



The Research Packet For
THE SNAP TASK FORCE
Meeting of March 15, 2018



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I. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1. USDA SEEKS IDEAS TO HELP SNAP PARTICIPANTS BECOME INDEPENDENT, FEBRUARY 22, 2018

<<https://www.fns.usda.gov/pressrelease/2018/004118>>

USDA FNS has invited the public to provide input on innovative ideas to promote work and self-sufficiency among ABAWDs participating on SNAP. Comments can be submitted on the web through the federal registry (federalregister.gov). USDA intends to use the input received to find improvements to policy and related services that can best assist participants return to self-sufficiency. The comment period will be open through April 9, 2018.

Federal law allows state agencies flexibility to request a waiver from ABAWD time limits if unemployment is high or the area does not have sufficient number of jobs to provide employment. The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal proposes to limit waivers of the time limit to counties with a 10 percent unemployment over 12 months.

"The SNAP safety net must be there for those unable to work due to disability or another legitimate reason," Perdue said. "But for the able-bodied, we must reduce barriers to work, and hold both individuals and states accountable for participants getting and keeping jobs?"

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS, FEBRUARY 26, 2018

<<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/nondisabled-adults.pdf>>

- **How many of these individuals are there in SNAP?** 3.8 million SNAP participants (about 8.8 percent of all participants) were nondisabled adults age 18 through 49 who lived in childless households.
- **What is the income of these households?** The average household income for ABAWDS is 33 percent of the federal poverty level, or about \$367 per month. Two-thirds of individuals who live alone have no income,
- **Do they work?** About 26 percent of these individuals are working and earning very low wages. Of those who work, the average earnings are about \$810 per month (80% of the federal poverty level for a one-person household).

- **What is the average benefit for these households?** Small households averaging 1.2 people household of which 77 percent live alone.
- **What is the average benefit received?** The average monthly benefit receive is \$163 per person, slightly higher than the average per person benefit for all SNAP households of \$123, reflecting these individuals lower income and smaller household sizes.
- **What are the demographics of this group?** Under half (46 percent) are females. Group distributed by age: one-third 18 to 25, twenty-seven percent are 26 to 35, and 40 percent are 36 to 49.
- **How long do these individuals stay on SNAP?** Small percentage stay on long term. Only two percent of those on SNAP for 8 years or longer are nondisabled adults ages 18 through 49 live in households without a child.

3. NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF FOOD ACQUIRED BY AMERICANS: FINDINGS FROM USDA'S NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD FOOD ACQUISITION AND PURCHASE SERVEY, FEBRUARY 2018

< https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/87531/eib-188_summary.pdf?v=4315>

The report examines the nutritional quality of foods purchased and acquired and how nutritional quality varies across population subgroups by income and by SNAP participation. In addition, examines differences in nutritional quality by households' access to food retailers, and differences by purchasing source (i.e. supermarkets and other grocery sources versus restaurants and other sources selling already prepared food).

The report assesses the nutritional quality of households acquired food report using the Healthy Eating Index-2010 (HEI-2010), a measure based on how well the mix of foods acquired compares to recommendations from the USDA 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Looking at the foods that household acquired over one week, breaking down the quality by the following groups: low-income participants and higher income nonparticipants food sources (i.e. grocery stores, restaurants, etc.) and supermarkets, supercenters, or large grocery stores.

