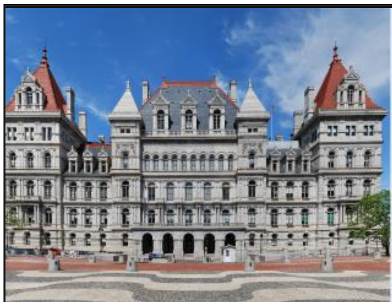

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THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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"No Man can be a good citizen unless he has a wage more than sufficient to cover the bare cost of living, and hour of labor short enough so that after his day's work is done he will have time and energy to bear his share in the management of the community, to help in carrying the general load" Governor Theodore Roosevelt.

In The News-New York State

Governor Hochul Touts $4 Billion in Public Safety Investments Since Taking Office That Has Paid Off with Significant Crime Reductions

This week, Governor Kathy Hochul highlighted nearly $4 billion in public safety investments made since she took office, pointing to significant reductions in crime and gun violence across New York State. The investments include more than $1 billion for gun violence prevention, more than $680 million for prosecutors, more than $667 million for defense and alternatives to incarceration, more than $300 million for subway safety, $165 million to protect communities against hate crimes, and $120 million to combat retail theft. The state has also invested $202 million in law enforcement technology and equipment upgrades and $12 million in border security and safety.

Governor Hochul took office as New York was still emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, a period that saw crime increase in cities across the country amid broader national debates over policing and public safety. According to the Governor's office, total index crime statewide fell 10 percent during the first quarter of 2026 compared with the same period in 2022, Hochul's first full year in office, with declines across all seven major crime categories. Violent crime fell 15 percent overall, while property crime declined 9 percent. Murders dropped 57 percent, burglaries fell 28 percent, and motor vehicle thefts decreased 19 percent.

Gun violence has declined even more sharply. From January through July 2026, compared with the same period in 2022, shooting incidents involving injury fell 57 percent, the number of people shot declined 57 percent, and shooting deaths dropped 62 percent statewide.

"Keeping New Yorkers safe has been my top priority since taking office," Governor Hochul said. She added that the State has "invested nearly $4 billion in statewide public safety programs and driven crime rates to record lows," pledging to continue efforts to protect communities across New York.

The State's announcement comes as New York City is also reporting historically low levels of violent crime. Mayor Zohran Kwami Mamdani has recently touted the City's public safety record during the first seven months of 2026, noting that New York recorded its fewest murders, shooting incidents and shooting victims for the first seven months of a year in recorded history. "I am proud of our police department for their work in delivering the lowest levels of murders and shootings and even the number of shooting victims in recorded history over seven months," Mamdani said earlier this month.

The improving numbers at both the State and City levels come as Albany and City Hall continue to invest in law enforcement, gun violence prevention and other public safety initiatives. Hochul's FY 2027 investments include $352 million for gun violence prevention grants, $122 million for increased police presence on subway platforms and trains, and $35 million for grants protecting organizations vulnerable to hate crimes, among other initiatives.

On Senior Citizens Day Governor Signs Legislation to Expand Alzheimer's and Dementia Resources for New Yorkers

Governor Kathy Hochul marked Senior Citizens Day this week by signing legislation to help New Yorkers with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, along with their families and caregivers, more easily find available programs and services.

The legislation, A.4195-A/S.118-A, sponsored by Assemblyman Alicia Hyndman and Senator Cordell Cleare's amends New York's Elder Law to require the NY Connects: Choices for Long Term Care program to provide information about programs and services available to individuals with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Governor Hochul signed the measure in Harlem during Senator Cleare's fifth annual Senior Citizens Day celebration.

Under the new law, NY Connects will serve as a more centralized source of information for individuals and families seeking dementia-related assistance. The measure is intended to make existing resources easier to locate, help families identify home-, community- and institution-based services, and require ongoing education and outreach so that New Yorkers know where to turn when they need assistance.

