

September, 2020 District Manager's Report

Agency Reports:

HRA Reported on the following:

Census: As the Trump Administration has indicated it intends to end the census count early, it is critically important that all New York City residents are counted. Only 54.8% of New York City residents have completed the Census thus far. HRA is asking the City to reinforce to clients and constituents the importance of completing the 2020 census. This is HRA's opportunity to ensure they receive their appropriate share of census-guided federal funds. Visit my2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020 to learn more.

Replacement of Food Purchased with SNAP Benefits Due to Power Outages: SNAP benefits are eligible for replacement of food costs resulting from the loss of power/gas. Applications for replacement of food benefits must be submitted within ten days of the date of the outage. The State OTDA has requested an extension of the ten-day requirement, extending the deadline to September, 2020. While HRA is hopeful they will receive this waiver, it has not yet been received so applicants should be aware of the 10-day deadline. HRA will provide an update once a response to the waiver request is received.

Food cost replacement benefits can be applied for as follows:

- Current SNAP clients (CA/SNAP and SNAP only) can request replacement of food purchased with SNAP benefits by completing and submitting a form [LDSS-2291](#). This form can be downloaded in multiple languages as a fillable PDF. This form needs to be submitted within 10 days of the loss of food (pending the waiver request mentioned above).
- Replacement issuances will be provided in the amount of the loss to the household, up to a maximum of one month's allotment, unless the most recent issuance includes restored benefits which shall be replaced at their full value.
- Documents can be submitted using the ACCESS HRA Mobile app by taking a picture of the completed and signed LDSS-2291 form (www.nyc.gov/accesshramobile).
- For SNAP recipients who cannot use the app, the form can be submitted by fax, by mail, or in-person (if necessary) at one of our [open Centers](#). The delivery information below is only for SNAP recipients:

Fax: 917-639-1111

Mail: HRA/Family Independence Administration
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Mail Application Referral Unit
P.O. Box 29197
Brooklyn, NY 11201-9956

- Households not in receipt of CA or SNAP who are unable to cook meals in their home because of the power outage (i.e. electric range) can apply for a One-Shot Deal restaurant allowance through ACCESS HRA.
- Households already in receipt of CA who are unable to cook meals in their home because of the power outage can request a special grant for a restaurant allowance through ACCESS HRA.
- Applicants may be required to submit documentation of the utility outage. Proof of power outage is not required at the time of application, but may be requested later.
- Households who need assistance with purchasing food can always apply for SNAP benefits, but regular eligibility requirements would apply.
- Based on federal law, food purchased using Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) payments is not eligible for replacement SNAP benefits. P-EBT is not SNAP, it is a one-time benefit. The federal CARES Act does not authorize replacement.

Emergency Grants/One-Shot Deal: In addition to HRA’s regular ACCESS HRA online training, they are offering targeted ACCESS HRA training specifically for applications for emergency assistance/One-Shot Deals.

Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents Work Requirements Waiver: The federal Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work requirement waiver remains in effect. As required by federal law, letters informing clients of their ABAWD status have been going out to clients. These letters are not notices of a requirement to work. There is no change to the current waiver of federal ABAWD work requirements. In response to a request from State OTDA on June 22, 2020, the USDA has extended suspension of work requirements through September 30, 2021.

New York State Emergency Rental Assistance: HRA announced last week, the [NYS COVID Rent Relief Program](#) deadline was extended to August 6, 2020. This State program was designed to support low-income households experiencing an increased rent burden due to a loss of income during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Rent Relief Program provides a one-time payment to cover the difference between their rent burden on March 1, 2020 and the increase in rent burden during the months the household is applying for assistance (up to four months, from April through July 2020). This rent relief program does not have an impact on a client’s eligibility for HRA rent arrears benefits through a “one shot deal”.

Mobile Covid-19 Testing Sites: The City is offering Covid-19 testing at mobile testing sites that move throughout the five boroughs. These sites provide 80 tests per day. Locations can be found by contacting 311.

Tenant Resource Portal: The Mayor’s Office to Protect Tenants (MOPT) and the Mayor’s Public Engagement Unit’s (PEU) Tenant Support Unit (TSU) have created an online tool to help renters in New York City navigate public and private resources that can stabilize their housing situation. A tenant seeking help will be taken through a series of questions and directed to the most useful

resources based on their responses, including information about free legal services for tenants through HRA's Office of Civil Justice (OCJ). MOPT and PEU have included resources from multiple city agencies, Legal Services Providers, and Community Based Organizations.

Legal Services Providers or Community Based Organizations are encouraged to recommend additional resources using the online feedback form found @ <https://www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantresourceportal/pages/feedback-form>.

