

THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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"Obstacles don't define us. Rather, it is the unparalleled courage and character of us that defines us as a people. So my confidence in the future is steeped in our glorious past - in the face of adversity, we always persist. We persevere, we prevail." Governor Kathy Hochul



In The News-New York State



Governor Hochul Announces Record Setting Tourism Milestones for New York State

New York welcomed a record-setting 306.3 million visitors in 2023, while also setting new highs for direct visitor spending and total economic impact associated with the state's tourism industry. Visitors to New York State contributed to a record-high \$88 billion in direct spending, and supported \$137 billion in total economic impact across the state.

"New York State is synonymous with tourism; it's part of the fabric, history and economy of our incredibly diverse state," Governor Kathy Hochul said. "As we approach the fall foliage and travel season, we are welcoming more visitors than ever, and their presence is supporting businesses and communities in every corner of the state."

Each of the state's 11 vacation regions experienced sustained growth, with the Finger Lakes, Greater Niagara region, Long Island and New York City all recording visitor spending increases of over 10 percent. While domestic visitor spending dominates New York's travel economy, spending growth from Canadian and overseas visitors outpaced that of domestic travelers.



The Concerning Growth of Hate Crime in NYS

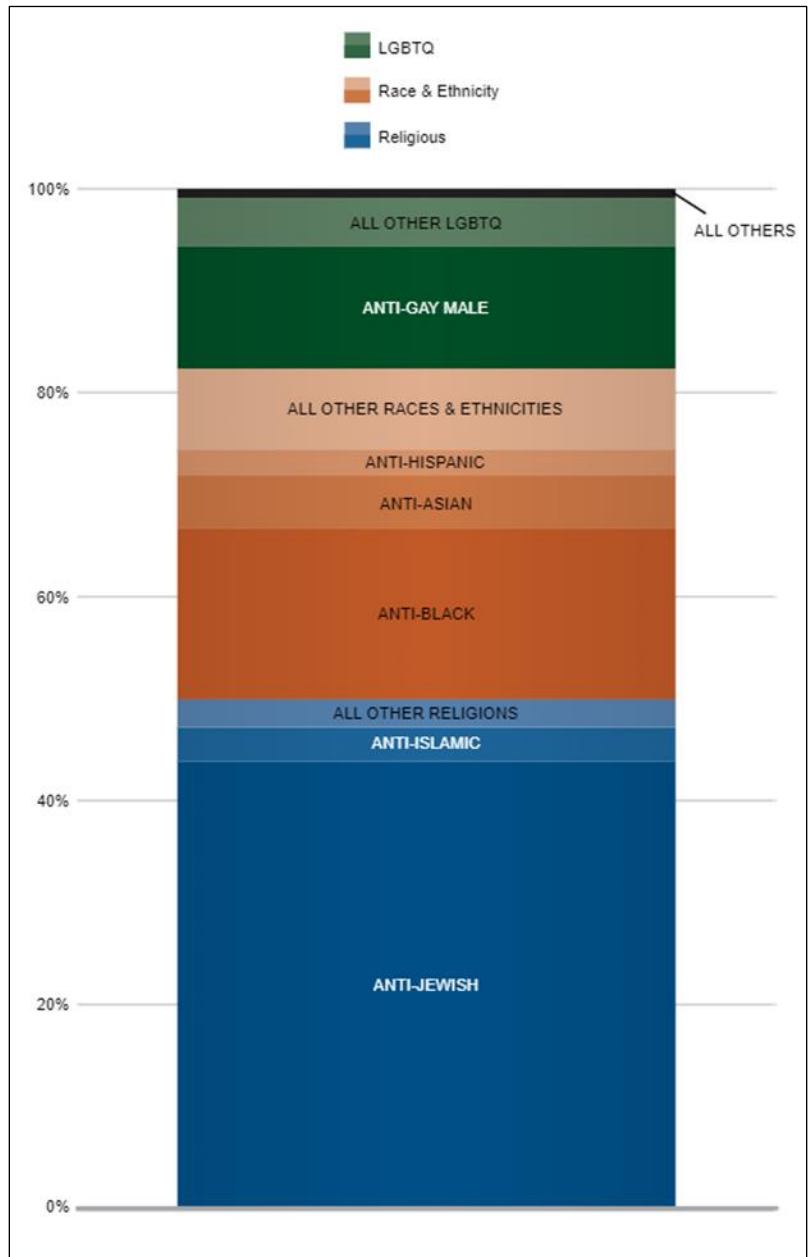
New York state has seen a surge in hate crimes over the last five years with 1,089 reported instances in 2023, marking the highest number since data collection and annual reporting were mandated by New York’s Hates Crimes Act of 2000, according to a report by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