For many families, navigating a diagnosis of Alzheimer's or dementia can mean simultaneously confronting medical, financial and long-term care decisions. The legislation seeks to address one piece of that challenge by ensuring that families do not have to independently navigate multiple agencies and programs simply to determine what assistance may be available. According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are approximately 426,500 to 427,000 New York State residents aged 65 and older living with Alzheimer's disease. This represents about 12.7% of the state's older adult population, making New York second among all U.S. states for Alzheimer's prevalence. When including all forms of dementia, the total number of affected New Yorkers approaches half a million people.

"Older New Yorkers have no greater friend and advocate than Governor Kathy Hochul," said Senator Cleare. "Time and again, she has listened and prioritized the needs of the Aging Community. From expanding the Medicare Savings Program to supporting individuals, families and caregivers dealing with dementia, I have been proud to partner with her each step of the way."

Assemblywoman Hyndman said the legislation addresses a longstanding problem in which valuable state programs existed, but families often did not know how to find them.

"I am proud to be the prime sponsor behind A4195A, an elder bill being signed into law that will make resources for people suffering from Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia more accessible to New Yorkers," Hyndman said. She noted that while New York has offered programs and services for individuals with dementia and their families for years, too few people knew where to look for assistance.

Hyndman said that making NY Connects a "one-stop shop for dementia information" will allow the state to reach and assist more people affected by the disease.

Governor Hochul also highlighted the personal significance of the legislation, recalling her own family's experience caring for her grandfather and later her father as they dealt with Alzheimer's. She said the new law is about making sure seniors, and their families have better access to information about the services available to them.

The bill signing was also part of the Governor's broader focus on affordability and health care for older New Yorkers. The administration highlighted the expansion of the Medicare Savings Program, which now serves more than one million New Yorkers and can save eligible beneficiaries approximately $203 per month by covering Medicare Part B premiums. The Governor also pointed to New York's elimination of insulin co-pays and its cap on out-of-pocket costs for EpiPens as additional measures aimed at reducing health care expenses.

In The News-New York City

NYC Office of the Mayor

New DOB Rules: Fewer Sheds and Faster Takedown

On August 20, 2026, the Mamdani administration announced that New York City now has more than 1,000 fewer permitted sidewalk sheds on city streets compared with this time last year — a nearly 10 percent drop since he took office.

For years, sidewalk shed permits seemed to be renewed on autopilot and often remained in place for years without any work actually being performed, causing quality-of-life problems, including blocking sunlight and attracting litter and vermin. According to the Mamdani administration, that changes now. Under new rules now in effect, permits must be renewed every 90 days, and property owners must provide detailed information about what repairs require the shed and what progress has been made — very different from the rubber-stamp approval process of the past.

After 180 days, the Department of Buildings (DOB) will issue graduated monthly penalties based on the size of the shed and how long it has been in place. The city expects to start imposing penalties in early 2027.

The Mamdani administration is also looking to address the quality-of-life issues caused by sheds by proposing six new sidewalk shed designs developed by architecture firms Arup and PAU. The designs would improve the pedestrian experience by providing more light, visibility, and space than the current standard design. The public comment period runs through September 24.

The new rules also address large "campus" scaffolding at NYCHA complexes, hospitals, and universities, where sidewalk sheds can seem to go on forever regardless of whether actual work is happening. New DOB guidance limits required sidewalk shed coverage to a maximum of forty feet from a building, cutting down on coverage that provides no real safety benefit.

Fewer sidewalk sheds have been a campaign promise for ages — and a bipartisan issue. Assemblymember Keith Powers has advocated on this issue since his days in the City Council. He said, "if there's one thing that unites New Yorkers, it's our universal hatred of sidewalk sheds. I was proud to lead legislation at the City Council last year to dramatically transform the city's sidewalk sheds to get them down quicker and improve the designs of those still up. I'm glad to see progress on this important issue so that fewer sidewalks become safe havens for illegal activity and more small businesses, and New Yorkers can enjoy the benefits of open sidewalks."

