

New York City Resources for Immigrant Communities During COVID-19 Pandemic

The City of New York is committed to helping New Yorkers significantly affected by the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Many city services are available to all New Yorkers no matter what your immigration status is and regardless of your ability to pay, although other eligibility requirements may apply.

The information on available services and resources is **frequently changing**. For updates, visit nyc.gov/immigrants/coronavirus and nyc.gov/coronavirus, and follow [@NYCImmigrants](https://twitter.com/NYCImmigrants) on Twitter.



COVID-19 Guidance and Treatment

- Staying home as much as possible can slow the spread of COVID-19 in New York City. People who do not show symptoms may still be able to spread the virus.
- New Yorkers must wear face coverings in public, especially when they are not able to stay at least six feet away from others. A face covering is a well-secured paper or cloth that covers your nose and mouth and should be worn whenever you leave home. For more information about what type of face covering should be used and how, visit [NYC.gov/Coronavirus](https://nyc.gov/coronavirus).
- All essential City of New York employees must wear face coverings when interacting with the public on duty. The City is distributing face coverings to essential City workers.
- Grocery stores should require customers to wear face coverings to protect employees and customers. Business owners are advised to post signs to help enforce this guidance.
- If you are sick, **stay home**. If you have a cough, shortness of breath, fever, sore throat and do not feel better after 3-4 days, consult with your doctor.
- Use telephone, text, telemedicine (video conferencing), or a patient portal to speak with your doctor rather than going to your doctor in person. You and your doctor will decide if you need to seek medical care outside of your home.
- If you need help finding a doctor or getting medical care, call **311**. The City will provide medical care no matter what your immigration status is and whether you can pay for it or not.
- The City of New York is NOT setting up COVID-19 tests directly with patients. If you receive such a call, it is a scam. Only discuss your health information, including any needed tests, with your health care provider.
- The City's guidance on what you should do regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is frequently updated. To stay up to date with the latest information, visit [NYC.gov/Coronavirus](https://nyc.gov/coronavirus). Information is available in over 20 languages.
 - For real-time text updates on COVID-19 in English, text **COVID** to **692-692**.
 - For real-time updates in Spanish, text **COVIDESP** to **692-692**.
 - The real-time updates can also found in English, Spanish and Chinese on Twitter. Follow [@NotifyNYC](https://twitter.com/NotifyNYC), [@NNYCSpanish](https://twitter.com/NNYCSpanish) and [@NNYCChinese](https://twitter.com/NNYCChinese).
- New Yorkers who have symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19, have come into contact with someone who may have COVID-19, or are currently in quarantine can update the City on their status. Visit the [NYC COVID-19 Engagement Portal](https://nyc.gov/coronavirus/engagement) for more information.



COVID-19 and Immigration Concern

- Getting care, treatment, or testing for COVID-19 will NOT make you a “public charge” or hurt your ability to apply for a green card. Getting charity or discounted medical care will not hurt your ability to apply for a green card. There is no “public charge” test when green card holders apply for citizenship. Seek care without fear.
- Many immigrants are not affected by the “public charge” test.
- And not all public services, programs or benefits are considered “public benefits” under the “public charge” test. For example, the following services and programs are NOT considered “public benefits,” even for immigrants subject to the “public charge” test:
 - Healthcare services and most health insurance except non-emergency Medicaid
 - While Medicaid is included, the following Medicaid benefits are excluded:
 - Emergency Medicaid
 - Services funded by Medicaid but provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - School-based services or benefits funded by Medicaid
 - Medicaid benefits received by children under the age of 21
 - Medicaid benefits received by a woman during pregnancy + 60 days
 - Many types of food assistance, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), food pantries, Grab and Go meals at schools, and more (except SNAP; see “Food” section below)
 - Unemployment benefits
- There are strong privacy protections in place for all health care patients regardless of immigration status. Under federal law, hospitals and clinics do not share patient information without patient authorization, unless required to do so by law.
- If you have questions about immigration and public benefits, call the free, confidential ActionNYC hotline at **1-800-354-0365**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., or call **311** and say “Public Charge” to access timely and trusted information and connections to legal help