In 2023, New York City Police Department reported 669 hate crimes in New York City, an increase of 12.6 percent from 2022. In the rest of the State, Department of Criminal Justice Services reported 420 incidents in 2023, a 12.9 percent increase from the year before. According to the Comptroller, the 2023 figure topped 2019 by 69%

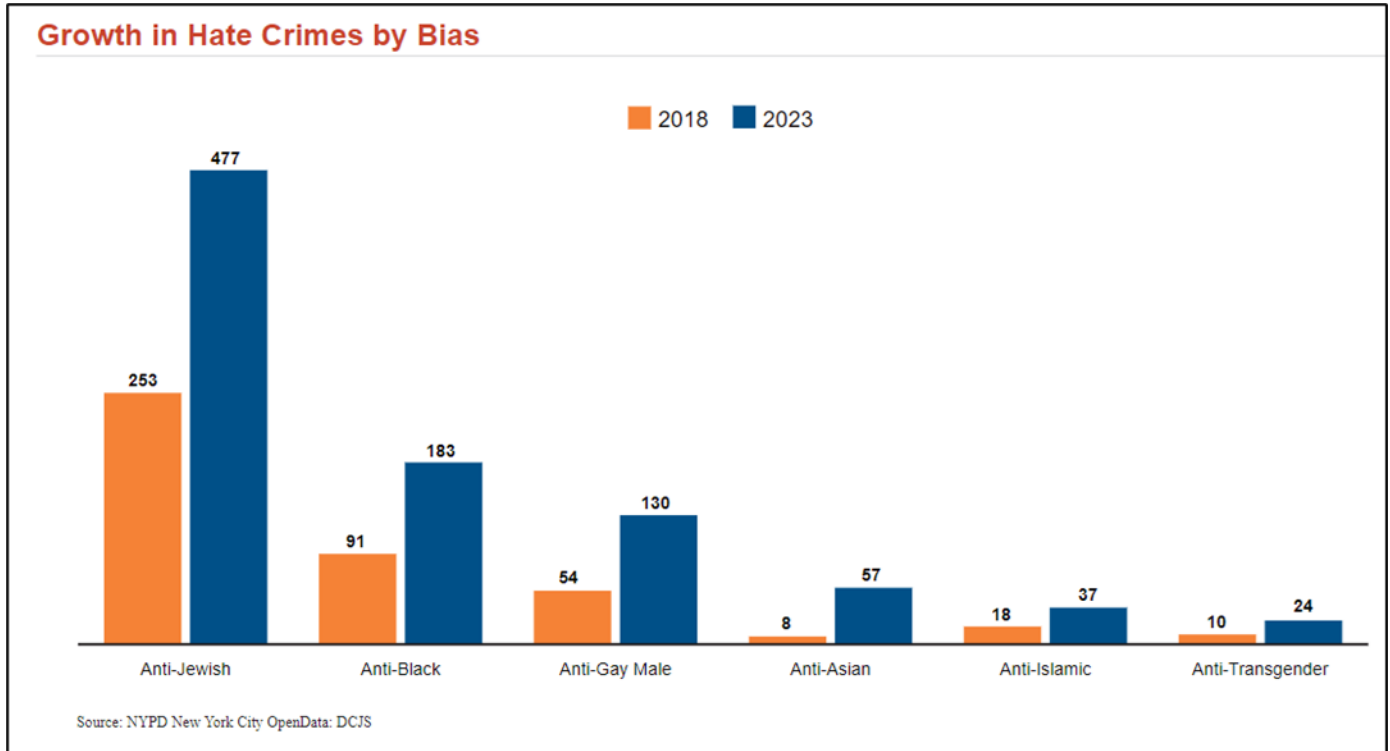
The Comptroller’s report looked at the share of hate crimes by bias motivation. The most common bias motivation reported in New York State in 2023 is for religion, with 543 incidents or about half. Race, ethnicity and national origin constitutes approximately one-third, and sexual orientation (LGBTQ) almost 17 percent. In 2023, there were fewer than 10 incidents involving other motivations, including gender, age and disability.

