

CHILD POVERTY SOLUTION: CASH ASSISTANCE

LOW-INCOME FAMILIES NEED CASH ASSISTANCE TO REDUCE CHILD POVERTY

What is cash assistance?



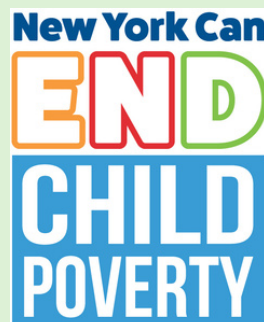
For many decades, New York State has provided cash assistance to low-income New Yorkers, funded by local, State, and federal TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funds. This assistance, known as the “Cash Assistance” program, is intended to enable families to fulfill their basic cash needs, including for soap, detergent, diapers, clothing for growing children, and transportation.

The existing Cash Assistance program provides inadequate assistance. The amounts allotted to families have not been increased in 12 years and relegate many families to a state of deep poverty (less than 50 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines). Throughout the state, a family of two (parent and one child), receives \$252 per month, plus \$39.50 for utility expenses. Families can supplement assistance with work income, but the rules about which working families qualify and how much they can save, leave many families out. Where a family is sanctioned for an adult allegedly failing to follow employment rules, the amount is reduced by half, or the case is closed. The result is that children suffer even more.

NEW YORK MUST DO BETTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BY ADOPTING REFORMS TO THE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ABOUT NEW YORK CAN END CHILD POVERTY

New York Can End Child Poverty is a coalition of organizations from across New York State working to improve long-term outcomes for children and families from households experiencing economic hardship. We are dedicated to advancing public policies that support children and families while reducing child poverty and inequity across New York State.



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What is Needed:



Substantial increases in the level of benefits, with ongoing index to inflation so families do not have to wait another 12 years for an amount that helps them meet their basic needs. A 100% increase in benefits level would bring the level for a family of two to approximately \$500 per month. The Urban Institute determined that such an increase would decrease child poverty in New York State by 18 percent.

Companion changes that would increase long-term economic stability of low-income families receiving Cash Assistance include:



Allow low-wage, working families to access Cash Assistance (at reduced levels). Participation in the Cash Assistance program is often the only way to access child care, employment services, and even housing assistance. Allowing more working families to participate in the program, at reduced levels of assistance to account for work income, will increase long-term stability.

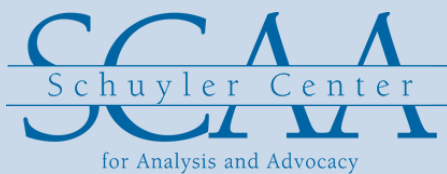


Eliminate the Cash Assistance resource limit. Many other states, ranging from Massachusetts to Alabama, have done this. This change helps families grow their savings and build long-term economic stability.



Implement Cash Assistance Sanction Reform Statewide. New York City did this in 2015, and the whole state should also benefit. The changes help prevent sanctions against families and end them more quickly.

New York's Children Cannot Wait for These Common-Sense Reforms. We know New York can do better to support children and families across the state, and address child poverty through sensible policy.



THE SCHUYLER CENTER

is a non-profit organization advocating for public policies proven to improve health, well-being, and economic security for all New Yorkers, especially children and families experiencing poverty.

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