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**CITY LAUNCHES “ACCESS HRA” DESKS AT IDNYC CENTERS TO CREATE
COMMUNITY ENTRYPOINT FOR ESSENTIAL BENEFITS**

ACCESS HRA desks launching at 3 IDNYC enrollment centers to bring information and applications for benefits including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program directly to New Yorkers

Additional desks to open in the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island by the end of the year

NEW YORK—With more than 1.1 million New Yorkers enrolled in IDNYC – New York City’s landmark municipal identification card – the City announced today that IDNYC enrollment centers will serve as even more critical community hubs by hosting ACCESS HRA self-service desks onsite, connecting New Yorkers directly with information on, and applications for, essential benefits. Through this partnership, the City is making applying for and receiving benefits like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) even easier for New Yorkers to navigate. Three ACCESS HRA desks launch this week at IDNYC enrollment centers in Manhattan and Brooklyn, including one at IDNYC’s newest permanent enrollment center at NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan in East Harlem.

“Simply making resources available is not enough. City government functions at its best when we bring essential services into the neighborhood – in the places people live, work, and already feel comfortable turning to for help,” said **Richard Buery, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives**. “By transforming IDNYC enrollment centers into hubs for a host of City resources,

the ACCESS HRA integration will make it easier for New Yorkers to navigate and connect to the many beneficial programs we have to offer.”

“The success of the IDNYC program is a testament to the City’s continued commitment to helping everyone in New York City,” said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “As more and more New Yorkers continue to sign up for IDNYC, they’ll have access to information about other essential services through these community hubs, making it a one stop shop to ensure that all New Yorkers learn about the city services and its many benefits. I want to thank HRA and the administration for their commitment in making Access HRA a gateway to all our City has to offer.”

“The IDNYC program is about helping all New Yorkers participate fully as residents of their city,” said **Steven Banks, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services**. “It only makes sense for IDNYC locations to include ACCESS HRA, which makes it easy for New Yorkers to apply for and manage essential benefits like SNAP.”

“Our partnerships across the public and private sectors make IDNYC even more essential for New Yorkers. Launching ACCESS HRA for the first time in our enrollment centers is the next step to open more doors for our communities,” said **Colette Samman, Executive Director of IDNYC**. “IDNYC’s many enrollment centers and pop-up enrollment sites already serve as important hubs of information on City services. Thanks to our partnership with HRA, New Yorkers will have easier access to food stamps and other important public resources.”

The new ACCESS HRA desks are located in three permanent IDNYC enrollment centers: NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan in East Harlem, the East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center, and Asian Americans for Equality’s Sunset Park office, with plans to open at IDNYC enrollment centers in the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island by the end of 2017.

“ACCESS HRA is a powerful self-service tool for New Yorkers who receive benefits like SNAP and Cash Assistance,” said **Grace Bonilla, Administrator of the Human Resources Administration**. “We’re proud to offer more convenient locations at IDNYC centers where clients can manage or recertify their benefits.”

“IDNYC has been so successful because it is accessible. We place our IDNYC enrollment sites in trusted community hubs, bringing services like ACCESS HRA straight to our neighborhoods to ensure that all New Yorkers are aware of services and benefits that they might be eligible for,” said **Bitta Mostofi, Acting Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs**. “Hosting ACCESS HRA desks at IDNYC enrollment centers puts City resources and services in communities and in the languages New Yorkers’ speak.”

“As a community hospital, NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan continues to seek ways to provide our patients and their families with convenient access to the essential services they need,” said **Alina Moran, Chief Executive Officer at NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan**. “We are grateful to HRA and IDNYC for providing this important resource to members of our community in the new, permanent IDNYC enrollment center.”

Since its launch in 2015, IDNYC has worked to open doors to the city for more New Yorkers. The new ACCESS HRA desks allow New Yorkers to manage their public benefits online through ACCESS HRA, a web-based client portal. By creating an ACCESS HRA account, individuals can apply for and recertify SNAP benefits, recertify for Cash Assistance, view their Medicaid coverage status, as well as manage payments, appointments, documents, and information of existing cases. ACCESS HRA is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Haitian Creole, Russian, and Arabic. IDNYC staff will assist New Yorkers in navigating ACCESS HRA, and direct individuals to other HRA resources, such as HRA Infoline, a SNAP Center, or a Job Center – which have access to telephonic interpretation services in 180 languages. ACCESS HRA desks enhance IDNYC’s ability to respond to the needs of communities across the city, particularly low-income and vulnerable populations.

