



SUPPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Local Law Int. No 105

Sponsors James, Eugene, Koo, Levine, Mendez and Rosenthal

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MFY Legal Services, Inc. envisions a society in which no one is denied justice because he or she cannot afford an attorney. To make this vision a reality, for 50 years MFY has provided free legal assistance to residents of New York City on a wide range of civil legal issues, prioritizing services to vulnerable and under-served populations, while simultaneously working to end the root causes of inequities through impact litigation, law reform and policy advocacy. MFY's Government Benefits Project focuses on helping low-income New Yorkers apply for and keep the public benefits to which they are entitled.

MFY supports this legislation, which would amend New York City's administrative code to require signs regarding application processing and fair hearings at job centers, SNAP centers, and Medicaid offices.

MFY applauds the City Council for these important improvements to properly inform low-income New Yorkers of their rights regarding public benefits and offers the following additional recommendations to ensure their success.

Recommendations

- 1. The signs should be at least 18"x 20" with at least two signs posted in each waiting area.*
- 2. The signs should inform applicants that if their application has not been processed during the standard time-frame of 30-45 days, they have a right to ask for a fair hearing.*
- 3. The signs should include that a person has 60 days, from a Notice of Intent, Notice of Decision, or a notice denying or changing benefits, to ask for a fair hearing for public assistance and Medicaid, and 90 days to ask for a SNAP fair hearing.*
- 4. The signs should also include that a person may ask for aid continuing, within 10 days of a Notice of Intent, Notice of Decision, or a notice denying or changing benefits. The definition of aid continuing, that a person's benefits will remain the same until there is a fair hearing and a decision is made, should also be on the sign.*
- 5. The signs should be in Arabic, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish to ensure that New Yorkers with limited English proficiency can read the signs and understand their rights.*
- 6. The signs should make clear that if an applicant has an emergency he/she should inform the caseworker and assistance can be provided the day of the application.*

For more information, please contact: Montel Cherry, Supervising Attorney, 212-417-3857, mcherry@mfy.org.