COVID-19 Resource Guide

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Last updated: April 1, 2020
COVID-19 Resource Guides

- **New York City**’s official COVID-19 resource guide [is available online](#).
- **NYC United Against Coronavirus** is a hub of neighborhood and borough based resources.
- **Community Care** has assembled a [resource guide for queer and trans people](#).
- **Harm Reduction Coalition** created this resource guide for people who use drugs, trade sex, or are vulnerable to structural violence.
- **Undocuscholar** compiled a nationwide guide of resources specifically for undocumented people.
- **Brooklyn Defender Services** is available to help. Our community office is currently closed but we are working remotely and available to help. **If you have issues or questions** about ACS, education, housing, education, employment, benefits, criminal matters or general legal issues, please call 646-971-2722 or email us at communityoffice@bds.org.
Clothing

- **Donated clothing is available** at Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en San Bernardo/Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Bernard, 328 W 14th St. Please call 212-243-0265.
Domestic Violence

- The National Domestic Violence Hotline and chat lines are open. People experiencing domestic violence can call 1-800-799-7233, visit www.thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.
- Safe Horizon’s website is continually updated so people know how to access programs, some of which remain open and most of which are operating remotely.
Education

With Department of Education (DOE) schools shut down and reopening in a remote fashion, there are many changes happening for parents and school children. DOE is updating things day by day and you can also look on their website here.

Remote Devices
- **DOE has distributed over 25,000 tablets** for students to complete classwork remotely, with a priority for children in homeless shelters and children in foster care. They are distributing 50,000 per week until they get to the point of distributing 300,000 devices.
- **To request a tablet for your child(ren) from the DOE**, you can complete this survey.

For families who do not speak English at home, the DOE is working directly with Google to create tutorials and guidance in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu, and will also work to get more languages available. The call line 718-935-5100, option 5, should also have translation services available.
- **How will Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners be able to get the services they need?** The Division of Multilingual Learners is developing guidance on supporting Multilingual Learners in any language, to maintain continuity of learning, including how co-teaching can work remotely.

Communication with a School
- Currently most schools’ phones are linked only to the physical building and so are not an effective way to reach anyone. The DOE is working on posting online directories and methods of being in touch with schools.

Students with Disabilities
- Every student with a disability and an IEP should have a “Remote Learning Plan” developed for them. The schools should be completing these now, and students should be entitled to receive these services remotely. This is very much a work in progress and schools seem to be rolling this out, but the services were supposed to start on March 23.

Grab and Go Meals
- Over 400 school locations are serving Grab and Go meals for students and their families from 7:30 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. No registration, ID, or documentation is required to pick up these meals. **Three meals a day will be available** per person and may be picked up at the same time. No one will be turned away. Parents and guardians may pick up meals for themselves and their children without the child present and should simply tell the staff at the location how many people they need to feed.
  - Find the closest location serving meals here or text the word “Food” or “Comida” to 877-877 to find the closest meal hub.
  - **Anyone can pick up food without documentation and/or without a child present.**
  - All students can receive free meals, this includes 3- and 4-year-olds, as well as all K-12 including over-age students in high school (3 to 21 years). Adults without
children present will not be turned away, and may ask for however much food they need for their families.

- **Regional Enrichment Centers** are open to children who are New York City residents, and whose parents/guardians are in certain fields (health care, FDNY, NYPD, OEM and some NYCTA roles). [Parents can enroll children online.](#)

- **If you want more information about your child’s educational rights in this uncertain time,** contact us at 929-314-0962.
Employment

- **Unemployment Insurance**
  - Unemployment insurance is available, and people can apply [online](#), or through the DOL hotline at 888-209-8124. Individuals who are not citizens can still receive unemployment if they (a) work working “legally” when they lost their job; (b) are “legally” allowed to take a new job; and (c) meet the other requirements for UI. We also expect the rates to significantly increase with the new federal legislation.

- **Paid Leave**
  - **NYC paid leave** is an option regardless of immigration status. An individual must have worked in NYC for more than 80 hours per year, and can take up to 40 hours of leave and can start sick time 120 days after first day of employment. [https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/about/paid-sick-leave-FAQs.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/about/paid-sick-leave-FAQs.page)
  - For individuals in the rest of the state, **NYS’s Paid Family Leave** may be an option, regardless of immigration status. [https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/](https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/) or (844) 337-6303.

- **Worker’s Comp or Temporary Disability Insurance**
  - Worker’s comp is available for employees who become sick or injured on the job and may be appropriate for our clients who contract COVID-19 from work. Temporary Disability Insurance could be another option, but that involves non-workplace related disability/injury.

- **NY Paid Leave for COVID-19**

- **Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act**
  - The new federal legislation provides the most expansive coverage to individuals affected by COVID-19, because they are quarantined by order or medical advice, experiencing symptoms, seeking a medical diagnosis, caring for an individual subject to quarantine, or caring for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19. This legislation took effect on April 1, 2020. [https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic)

- **If you want more information about what employment benefits you might be eligible for** if your work has been affected by coronavirus, contact us at 929-314-0962.
Food and Nutrition Resources

- **The City of New York** is helping New Yorkers during the COVID-19 crisis by delivering meals to those who cannot access food themselves. Visit their website for eligibility requirements and to apply.

