



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 13, 2018  
**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

## **MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES DROP IN NYC POVERTY RATE**

*141,000 fewer New Yorkers in poverty or near poverty in 2016 compared with 2013*

**NEW YORK**—The Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity today released its annual New York City Government Poverty Measure report, which shows that both the poverty rate and the near-poverty rate (the percentage living below 150% of New York City’s poverty threshold) have decreased since last year’s report. Today’s report shows a drop in the near-poverty rate to 43.5% in 2016, which is a 1.6 percentage point decline from 2014’s rate of 45.1 percent. The report also demonstrated that New Yorkers in actual poverty has declined since 2014, from 20.6% to 19.5%. Poverty is at its lowest level since the Great Recession. In 2016, there were 141,000 fewer New Yorkers in poverty or near poverty than there were in 2013, surpassing prior projections and indicating that the City is on pace to reach its goal of moving 800,000 people out of poverty or near poverty by 2025.

“We’re always working to make this city fairer for everyone, and it’s promising to see there are fewer New Yorkers living in or near poverty,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “From Pre-K for All to paid family and sick leave to the most ambitious affordable housing plan in the city’s history, we are working to provide opportunities that will make a lasting difference in the lives of New Yorkers. Today’s report shows real progress toward our goal of lifting 800,000 New Yorkers out of poverty or near poverty by 2025.”

Both the poverty rate and the near poverty rate have fallen significantly since Mayor de Blasio took office in 2014. The drop in poverty was broadly felt across many groups of New Yorkers, and included decreases in the poverty rate for black New Yorkers, adults working part time, and families with children under 18, among others.

The City’s NYCgov poverty measure is updated annually. This year’s report uses the most recently available information from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and is augmented by the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity. It offers a more precise measure for policy makers than the official U.S. poverty measure.

Highlights from this year’s Poverty Report include:

- The NYCgov Poverty Rate for 2016 was 19.5%, down from 19.9 % in 2015.
- The NYCgov At or Near Poverty Rate for 2016 was 43.5%, down from 44.2% in 2015.
- From 2014 to 2016, the following groups experienced significant declines in their poverty rates:
  - Working Age Adults (19.7 percent in 2014 to 18.3 percent in 2016)
  - Blacks (21.3 percent in 2014 to 19.2 percent in 2016)
  - Asians (26.6 percent in 2014 to 24.1 percent in 2016)
  - Families with one full time and one part time worker (14.8 percent in 2014 to 12.8 percent in 2016)
  - Unmarried childless adults (20.8 percent in 2014 to 17.1 percent in 2016)

“At Operations, we track progress on the Administration’s public commitments, including its ambitious goal of moving 800,000 New Yorkers out of poverty or near poverty by 2025. As we continue to increase equity across our city, the 1.2 percentage point reduction in the New York City poverty rate shows we’re making progress,” said **Emily W. Newman, Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Operations**.

“Poverty and near poverty are down, and that is good news for New York City,” said **Matthew Klein, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity**. “Reducing poverty is a critical part of the City’s goal to be the fairest big city in America. We have much more progress to make, but the findings in this report show that we are headed in the right direction.”

“The NYCgov poverty measure continues to be a unique tool in New York City’s efforts to lower the poverty rate,” said **Christine D’Onofrio, Director of Poverty Research for the Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity**. “Mayor de Blasio’s commitments to affordable housing, better wages, good jobs and fair access to public benefits address the main sources of poverty identified in this data.”

The decrease in the poverty rate has been accompanied by other positive trends. The economy grew steadily in 2016, with more New Yorkers holding jobs. Median household income in New York City has increased 7.8% since 2014. Income in the bottom 20<sup>th</sup> percentile has increased 4.0% from 2014, adjusted for inflation. A significant factor in the decline in poverty has been increases in the minimum wage, which the City lobbied for at the state level.

In addition, the City has many initiatives aimed at increasing equity and fairness. These programs include Pre-K for All, which gives every 4-year-old in the city access to early education and saves families money; paid family leave and paid sick leave; ACCESS NYC, a portal designed to help New Yorkers apply for benefits; and Housing New York, the largest and most ambitious plan to build and preserve affordable housing in the nation.

The NYCgov poverty measure was developed to provide a more precise portrait of poverty in New York City than official U.S. poverty measure. It takes into account the cost of living in New York City, including the higher cost of housing, and counts as income those programs that supplement New Yorkers’ income, such as tax credits and SNAP benefits—elements that are not taken into account in the federal measure. Additionally, the U.S. Official poverty measure has

remained largely unchanged for 50 years. New York City is the only U.S. city that calculates its own poverty rate using this more precise measure.

“Our city must always be a place where people can find economic security for themselves and their families,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the General Welfare Committee**. “I am heartened to see progress for our most vulnerable residents despite economic challenges in the wake of a recession. The City's continued investment in innovative and critical initiatives has been key, and I hope we will see continued reductions in poverty in the years to come.”

### **Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity**

The Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity (NYC Opportunity) uses evidence and innovation to reduce poverty and increase equity. It advances research, data and design in the City’s program and policy development, service delivery, and budget decisions. NYC Opportunity’s work includes analyzing existing anti-poverty approaches, developing new interventions, facilitating the sharing of data across City agencies, and rigorously assessing the impact of key initiatives. NYC Opportunity manages a discrete fund and works collaboratively with City agencies to design, test and oversee new programs and digital products. It also produces research and analysis of poverty and social conditions, including its influential annual Poverty Measure report, which provides a more accurate and comprehensive picture of poverty in New York City than the federal rate.

###