Health Care and Wellbeing

- NYC Health + Hospitals provides care to all New Yorkers, no matter what your immigration status is. NYC Health + Hospitals will help you even if you do not have insurance and cannot pay for health care. This is true for all types of health care services, including emergency care, doctor’s visits, medications, long-term care, and hospital stays. Visit [NYCHealthandHospitals.org/immigrant](https://www.nyc.gov/healthandhospitals), or call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692) or 311.
- NYC Care is a program that guarantees low-cost and no-cost services offered by NYC Health + Hospitals to New Yorkers who do not qualify for or cannot afford health insurance. To comply with social distancing (staying at least six feet away from people who do not live in your household), NYC Care staff members will take your contact information and call you back for enrollment when in-person meetings are permitted. Visit [NYCCare.nyc](https://www.nyc.gov/nycare), or call **1-646-NYC-Care (1-646-692-2273)** or **311**.
- New York City is home to many community health centers that provide medical care on a sliding-fee basis, depending on your income. This care is available to everyone, regardless of immigration status. Visit [FindaHealthCenter.HRSA.gov](https://www.findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov) or the [NYC low- to no-cost care option list](#) to find a location near you.

- If you are feeling anxious, stressed or overwhelmed, connect with trained counselors at NYC Well, the City’s free, confidential helpline available in 200+ languages. Call **888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355)**, text **WELL** to **65173**, or chat online at [NYC.gov/NYCWELL](https://www.nyc.gov/NYCWELL).
- Call the New York State’s COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline at 844-863-9314 to talk to specially trained volunteer professionals. They are available to listen, support and offer referrals from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week.



Health Insurance

- Many low- to no-cost health insurance plans are available to immigrants, including undocumented children and pregnant people. Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and Essential Plan are available all year around. Visit [New York State of Health](https://www.health.ny.gov/) or call **311**.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person health insurance enrollment services will be suspended until further notice. You can call for information or to schedule a telephone enrollment appointment. Help is available regardless of immigration status and in many languages. Visit [NYC’s Office of Health Insurance Services](https://www.nyc.gov/officeofhealthinsurance) to make an appointment, or call 311. You can also text **CoveredNYC** to **877-877**. Text **SeguroNYC** to **877-877** for Spanish.
- Community Health Advocates (CHA) helps New Yorkers navigate the complex health care system by providing individual assistance and education to communities throughout New York State. CHA provides assistance on how to use health insurance, resolve medical billing and debt issues, and dispute coverage denials and eligibility determinations. The help is available in more than 170 languages. Call the hotline at **(888) 614-5400**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Food

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, helps people with limited income buy food. Some immigration restrictions apply. Online application and renewal can be done via [ACCESS HRA](https://www.accesshra.com/), the city’s online portal that allows you to apply for and manage your public benefits case. For more information call HRA’s Infoline at **718-557-1399**.
 - SNAP recipients in NYC can shop online for groceries at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/), [Shoprite](https://www.shoprite.com/), or [Walmart](https://www.walmart.com/). Be sure to confirm that an online store delivers to your home address.
 - If you have questions about immigration and public benefits such as SNAP, call the free, confidential ActionNYC hotline at **1-800-354-0365**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., or call **311** and say “Public Charge” to access information and connections to legal help.
- The services listed below are provided for free to all New Yorkers no matter what your immigration status is. Undocumented immigrants can also receive these services, and doing so will NOT make you a “public charge” or hurt your ability to apply for a green card.
 - New York City’s food pantries provide groceries, and community kitchens provide hot meals. There is no income limit. Find locations near you and hours using [FoodHelpNYC](https://www.foodhelpnyc.com/) or call 311.
 - Three meals a day are available for all New York residents at meal hubs citywide. Meals Hubs operate Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for children and families, and from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for adults. No registration, identification, or documentation is required to pick up these meals. All adults and children can pick up three meals at one time. Parents or guardians may pick up meals for their children. No dining space is available, so meals must be eaten outside of meal hubs. Vegetarian, kosher, and halal options are available at all sites. Visit the Department of Education’s [free meal](https://www.nyc.gov/education/free-meal)

[location finder website](#) or call **311**. You can also text **FOOD** to **877-877**. Text **COMIDA** to **877-877** for Spanish.