In 2023, nearly 44 percent of all recorded hate crime incidents and 88 percent of religious-based hate crimes targeted Jewish victims, the largest share of all such crimes. Nearly 17 percent of all recorded hate crime incidents and 52 percent of incidents motivated by race, ethnicity or national origin were anti-Black. And the vast majority, 71 percent, of hate crimes based on an anti-LGBTQ bias targeted Gay Male victims, almost 12 percent of all incidents. Although anti-Jewish hate crimes consistently remain the most frequently reported bias, the share of racially motivated incidents in the State is now greater than five years ago.

Share of Hate Crimes by Bias Motivation, 2023



During the pandemic, the Comptroller explained, anti-Asian hate crimes spiked from 5 incidents in 2019 to 140 in 2021. In the last two years, the number of anti-Asian incidents has dropped by half but remains 11 times the number of incidents reported in 2019. Between 2018 and 2023, anti-Gay Male incidents rose by 141 percent (54 to 130) and hate crimes against Transgender New Yorkers have risen by 140 percent (10 to 24). Hate crimes against Jewish and Muslim New Yorkers rose by 89 and 106 percent, respectively. There were 121 more incidents against Jewish New Yorkers in 2023 compared to 2022 and 11 more incidents against Muslim New Yorkers.



“New York is a diverse hub of cultures, beliefs and identities, whose strength has always been in the creation of community bonds that unite us,” Comptroller DiNapoli said. “Fighting hatred and bigotry demands that we communicate with, respect and accept our neighbors. It requires our spiritual, political, community and business leaders to take active roles in denouncing hate, investing in prevention and protection efforts, and increasing education that celebrates the value of New York’s diversity.”

Legislation in the Enacted Fiscal Year 2025 State Budget aims to improve reporting mechanisms for hate crimes by the court system and expanded the list of criminal acts eligible to be prosecuted as a hate crime, allowing these charges to carry stiffer penalties. The State Budget also increased State-supported grant funding to nonprofit organizations to improve security and support services for communities at risk of hate crimes. Federal grant funding provided through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was also substantially increased this year for enhancing security at vulnerable organizations.

"When reported hate crimes increase, we at the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) know that there are even more incidents that are not being reported to law enforcement," said Audacia Ray, Interim Co-Deputy Executive Director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project.

Laws of the State of New York

Chapter 228 -- Sponsored by AM Paulin/Senator Cleare -- Requires certain insurers to provide coverage for tattooing performed by a physician as part of breast reconstruction surgery.

Chapter 250 -- Sponsored by AM Taylor/Senator Ramos -- Relates to fees and expenses in unemployment insurance proceedings; extending effectiveness

Chapter 252 -- Sponsored by AM McDonald/Senator Ryan -- Extends the State's provision allowing small businesses the opportunity to cure certain de minimus violations as opposed to an immediate fine.

Chapter 255 -- Sponsored by AM Burgos/Senator Sepulveda -- Authorizes the City of New York to alienate certain parcels of land to enable the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to make critical improvements related to the Penn Station Access Project

Chapter 256 -- Sponsored by AM Lupardo/Senator Hinchey -- Clarifies the requirement for each livestock and equine rescue facility to hold a Domestic Animal Health Permit.

Chapter 264 -- Sponsored by AM Simone/Senator Kreuger -- Extends, for five years, until January 1,2030, the ability for counties to retain any fines collected by a proceeding to enforce the polystyrene packaging foam container and loose fill ban which was initiated by the county.

