

# Excluded Workers Disaster Income Replacement Fund

## The NEED:

Undocumented workers, very small immigrant-owned businesses, and immigrant families who have lost a breadwinner to Coronavirus are left virtually without relief, despite having paid more than their fair share of taxes, and bearing the brunt of the pandemic.

This is a crisis for immigrant communities, but also forces sick people to venture out to work or search for work, putting everyone at risk.

No Unemployment Insurance. No \$1200 check from the IRS. No SNAP for many. Foundations and charities are establishing modest funds to get some cash to families, but our communities need government-scale solutions.

We all fought for Unemployment Insurance that is now set at \$600 plus the normal UI amount - for those of us who are eligible. And we fought for the \$1200 cash to taxpayers for those of us who are eligible. Those are *not enough for any of us*, and we must keep pushing for more.

**But what about the families of immigrant workers who are undocumented?** No matter how much they have contributed to our tax base, they will NOT get a tax rebate from the IRS. **No matter how many hours an undocumented worker has spent at a dangerous essential job, their family will not be able to access Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** if that worker dies after contracting Coronavirus.

In **the epicenter** of the pandemic, the numbers are stark: immigrant communities are among the hardest hit by COVID-19. **Most New York City residents employed in essential jobs are immigrants** — 54 percent of the total (Fiscal Policy Institute). Over a quarter of food and drug store, 22 percent of social service, and a striking 36 percent of cleaning service employees do not have citizenship status, [according to The NYC Comptroller's office](#). The impact of this increased exposure, combined with other factors, is taking its toll. **Latinx residents make up 34% of coronavirus deaths.**

**Immigrant workers also predominate in jobs decimated by the crisis.**

According to [James Parrott of the New School Center for NYC Affairs](#), while foreign-born workers held 49 percent of all private jobs before the pandemic crisis, they account for 54 percent of the lost jobs - twice that of the 27 percent overall private

sector displacement rate. Many worked in industries hard hit by mandated closings, including restaurants, personal services, and construction. **Nearly one in six New York City jobs lost due to the pandemic was held by an undocumented worker.**

But no matter how many hours they have clocked doing essential work so that others can stay home, nor how hard hit by job displacement now, **undocumented workers cannot get a single penny from the Unemployment Insurance System** or the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Many are not even eligible for Food Stamps.

**When our undocumented brothers and sisters lose their jobs or their lives, how exactly do we expect them and their families to stay home and maintain social distance?** While their families run out of food, while their landlords bang on the door demanding the rent that was due April 1. What will happen May 1st?

No \$1200 check is coming. No matter how long they stay on hold with the Department of Labor, no Unemployment check is coming.

**Today we call for a \$3.5 Billion New York State fund to reach excluded workers and families.** Monthly checks in a flat amount pegged to what other low wage workers get from Unemployment. To help families survive. To help all of us recover.

### **The SOLUTION:**

#### **Create a \$3.5 billion Excluded Workers Disaster Income Replacement Fund:**

- For **immigrant workers excluded** from Unemployment and Federal Tax Rebates
- For **immigrant families who have lost their breadwinner** and have no access to replacement income.
- For very **small businesses** or the self-employed who lack documentation to apply for small business relief and are barred from Unemployment and PUA.

#### **Key Basics:**

- **Flat rate monthly cash payments** direct to families - based on **\$750 per week** to each worker - what a typical low wage worker receiving Unemployment Insurance receives at this moment.

- **Monthly payments retroactive to the start of the COVID-impacted unemployment crisis, and continuing at least through the end of 2020,** like Unemployment Insurance, with triggers to continue the program thereafter.
  - **Flexible application and proof requirements given the urgent crisis situation.** Include self-attestation and information that even off the books workers are able to provide - documents for proving identity can be the same as those for getting drivers licenses under Green Light.
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LIST OF CAMPAIGN ENDORSERS (in formation):

1. 32BJ SEIU
2. ALIGN
3. Adhikaar
4. African Communities Together
5. Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development
6. A Better Balance
7. Brandworkers
8. Carroll Gardens Association
9. Center for Popular Democracy
10. Chhaya CDC
11. Communications Workers of America District 1
12. Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)
13. Domestic Workers United
14. Empire State Indivisible
15. Families for Freedom
16. Fiscal Policy Institute
17. Hudson Valley Justice Center
18. Indivisible Activate NYC
19. Indivisible Harlem

20. Indivisible Nassau County
21. Indivisible Nation BK
22. Indivisible Upper East Side
23. Inwood Indivisible
24. Jews for Racial and Economic Justice
25. Laundry Distribution & Food Service Joint Board, Workers United/SEIU
26. Laundry Workers Center
27. The Legal Aid Society
28. Long Island Activists
29. Make the Road New York
30. Mayday Space
31. MinKwon Center for Community Action
32. Morningside Heights Resistance
33. National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON)
34. National Employment Law Project
35. NYC-DSA Debt & Finance Working Group
36. NYC-DSA Immigrant Justice Working Group
37. New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE)
38. New York Caring Majority
39. New York Communities for Change
40. New York Immigration Coalition
41. New York Nail Salon Workers Association
42. New York New Jersey Regional Joint Board, Workers United/SEIU
43. New York State Council of Churches
44. New York Taxi Worker Alliance, AFL-CIO
45. Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson
46. NYCOSH
47. One Queens Indivisible

48. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union
49. SEIU Local 1199
50. Street Vendor Project, Urban Justice Center
51. Strong Economy for All Coalition
52. Teamsters Joint Council 16
53. UAW Region 9A
54. UndocuBlack Network
55. United We Dream
56. United for Small Business NYC (USBnyc)
57. VOCAL-NY
58. Worker's Justice Project (WJP)
59. Worker Justice Center of New York