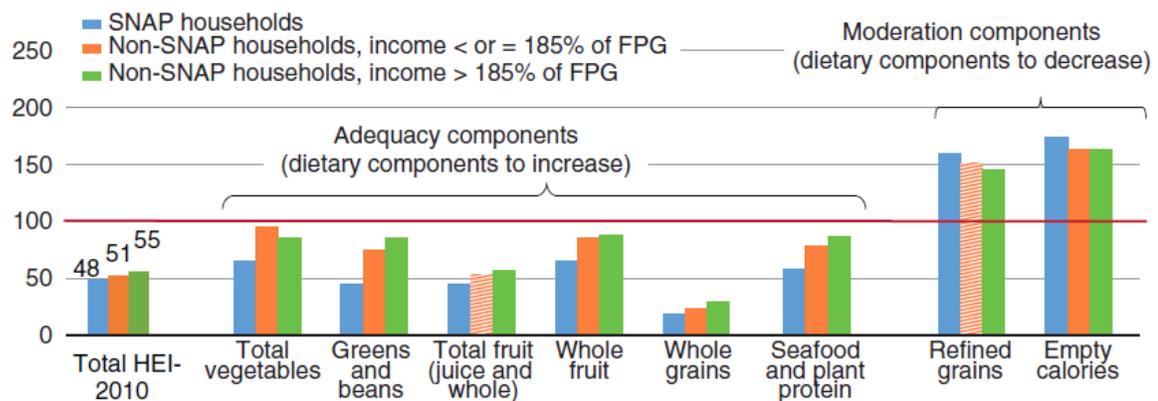
Report Findings:

- SNAP participating households had lower HEI-2010 scores than both low-income non-participating and higher income households. However, findings do not prove causal link between SNAP participation and low diet quality because the report did not control for the many ways participating household differ from non-participating households, such as age, household composition, and education.

- Households with low household-level access to food retail sources had lower HEI-2010 scores than those with better food store access. However, when analysis was limited to SNAP-participating households, total GEI-2010 scores and component densities did not differ by food store access.
- Across all income groups, food-away-from-home (FAFH) sources were lower nutritional quality than those from food-at-home (FAH) sources, such as grocery stores and supermarkets. For higher income households the difference in nutritional quality between FAFH and FAH was greater than it was for SNAP-participating households, possible reflecting that higher income households acquire more FAFH from restaurants or fast-food sources; whereas participating households acquired more of their FAFH from sources such as school meals or meals with friends and family.

Nutritional quality of household food acquisitions by SNAP participation and income

Average component density relative to density needed for maximum Healthy Eating Index-2010 score, percent



Notes: Dashed bars indicate difference from SNAP-participating households is not statistically significant from those of SNAP-nonparticipating households at p <0.05. SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. HEI-2010 = Healthy Eating Index-2010. FPG = Federal poverty guidelines.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) estimates using data from USDA's National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS).

II. NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE



1. PRESS RELEASE:

GOVERNOR CUOMO CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PROTECT NEW YORK'S FAMILIES AND REJECT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S DEVASTATING CUTS TO SNAP, FEBRUARY 23, 2018

<http://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-calls-congress-protect-new-yorks-families-and-reject-federal-governments>

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo is calling on Congress to protect New York families and reject the federal government's cuts to SNAP. Based on an initial analysis by OTDA, 1.25 million households or 2.3 million New Yorkers would have their monthly food assistance drastically reduced under the proposed budget, which slashes funding for SNAP by 30 percent.

"The Trump Administration's Harvest Box proposal makes their priorities crystal clear to families in need to fund tax cuts for corporations," Governor Cuomo said. "This is an unnecessary change to an effective, important program and I urge Congress to reverse this effort to take food away from New York's hungry families."

SNAP helps more than 2.8 million New Yorkers, or nearly 1.6 million households, put food on their table. Nearly two-thirds of participants are in families with children. Forty-three percent of recipients are in families with older adults or someone who is disabled, and twenty-seven percent of total participants are in families that are working but earn too little to feed themselves. The proposed cut will impact 80 percent of recipients in New York.

The following households and individuals face devastating cuts under the President's plan to place portion of their benefits would be placed in a prepackaged, one size fits all, box of food:

	Households	Individuals	SNAP Benefits
New York City	754,306	1,332,530	\$ 2,326,394,651
Rest of State	525,269	974,466	\$ 1,465,408,252
New York State	1,279,575	2,306,996	\$ 3,791,802,903

The President's "Harvest Box" initiative proposed replacing a portion of the SNAP benefits with boxes of food commodities will cut millions of New Yorker's spendable benefits in half will have massive effects on the state's economy and severely limit families' to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

2. INFORMATIONAL LETTER 18-INF-06 SNAP NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES (NDHN) MATCHES ADDES TO VERIFIED EMPLOYMENT DATA (VED) RESOURCE WITHIN RESOURCE FILES INTEGRATION (RFI), MARCH 2, 2018

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/directives/2018/INF/18-INF-06.pdf>

OTDA has informed social service districts outside of NYC that the National Director of New Hires (NDHN) Verified Employment Data (VED) match within Welfare

Management System (WMS) Resource File Integration (RFI) system was modified to include SNAP hits.