The new proposed DOB sidewalk shed design rules are available here.

New York City Council Gets an Early Start on the 2030 Census as Redistricting Battles Raises the Stakes Nationally

It may seem early to begin preparing for the 2030 Census, but recent history demonstrates that when it comes to counting New Yorkers, there is no such thing as starting too soon. This week, City Council Speaker Julie Menin announced the launch of a new Council-led Census Taskforce that will begin laying the groundwork nearly four years before the next decennial count. The Taskforce brings together census experts, community organizations, labor, faith leaders, researchers and other civic institutions to develop recommendations for the City's newly established Office of the Census. The Taskforce will be co-chaired by Speaker Julie Menin; Jeffrey M. Wice, Director of New York Law School's New York Elections, Census, and Redistricting Institute; L. Joy Williams, President of the NAACP New York State Conference; and Emely Paez, Associate Vice President of Policy and Advocacy at United Way of New York City, bringing together extensive experience in census administration, redistricting, civil rights and community engagement.

The early start is particularly important for New York. Following the 2020 Census, New York State lost one congressional seat, reducing its delegation from 27 to 26 members. What made the loss remarkable was just how close the State came to keeping the seat: according to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 89 additional people in New York's apportionment population would have been enough for the State to retain its 27th seat. While population shifts also played a role in New York's loss, the razor-thin margin underscored the potentially enormous consequences of even a small undercount or missed population.

The stakes surrounding the 2030 Census may be even higher because the national environment surrounding congressional redistricting has changed dramatically. Redistricting traditionally occur once every decade following the Census, when states receive new population data and redraw congressional and legislative districts. Over the past year, however, the country has experienced an extraordinary wave of mid-decade redistricting.

The current battle was accelerated after President Donald Trump encouraged Republican leaders in Texas to redraw the state's congressional map between censuses to strengthen Republican representation in the House. That effort helped trigger a broader national response, with Democratic-led California pursuing its own congressional map changes and other states becoming involved in what has effectively become a national redistricting competition. Recent reporting has described states controlled by both parties looking for opportunities to maximize their congressional representation rather than waiting for the traditional post-Census redistricting cycle.

The battle intensified further following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2026 decision involving Louisiana's congressional districts. The ruling significantly limited the role that race and the Voting Rights Act can play in drawing congressional districts and provided states with new grounds to revisit maps containing majority-minority districts. Republican-led states across the South subsequently moved to redraw districts, while Democrats have responded where they possess the political and legal ability to do so.

The result is that the 2030 Census and the redistricting cycle that follows are likely to take place in a considerably more politically charged environment than previous cycles. Census numbers do more than determine federal funding formulas and government planning: they determine how the 435 seats in the House of Representatives are divided among the states and provide the population data that will form the foundation for the next generation of congressional, state legislative and local political maps.

For New York, that makes an accurate count consequential. The State has experienced a long-term decline in its share of congressional representation as population growth has shifted toward other regions of the country. After the 2010 Census, New York lost two congressional seats; after 2020, it lost another, although the margin for retaining that seat was just 89 people. With congressional control increasingly determined by narrow margins, a single seat can have national implications.

The Council's new Taskforce will spend the next year conducting research, engaging communities and developing recommendations intended to help New York City achieve what it hopes will be its most complete and inclusive Census count. Participants include the NAACP New York State Conference, United Way of New York City, Hispanic Federation, Asian American Federation, New York Immigration Coalition, Dominicanos USA, the New York City Central Labor Council, 32BJ SEIU, the United Federation of Teachers, libraries, universities, faith organizations and numerous other civic and community institutions.

The lessons from 2020 are clear: just 89 people separated New York from another seat in Congress. With heightened ICE enforcement in immigrant communities, including Elmhurst and Jackson Heights, potentially chilling participation, early outreach and trust-building will be critical. With billions in federal funding, congressional representation and the next decade of political maps tied to Census data, New York City cannot afford to wait until 2030 to begin preparing.