All New Yorkers in need of assistance are encouraged to apply for public benefits. All City resources, including education, health care, and access to public safety, are available to New Yorkers regardless of immigration status. Certain public benefits that are administered by the City but funded by federal or State resources, such as SNAP, have eligibility restrictions that include immigration status. Any New Yorker with questions about their eligibility status for benefits should contact HRA for help. For more information, individuals can visit nyc.gov/accessNYC or call HRA’s Infoline at 718-557-1399.

All City residents age 14 and above are eligible to get a municipal ID card, and enrollment is free for anyone who applies in 2017. IDNYC has a wide array of benefit partners across the city that make entertainment options, sporting events, zoos and museums, among others, cheaper and more accessible to New Yorkers. A full list of benefit partners is available on IDNYC’s website. All IDNYC applicants must have documentation that proves identity and residency in New York City. The City is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all IDNYC card applications. For more information on eligibility criteria, benefits, enrollment centers across the five boroughs and more, applicants can visit nyc.gov/IDNYC.

“I commend the City for this innovative new venture which will undoubtedly connect more New Yorkers with the crucial city services they deserve,” said **Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez**. “From enrolling in food stamps to checking Medicaid status, ACCESS HRA will play a major role in helping our most vulnerable neighbors. I am especially grateful to have one of the new ACCESS HRA desks installed in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.”

“The IDNYC program has been transformative for the lives of so many New Yorkers as more than 10 percent of New Yorkers have IDNYC,” said **Congressman Adriano Espaillat**. “The rollout of ACCESS HRA desks furthers New York City’s mission to expand inclusion and access to the program. These kiosks will make the program now more accessible to vulnerable populations, including homes without Internet service and those experiencing homelessness. It is crucial to serve all New Yorkers and ensure full access to the public benefits. I commend the Human Resources Administration for recognizing the needs of our most vulnerable populations and responding with effective infrastructure improvements.”

“IDNYC has allowed over 1 million New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status, greater functionality in obtaining essential services,” said **State Senator José M. Serrano**. “Now these

services are being expanded even further with the addition of ACCESS HRA self-service desks which will connect New Yorkers to essential benefits like Medicaid and SNAP. I am proud to see the municipal ID become such a success and that New York City continues to lead the way and providing a successful blueprint for the rest of the country to follow.”

“As my office has witnessed with many of the constituents that we service, those most in need of the public assistance programs that HRA administers face a number of barriers to accessing them,” said **State Senator Brian Benjamin**. “They may lack the financial means to travel to government appointments or lack the flexibility to meet multiple appointments because of job and familial responsibilities. ACCESS HRA’s new location in my Senate District will help to reduce those barriers by providing greater and easier access to critical social service program offerings like Medicaid, SNAP, and Emergency Cash Assistance, in a community where there is the tremendous need for these services. This will enable more women, children, and men to receive the help that they desperately need and are entitled to.”

“I applaud the City’s latest initiative to help eligible people access food and health benefits, including in Sunset Park,” said **Assembly Member Félix W. Ortiz, Assistant Speaker**. Providing more ways for people to apply for basic benefits promotes the health and well-being of families and communities. Each one dollar of federal SNAP benefits generates \$1.79 in economic activity.”

“IDNYC has already proven invaluable to more than a million New Yorkers,” said **Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried, Health Committee Chair**. “Now, by equipping IDNYC enrollment centers with ACCESS HRA desks, the de Blasio administration is making it easier for New Yorkers to navigate essential government services, like checking their Medicaid coverage status, accessing a job center, or applying for food stamps.”

“By adding Access HRA self-service desks at IDNYC centers we will be able to provide New York City’s neediest residents access to the services and benefits they need,” said **Assembly Member Robert J. Rodriguez**. Access HRA is an extremely efficient and easy way to get benefits and recertify online that can save people valuable time because they no longer will have to visit an HRA office to apply for services.”

“The launch of Access HRA is one more way New York City is keeping its promise of being a sanctuary city, while at the same time educating residents about the services they qualify for,” said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. “Every New Yorker, regardless of immigration status, who qualifies for public assistance is encouraged to apply. City services like education and healthcare among others are available to everyone, no matter their status.”

“When it comes to helping New Yorkers in their time of need, we need to meet them wherever and whenever,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**. “By using technology to better engage residents in the community, we will continue to improve program participation. I applaud HRA on their progress combining technology and community for the benefit of New Yorkers everywhere.”

“Having IDNYC in AAFE’s office has been an invaluable asset to the Sunset Park community,” said **Christopher Kui, Executive Director of Asian Americans for Equality**. “And now, with expanded services through ACCESS HRA, the office is truly becoming a one-stop shop for the neighborhood. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his dedication to the immigrant community and all New Yorkers in need, and I look forward to these exciting new services at AAFE.”

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