

## Why the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Is So Important

Posted At : March 22, 2010 11:29 AM | Posted By : Food Bank Staff

Related Categories: Government Supports

by *Amruta Kale*

As anyone who has ever held a job knows, taxes are no simple matter. And running our [Tax Assistance Program](#), one of the largest programs of its type in the country, is quite an undertaking as well. But the Food Bank meets this challenge every year — helping to submit up to 50,000 tax returns for New York City's [working poor](#), providing as much as \$100 million in refunds.

New Yorkers are eligible for free tax assistance through the Food Bank's program if they earn \$50,000 or less with dependents, or \$18,000 or less without dependents. Our program also screens clients to see if they are eligible to receive an [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) — a key piece of the safety net for the working poor and one of the largest anti-poverty tools in the United States.

For tax year 2009, EITC can provide low-income Americans with a federal tax credit of up to \$5,657. In New York City, the working poor are able to receive a larger credit due to additional New York State and City Earned Income Tax Credits — bringing the total maximum credit to \$7,637. A New York City resident with one qualifying child can receive a maximum credit of \$4,108. A claimant with two qualifying children can receive a maximum credit of \$6,817. And, due to the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009](#), a New Yorker with three or more qualifying children can receive a credit of \$7,637 during the 2009 and 2010 tax years.



While EITC can be a lifeline to a low-income individual or family, there is a lack of awareness about this credit; nationally, nearly \$16 billion worth of EITC goes unclaimed. To build awareness throughout our city, the Food Bank works with Intuit, business partners, elected officials and government agencies to conduct community outreach and media efforts. You can help too by spreading the word about EITC to your friends, co-workers and community — use our [SHARE](#) button below to spread the word through [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and more or just email the post around!

*If you think you may be eligible for EITC, use Intuit's free [EITC calculator](#) today. For a listing of the Food Bank's Tax Assistance Program sites, [click here](#).*