

Documentation requirements include the following:

Note: You may submit your choice of the options that follow each category for verification.

- Identity of person making application — driver's license, work or school ID, clinic card, wage stubs, birth certificate, or church records
- Social Security number — Social Security card or tax return
- Household size — landlord letter, school record, draft card, census record, or marriage record
- Date of birth for each household member — birth certificate, church record, hospital record of birth, school record, or insurance policy
- Immigration status — passport, "green card," re-entry permit, or employment authorization card
- Proof of income (if any) — pay stubs, letter from employer, or tax return
- Bank accounts (if any) — monthly bank statement, or letter from bank
- Place of residence — lease, mortgage papers, deed, or utility bills
- Shelter cost — rent or mortgage receipt
- Heating, utility and telephone expenses — monthly bill
- Medical expenses (if any) — billing statements, hospital discharge papers
- Childcare expenses — letter or bill from childcare provider
- Loan payments (if any) — payment book, letter from loan company, letter signed by both parties to the loan

For more information on services and benefits for low-income families and individuals, see [KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: SUBSIDIES FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES](#).

For in-depth information, contact The Children's Aid Society at (212) 358-8930 to get a complete set of **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS** brochures and other legal advocacy publications in both English and Spanish. You may also log onto www.childrensaidsociety.org.



For over 150 years, The Children's Aid Society has been assisting New York City's children and their families without regard to race, religion, nationality or socio-economic status. Children's Aid helps children in every aspect of their lives from infancy through adolescence, providing guidance and resources to ensure a child's current well-being and future potential. With over 100 programs and 40 locations in New York that touch the lives of more than 150,000 children every year, Children's Aid is one of the country's largest and most innovative child and family social service agencies.

www.childrensaidsociety.org

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

how to apply for food stamps



More than 400,000 New York City children live in “food insecure” households, and nearly all are eligible to receive food stamps.

What is the Food Stamp Program?

The Food Stamp Program provides food coupons to low-income families that can be used to purchase food. You do not have to be on welfare to receive food stamps; 22.8 million people receive food stamps and many are employed. All SSI recipients are entitled to receive food stamps. These families use food stamps to enhance the nutrition level of their meals.

The application process, described below, includes completing and filing an application form, being interviewed, and showing documents to verify the information you provide. If you are homebound, someone will come to your home to complete the application process.

How do I know if I am eligible for food stamps?

If you have no income because you are unemployed or if you receive public benefits, you are probably eligible for food stamps. If you are employed, you may still be eligible for food stamps, depending on your income and the size of your household.

Can immigrants receive food stamps?

Some immigrants can receive food stamps and others cannot.

Eligible immigrants

- Legal Permanent Residents who entered the U.S. *before* August 22, 1996
- Legal Permanent Residents who entered the U.S. *after* August 22, 1996 and are under 18, 65 or older, or disabled

- Legal Permanent Residents who have worked in the U.S. for 40 quarters (10 years of work as defined by Social Security). You can count work done by your husband or wife, as well as work done by your parents while you were under 18 years of age.
- Refugees and asylees
- Certain Amerasians, Cubans, Haitians, Hmong, and Highland Laotians. After seven years, you must become a citizen or have accumulated 40 quarters of work history as defined by Social Security. You can count work done by your husband or wife, as well as work done by your parents while you were under 18 years of age.
- North American Indians born in Canada

Immigrants who are not eligible

- Legal Permanent Residents who entered the U.S. *after* August 22, 1996. These immigrants will be eligible if they become citizens or accumulate 40 quarters of work as defined above.
- Undocumented (illegal) immigrants

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- [Legal immigrants without birth records cannot be denied food stamps.](#)
 - [Undocumented immigrants with citizen children cannot be denied an application because the parent has no Social Security number.](#)
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Food for Survival

This private charity operates a 24-hour call center referring hungry people to food pantries, shelters, or soup kitchens in their boroughs. They will not ask about immigration status, but clients may want to independently confirm the reporting and confidentiality policies of the resources to which they are referred. Call (866) 692-3663.

Where do I apply for food stamps?

New York City has food stamp offices all over the city. You should apply at the center in your neighborhood that services your zip code. To find out the address and phone number, call the Infoline at (877) 472-8411 or dial 311. You may also receive application assistance by contacting the Food Change (formerly Community Food Resource Center) at (212) 894-8061.

How can I get immediate emergency food assistance?

If you have no food, you may request emergency assistance while you wait for your application to be processed. To be eligible:

- You must have less than \$150 in monthly household income, *or*
- Your monthly housing and utility costs must exceed your monthly income and resources.

Note: If your request is denied, go to the conference unit at the center and request immediate assistance.

Every person has the *right to apply* for food stamps. If you are denied this right, you should request a conference and fair hearing. See [KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: FAIR HEARINGS AND PUBLIC BENEFITS for more information.](#)

What information will I have to provide to qualify for food stamps?

A food stamp worker will ask you for written proof of the following eligibility factors, for which you can use some of these documents. *If you have a problem getting the documents or do not have money for a fee, the food stamp worker is required to help you.*