.

**Medicaid.** Free health insurance for individuals of any age.

**Family Health Plus (FHPlus).** Free health insurance for people 19-64 years old who do not have health insurance and whose income is too high for Medicaid.

**Child Health Plus.** Free to low-cost insurance for children under age of 19.



### Eligibility Criteria

- No citizenship/immigration status requirements for eligibility.
- Food pantries may have their own requirements.
- To locate a food pantry or soup kitchen in your area, please call 311.
- To find out how to apply for public health insurance, call 311 or HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399, or to check potential eligibility, go to [www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC](http://www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC)
- U.S. citizens or people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Single adults, couples, families with children, and children may be eligible.
- Eligibility is based on income and on resources for those who are disabled, over 65 years old or blind.
- \* *Undocumented applicants may be eligible for Medicaid to treat an emergency medical condition and for prenatal care.*
- No citizenship/immigration status requirements.
- Children under 19 years old.
- Depending on a family's income, Child Health Plus is free for some families and others have to pay a small monthly premium. Families with higher incomes can also purchase health coverage for their children at the full premium level.

**Prenatal Care for Pregnant Women through Medicaid.** Free health insurance for individuals of any age. Offers free pregnancy care and other health services to women and teens. Under Prenatal Care Services, pregnant women receive prenatal health services, such as lab tests, HIV tests, nutrition screenings, and other services related to their pregnancy and birth.

**Family Planning Benefit Program.** Free health insurance for males and females of childbearing age. Offers males and females free family planning services. FPBP covers screening for sexually-transmitted diseases, HIV and cervical cancer, related clinical exams and lab tests, provision of birth control methods, devices, and supplies related to reproductive health.

## Medicare Savings Program (MSP)

Helps people who receive Medicare (due to age or disability) by paying their monthly Medicare premiums, co-payments, and/or deductibles.



### Eligibility Criteria

- No citizenship/immigration status requirements.
- Eligibility is based on income.
- U.S. citizens or persons with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Eligibility is based on income.
- U.S. citizens and people with certain immigration statuses may be eligible.
- Applicants must be eligible to receive or be receiving Medicare.
- Eligibility is based on income.
- To find out how to apply, call 311 or HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399, or to check eligibility, go to [www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC](http://www.nyc.gov/ACCESSNYC)