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT): As detailed below in the "Additional Information" section, State OTDA has been administering Pandemic EBT benefits. These benefits are being issued by State OTDA in three cohorts. State letters confirming distribution of benefits to the first two cohorts, recipients of SNAP and/or Cash Assistance and recipients of Medicaid have been sent and State OTDA considers the distribution process to these cohorts to be now complete. Utilization of benefits for these two cohorts has been 100% and 40% respectively. There have been approximately 13,000 returned letters. The State is using State DOH and State WMS data to search for current addresses.

Advocates who are contacting the State on behalf of clients may email otda.sm.eisp.pebt@otca.ny.gov with questions, and use "Advocate Inquiry" in the subject line in order to facilitate appropriate routing of the inquiry to expedite a response.

Here is the number for State OTDA's P-EBT helpline: 833-452-0096. The helpline is available from 8:30am – 5pm Monday through Friday. Translation services are available

Statewide Eviction Moratorium: No evictions can take place until October 1, 2020, at the earliest, by order of the New York State courts. In addition, under the state Tenant Safe Harbor Act, if you have experienced a financial hardship any time between March 7, 2020 and the date that all COVID-related safety restrictions are lifted in the region, you may not be evicted for failing to pay rent that became due during that period.

Under the court's order, in Housing Court in New York City, eviction cases filed on or before March 16, 2020 (pre-COVID) may proceed, but if you received an eviction notice before March 16, 2020, your landlord must file a motion and get permission from the court to evict you. If you receive a motion like this, or if you receive a warrant of eviction, HRA's Office of Civil Justice (OCJ) can provide free legal representation through its nonprofit legal organization partners to help you with your case. You can call 311 and ask for the City's Tenant Helpline to connect you with free legal help through OCJ.

Under the court's order, eviction cases filed on or after March 17, 2020 are on hold until further notice. Any tenant who receives a petition for a Housing Court eviction case does not need to go to the courthouse to respond in person. If you have received an eviction petition or other Housing Court papers, you can connect with the City's Tenant Helpline for free legal help.

Pandemic Unemployment Insurance: While there may be confusion following the President's announcement about additional unemployment benefits, it is important that individuals receiving

unemployment insurance benefits continue to certify weekly to ensure receipt of benefits. The State will process any additional benefits if/when they become available for those who continue to recertify weekly. The State Department of Labor (DOL) is asking benefit recipients not to call the DOL to inquire about the Trump Administration's announcement at this time. As soon as additional information regarding the continuance of Federal Pandemic Unemployment benefits is available, it will be shared by the State DOL on its [website](#) and social media platforms.

Mayor's Office Reported: NYC HHC launched NYC Care in Manhattan and Queens ahead of schedule, delivering on the Administration's promise of guaranteed health care access for all New Yorkers citywide, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay. Since its launch in August 2019 in the Bronx, and expansion to Brooklyn and Staten Island in January 2020, nearly 30,000 New Yorkers have enrolled and obtained access to high-quality health care across the city.

To expand NYC Care membership in neighborhoods most affected by COVID-19, the City will collaborate with 19 community-based organizations (CBOs) to enroll uninsured New Yorkers in the program. Outreach will be conducted in key languages, such as Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Bengali and Urdu. Were selected through a request for proposal process in July, the CBOs will conduct outreach with a focus on Jackson Heights, North Corona, Flushing, Murray Hill, Whitestone, Elmhurst and South Corona in Queens and Washington Heights, Inwood, Marble, Hamilton Heights, Manhattanville, West Harlem, Chinatown & Lower East Side in Manhattan:

- Alliance for Positive Change
- Bangladeshi American Community Development & Youth Services (BACDYS)
- China Manpower Project
- CIANA
- DSI International
- Emerald Isle Immigration Center
- Haitian Americans United
- Jacob A Riis Neighborhood Settlement
- Korean Community Services
- Make the Road New York
- Mexican Coalition
- New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE)
- Polonians Organized to Minister to Our Community (POMOC)
- Queens Community House
- Single Stop

- South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS)
- The Tibetan Community of New York & New Jersey
- United Sikhs
- Voces Latinas

In addition to the new CBOs, CBOS that are currently active in in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island will receive a seven-month extension to their contracts as well.

The City will also spearhead a public awareness campaign in key languages, including Spanish, Chinese, Urdu, Bengali, and French, in key neighborhoods in Manhattan and Queens and near all NYC Health + Hospital facilities, including three subway station and bus shelter ad dominations, neighborhood locations, and LinkNYC terminals. In addition to these platforms, NYC Care will also take advantage of guerrilla marketing, coordinating street marketing teams, storefront and in-store posters in bodegas, laundromats, barbershops, check-cashing locations, and more.

