

## Mayor's Public Engagement Unit leads 2023 Benefits Enrollment Push

*In 2023, PEU has connected thousands of New Yorkers to various benefit programs offered by New York City agencies*

New York, NY – December 21, 2023 – As 2023 comes to a close, the [NYC Mayor's Public Engagement Unit \(PEU\)](#) is proud to have been able to provide essential support and alleviate financial hardship for struggling New Yorkers. Using a combination of data, digital tools, and grassroots efforts, PEU proactively reaches New Yorkers and ensures that life-changing resources don't go unused. Some highlights from the past year include:

- The [Special Projects Team](#) reached out to 21,000 New Yorkers, offering information about how to get a refund for benefits stolen from EBT accounts
- Our [Tenant Helpline](#) went live and received roughly 41,000 calls
- [GetCoveredNYC](#) supported over 6,400 New Yorkers by providing critical information about how to navigate health insurance options and other health-related resources
- Our [Home Support Unit](#) worked with homeowners and brokers to house over 2,400 families

Additionally, PEU has partnered with a number of New York City agencies to assist eligible New Yorkers with accessing city benefits. These resources, including Fair Fares, the Rent Freeze program, and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which offer crucial assistance with transportation, housing, and broadband, ensure all New Yorkers can experience a season with less financial stress.

While these programs provide significant benefits to qualifying New Yorkers, data indicates that enrollment continues to fall short of their targets. With our proactive outreach strategies, we're working to change that.

"These invaluable programs have helped New Yorkers navigate financial challenges during 2023, ensuring everyone has the resources they need," **said Adrienne Lever, Executive Director of the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit.** "Whether it's securing stable housing with Rent Freeze or finding health insurance options through GetCoveredNYC, these programs have offered vital support throughout the year. The new year should be a time of hope, and PEU will continue to proudly serve New Yorkers in 2024."

## **Expanding Benefits Outreach**

[PEU's Special Projects Team](#) (SPT) was hard at work this year connecting New Yorkers to City resources, in addition to expanding our scope of work to provide comprehensive benefits screenings. SPT creatively leveraged technology, partnerships, and interagency resources to support New Yorkers this year. The team raised awareness about [Fair Fares](#), [discounted internet](#), [SNAP Skimming](#), City job openings, and more. SPT was also on the frontlines doing its part to assist asylum seekers, scheduling thousands of appointments for work authorization and asylum application support.

## **Supporting New York City's Tenants**

[PEU's Tenant Support Unit](#) pairs proactive outreach with ongoing support to protect NYC tenants. Our [Tenant Support Unit launched our live operator Tenant Helpline](#) this summer to better assist tenants experiencing housing crises. We also [expanded our Rent Freeze outreach](#) with hyper-targeted canvassing and tabling at Older Adult Town Halls, in partnership with the Department of Aging and Mayor Adams. Finally, we've been hitting the streets to educate New Yorkers about [illegal evictions](#) in neighborhoods at high risk. All this, in addition to routine canvassing and case management to ensure NYC tenants have what they need.

## **Getting New Yorkers Covered**

[GetCoveredNYC](#) helps connect New Yorkers to health insurance, primary care, and other key benefits to keep them healthy. In addition to routine targeted phone outreach, office hours in key community locations, and ongoing case management, GetCoveredNYC spent 2023 [hosting days of health insurance enrollment action](#), [virtual info sessions](#), and our first [Health Care Fair in the Bronx](#), connecting NYC Care members to [primary care](#), helping New Yorkers [renew their health insurance](#) after the end of the Public Health Emergency, [promoting health insurance literacy](#), providing [veterans with a unique health care access pathway](#), and more.

## **Bringing New Yorkers Home**

[Our Home Support Unit \(HSU\)](#) continued to expand interagency and homeowner partnerships to ensure more homes for voucher holders. We coordinated dozens of open houses to connect homeowners and brokers to interested tenants, helped process paperwork and applications galore, launched a special large building project to expedite our viewing processes, kept in regular contact with our partners through a new educational monthly newsletter, sent thousands of mailers to recruit new partners, and developed new data dashboards to track our work. With this and more, we're proud to have helped over 2,400 families move into new homes in 2023.

### **About the NYC Public Engagement Unit (PEU)**

The NYC Public Engagement Unit (PEU) was created to develop a new model for government outreach, using community organizing principles to re-envision how the City provides services to its most vulnerable communities. Rather than expecting constituents to navigate a complex City bureaucracy to get the help they need, PEU adopts grassroots tactics to meet residents where they are – at their doors and on their phones, in their social media feeds, and in their communities. PEU combines this proactive outreach with comprehensive case management, and in doing so, combats disillusionment and builds long-term relationships between New Yorkers and their government. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/PEU](https://nyc.gov/PEU) and stay connected on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MayorsPEU> or [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) at @MayorsPEU.