

HRA Receives Federal Food Stamp Grant

HRA has received over \$600,000 in federal funding to improve access to the Food Stamp Program as part of an initiative from the US Department of Agriculture. HRA was one of seven city and state government organizations nationwide to receive a competitive USDA grant aimed at improving access and simplifying the application process for Food Stamps programs. Better access to food stamps means more families throughout the city will be able to get the help they need quickly and efficiently.

With previous USDA help, HRA was able to implement an electronic application system, which allows eligible people to submit their food stamp applications on-line with the help of community organizations partnered with HRA. The new grant will be used to streamline the recertification system, letting food stamps recipients submit their annual recertification applications on-line. Follow-up interviews for recertification can then be handled by phone. Because food stamps recipients may not have access to the internet, on-line recertification will be available in neighborhood-based locations. HRA will work with the New York City Coalition Against Hunger and the NYC Food Bank to put these changes into effect.

By making food stamps easier to access, HRA hopes to connect more eligible New Yorkers with the benefits they need. “The federal government plays an important role in combating food insecurity and hunger,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on the USDA grants, “but it is through special partnerships that we can reach the people who are most in need of assistance.”