



HEALTH BRIEFS

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FEAR OF LOSING HEALTHCARE OUTWEIGHS PANDEMIC CONCERNS AMONG NEW YORK CITY RESIDENTS

New Public Health Solutions Survey Reveals Public Opposition to Medicaid and SNAP cuts

BACKGROUND

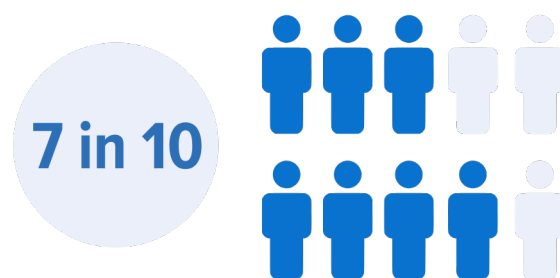
In May 2025, as Congress considered significant federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP, Public Health Solutions (PHS) surveyed New York City residents to understand their reliance on federal health insurance and food assistance programs. This comprehensive health survey included a cross-section of 1,001 New York City residents across the city and examined residents' use of federal assistance programs, their healthcare access concerns, and potential impacts of proposed federal budget cuts.

WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE, NYC'S MOST VULNERABLE CAN'T AFFORD HEALTHCARE

- 71% of New Yorkers earning under \$60K say they wouldn't be able to afford healthcare without insurance. (57% report they are certain they couldn't afford it, 14% say they are unsure)
- 64% of lower-income New Yorkers don't think they could maintain regular doctor visits without insurance (48% report they are certain they couldn't, 16% say they are unsure)

LOWER-INCOME NEW YORKERS RELY ON FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO STAY HEALTHY

- Nearly 4 million NYC residents rely on Medicaid for their healthcare—any cuts will leave hundreds of thousands without coverage. 67% of lower-income New Yorkers receive insurance through Medicaid (45%) or Medicare (22%)



New Yorkers won't be able to afford healthcare without insurance

LOSS OF FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WILL IMPACT FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

- 62% of lower-income New Yorkers are concerned about cuts to SNAP and WIC programs (42% extremely concerned, 20% somewhat concerned)
- 73% of lower-income residents express at least some level of concern about food assistance cuts

- Overall, 57% of all NYC respondents are concerned about SNAP and WIC cuts.
- One in five New Yorkers rely on SNAP to help meet their food needs—the majority are children and the elderly

CONCLUSION

The survey reveals widespread anxiety among New Yorkers about potential cuts to programs that millions depend on. With nearly 4 million residents relying on Medicaid and one in five depending on SNAP, proposed federal cuts would create a public health crisis in New York City. Experts warn that over 10% of Medicaid users could lose coverage, straining emergency rooms and driving up healthcare costs for all. Meanwhile, funding formula changes would force states like New York to cover more Medicaid costs—despite lacking the necessary resources.

The impact extends to food security, where SNAP cuts would shift 25% of costs to states while undermining local economies—every dollar cut from SNAP eliminates \$1.54 in economic activity. Reduced enrollment would overwhelm food banks, which are already facing funding shortages. Additionally, Medicaid covers over half of all births in NYC, meaning cuts could leave countless expectant and new mothers without vital care.

States cannot compensate for these federal losses, and with three-quarters of lower-income residents fearing cuts, such policies would be both deeply unpopular and economically devastating. The findings underscore a clear mandate: safety net programs must be protected and strengthened, not dismantled.

Among lower-income households, significant participation in federal programs:

42%



receive Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance
Program (SNAP) benefits

36%



receive
Medicare

30%



receive
Medicaid

22%



receive Social
Security
payments



Every dollar invested in
SNAP generates **\$1.54** in
economic activity