Chapter 284 -- Sponsored by AM Sillitti/Senator Harckham -- Extends the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, established to provide financial assistance to recipients, generally municipalities, to construct and upgrade eligible water pollution control projects, to 2027.

Chapter 291 -- Sponsored by AM Hevesi/Senator Persaud -- Extends, for an additional three years, reporting requirements of the Office of Children and Family Services regarding child welfare preventive services.

Chapter 292 -- Sponsored by AM McDonald/ Senator Gallivan -- Requires that release mechanism standards for swimming pool enclosures be developed by the state fire prevention and building code council based on internationally recognized standards.

Chapter 293 -- Sponsored by AM Pheffer Amato/Senator Mannion -- Extends the temporary "commission to prevent childhood drowning" to improve water safety in New York state another year.

Chapter 294 -- Sponsored by Senator Mannion/AM Reyes -- Provides that the department of health may conduct education and outreach programs promoting public awareness of the dangers of fatal and non-fatal drowning.

Chapter 297 -- Sponsored by Senator Palumbo/AM Giglio -- Designates a portion of the state highway system as the "NYPD Detective Brian P. Simonsen Memorial Bridge"

In the News-New York City



Mayor Adams, City Council Announce 10-Point Plan to Make Child Care More Affordable & Accessible For All New Yorkers



Plan Would Reimagine City's Early Childhood Education System With More Than \$3 Billion Invested, Joint Adams Administration-Council Effort

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and leadership of the New York City Council this week announced a joint effort to strengthen early childhood education across the five boroughs and address longstanding systemic issues, while boosting enrollment and connecting families with more Pre-K and 3- K seats.

The 10-point plan – developed by an unprecedented joint Adams administration-Council working group will be anchored by \$100 million in new city investment allocated in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Adopted Budget to implement an action-oriented roadmap for outreach and seat allocation across the city. With the new \$100 million investment, the total investment in the FY25 city budget for early childhood education is \$3 billion, comprised of \$2 billion for early childhood education programming for children aged zero to five and approximately \$1 billion for preschool special education.

The plan includes increasing 3-K Access for families this school year, increasing preschool special education classrooms, expanding support for undocumented children, bolstering support for child care and early childhood education providers and programs, Establishing the "Child Care Advisory Group" and Convening Bi-Weekly Meetings Between the Adams Administration and the City Council.

Under the plan, New York City Public Schools added more than 1,500 additional 3-K seats in high-demand areas of the city to support families for the 2024-2025 school year. Since May 2024, New York City Public Schools has continued to drive down waitlists – reaching 100 percent of families who applied before the application deadline with first-round offers by mid-August. The city's 3-K capacity is now over 53,000, according to the Mayor.

Briefs

New York Kicks Off State Energy Plan Process

Governor Kathy Hochul this week announced the kickoff of the State Energy Plan process convening the State Energy Planning Board to update New York's comprehensive roadmap to build a "clean, resilient, and affordable" energy system for all New Yorkers.

The Plan provides program and policy development direction to guide energy-related decision-making in the public and private sectors within New York State.

Governor Hochul also announced the appointment of Dr. John B. King Jr., Chancellor of the State University of New York, to the Board chaired by the President and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and comprised of the heads of State agencies and authorities, appointees from the Governor, Senate, and Assembly, and the president of the New York Independent System Operator.

The Plan was last updated in 2020, when it was amended to incorporate the objectives of the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act). Since the 2020 update, the Climate Action Council produced its Scoping Plan, examining many of the energy issues that contribute to climate change and offering a number of recommendations that are currently being implemented by the State. The State Energy Planning Board will now convene to begin the process of producing a draft, then a final plan, for this planning cycle. Currently planned to be considered by the Board in December 2025, the final plan will provide a 15-year outlook and focus on strategies to meet future energy needs.

Governor Hochul Directs College Campuses to Prepare for Fall Semester, Develop Emergency Safety Plans

Governor Kathy Hochul met with leaders from over 200 college and university campuses in New York State as well as public safety experts to reinforce the importance of emergency plans ahead of students returning to campus for the fall semester. With increased need to monitor and respond to campus protests and potential threats to student safety, Governor Hochul, State Police and the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services met to reinforce expectations and connect campus leaders with necessary resources.