Since its launch in the Bronx, NYC Care has dramatically changed the way the City's public health system connects people to personalized, coordinated primary, preventive and specialty care. With the expansion of NYC Care to Queens and Manhattan, new NYC Care members will receive a primary care appointment within two weeks. All NYC Care members also receive a membership card, access to language interpretation services, expanded pharmacy hours within the NYC Health + Hospitals system, and a 24/7 customer assistance line where they can ask questions about NYC Care and speak to an on-call clinician for all of their needs, including prescription refills. Those who are eligible and want to enroll in the program should call 646-NYC-CARE.

To date, NYC Care's nearly 30,000 members have had over 85,000 provider visits since the beginning of the program, with over 17,000 telehealth visits and over 30,000 prescriptions filled during new extended pharmacy hours. Further, nearly 20,000 members have been screened for depression since the program began and have been connected to additional supports and services when appropriate. NYC Health + Hospitals is also hiring 26 new primary care providers and specialists, expanding on existing care teams at Queens and Manhattan NYC Health + Hospitals locations. To date, NYC Health + Hospitals has hired over 20 new providers at facilities in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island, and continues to recruit to hire over 60 new medical providers to serve new patients through NYC Care.

Additional information on NYC Care, including brochures and translated material languages, is available @<https://www.nyccare.nyc/>.

Manhattan Borough President Office (MBPO) Reported: MBPO is partnering with the Commission on Human Rights to offer several trainings via zoom. MBPO are currently working on hosting more sessions during the evening so more CB members can attend. In the meantime,

the below trainings are being offered. I've sent an email to all CB members, but please feel free to forward again to your members. These trainings are important and relevant and we are hoping all members are able to take each training.

Understanding Muslim Experiences and Combating Islamophobia

This workshop promotes understanding of the City's diverse faith communities. The workshop addresses what is referred to as anti-Muslim racism, introduces Muslim beliefs and practices, outlines best practices in working with Muslim New Yorkers, and elaborates on the protections under the City Human Rights Law against discrimination based on religion.

When: Wednesday, September 9th at 3pm

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrdo6vqT8tEtDPai9zYGCipV1wsJNjNnTn>

Working with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Communities

This workshop creates awareness that transgender New Yorkers face discrimination in all areas covered by the City Human Rights Law and that they must be treated with dignity and respect. The workshop covers protections under the City Human Rights Law, briefly addresses federal and state law and reviews in detail correct terminology when addressing the LBGTQI community.

When: Monday, September 14th at 1pm

Register in advance for this

meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtdOyurTMiHNWKZtztF0N2Z6HMAN8fnKki>

NYC Department of City Planning (DCP) Reported: Director Marisa Lago announced a series of [remote workshops](#), two or more in each borough, that seek to gather comment and input on the next edition of New York City's Comprehensive Waterfront Plan. The plan will set a vision for the future of the waterfront for the next decade and beyond.

This announcement comes alongside the launch of a [new website](#) dedicated to increasing public engagement on the plan. Public input is a critical, central pillar of the plan, which is tentatively scheduled to be released by the end of 2020. The website will accept public input through the end of November 2020.

The website also provides information about existing waterfront regulations, links to waterfront-related interactive maps, a section on what we've heard through public outreach so far, information about our community partners and a space where New Yorkers can share their thoughts on the waterfront.

The new website includes a [draft framework document](#), spelling out priorities based on what DCP has heard from communities so far. Meant to further spur public conversation and input, the framework includes overarching themes of resiliency, equity and health that will shape the content of the plan and our process. The framework uses these themes as a lens through which it discusses topics like economic activity, ferries, natural resources and the working waterfront.

The workshops are tailored for local communities. Participants can join by videoconference on Zoom or by calling from any phone. The hour and a half long meetings, which are also accessible through [NYC Engage](#), are scheduled to start at 4 p.m. for:

- **Oct. 27:** Manhattan: Upper Manhattan, East Side (Community Districts 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12)
- **Nov. 12:** Manhattan: Lower Manhattan, West Side (Community Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9)

Each workshop will start with a presentation by DCP on the preliminary goals and issues the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan aims to address, followed by small group discussions to share ideas.

Mayor's Office Reported: Restaurants will be allowed to reopen on September 30th. They will be subject to rigorous inspection protocols and strict occupancy limits. Some requirements for restaurants include:

- Serve customers at a maximum of 25% capacity
- Conduct temperature checks at every front door
- Collect Test & Trace data from at least one customer at each table
- Close bar tops for seating
- Offer COVID-19 protections like PPE for employees
- Space tables six feet apart

If New York City hits 2% in COVID-19 positivity rates, the City will immediately reassess.

Open Restaurants, New York City's outdoor dining program, has already given the restaurant industry a lifeline; more than 10,000 restaurants are participating, and the program has saved an estimated 90,000 jobs.

FY22 Budget Consultations will take place the following Friday's during the month of September (Please refer to the Chair's email to the prospective Committee Chair(s)).

Respectfully Submitted by,

Eutha Prince
District Manager – **9-17-20**