The NDHN computer match was established to process a cash assistance adult recipient against the database of W-4 New Hires Information, in order to assist with case processing, preventing fraud and increasing work participation. NDHN match is then verified with employers by OTDA and provided to the district via electronic transmittal. Until now, the SNAP case matches have been transmitted by OTDA monthly to local districts via encrypted spreadsheets. Effective with the April 2018 SNAP match, available week of April 9, 2018 the process will change and SNAP NDHN matches will be transmitted to outside NYC districts via WMS RFI systems.



III. NEW YORK CITY HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION

1. POLICY BULLETINS AND DIRECTIVES

- *POLICY BULLETIN # 18-09-OPE: CLOSING OF THE HURRICANE RELIEF CENTER: SERVICES TRANSFERRED TO DESIGNATED HOMEBASE LOCATION, FEBRUARY 12, 2018*

The Hurricane Relief Center was closed on February 9, 2018. Hurricane evacuees seeking assistance will be directed to 13 HomeBase providers where benefits screening and referral will be provided.

Individuals from Puerto Rico who are applying for SNAP and were in receipt of Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) must be provided an opportunity to sign and complete the affidavit Attachment A. **See Appendix A.** The form is an attestation that they will not receive SNAP and NAP at the same time and will close their NAP case as soon as possible. Applicant who do not want to sign but are willing to verbally attest will have it recorded on their case record through a case comment in the Paper Less Office System (POS).

- *POLICY BULLETIN #18-03-EII: EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC) AND OTHER TAX CREDITS FOR TAX YEAR 2018, February 22, 2018*

This policy informs HRA staff of the following Federal, NYS and NYC tax credits available to families and individuals with low to moderate income:

- Federal EITC, NYS EITC, NYC EITC
- Noncustodial Parent NYS EITC
- Federal Child Tax credit and NYS Empire State Child Credit
- NYS and NYC Household Tax Credit

- NYC School Tax Credit
- NYC Enhances Real Property Tax Credit

Included in the SNAP application kits will be The NYC Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE)/Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) EITC palm card entitled "NYC Free Tax Prep: Trusted Professional Filing" (Attachment A). See **Appendix A**. The palm card provides information on what tax documents an individual should bring to a VITA site and the two options available to file taxes for free and the benefits associated with using the free tax filing options.

Department of Social Services (DSS) Information Technology System (ITS) will send all applicants/participants with earned income the EITC Letter (Attachment B). See **Appendix B**. An email will also be sent to the same group for whom emails addresses is known.

Federal, NYS, and NYC EITCs are exempt as income and as a resource. The amount of credits or any unspent balance is excluded as a resource for twelve months following receipt of the credit.

III. Reports and Notable Items from Other Sources

1. REPORTS FROM FOOD RESEARCH AND ACTION CENTER (FRAC):

- *SNAP BENEFITS NEED TO BE MADE ADEQUATE, NOT CUT OR RESTRICTED, FEBRUARY 2018*

<<http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/snap-food-choice.pdf>>

Recent research from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) continue to demonstrate how vital SNAP is to a wide-range of the nation's most important health, employment, education and goals.

SNAP is efficient because it provides access to normal streams of food commerce while preserving the dignity of beneficiaries by making the food purchase smooth and similar to all other commercial food purchases through the use of an electronic benefits card. Eighty-four percent of benefits go to households who are elderly, disabled or with children. SNAP reaches people between jobs, after changes in family circumstances, and in a variety of other ways that create movement of households in and out of the program:

- Each month in recent years, about 1 in 8 participated in SNAP. There is much movement in and out of the program every month as some people lose employment or face lowered hours/wages, while others become employed or get more work hours, or second jobs, or higher hourly wages. About 40 percent more individuals participate in over the course of the year than participate in an average month. In other words, in fiscal year 2017, 42.3 million people participated in an

average month, but as many as 60 million; almost 1 in 5 participated at some point during the year.