With the country's redistricting battles demonstrating how aggressively both parties are prepared to fight over congressional maps, the population numbers produced by the 2030 Census may carry even greater political significance. Starting the work four years early may therefore prove less a case of getting ahead of schedule than a recognition of how much will be at stake when America conducts its next census.

Briefs

New York State Looks to Expand Access to EVs to Meet Demand with $35 Million in Grants

Governor Kathy Hochul announced that $35 million is now available to help public entities install and operate electric vehicle charging stations across New York State, as the State continues to expand its charging network and further encourage the transition to cleaner transportation.

The funding will be distributed through the new Charge Ready NY – Large Public Sector Project program administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). State agencies and authorities, local governments and public university systems will be eligible to compete for funding to install Level 2 charging stations on publicly owned property. Individual projects can receive between $1 million and $15 million, with the State covering up to 80 percent of eligible equipment and installation costs. Applications are due October 20.

The investment comes during a year of elevated gasoline prices, driven in significant part by the military conflict in Iran and disruptions and uncertainty surrounding global oil supplies. At the same time, the number of electric vehicles on New York's roads continues to grow, increasing the need for a reliable and accessible statewide charging network.

According to the Governor's office, as of July, more than 331,000 electric vehicles were on New York roads, supported by more than 21,000 Level 2 and direct-current fast chargers statewide. The Hochul Administration says New York is investing nearly $3 billion overall in zero-emission vehicles and clean transportation initiatives.

New York League of Conservation Voters President Julie Tighe praised the investment, saying: "Expanding access to EV charging is critical to building a cleaner transportation future for New York." The new program is part of Governor Hochul's $2 billion Sustainable Future Program and builds upon existing State efforts to expand charging infrastructure at workplaces, multifamily housing, hotels and other locations.

New York City Remains Open for Small Businesses While Mayor Vacations Upstate

While Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani is away from City Hall on a week-long vacation in Upstate New York, the administration continues to move forward with its economic development agenda. First Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan is overseeing the day-to-day operations of City government during the Mayor's absence.

On August 17, the administration announced more than $8.4 million in grants to nearly 90 community-based organizations across all five boroughs to support small businesses and strengthen neighborhood commercial corridors. One of the largest single releases of small-business grants in the history of the Department of Small Business Services (SBS), the funding will support organizations serving more than 20,000 small businesses.

The grants will fund public art, street cleaning, improved lighting and wayfinding, commercial district marketing, neighborhood improvements, and efforts to strengthen relationships among local businesses and expand Business Improvement Districts. The funding includes approximately $2.77 million for Brooklyn, $1.55 million for the Bronx, $1.53 million for Manhattan, $1.51 million for Queens, $550,000 for Staten Island, and another $500,000 for citywide initiatives.

Deputy Mayor for Economic Justice Julie Su emphasized that the grants are intended to strengthen both individual businesses and the neighborhoods in which they operate. "Small businesses are the heartbeat of New York City's economy," Su said, adding that the investments are designed to "strengthen local economies and help small businesses create good-paying jobs."

This new investment builds on the Mamdani administration's "OPEN for Small Business" initiative, a package of more than 50 reforms aimed at reducing red tape, paperwork, fines and other costs associated with operating a small business. Taken together, the initiatives demonstrate that while Mayor Mamdani is temporarily away from City Hall on vacation, his administration continues to advance its small business and economic development priorities and direct resources toward businesses and commercial corridors across the five boroughs.

Staten Island's Banner Year Continues as City Opens $230 Million Fresh Kills Sanitation Complex

Staten Island's rapid transformation continued this week as Mayor Zohran Kwami Mamdani joined Department of Sanitation Commissioner Gregory Anderson and Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Paul Ochoa to open a new $230 million Sanitation complex at Fresh Kills, providing a modern home for sanitation operations serving two districts.