- Any older adult, age 60 and over, looking for options on where and how to get food, including possible home delivery, should visit www.nyc.gov/getfood or contact 311 and say “Get Food.”
- To cancel, change, or submit a complaint about this service you can call 311 and say “Get Food” or submit feedback online here: on.nyc.gov/seniorfoodhelp
- If you cannot leave your home, do not have anyone who can bring you food, and cannot use private delivery options, you may be eligible to get meals delivered to your home. Visit the [NYC COVID-19 Food Assistance Resources website](#) or call 311 and say “Get Food.”
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides free healthy food and other services to low-income women and children. Visit [ACCESS NYC](#) (for Spanish, visit [ACCESS NYC Español](#)) or call HRA’s Infoline at **718-557-1399**.



Housing and Utility

- All eviction proceedings and pending eviction orders have been suspended in New York for everyone at this time, no matter what your immigration status is. This means that your landlord cannot make you leave your home for failure to pay rent during this time. For more information, visit the [Mayor’s Office to Protect Tenants website](#) or the NYS Attorney General’s [page on COVID-19](#) and housing rights.
- Renters who have questions or need legal advice about their tenancy, if they are being harassed by their landlords or if they are being threatened with eviction, can contact the City’s residential tenant hotline by calling 311. The hotline provides guidance on how to access city benefits or apply for assistance, free legal advice, and other resources available to help all New Yorkers – regardless of ZIP code, income, or immigration status – address tenancy issues during the COVID-19 crisis.
- If your work schedule was reduced as a result of the coronavirus and you are unable to pay your rent, you can apply for Emergency Cash Assistance. Some immigration restrictions apply. Visit [ACCESS NYC](#) (for Spanish, visit [Access NYC Español](#)) or call HRA’s Infoline at 718-557-1399.
- The Homebase program can help NYC residents at imminent risk of losing their house and entering the shelter system. Visit HRA’s webpage on Homebase or call 311.
- If you use an NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Section 8 voucher and have trouble paying rent because of income loss, email DTRAI@hpd.nyc.gov to receive assistance.
- NYCHA residents experiencing income loss may qualify for [NYCHA’s rent hardship program](#). To learn more, call the NYCHA Customer Contact Center at **718-707-7771**.
- The City is providing NYCHA residents with various resources, including personal protective equipment and COVID-19 testing for all NYCHA residents as well as food and wellness checks for seniors. For more information, [visit the NYCHA website](#).
- New York City is providing temporary hotel accommodation to the following groups of individuals: New Yorkers experiencing homelessness; healthcare workers, regardless of symptoms; NYC Health + Hospitals patients who are being discharged and in need of self-isolation; and individuals who tested positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19 and are in need of self-isolation. For more information, visit nyc.gov/covid19hotel.
- ConEdison has agreed to not shut off electricity services for failure to pay utility bills and to waive late penalty fees. National Grid has also said it will not disconnect gas service for failure to pay the bills at least until the end of April. Check the [ConEdison website](#) and the [National Grid website](#) for more information.
- [Comcast](#), [AT&T](#), and [Verizon](#) have agreed to not terminate internet services for 60 days if you are not able to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by COVID-19.
- Comcast is offering two months free internet with speed up to 25 Mbps) to new low-income customers. Visit

the [Comcast Internal Essentials website](#) to find out more.

- [Metro PCS](#), [T-Mobile](#), [Sprint](#), [AT&T](#) and [Comcast Xfinity](#) are all lifting their data caps for cell phone subscribers for at least 60 days. [Verizon](#) is automatically adding an additional 15GB of 4G LTE data to consumer and small business shared data plans, hotspots and jetpacks. Contact your cellphone provider for more information.
- Until further notice, all Xfinity WiFi Public Hotspots are now open to everyone on the “xfinitywifi” SSID. Public hotspots can be found in small/medium businesses and outdoors in commercial areas. Visit the [Xfinity WiFi website](#) to find a WiFi Public HotSpot and learn more.