- An estimated one-half of all children will receive benefits at some point during childhood; and half of all adults will use SNAP at some point by age 65.

Attacks on the program and its participants often are based on stereotypes that do not acknowledge these demographics that the face of SNAP is the face of much of the country. And proposals to reshape the program through benefit cuts, eligibility reductions, restrictions on food choice, or different delivery mechanisms typically fail to recognize this as well. SNAP benefits are inadequate. The greatest shortcoming of SNAP is that benefits are not enough to get through the entire month without hunger or forced to sacrifice nutrition quality³.

2. MAKING SNAP WORK REQUIREMENTS HARSHER WILL NOT IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE, MARCH 1, 2018

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/making-snap-work-requirements-harsher-will-not-improve-outcomes-for-low>

A proposal in the President's 2019 budget would expand the SNAP work requirement by raising the age of those who face the time limit from 50 to 62 and by changing current law to make it harder for states to exempt vulnerable individuals, such as those who live in high-unemployment areas. Some have suggested that a similar work rule could be applied to unemployed parents who are receiving SNAP. Imposing harsher work rules would do little to move long-term unemployed participants into the workforce, could harm those who are working but need SNAP to make ends meet, and would cut off critical food assistance to unemployed people, putting children at greater risk of food insecurity.

While the national unemployment rate is low, the labor market continues to feature a large number of low paying jobs that provide no benefits, unpredictable hours, and high rates of turnover that leave workers with periods of joblessness. Given this reality, policymakers considering work requirements should recognize that:

- **SNAP is a crucial work support.** Most working adults on SNAP, who can work, do so. Unfortunately, low-paying jobs with unreliable hours and little to no benefits are all too common. Workers in the low-wage market cannot rely on always having a steady full-time job that pays a living wage, and work requirements will not create these jobs. SNAP is there to help them when they are in between jobs and searching for work.
- **Work rates are high among SNAP households that can work.** More than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult work while receiving SNAP. Because people often participate in SNAP when they are between jobs, work rates are higher over a longer time frame: more than 80 percent of SNAP

3 For studies and analyses on SNAP benefit adequacy, see the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council's *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Examining the Evidence to Define Benefit Adequacy*; FRAC's *New Institute of Medicine Report Outlines Steps to Address Benefit Adequacy*; FRAC's *New Study Buttresses Case for Higher SNAP Benefits*; and FRAC's *The Role of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Improving Health and Well-Being*.

households are employed in the year before or the year after receiving SNAP. Work rates are even higher for families with children: over 60 percent work while receiving SNAP and almost 90 percent work in the prior or subsequent year.

- **SNAP already has a harsh cut-off for unemployed workers without children.** SNAP benefits are limited to just three months out of every three years for unemployed workers who work less than 20 hours a week. States are not required to offer individuals subject to this limit a work slot and most do not. States can waive the rule temporarily in areas with elevated unemployment. Otherwise, they must impose this rule even on individuals actively looking for work or working less than half time. In 2016, at least a half-million unemployed individuals lost benefits due to this rule. States, workforce training groups, and anti-hunger advocates have called on Congress to ease this rule, not make it worse.

- **States have been able to set additional work requirements for over 30 years** States can go further and impose very tough work requirements (up to 30 hours a week) and cut off benefits including those for children in the household to those who don't comply. States mostly require job search and workfare activities, interventions that aren't effective at improving long-term employment and earning outcomes¹. The USDA and states spent more than \$700 million for SNAP employment and training programs in 2016.

- **Work requirements aren't an effective way to encourage or support employment.** Work requirements in other programs have generated little or no long-term increase in earnings and employment and have caused many families to lose assistance, leaving them in deep poverty, research shows.² In an effort to find effective ways to help participants move to work, states have started to experiment with approaches that focus on helping them increase their earnings through training in high-demand sectors. These approaches are expected to have better outcomes than and do not risk cutting benefits to unemployed individuals who need them.