The investment carries particular significance given the history of Fresh Kills. What began as a landfill in 1948 was originally envisioned by Robert Moses as a temporary operation lasting only a few years. Instead, it remained open for more than half a century, eventually becoming the largest landfill in the world. At its peak, Fresh Kills received as much as 29,000 tons of garbage per day. After years of advocacy by Staten Island residents and elected officials, state legislation was enacted requiring its closure, and the final barge of regular household waste arrived on March 22, 2001.

Fresh Kills would take on another solemn role later that year following the September 11 attacks, when a portion of the site was temporarily reopened as part of the World Trade Center recovery and investigation efforts. Over approximately ten months, investigators and recovery workers carefully screened roughly 1.2 million tons of material from Ground Zero.

Twenty-five years after the landfill's closure, however, Fresh Kills increasingly represents Staten Island's future rather than its past. The surrounding 2,200-acre landscape is being transformed into Freshkills Park, nearly three times the size of Central Park. Portions of the park are already open, with the larger project continuing to take shape in phases.

The new Sanitation complex is another piece of that transformation. Located on a 13.55-acre site, the project includes a 140,000-square-foot maintenance and operations garage, a fueling station, a salt shed capable of storing four million pounds of road salt, upgraded recycling and household special-waste facilities, expanded vehicle parking, modern employee facilities and rooftop solar systems. The complex will support garbage collection, street cleaning, snow removal and other essential Sanitation services across Staten Island.

Importantly, the investment will also create a development opportunity on the North Shore. Moving Sanitation District 1 operations out of the former garage at 539 Jersey Street in New Brighton will allow that property to be redeveloped with 232 affordable homes, public open space and a grocery store. The relocation is also expected to reduce heavy Sanitation truck traffic in the surrounding neighborhood and improve its quality of life.

The opening comes at an interesting moment for a borough that for generations has carried the nickname of New York City's "forgotten borough." Staten Island today appears to be amid an upswing, with major public investments, new housing and economic development opportunities, expanded recreational space and the continuing transformation of Fresh Kills all helping reshape perceptions of the borough.

Even Staten Island's identity is receiving renewed attention. Just last week, the City Council approved legislation to formally recognize Staten Island's borough flag. The current design dates to the administration of former Borough President James Oddo and replaced an earlier flag that Oddo famously criticized for appearing to depict the Fresh Kills landfill. The newer design incorporates Staten Island's history and waterfront and has served as the borough's unofficial flag since 2019.

NY AG Secures $6 Million from Buffalo Nursing Homes in Medicaid Fraud Settlement

New York State Attorney General Letitia James announced a settlement with three Buffalo-area nursing homes that have been accused of submitting tens of thousands of fraudulent Medicaid claims. Safire Rehabilitation of Northtowns, Safire Rehabilitation of Southtowns, and Williamsville Suburban Nursing Home will pay $6 million to Medicaid, including $3.6 million to the State, following a joint investigation by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of New York. The facilities will pay an additional $3 million to the federal government for Medicare fraud, bringing the total settlement to $9 million.

According to the Attorney General's Office, between July 2016 and December 2020 the nursing homes submitted false information regarding residents' rehabilitation needs during periods used to determine Medicaid reimbursement rates, resulting in artificially high payments. Investigators also found that during periods that did not affect reimbursement rates, the facilities reduced rehabilitation services for certain residents regardless of their needs. As part of the settlement with the Attorney General, the nursing homes have admitted wrongdoing and must implement new policies to ensure residents receive appropriate services and that the services are accurately documented.

The Attorney General said, "nursing homes that commit financial fraud are stealing funds meant to provide care for our most vulnerable," adding that her office would continue investigating Medicaid fraud and nursing home neglect throughout the state. The investigation originated with a whistleblower complaint filed in December 2020 under the New York and federal False Claims Acts.

Coming Up

New York State

There are currently no meetings at the State Level at the time of this Publication*

New York City

There are currently no meetings at the City Level at the time of this Publication*

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