



## **Food Bank For New York City**

### **Fiscal Year 2026 New York State Budget Priorities**

#### **Executive Summary**

For the FY25-26 New York State Budget priorities, Food Bank For New York City partnered with City Harvest and United Way of New York City to create a collaborative priorities platform, informed by the New York City food assistance network comprised of hundreds of food pantries and soup kitchens. We urge our elected leaders in Albany to include these priorities in next year's budget, providing needed resources and relief to New Yorkers experiencing food insecurity.

These priorities begin with critical funding for New York's food assistance programs, often the last resort for people facing food insecurity and for New Yorkers who cannot utilize federal nutrition programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**). Food pantries across the city and state are serving an increased demand with dwindling resources. In collaboration with the organizations above, as well as Feeding New York State, and the New York State Alliance Against Hunger, we ask for \$75M each for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (**HPNAP**) and Nourish New York (**NNY**) to bolster the food assistance network to provide more nutritious, culturally appropriate meals to neighbors in need.

The priorities also focus on increasing the reach and food buying power of SNAP, our nation's most effective tool to fight hunger. We ask for a modest increase to the Nutrition Education and Outreach Program (**NOEP**) to \$5.6M, and for New York State to create a \$100 SNAP minimum benefit.

In addition to food and nutrition assistance, network feedback reinforced that more must be done to address the interconnected economic issues facing our neighbors who struggle to put food on the table. This important discussion led to the inclusion of budget priorities to support the fight to address the affordability crisis impacting New Yorkers. Access to affordable childcare and housing vouchers to help keep people in their homes were identified as programs to focus on.

By prioritizing these key areas—food and nutrition assistance, affordable childcare, and housing stability— New York's leaders can create meaningful, lasting change for families across the state. We are eager to fight for these priorities in the next New York State budget and ensure that every New Yorker has access to the resources they need to thrive.



## **State Budget Priorities**

### **Priority 1: Create Food Security by Strengthening Food Assistance Programs**

- ASK: \$75M for The Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (**HPNAP**)
- ASK: \$75M for Nourish New York (**NNY**)
- ASK: Increase support for The Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (**NOEP**) to \$5.6M
- ASK: Raise the SNAP Minimum in NYS to \$100

### **Priority 2: Invest in Affordable Childcare**

- ASK: Increase state investments in childcare subsidies and expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare statewide.

### **Priority 3: Support Housing Stability for New Yorkers**

- ASK: Strengthen and expand the State Housing Voucher Program to improve housing affordability and help keep New Yorkers in their homes, stabilizing families at risk of displacement.



## **Explanation and Key Messages**

We ask that the next budget support and strengthen the food and nutrition assistance programs that the food assistance network and New Yorkers in need rely on, while providing needed relief for expenses like childcare and housing for all New Yorkers.

- **Priority 1: Create Food Security by Strengthening Food Assistance Programs**
  - **Need at food banks, pantries, and emergency food providers continues to be far higher** than pre-pandemic levels, who continue to serve our communities with dwindling resources while both demand and food prices remain high.
    - 15% or nearly 1.3 million New Yorkers, are facing food insecurity, an increase from last year.
    - 1 in 4 NYC kids is facing food insecurity, with the food insecurity rate for children in NYC currently at 23.5%.
    - Food pantries are a critical lifeline for New Yorker who may be excluded from federal nutrition programs such as SNAP.
    - **SNAP is our nation's most effective program against hunger.**
      - **SNAP provides nearly 3 million New Yorkers in need statewide with assistance** to buy nutritious groceries.
        - These federal dollars generate over \$11.3 billion annually in economic activity.
        - As of June 2024, nearly 1.8 million New York City residents were relying on SNAP to put food on the table, a 2% increase from last year.
        - The average cost per meal in New York City is \$4.86. This is an increase of 49 cents compared to last year. Since March 2020, the cost of groceries has increased by 21%.
        - According to the [NYC Department of Social Services](#), an estimated 25% of NYC residents who are eligible for SNAP do not participate in the program.
  - **ASK: \$75M for The Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP)**

Increasing funding for HPNAP would allow the food assistance network to expand its reach and better serve more New Yorkers in need.

    - **HPNAP provides over 220 million meals statewide** and it's a lifeline for the nearly 3 million New Yorkers, including 1.2 million New York City residents, who rely on food assistance programs to keep food on the table.
    - For over 30 years, HPNAP has helped improve nutrition security for New Yorkers through healthy food procurement, storage and distribution, and operational expenses.



- HPNAP helps support New York-based food banks, food pantries, emergency shelters, and community-based organizations that work on the frontlines in the fight against food insecurity.
- **FY25 allocation** for HPNAP was \$57.8M
- **ASK: \$75M for Nourish New York**

Nourish New York support New Yorkers with nutritious produce, the program also directly supports producers – from the fishing industry on Long Island to fruit and vegetable growers up north and out west to dairy farmers across the state.

  - **Since 2020, Nourish New York has provided over 70 million pounds of healthy, nutritious food to New Yorkers** experiencing food insecurity while generating \$150M in direct benefits for over 4,000 producers across the state.
  - Nourish New York helps food banks distribute healthy, New York-grown produce across our network. The program helps improve the selection of food at distributions – providing more healthy choices to New Yorkers in need who often don't have the freedom to choose.
  - **FY24 allocation** for Nourish NY was \$54.3M
- **ASK: \$5.6M for The Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP)**

NOEP is New York's largest SNAP outreach, education and application assistance program. This program increases SNAP participation among eligible residents and helps to maximize federal matching funds coming into the state, helping households, communities, and the regional food system.

  - Funded since 1987, NOEP (managed by Hunger Solutions New York) is a unique model that combines statewide activities with community-based services. At the community level, NOEP manages a network of community-based organizations, including working with Food Bank For New York City's SNAP team, skilled at conducting SNAP outreach and enrollment assistance.
  - In 2023, NOEP helped more than 32,500 households receive more than \$140 million in annual SNAP benefits in NY state.
  - **FY25 allocation** for NOEP was \$5.6M
- **ASK: Raise the SNAP Minimum in New York State to \$100**

This ask is to create a state-based SNAP minimum benefit. Eligible households would receive a monthly state SNAP benefit equal to the difference between the household's federal SNAP monthly allotment and one hundred dollars (\$100).

  - This increase will make SNAP a stronger resource for the tens of thousands of New Yorkers who are eligible for SNAP but at a benefit amount that is less than \$100 per month, including people on a fixed income such as older adults. New York has the opportunity to follow our neighbors in New Jersey



in acknowledging that the federal minimum of \$23 per month is not enough to meaningfully supplement a grocery budget in our state.

- This will improve nutrition for seniors and households on the cusp of poverty and improve health outcomes and financial security for older adults.

- **Priority 2: Help Make Childcare Affordable for New York Families**

- More than [80% of NYC families](#) with children under 5 cannot afford childcare, with the highest childcare cost burden in the Bronx and Brooklyn, also the boroughs with the highest food insecurity rates.
- Nearly [1 in 5 children](#) in New York State lives in poverty, in NYC that number is closer to [1 in 4](#).
- **ASK: Increase state investments in childcare subsidies and expand access** to affordable, high-quality childcare statewide.

- **Priority 3: Improve Housing Stability for New Yorkers**

- New Yorkers experiencing housing insecurity are 3x more likely to experience food insecurity
- **ASK: Strengthen and expand the state housing voucher program** to improve housing affordability and help keep New Yorkers in their homes, stabilizing families at risk of displacement.