

**Attendance and Minutes of  
The SNAP Task Force Meeting of April 20, 2017**

**ATTENDANCE SHEET**

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|---|---|
| 1) Sherry Moss - NYC HRA-FIA  | 16) Ricardo Cruz – Fortune Society              |
| 2) Milagros Rodriguez – HRA SNAP Outreach Services  | 17) John Rivera – Fortune Society               |
| 3) Brenda Williams – HRA SNAP Outreach Services   | 18) Michelle Zambrano – Health Leads NY         |
| 4) Damaris Sorrentini - HRA SNAP Outreach Services  | 19) Miguelina Diaz - Hunger Free NYC            |
| 5) Ilana Yamin - HRA  | 20) Ond Larosiliere – LIFT-NY                   |
| 6) Ellen Vollinger – Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) ( <i>via teleconference</i> ) | 21) Rachel Patterson - Manhattan Legal Services |
| 7) Ray Burke – Empire Justice Center ( <i>via teleconference</i> )                        | 22) Tom Furstenberg-Carroll – Met Council       |
| 8) Dawn Secor – Hunger Solutions NY   | 23) Langina Pena – Met Council                  |
| 9) Colleen Donovan – Hunger Solutions NY  | 24) Juana Almonte – Part of the Solution (POTS) |
| 10) Bridget Gibbons – Benefits Data Trust   | 25) Ailin Liu - Public Health Solutions         |
| 11) Kiana Davis – Bronx Defenders   | 26) Veronica Solano – RBSCC                     |
| 12) Yessenia Mendez – Brooklyn Legal Services   | 27) Vanessa Mendez – Single Stop                |
| 13) Annelise Macleod – Central Queens Y   | 28) Ariel Savransky – UJA-Federation            |
| 14) Suzy Zhou – Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)                                   | 29) Ed Ortiz – Urban Justice Center             |
| 15) Tiffany Morton – CUNY Single Stop   | 30) Mark Herreros – FBNYC                       |
|   | 31) Nancy Miranda - FBNYC                       |

## **The meeting began at 1:10PM**

Mark Herreros (Food Bank For NYC) opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and introducing all attendees. After giving an overview of the meeting's agenda, Mark introduced Ellen Vollinger from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) to present national updates.

### I. Outlook in Congress on SNAP and National Updates

- The Senate will vote on Sonny Purdue's nomination as Agriculture Secretary on Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>
- Ellen advised SNAP advocates to remind the public that there are no changes to federal law regarding immigrant eligibility for SNAP benefits. Ellen emphasized that leaked executive orders have no force of law, and no rulemaking has been changed at this time
- While a bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act was rejected, the Trump administration may still pursue cuts to parts of the ACA that support low-income people in an upcoming budget agreement
- April 28<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to consider appropriations for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2017. A government shutdown is a possibility, but Congress is more likely to fund a short-term continuing resolution
- As Congress looks towards the FY 2018 budget, President Trump has put proposals for portions of programs, but has yet to describe his plan for entitlements like SNAP. More details about those programs are likely to come in mid-May
- FRAC looks ahead to September 2018 and the passage of the next Farm Bill for future developments in SNAP

### II. Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)

Mark Herreros (FBNYC) presented the following directive released by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). Full summaries of each of these items are available on page 6 of the April 2017 Research Packet.

#### Administrative Directive 17-ADM-01: Requirements for ABAWDs

Dawn Secor (Hunger Solutions NY) commented that OTDA had been applying a more flexible ABAWD policy in the past, but will now be required to notify ABAWDs in advance of their final month of SNAP eligibility.

### III. Mediation

#### Mediation Analysis Report for March 2017

Mark Herreros (FBNYC) reviewed highlights<sup>1</sup> from the March 2017 Mediation Analysis Report. The report is based on a total of 234 mediation requests submitted by Mediation Model participants in the month of March 2017. Mark thanked the organizations represented in the report for submitting their issue logs, and opened the floor for Task Force Members to share observations from the field.

