

# Public Assistance

## What is Public Assistance?

In New York, what people sometimes call Welfare or Public Assistance (PA) is more formally called Temporary Assistance. Temporary Assistance is generally available to people who have little or no income and comes in the form of a cash payment. This payment is typically loaded on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card twice a month.

## Temporary Assistance Benefits Available

There are two major Temporary Assistance programs - one for families with minor children and the other for single adults and families without children.

- **Help for Families with Children**
  - **Family Assistance (FA)** - provides cash assistance to families with minor children. If found eligible, you can receive FA for a total of 60 months (5 years), but after that you may be eligible for the other program, Safety Net Assistance.
- **Help for Adults without Children**
  - **Safety Net Assistance (SNA)** - provides cash assistance to qualifying single adults, childless couples and people otherwise ineligible for FA. After 2 years, SNA may be provided in the form of a voucher rather than a cash payment.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who qualifies for Temporary Assistance?

U.S. citizens, or non-citizens with a qualifying immigration status, who meet income and asset tests are eligible to apply.

### Do I have to work to get Temporary Assistance?

Your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office will determine whether you are able to work. If so, then you will be required to participate in work activities to receive Temporary Assistance. That could include working, looking for work, being in a training program or attending school.

### How do I apply for Temporary Assistance?

To apply for Temporary Assistance, fill out an application at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) or at a Job Center, if in NYC. Depending on the type of benefit for which you are applying, there may be more than one interview or requests for additional documentation.

### What documents will I need to apply?

You will need to provide proof of several eligibility factors with your application. Common documents requested are: proof of identification for all members of the household, proof of where you live, proof of living expenses (rent/mortgage payments, and utilities), employment status, immigration status and other income or assets you own.



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