- **The USDA is also testing new approaches to improve results through SNAP employment and training.** Congress has set up ten comprehensive SNAP employment and training demonstration projects to gauge whether new approaches would help boost employment/earnings. These projects, which build upon the existing state efforts, are testing a variety of interventions, including intensive supports for individuals with significant employment barriers as well as training based on the needs that local employers identify.

¹ U.S. Agriculture Department, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) Best Practices Study: Final Report," November 2016, <https://fnsprod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/SNAPeandTBestPractices.pdf>.

² LaDonna Pavetti, "Work Requirements Don't Cut Poverty, Evidence Shows," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, updated June 7, 2016, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/work-requirements-dont-cut-poverty-evidence-shows>.



IV. Hunger and Poverty in the Media

1. NATIONAL

- *“DEMOCRATS ‘IN REVOLT’ OVER DRAFT FARM BILL’S NUTRITION TITLE, MARCH 9, 2018*
[*<https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/10710-democrats-in-revolt-over-draft-farm-bills-nutrition-title>*](https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/10710-democrats-in-revolt-over-draft-farm-bills-nutrition-title)

Democrats on the House Agriculture Committee are in revolt after the release of a draft version of the nutrition title in the upcoming Farm Bill. Ranking Democrat Collin Peterson of Minnesota says he has seen the nutrition title and cannot support it, noting it would tighten waiver rules for ABAWDS and include work requirements for families with children 12 and over and expand the ABAWD age limit to 18-65 (from 18-49). Savings from tightening work requirements would be used to expand state employment and training programs. States would maintain their authority to decide who can be exempted from existing work requirements - those may include retirees, people with temporary injuries or those who live in areas where fewer employment options are available. This action by House Ag Democrats will likely delay a planned markup of the bill for March 20. There is a two-week recess following this scheduled mark up. Both sides are claiming political posturing in an election year. House Ag Committee Chairman Conaway added: "In regard to SNAP, I successfully led efforts to prevent cuts to the farm bill, including to SNAP, last year and my position has not changed. That is a matter of public record. I have made it clear that policy, not budget cuts, will govern the writing of this farm bill, including SNAP.

- *“IN STICKING NATIONWIDE TREND, HOSPITALS TAKE ON HUNGER TO IMPROVE OVERALL HEALTH, MARCH 8, 2018*
[*<https://civileats.com/2018/03/08/in-striking-nationwide-trend-hospitals-take-on-hunger-to-improve-overall-health/>*](https://civileats.com/2018/03/08/in-striking-nationwide-trend-hospitals-take-on-hunger-to-improve-overall-health/)

As Congress strips away the Affordable Care Act and makes moves to cut and weaken SNAP, the medical community is working to help low-income patients living in food insecure homes. With community health and their bottom lines in mind, many health clinics, hospitals, and provider networks across the country have stepped in to make healthier food available to more people in their communities. Community Health clinics and hospitals are including food security surveys in patient intakes and paying attention to hunger in their patients. Some doctors are building food boxes for patients in conjunction with emergency food providers tailored to the patient's individual health needs.

APPENDIX A

Attachment A (Sample Affidavit)

Affidavit for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applicants who were receiving Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) when they were displaced from Puerto Rico due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria

Instructions: If you would like to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and were receiving Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) benefits in Puerto Rico, you must fill out the following information and verify that you will not participate in both programs at the same time.

NAME (Head of household):

NAME (Other members of household):

SNAP APPLICATION/CASE NUMBER (If available):

CURRENT ADDRESS:

ADDRESS IN PUERTO RICO:

NAP CASE NUMBER(If available):

STATEMENT AGAINST DUPLICATE PARTICIPATION:

I understand that each member of my household may not receive benefits from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the same time. If I am found eligible for SNAP benefits, I attest under penalty of perjury and disqualification that I will not participate in both programs simultaneously and will close my household's NAP case at the earliest possible opportunity.

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX B

Attachment A



This is a checklist of what you need to file your 2017 tax return at an [NYC Free Tax Prep site or online](#). Learn more at nyc.gov/taxprep

**Identification:**

- Government-issued photo ID (includes IDNYC)
New York State Department of Taxation and Finance recommends using a driver's or non-driver's license identification issued by the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles. Returns filed using other forms of identification will be subject to additional identify verification that can delay your state refund.
- Social Security or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) and birth dates for you, your spouse, and your dependents

**Proof of Income:**

- Forms W-2, 1098, 1099, or income and expense records if you are self-employed
(See page 2 for detailed list.)

