



Robin Hood Foundation Invests in Technology-Driven Program to Boost Thousands of Low-Income Workers' Access to SNAP Benefits in NYC Pilot to generate \$25M in poverty alleviation while saving 85% on cost of similar programs

The Robin Hood Foundation is funding an innovative pilot to use technology to radically reduce program costs for assisting low-income families to access food stamps. This one-year pilot program has the potential to:

- Generate \$25 million in poverty alleviation for the city;
- Assist 15,000 New York families in enrolling in benefits;
- Save 85% on the cost of similar programs.

The pilot pairs BeneStream, a mission-driven benefits enrollment business, with Met Council, one of New York's largest human services agencies, combining BeneStream's software and pioneering strategy to batch-process applications in high-volume with Met Council's intensive one-on-one application assistance for those who need it. This hybrid model will radically reduce the cost of enrollment assistance without diminishing the rate at which applicant families are approved for benefits.

How This Free Program Works:

BeneStream provides free services to businesses, nonprofits, and unions with significant low-income workforces and uses the verified data these organizations already have in payroll systems and internal databases. After obtaining authorization and a short questionnaire from individuals requesting assistance in applying for food stamps, BeneStream batch-processes their data through its software to determine eligibility, calculate an estimated food stamp dollar benefit, and print the collected data directly into applications. BeneStream then delivers to eligible workers application packets ready for easy completion and submission to the government. These packets help families overcome significant barriers to access including having to compile all required verified documentation, such as consecutive pay stubs and rent receipts, by, for example, including a signed Employer Letter verifying wage data and a form Landlord Letter to certify rent costs and residency. BeneStream then encourages and supports applicants to complete the process via a targeted call program. At no cost and with very little administrative investment, employers and unions are able to facilitate a \$2,000 - \$6,000 increase in annual income for their workers, stabilizing families and reducing absenteeism and turnover.

Met Council case workers provide additional assistance to those who need or want it at any step of this process – at the job site, Met Council's office, or via their helpline. The case workers have wireless access to BeneStream's secure servers, and can use laptops to add new data to applications, scanners to upload required documents, and portable printers to deliver updated packets to participating families in real time.



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Robin Hood funding enabled Met Council to contract for BeneStream’s technology and strategic services. The resulting hybrid approach reduces program costs by serving some applicants solely with low-cost technology and those who need more assistance with Met Council’s more intensive assistance. The model also produces savings by reducing the cost of outreach to eligible workers and increasing the efficiency of Met Council case workers who work with applicant families whose applications are already significantly complete.

For information about participating in the New York City pilot or funding a pilot program in your area, please contact: Info@benestream.com or 212-231-9732.