



FUND EXCLUDED WORKERS

2021

YEAR IN REVIEW



TIMELINE



JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2021

The New York State Legislature returned to Albany in January 2021 to initiate a new legislative session.

For the Fund Excluded Workers (FEW) Coalition, this was the opportunity to pass a relief fund for excluded workers.

- On January 28th, FEW partners join Rep. AOC and Jamaal Bowman to call on Albany to end tax breaks for the rich and **#InvestInOurNY!**
- In February, the North Brooklyn community rallied outside of Assemblymember Erik Dilan's office for his absence, inaction, and refusal to support the most vulnerable workers in his district.



TIMELINE



MARCH 2021

- On March 5th, simultaneously shutting down the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges, [hundreds march to #FundExcludedWorkers](#) and bring awareness to the exclusion of pandemic relief felt by hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.
- On March 16th, undocumented Excluded Workers and allies launch a hunger strike that will continue until the state legislature passes a relief fund in its state budget.
- A [video series](#) documents the daily actions, mobilizations, press conferences led by the workers on hunger strike.
- The NYS state budget, due on April 1st, will not be completed on time. Excluded Workers on hunger strike commit to continuing their strike until relief is secured in budget negotiations.



TIMELINE



APRIL 2021

- More than two weeks into their hunger strike and counting, Excluded Workers and allies blast the late budget, hold Passover demonstrations, and raise pressure on the legislature that led to heated tensions in budget negotiations.
- After 23 days, Excluded Workers break their hunger strike after the state legislature secures \$2.1 billion for the Excluded Workers Fund!
- The first-in-the-nation program, and largest of its kind, will deliver \$15,600 direct cash payments to eligible excluded workers – most of whom are undocumented.
- The NYT describes the victory as a signal of NY's progressive shift.



TIMELINE



MAY - AUGUST 2021

- Statewide FEW partners work directly with the New York State Department of Labor to implement the newly created Excluded Workers Fund. Advocates fight for accessibility in eligibility.
- The Excluded Workers Fund opens in August 2021. Community organizations across NYS launch an extensive outreach campaign to complete tens of thousands of EWF applications.
- \$15,000 payments begin to go out to approved applicants. For many Excluded Workers, it's the first time they've received benefits from the state.



TIMELINE



SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2021

- Within nine weeks after the EWF opens, the \$2 billion Fund is exhausted. Just over 130,000 applicants are approved, but 75,000 applicants are denied after funding runs out. Geographical barriers and bureaucratic delays resulted in thousands of denied applications.
- The FEW Coalition mobilizes and launches a new campaign to demand additional funds for the tens of thousands who were denied.
- A new demand is introduced: [#ExcludedNoMore legislation](#), which would create an unemployment program for Excluded Workers – those denied traditional UI because of their immigration status or the type of work they do.
- With dual demands, the Coalition fights to finish the job of the EWF and moves to close the gaps in our social safety net.

