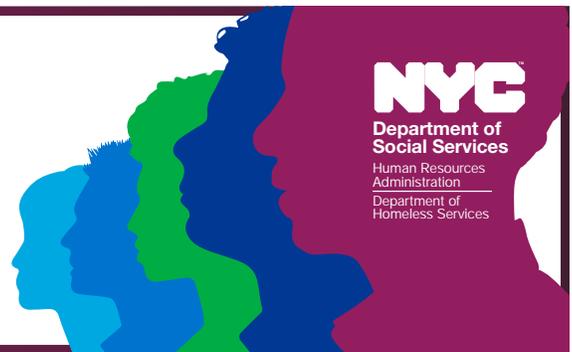


# FRONTLINE PROFILES



## DSS Frontline Profile: Mohammad Afzal

HRA's Mohammad Afzal is an Eligibility Specialist II at Coney Island Medicaid Office, where he draws on years of experience to help eligible New Yorkers enroll in public health insurance plans like Medicaid. Since the Coronavirus pandemic began, Mohammad and his coworkers have been dividing their time between working on site and working from home, in order to reduce their risk.

"As an essential worker, I'm proud to do it. I'm very happy here to help people," said Mohammad. "Senior citizens or people who come to us very sick, when I help them through my experience and knowledge, and they stand up and say "thank you, very good," that for me is rewarding."

HRA's Medical Insurance and Community Services Administration (MICSA) handles Medicaid applications for seniors and people with disabilities, but HRA Medicaid offices can also help New Yorkers who do not fit these categories apply through the New York State of Health website. Mohammad is no exception, helping anyone who calls or comes in to apply, even some people who have come from faraway parts of the city because they've heard of his office's good customer service.

Mohammad is known around his office for his deep knowledge of the Medicaid program and his patience in working with clients. Because of this, he's often called in to handle the most difficult cases. In one instance, he was called in to help an applicant who had recently been released from incarceration and was acting aggressively toward other staff.

"I took him to my desk and I sat down and I did everything for him, whatever I knew from my experience. I saw I just had to switch his case to community Medicaid, and I told him, 'Listen, you wait 72 hours, your Medicaid will start working. If not, come back to me or call me.'"

Mohammad lives in Brooklyn with his family. Since the pandemic began his daughters have been taking college classes online. He has been driving to work and is always careful to wear a mask and take other precautions.

"A lot of people need help, especially with the virus. We try to process their cases as fast as we can so they can get the benefit and not have to worry about insurance."

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