

What Are My Rights?

The Right to Apply for All Benefits and Services

To find out if you are eligible to receive Public Assistance (PA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Child Care and/or Medicaid you may apply at your social service office, or submit an application online at myBenefits.ny.gov. If you live in one of the five boroughs of New York City, you may apply at your local Benefits Access Center, or online at accesshra.nyc.gov.

The Right to Apply for Emergency Public Assistance

If you are already getting PA and an emergency comes up, tell your worker right away. If you are not getting PA, fill out an application and tell a worker that you have an emergency. You will be interviewed about your emergency on the same day.

Right to Screening and Special Services if Experiencing Domestic Violence

Free services are available to anyone, with or without children, to help them with physical or emotional abuse, or threats of physical abuse or emotional abuse, from a family member or current or former household member. There is no income limit to get these services.

You can call a free, 24-hour hotline for information about services, including emergency shelter, support groups, and counseling. These services will help keep you and your children safe. To get information and referrals to your local domestic violence services provider:

In New York City call 1-800-621-HOPE (1-800-621-4673).

In any other area of New York State call the NYS Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-942-6906, Text 844-997-2121, or chat @opdv.ny.gov.

If you are unsafe at home, you may be eligible to receive waivers of certain PA program requirements. Ask to see the Domestic Violence Liaison (DVL) for more information about how to obtain these waivers.

Right to Ask About Child Care

Child care assistance helps a parent(s)/caretaker(s) who need child care while they are working, looking for work, attending an education or training program and other specific circumstances pay for some or all of the cost of child care.

You may apply by calling or visiting your local district and asking for an application package. If you live in New York City and are on PA or applying for PA, call or visit your local Benefits Access Center. If you are applying only for child care assistance, call the New York City information helpline at 311.

Right to Free Language Services

Free language assistance services are available for benefits and services programs.

Right to an Adequate Written Notice

If the district finds you ineligible for the program and benefits you applied for, decides that your benefits should be reduced, or your case should be closed, you will get a written notice telling you about your application and/or any changes in your household's benefits.

Fair Hearing Rights

You have a right to a Fair Hearing if you have been denied PA, SNAP, HEAP, Medicaid or Child Care assistance; if your benefits have been discontinued, suspended or reduced, or if you disagree with certain other decisions of the social services district.

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