

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF CLASS ACTION
CONCERNING THE TIMELY PROCESSING OF FOOD STAMPS APPLICATIONS**

Have you recently applied for or do you intend to apply for food stamps at a Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Center? Have you recently received assistance in completing an application for food stamps from a community-based organization in New York City? If you answered yes to either question, you should read this notice because it gives you information about the settlement of a lawsuit about the Food Stamp application process.

BACKGROUND

In 2004, a lawsuit, *Williston v. Eggleston*, 04 Civ. 4454, was brought claiming that the New York City Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services ("HRA") does not process applications for food stamps on time. The lawsuit also claimed that the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) failed to supervise the timeliness by which HRA processes food stamp applications. Plaintiffs asked the court to certify the case as a class action on behalf of New York City residents who have sought, are seeking, or will seek to apply for food stamps in a Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Center in New York City. The Commissioners of OTDA and HRA deny any wrongdoing, and the Court has not made any final decisions about the claims in the lawsuit. The parties have agreed to a settlement in the case, which must be approved by the Court.

PROPOSED SETTLEMENT

You can see the entire proposed settlement at the websites for the plaintiffs' counsel: New York Legal Assistance Group, www.nylag.org; Urban Justice Center, www.urbanjustice.org; and Welfare Law Center, www.nclej.org.

The basic terms of the settlement are:

1. The plaintiff class will consist of "all individuals who apply for Food Stamp benefits at a Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Center, or for whom an application is submitted at a Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Center."
2. HRA will post and maintain signs in Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Centers with information on the right to apply for Food Stamp benefits and the time frames for the provision of food stamps.
3. HRA will screen Food Stamp applications for eligibility for expedited processing.
4. HRA will provide Food Stamps to eligible households within five days if eligible for expedited food stamp processing, and within thirty days if otherwise eligible, unless the delay was caused by the household.
5. OTDA will supervise HRA's compliance with the timeliness provisions of the federal food stamp laws.
6. HRA will monitor its own compliance with the timeliness provisions of the food stamp laws.
7. Plaintiffs' counsel will also monitor HRA's and OTDA's compliance with their obligations under the settlement.

RIGHT TO OBJECT

Any class member has the right to let the Court, the attorneys, and the parties know if he or she objects to the proposed settlement. The Court has set a hearing for this purpose on April 16, 2008, at 12:00 p.m. at the following address:

**Honorable Robert W. Sweet, United States District Judge
United States District Court for the Southern District of New York
Daniel Patrick Moynihan United States Courthouse
500 Pearl St., Room 1920, New York, NY 10007**

Class members may also object to the settlement by sending a letter marked "Williston Settlement" and postmarked by April 10, 2008, to the Court at the address listed above. Class members may also call the Urban Justice Center, which represents the plaintiffs in this lawsuit, with objections to or comments on the settlement or with any questions, at: 646-602-5639.