- **NeON Nutrition Kitchens** are operating in each borough, providing free meals and groceries. See their website for hours and locations in each borough.

- **God’s Love We Deliver** provides meals to homebound New Yorkers with serious chronic health conditions. Documentation from a physician is required, applications are being accepted.

- **Invisible hands** will deliver groceries to high risk people in NYC and some areas of New Jersey.

- **Ancient Song and Brooklyn Packers** are delivering groceries to pregnant people in need.

- Older adults are may be eligible for meal delivery through the NYC Department for the Aging. You can call 212-Aging-NYC (212-244-6469) or 311 for more information.

- **Grab and Go Meals**
  - Over 400 school locations are serving Grab and Go meals for students and their families from 7:30 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. No registration, ID, or documentation is required to pick up these meals. **Three meals a day will be available** per person and may be picked up at the same time. No one will be turned away. Parents and guardians may pick up meals for themselves and their children without the child present and should simply tell the staff at the location how many people they need to feed.
  - 4/3/20 ALL NEW YORKERS will be able to pick up 3 free meals at any of the grab-and-go food sites at schools. Times: 7:30-11:30am children and families can pick up meals, 11:30-1:30pm adults can pick up meals
  - Find the closest location serving meals here or text the word “Food” or “Comida” to 877-877 to find the closest meal hub.

- **Anyone can pick up food without documentation and/or without a child present.**

- All students can receive free meals, this includes 3- and 4-year-olds, as well as all K-12 including over-age students in high school (3 to 21 years). Adults without children present will not be turned away, and may ask for however much food they need for their families.
Health Insurance and Medicaid Coverage

• Health insurance navigators are available by phone for Medicaid and private insurance applications. Marketplace health insurance enrollment has been re-opened until April 15. Application assistance here: https://www.nadap.org/services/ipa-navigator/.
• New York State Medicaid will cover certain health care services related to COVID-19 without copays, including physician, clinic, and emergency visits for the purpose of testing, evaluation, and/or treatment for COVID-19.
• New York State Medicaid coverage for undocumented immigrants is limited to emergency services only, including lab testing, evaluation, and treatment.
• New York State Medicaid has expanded coverage of telehealth services.
Homelessness Resources

- Shelters in NYC continue to operate. For information on entering a shelter during the COVID-19 crisis, see the Coalition for the Homeless website.
- With guidance from Health and Hospitals (H+H), DHS have provided a protocol for thousands of staff in DHS shelters and HRA shelters/congregate care settings and DHS outreach workers to help identify clients who are experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms and connect them to a medical assessment and care including:
  - Created isolation capacity to provide shelter to clients who have COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive and do not need to be hospitalized. Brought on additional shelter capacity to free up existing shelter space for isolation capacity.
  - Provided shelter providers with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) cleaning protocols and are making sure that providers are equipped with the necessary cleaning supplies.
  - Promoting social distancing in congregate shelters by extending and staggering mealtimes.
  - Provided street outreach teams with hand wipes (in the absence of hand-sanitizer supply) and socks to distribute to clients experiencing street homelessness.
  - Streamlined the shelter application process through the use of telephone interviews and conferences, submission of documents by email, and the use of Skype.
- Coalition for the Homeless is regularly updating a list of open food pantries and soup kitchens, drop-in centers, and other services such as places to shower or do laundry.
- All Streetwork Project locations for homeless young people are operating. Click here for more information
**Housing Court and Evictions**

- Housing court is closed and all evictions have been suspended indefinitely. All court dates are being rescheduled and a new court date will be sent via mail.
- There *will* be limited access to court for emergency matters such as illegal lockouts or extremely dire housing conditions.
- NYCHA and other administrative hearings are also being postponed.
- BUT, statutes of limitations have not been suspended so landlords are still filing new cases.
- **If you are an existing client with questions about your case**, please reach out to your attorney directly.
- **If you are a Brooklyn Defender Services client with a civil legal issue not yet working with our team**, or don't remember who you are working with, please reach out to our intake coordinator at 332-213-4193.
Internet, Phone, and Utilities

- The Federal Communication Commission announced an agreement stating that phone and internet providers will waive late fees, not cutoff service for lack of payment, and open wifi hot-spots.
  - Spectrum is offering 60 days of free Wi-Fi to households with school age children and will waive installation fees. Contact, 1-844-488-8395 or 1-844-488-8398
  - Comcast COVID-19 response: offers free WiFi for 2 months to low income families plus all Xfinity hot-spots are free to the public during this time. Contact 1-855-846-8376 (English); 1-855-765-6995 (Spanish)
  - Charter Free Internet offer for 2 months free.
  - AT&T COVID-19 response: offers open hot-spots, unlimited data to existing customers, and $10/month plans to low income families
  - Verizon COVID-19 response: no special offers, but following the FCC agreement.
  - Sprint COVID-19 response: follows FCC agreement, provides unlimited data to existing customers, and, starting Tuesday, 3/17/2020, will allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge.
  - T-Mobile COVID-19 response: follows FCC agreement, plus unlimited data to existing customers, and, coming soon, will allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge.
Mental Health Resources