**Banking Information:**

- Bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit of your refund
Need to open a bank account? Visit nyc.gov/safestart to find out how you can open an NYC SafeStart Account. The NYC SafeStart Account has no overdraft fees and no monthly fees if you maintain a minimum balance of \$25 or even less depending on the financial institution.

**Other:**

- 2016 tax return (if available)
To file online: You must have your 2016 Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) or Self-Select PIN Number. If you cannot find this information on the return or do not have your 2016 tax return, call the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at 1-800-908-9946 or visit irs.gov and search "Get Transcript" to request a Tax Return Transcript.
- Proof of health insurance coverage or Health Insurance Exemption Certificate for you, your spouse, and your dependents
- Payment records for child care, including the provider's name, address, and Employer Identification Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, or Social Security number
- Records of cash and non-cash charitable contributions

If you are filing a joint return, both spouses must be present.

12/2017

1

Attachment A



You might also need **Other Proof of Income and Additional Documents.**



Other Proof of Income:

- Employed
 - Form W-2
- Unemployed
 - Form 1099-G
- Self-Employed
 - Form 1099-MISC (Miscellaneous Income)
 - Income records if you didn't receive a 1099
 - Records of all expenses
 - Record of estimated tax payments made
- Retired
 - Form 1099-R (Retirement Plans)
 - Form SSA-1099 (Social Security benefits)
- Student
 - Form 1098-T (scholarships and grants)
- Other Income
 - Form W-2G (gambling winnings)
 - Form 1099-B (sale of stock)
 - Form 1099-C (cancellation of debt)
 - Form 1099-INT (interest)
 - Form 1099-DIV (dividends)



Additional Documents:

- Health Insurance
 - Form 1095-A if you enrolled in an insurance plan through the Marketplace (Exchange)
 - Form 1095-B and/or 1095-C if you had insurance coverage through any other source, like your employer or a government health plan such as Medicare or Medicaid.
 - Marketplace exemption certificate (ECN) if you applied for and received an exemption from the Marketplace (Exchange)
- Childcare Expenses
 - Receipt for fees paid to a licensed day care center or family day care
 - Form W-10 or other documentation of the provider's name, address, and Employer Identification Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, or Social Security number.
- Educational Expenses
 - Form 1098-T for tuition payments to attend a university or technical college
 - Form 1098-E if you paid student loan interest
 - Receipts for qualified educational expenses
 - Records of any scholarships or fellowships

APPENDIX C

Attachment B

EITC - Letter A

File today and you could receive \$2,400* by claiming the EITC.

Don't give up the refund you earned. File your taxes for free today!

**This is the average amount most eligible New Yorkers got. You could get more!*

About the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The EITC is a way to keep more of what you earned in 2017.

The amount you get depends on how much you were paid and the number of qualifying children you claim on your tax return. If you do not have children, you may still be eligible.

What you need to do

To claim the EITC, you must file your taxes. Visit nyc.gov/taxprep or call 311 and ask for tax preparation assistance, which includes in-person help at an NYC Free Tax Prep site.

February 9-11, 2018: Come to **Tax-a-Thon** and sit with a volunteer preparer who will help you complete and submit your tax return, along with the required EITC form.



NYC Free Tax Prep sites are located in every borough. Find your nearest one RIGHT NOW. Text "TAXPREP18" to 42033 to get updates.‡

‡Message and data rates may apply. Check with your service provider. This service is available in English only.

Attachment B
EITC - Letter B



File today and you could receive \$7,582* by claiming the EITC.

Don't give up the refund you earned. File your taxes for free today!

*This is the maximum amount eligible New Yorkers with two dependent children can get.

About the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

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NYC Free Tax Prep sites are located in every borough. Find your nearest one RIGHT NOW. Text **"FREETAX18" to 42033 to get updates.**[‡]

[‡]Message and data rates may apply. Check with your service provider. This service is available in English only.

**THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY
2018**