



August 25, 2025

Human Resources Administration (HRA) Rules
c/o Office of Legal Affairs
150 Greenwich Street, 38th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Fair Fares amendment doesn't make fares fair for enough New Yorkers

To whom it may concern:

Reinvent Albany writes to express our support for a much greater increase in the eligibility threshold of the Fair Fares Program. The proposed increase from 145% of the Federal Poverty Level to 150% will not meaningfully improve the program or ensure that transit is affordable to those who most need discounted transit fares.

As [we wrote in a letter](#) to Mayor Adams with our colleagues and a number of elected officials, we support expanding eligibility for Fair Fares to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), granting many more New Yorkers 50% reduced transit fares. New York City is the least generous of the major U.S. cities that offer a public transit discount for low-income residents, despite having one of the highest costs of living and the highest poverty rates, according to research from the [Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA](#). Nearly all other cities use 200% FPL as their income eligibility limit, and most also offer discounts on their commuter rail systems, which New York City currently does not do. Below is the [current chart of income eligibility](#), which reflects income levels at 145% of the FPL.

Persons in Household	Maximum Annual Income
1	\$22,692.50
2	\$30,667.50
3	\$38,642.50
4	\$46,617.50
5	\$54,592.50
6	\$62,567.50
7	\$70,542.50
8	\$78,517.50
More than 8	Add \$7,975 for each additional person

Raising the Fair Fares level to 200% of the FPL – \$30,120 for an individual or \$62,400 for a family of four, as the City Council suggested in its [Preliminary Budget Response](#) – would expand [eligibility to over 415,000 residents](#), including 160,000 regular commuters and minimum wage New Yorkers who are incredibly likely to be transit dependent.

We urge the Human Resources Administration to increase the income eligibility threshold for Fair Fares to 200% of the federal poverty level, aligning New York with best practices in other cities, and ensuring the program truly lives up to its promise of delivering affordable transit fares to New Yorkers in need.

Sincerely,

Rachael Fauss
Senior Policy Advisor
Reinvent Albany