Rebecca Cespedes said there was a period of time in which she was unable to submit periodic reports and documents through POS. Nancy Miranda asked Rebecca to follow-up with her so she could forward the issue to POS Help Desk.

Vanessa Mendez (Single Stop) noted a huge increase in recertification-related mediation requests submitted by her sites. Even though the recertification cases were completed with a liaison from the Recertification improvement Project (RIP), the cases were still closed. Vanessa said she coordinated with Derek Singh (HRA) to try and resolve the cases. She has also advised clients to submit the recertification via ACCESS NYC and/or complete the interview using On-Demand.

Rachel Patterson (Manhattan Legal Services) said TIPS 42 liaisons have not been responsive to her mediation requests over the past two weeks. Kiana Davis (Bronx Defenders) brought up similar issues, though noted that several of her cases had been resolved. Vanessa Mendez said that it's helpful to send a screenshot of what was originally submitted through POS along with the mediation request.

Kiana Davis commented that the document checklist provided with an FIA-1146 can be unclear to clients. Specifically, she said the checklist does not specify why a document wasn't accepted by HRA.

Veronica Solano (RBSCC) said she had issues entering her clients' case numbers in POS. At times, the case number is listed as invalid because the POS system has multiple case numbers from previous cases. Vanessa Mendez encouraged Veronica to look at ACCESS NYC for the current case number.

Sherry Moss (HRA-FIA) joined the meeting at this time. Michelle Zambrano (Health Leads NY) said that she had an ACCESS NYC case that was denied because the scans of the birth certificate and social security number were too dark. Michelle said that the client did not receive a document follow-up from HRA. Nancy Miranda (FBNYC) said that ACCESS NYC should update when a worker has reviewed and accepted the

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<sup>1</sup> See pg. 3, March '16 Mediation Analysis Report, for full highlights

document. Sherry added that ACCESS NYC will update if a document was indexed and attached to the case file, but has not been reviewed for an eligibility factor.

Rebecca Cespedes (Catholic Charities) said that the wait-times for On-Demand have tremendously improved. Sherry Moss (HRA-FIA) noted that staff have recently been trained and installed to handle the increased traffic through the hotline. Rachel Patterson (Manhattan Legal Services) said that responsiveness at TIPS 43 has improved.

Veronica Solano (RBSCC) said that she had several cases that were closed due to failure to recertify, even though she completed the interview as the authorized representative. She ask HRA to follow-up on these cases via mediation. Sherry Moss (HRA) explained that the recertification process will change for community-based organizations, and an update is forthcoming. Miguelina Diaz (Hunger Free NYC) proposed HRA generate a straight-forward letter confirming that a recertification call was completed.

Veronica also said that for some of her new applications, HRA was unable to view the documents and asked Veronica to submit all documents a second time. Sherry asked Veronica to forward her these cases for review. Vanessa Mendez (Single Stop) said that a good practice is to add a comment in POS, instructing the worker to search for documents by case number/Social Security number so the HRA workers know to use one or both identifiers.

#### IV. Human Resources Administration (HRA)

Mark Herreros (FBNYC) presented the following updates released by the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA). Full summaries of each of these items are available on page 8 of the April 2017 Research Packet.

#### Policy Bulletin #17-28-OPE: Introduction of the Invalid Submission Using NYC HRA Document Upload Notices (FIA-1139A and FIA-1139B)

Responding to follow-up questions from Task Force Members, Sherry Moss (HRA) clarified that an application and periodic report is an invalid submission through HRA Document Upload. When these documents are forwarded to HRA via the app, HRA will send the documents back and advise the client to submit them via an enclosed envelope or another valid submission method. Rachel Patterson commented that there should be a greater distinction between an invalid method of submission and invalid documentation.

Policy Bulletin #17-37-OPE: NYC HRA Mobile Document Upload Application System Error

Policy Bulletin #17-24-OPE: Revisions to the "Do You Have Documents To Submit To the Human Resources Administration (HRA)?" Form (FIA-1138)

Policy Bulletin #17-12-ELI: Revisions to the Notice of Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Status (FIA-1021)

***The Meeting Adjourned at 2:30PM***