



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER  
SCOTT M. STRINGER

March 23, 2021

Honorable Bill de Blasio  
Mayor  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought immeasurable harm to New Yorkers, with skyrocketing unemployment and ballooning food insecurity following waves of illness and death. People of color and immigrant New Yorkers have been hit hardest with the highest rates of COVID infections, illness and fatalities, and job and income loss, all of which have contributed to our current crisis of food insecurity. But within these communities, undocumented New Yorkers are uniquely vulnerable when tragedy strikes. Unable to access federally funded safety net programs like SNAP, undocumented New Yorkers have fewer resources available to help put food on the table, and often rely solely on food pantries and mutual aid networks for additional food, which often is not enough. In a city like New York, it's unconscionable that anyone should go hungry.

That's why we are calling for \$25 million in FEMA reimbursement funding to be specifically dedicated to providing emergency food to undocumented New Yorkers, in addition to the City's current emergency food programs. The Biden Administration has agreed to lift the cap on FEMA reimbursement for New York State and City's pandemic related costs, clearing the way for 100 percent reimbursements. This will result in \$1 billion in reimbursements for New York City. This funding creates an opportunity to address food insecurity among New Yorkers who cannot access the federally funded SNAP program due to immigration status, including workers in the informal economy, seniors, and others who have been hardest hit. The City should seize this opportunity and dedicate at least \$25 million of this funding to create food security programs for immigrant New Yorkers who have been left out of other safety net programs.

We call on you to take immediate action and commit the funding to make this proposal a reality. Undocumented New Yorkers cannot wait for relief any longer.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Stringer  
New York City Comptroller

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