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HEALTHCARE

New York pours $26M into SNAP outreach as federal work rules shrink enrollment

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By **Amanda D'Ambrosio**
October 13, 2026 05:30 PM EDT

New York has issued $26.4 million to expand outreach and enrollment assistance for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP — aiming to help individuals maintain their food benefits amid recent federal work requirements that have led to declining enrollment.

The state's Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance announced the new funding on Tuesday for the Nutrition Navigators program, which conducts outreach to inform people about SNAP and help them apply. The funds are expected to support outreach and enrollment assistance efforts for roughly 340,000 New Yorkers, according to the office.

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The expansion of SNAP outreach comes amid a spate of federal policies that have put New Yorkers at risk of losing their nutrition benefits. The Trump administration has implemented new work requirements for SNAP and reduced federal funding for program administration — both changes that were passed in Congressional Republicans' 2025 tax law, known as H.R. 1. The work requirements put certain low-income New Yorkers at risk of losing their benefits if they do not comply with requirements to work at least 80 hours per month.

Since federal work requirements took effect in March, SNAP enrollment in New York has declined from 2.7 million to 2.6 million — a reduction of roughly 120,000 fewer enrollees, according to Barbara Guinn, commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. Not all of those changes can be attributed to the work requirements, as SNAP enrollment was already declining prior to the implementation date, but Guinn said the new rules have led to enrollment declines.

"There have been a lot of changes with the SNAP program over the past year or two," Guinn said, pointing to H.R. 1. "There's no time more important than now for us to get information out."

The Nutrition Navigators program combines and replaces two former SNAP outreach programs: the Nutrition Outreach and Education Program and Targeted SNAP Outreach Program. The new initiative will help with pre-screening, application assistance, general information and assistance with meeting expanded work requirements, according to OTDA.

New York included $8.7 million in the most recent state budget to ramp up SNAP outreach, according to Guinn. The federal government previously provided states 50% of administrative funds for SNAP, but a recent change that took effect this month reduced that contribution to 25%. The state increased its share of funding to make up for that gap, Guinn added.

The state has issued funds to 44 organizations to help with SNAP outreach, including the Food Bank for New York City, the Chinese-American Planning Council, Hunger Free America and others. The state also awarded $4.4 million to the nonprofit Hunger Solutions New York to provide statewide technical assistance and help train navigators.