Education and Childcare

- Remote learning will continue for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year as schools remain closed. This means students are taking their classes from home using the internet. The Department of Education (DOE) is lending internet-enabled iPads to students in need. The cellular data plan is included. Find out more at [Schools.NYC.gov/Coronavirus](#) or call **311**.
- There are a number of free internet options for K-12 students and university students:
 - [Charter Spectrum](#) provides the first two months of internet with speeds up to 100 Mbps for free to new customers. Installation fees may be waived. Call 1-844-488-8395.
 - [Suddenlink and Optimum](#), both owned by Altice USA, are offering 60 days of free internet with speeds up to 30 Mbps to new customers. Call 1-866-200-9522 for Optimum, and call 1-888-633-0030 for Suddenlink internet service.
 - Cox is offering the first month of its internet program, [Connect2Compete](#), for free to low income customers with children (K-12 or younger) until May 12, 2020.
- DOE has [learn-at-home resources](#) in English for students in grades Pre-K through 12.
- NYC Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) has a [virtual COVID-19 resource guide](#) for parents and children, including parenting tips, suggested activities during quarantine, and resources for basic needs.
- ACS partners with community-based organizations in three neighborhoods to provide Family Enrichment Centers (FECs) that provide a range of offerings for and with the community. FECs are now providing remote referrals and support, as well as limited in-person emergency resources. You can visit the [ACS website](#) for more information.
- The New York Public Library (NYPL) offers [free online tutoring for students](#). Students can receive online homework help from tutors daily from 2 to 11 p.m. Tutors are available in English and Spanish, from early elementary through high school grades, in core subject areas. Video content and other resources are also available 24 hours a day. Families will need a New York Library card to access this service, and can apply for a card on the [New York Public Library website](#).
- We Speak NYC provides free online educational English language resources and is offering free weekly online classes. [Sign up for a class today](#) to meet new people, learn about New York City services available to all New York City residents, regardless of immigration status, and practice speaking English. If you would like to drop in to a class, please visit the [schedule of classes here](#). Anyone can access free resources on the [We Speak NYC website](#) without a need to create an account. There are also materials for educators including lesson plans, and handbooks.
- The City provides free childcare at Regional Enrichment Centers (RECs) for first responders, health care workers, transit workers, and other city staff as well as essential workers. RECs are open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, for children in pre-kindergarten up to grade 12. Meals will be provided. Visit DOE’s [Regional Enrichment Center website](#) or call 311 to learn more about the services and the full list of workers eligible for free childcare.



Worker Support and Financial Assistance

- Whether you're a business owner or a jobseeker, the NYC Department of Small Business Services offers support for New Yorkers. Visit nyc.gov/sbs for up-to-date resources and information about COVID-19.
- As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the government is sending Economic Impact Payments to many people in the United States who make less than a certain amount of money.
 - You may be eligible for the Economic Impact Payment if you
 - Are a U.S. citizen or U.S. resident alien;
 - Cannot be claimed as a dependent on someone else's return;
 - Have a Social Security number (SSN) that is valid for employment (valid SSN); and
 - Have adjusted gross incomes up to \$99,000 individually or \$198,000 jointly.
 - In case of a family, both parents must have valid Social Security Numbers and children claimed as dependents must also have valid Social Security Numbers. (Exception: If either spouse is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the taxable year, then only one spouse needs to have a valid SSN.)
 - For more information, visit [ACCESS NYC](#).
- Know your rights as a worker and that you have these rights no matter what your immigration status is, including paid safe and sick leave under the New York City law. [The NYC worker's bill of rights](#) applies to everyone, including undocumented immigrants.
- You may be entitled to emergency paid sick leave for COVID-19 under the New York State law. Undocumented immigrants may also be eligible. To learn more, visit the [New York State Governor's website](#) or call the state's COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-364-3065.
- Immigrant New Yorkers with work authorization may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. New York State is waiving the 7-day waiting period. Visit the [New York State Department of Labor website](#) or call 1-888-209-8124. For more information about eligibility and application process, visit the [Access NYC Unemployment Benefits FAQ](#).
- Immigrant New Yorkers and/or their children may be eligible for cash assistance in New York. Visit [ACCESS NYC](#) (for Spanish, visit [Access NYC Español](#)) or call HRA's Infoline at 718-557-1399.
- If you are having financial difficulties in paying home mortgages, your bank may waive your mortgage payment for 90 days under the New York State Department of Financial Services' [mortgage exemption guidance](#). Call your mortgage lending bank to find out more.
- Federal student loan payments are automatically suspended, without interest or penalties. Some student loans, such as older federal family education loans not owned by U.S. Department of Education, Perkins Loans owned by schools, and private student loans, are not suspended. Find out more at NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection's [Student Loan Debt Tips During COVID-19](#) and visit studentaid.gov.
- If you have student or medical loans overdue for payment to the New York State, you may be temporarily protected from debt collection. Find out more at the [New York Attorney General's website](#).
- Healthcare providers, transit employees, and first responders can obtain a free 30-day Citi Bike membership by signing up through their employers. Visit the [Citi Bike Critical Workforce program webpage](#) to find out more.