- **NYC Well** is a confidential helpline for mental health and substance misuse services. Trained counselors can provide you with support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in over 200 languages. Services are free regardless of insurance coverage or immigration status. Services include:
  - Crisis counseling
  - Peer support
  - Short-term counseling
  - Mobile crisis teams
  - Connection to ongoing mental health and substance misuse services
  - CALL: 1-888-NYC-Well (692-9355)
  - TEXT: “Well” to 65173
  - VISIT ON THE WEB: nyc.gov/nycwell

- If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, you can contact the **National Suicide Prevention Hotline at any time at 800-273-TALK (8255)**. You will be connected with a crisis center in the Lifeline network closest to your location. Your call will be answered by a trained crisis worker who will listen empathetically and without judgment. The crisis worker will work to ensure that you feel safe and help identify options and information about mental health services in your area. Your call is confidential and free.

- The **Nathaniel Clinic** is accepting referrals for remote individual therapy, psychiatric services, initial assessments, psychiatric assessments, and health monitoring. If you need assistance, call (212) 553-6708.

- **United Consulting Services** is accepting new clients and referrals for telehealth counseling. For more information call (718) 233-2533.

- **New York Psychotherapy and Counseling Center** is open and providing intakes and counseling for counseling for all eligible Medicaid recipients by phone. Services are available in Spanish. Contact them online for more information or by phone at (718) 553-1100.

- Mobile Crisis Teams are still operating. It may take **24-48 hours** for a crisis team to respond. You can request a Mobile Crisis response by calling 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355).

- **Our community office is currently closed** but we are working remotely and available to help. If you have issues or questions about accessing mental health resources, please call 646-971-2722 or email us at communityoffice@bds.org.
Public Assistance, SNAP, Etc.

- The biggest change is that any negative case actions are suspended and that ANY application can be submitted online through Access HRA. This includes cash assistance, SNAP, and emergency assistance for rent arrears etc.

- HRA offices remain open for new cash assistance or rental arrears applications. They are not taking any negative case actions for missed appointments or other program requirements. Prior adverse actions can be resolved upon request. SNAP applications, recertification for current recipients, and some other actions can be completed here: https://a069-access.nyc.gov/accesshra/

- Those with changes in income due to reduced hours or inability to work may be eligible for SNAP benefits.

- **If you need assistance, you don’t need to go in person to an HRA Office.** HRA now has phone and online applications for many necessary services. See more information here: Be Safe, Skip the Trip!
  - You can apply for Cash Assistance or Emergency One Time Assistance with the ACCESS HRA website and mobile app. An HRA staff member will call you to complete your eligibility interview.
  - Apply for SNAP online at www.nyc.gov/accesshra or by smart phone with the ACCESS HRA app. After you submit your application, complete your eligibility interview by calling 718-SNAP-NOW (718-762-7669) anytime between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
  - Apply for a Special Grant online through ACCESS HRA if you are a Cash Assistance client.
  - Get food assistance at a food pantry near you. Call 311 for locations.
  - Use ACCESS HRA online or download the ACCESS HRA app to view your case information.
  - Apply for child support services by downloading an application at childsupport.ny.gov OR calling the NYS child support helpline at 888-208-4485 to have an application mailed to you.

- Social security offices are closed for in person service. People are encouraged to go online (www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices) or call their local office. For appointments already scheduled, they will call you instead from a private number. For scheduled hearings, they will call to discuss alternatives, including offering a telephone hearing.

- For additional resources, visit this link.

- **If you are an existing client with questions about your case,** please reach out to your attorney directly.

- **If you are a Brooklyn Defender Services client with a civil legal issue not yet working with our team,** or don’t remember who you are working with, please reach out to our intake coordinator at 332-213-4193.
Substance Use Resources

- **H+H Virtual Buprenorphine Clinic**
  - NYC Health + Hospitals will begin operating a virtual Suboxone clinic in response to the COVID-19 emergency. The clinic will serve all New Yorkers seeking opioid addiction treatment for continuation or initiation of buprenorphine. Clinic hours (by phone or videoconference) Mon - Friday, 9am - 5pm, For appointment and referrals call: 212-562-2665.

- **AA and NA meetings are available online**: Online [AA Directory available here](#) and [Virtual NA is available here](#).

- **In the Rooms** hosts 130 weekly online meetings for those recovering from addiction and related issues, including 12 Step, Non-12 Step, Wellness and Mental Health modalities.

- **Phoenix House Outpatient Centers** are providing telephonic assessments, group, and individual sessions. Clients or providers can call for assessment or more information - 646-505-2003

- **ThriveNYC** provides brief mental health and substance use counseling and referrals via phone.

- **VOCAL-NY's** ([http://www.vocal-ny.org/](http://www.vocal-ny.org/)) syringe access and overdose prevention programs remain open. VOCAL is distributing Naloxone and other harm-reduction supplies at their office: 80A 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

- **Our community office is currently closed** but we are working remotely and available to help. If you have issues or questions about accessing substance abuse resources, please call 646-971-2722 or email us at communityoffice@bds.org.