Public Safety and Protection Against Harassment or Discrimination

- Hate and discrimination against anyone on the basis of their race, national origin, or other status is not tolerated in New York City. The [NYC Commission on Human Rights](#), Mayor's Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, and NYPD are monitoring and responding to reported hate and bias incidents resulting from fear and stigma related to COVID-19.
 - Call **311** to report harassment or discrimination.
 - Call **911** if you are the victim of a hate crime or witness what you believe to be a hate crime. NYPD officers will not ask about the immigration status of anyone seeking help.
 - Visit nyc.gov/StopCOVIDHate for information on how to report hate and bias incidents related to COVID-19, and access victim and mental health support.
- [NYC Family Justice Centers](#) are available by phone to provide assistance to domestic violence survivors, including immediate safety planning, shelter assistance, legal assistance, mental health and counseling services, and other vital resources. You may be asked to leave a message, and someone will get back to you as quickly as possible.
 - From Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., you can call the center location near you.
 - For NYC Family Justice Center, **Bronx**, call **718-508-1220**
 - For NYC Family Justice Center, **Brooklyn**, call **718-250-5113**
 - For NYC Family Justice Center, **Manhattan**, call **212-602-2800**
 - For NYC Family Justice Center, **Queens**, call **718-575-4545**
 - For NYC Family Justice Center, **Staten Island**, call **718-697-4300**
 - In the evenings or weekends, call NYC's 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline at **800-621-HOPE (4673)**.



Status of Immigration Proceedings and Enforcement

- ActionNYC is the City's initiative that provides free, safe, and confidential legal immigration help for New Yorkers. The program is currently adjusting during this time to allow for immigration screenings by phone to comply with social distancing (staying at least six feet away from people who do not live in your household). For any questions or concerns you have regarding immigration status, call 1-800-354-0365 Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., or call 311 and say "ActionNYC."
- NYC Office of Civil Justice provides free legal services to New Yorkers in need, including tenants, immigrants, low-wage workers and other New Yorkers facing civil legal challenges. Visit the [NYC Office of Civil Justice website](#) to find out more.
- All immigration court hearings are postponed until at least May 15, 2020 for people who are not detained. For people who are detained, hearings are continuing for now. Stay informed about updates by visiting Justice.gov/EOIR, calling the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) hotline at **1-800-898-7180**, and checking [EOIR's Facebook page](#)
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has cancelled all face-to-face services including interviews and naturalization ceremonies until further notice. Visit USCIS.gov/Coronavirus (for Spanish, visit the [Respuesta de USCIS al Coronavirus 2019 webpage](#)) or call the USCIS hotline **1-800-375-5283**.
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has modified its policies in response to the COVID-19

pandemic. For more information, visit [ICE.gov/COVID19](https://ice.dhs.gov/COVID19)

- Visits to people in ICE detention are currently not allowed for family and friends. For attorneys, some legal visitation continues. However, ICE is encouraging video visitation for attorneys where possible and requiring those visiting in person to provide their own personal protective equipment and they may be subject to testing at the facility. Attorneys should contact the individual facilities for details and updates.
- ICE cancelled all in-person check-ins for people who are not detained. Telephonic check-ins are still happening.
 - Arrests by ICE continue. ICE has said they will implement some limitations on who they will arrest and that they will not carry out arrests at or near health care facilities except in extraordinary circumstances.



Additional Resources

- Questions about immigration or how to access City services? Call the MOIA hotline at 212-788-7654, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., send an email to AskMOIA@cityhall.nyc.gov, or reach out to a MOIA Neighborhood Organizer.
- New Yorkers with disabilities can visit the [COVID-19 webpage of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities](#) for information on food/supply delivery, social security/Medicaid benefits, home healthcare services, and more resources.
- [Census forms can be completed online](#) or by phone **844-330-2020**. For language support, visit the [2020 Census Language Support webpage](#). The census is safe, responses are completely confidential, and there are NO questions about citizenship or immigration.