“Public safety is my top priority, and as classes resume, it is essential that all students feel safe and are free from harm,” Governor Hochul said. “Last spring, I directed college campuses to review and update their emergency response plans, and as tensions may be high as we start the academic year, I will continue to ensure all campus leaders and public safety officials have the resources they need to keep students safe.”

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHS) is advising campuses to utilize the updated Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) along with their Emergency Action Plans (EAPs), and have a good understanding of their protocols prior to the Fall 2024 semester. DHSES Domestic Terrorism Prevention Unit (DTPU) has also partnered with CICU to survey the private colleges and universities to assess whether they have Threat Assessment and Management teams or equivalent multidisciplinary teams that conduct risk, threat and behavioral assessments, and work together to create a management plan for the campus. The unit has also partnered with the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities to identify and collaborate with schools that would like assistance developing or improving their teams.

Comptroller DiNapoli: State Pension Fund Valued at \$267.7 Billion at End of First Quarter

New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli announced that the estimated value of the New York State Common Retirement Fund (Fund) was \$267.7 billion at the end of the first quarter of state fiscal year 2024-25. For the three-month period ending June 30, 2024, Fund investments returned an estimated 1.38%.

“Stock market volatility underlines the continued economic uncertainties faced by investors,” DiNapoli said. “Fortunately, our diverse portfolio is built on long-term sustainable investments that can weather such ups and downs and is one of the reasons we are one of the nation’s strongest public pension funds.”

The Fund's value reflects retirement and death benefits of \$4.2 billion paid out during the quarter. Its estimated value was \$267.7 billion [as of March 31, 2024](#), the end of the state’s fiscal year.

As of June 30, the Fund had 42.32% of its assets invested in publicly traded equities. The remaining Fund assets by allocation are invested in cash, bonds, and mortgages (22.07%), private equity (14.71%), real estate and real assets (13.14%) and credit, absolute return strategies, and opportunistic alternatives (7.76%).

The Fund’s long-term expected rate of return is 5.9%.

Adams Administration Wins \$15 Million Federal Grant to Build Nation's Largest Municipal Curbside EV Charging Program

New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced that New York City has won a \$15 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Program to build the nation’s largest curbside electric vehicle (EV) charging program.

The funding will allow for an additional 600 Level 2 chargers to be installed along streets across the five boroughs, with more than half of those chargers designated for disadvantaged and low-income neighborhoods. Additionally, the funding will allow the city to build 32 solar-powered charging ports at eight different New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) locations throughout the city.

The City is currently participating in a 100-charger pilot program, launched in conjunction with Con Edison.

City Releases RFP to Redesign Park Avenue Between East 46th Street and East 57th Street

The City Department of Transportation has released an RFP to help develop a “cohesive” design vision for that portion of Park Avenue, which sits atop the Grand Central Terminal Train Shed — currently undergoing a major capital rehabilitation by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)’s Metro-North Railroad.

Through the RFP process, DOT is seeking design services from a contractor with a background in landscape architecture or urban design to help fill in that wider median, encompassing pedestrian enhancements, cycling infrastructure, landscaping, and innovative streetscape amenities. The selected design team will work with relevant agencies and engage with local stakeholders to produce design concepts that are infrastructurally sound and meet community needs

As the MTA completes its train shed work, Park Avenue will be restored with an expanded median for pedestrians featuring landscaping and seating. This effort comes as the city continues to advance its vision to permanently reimagine Fifth Avenue as a safer, less congested, pedestrian-centered boulevard, as well as other public realm projects in commercial corridors across the city.

Last year, the total statewide economic impact of tourism reached a record-high \$137 billion, representing an 11 percent jump over 2022. Direct visitor spending was also up nearly 12 percent from \$78.6 billion in 2022 to \$88 billion in 2023 – the third straight year of double-digit growth. New York State also saw a five percent increase in visitation to 306.3 million travelers, up from 291.5 million in 2022. Additionally, state and local tax revenues generated by tourism saved the average New York State household \$1,420 in taxes.

Uber and Lyft Drivers Threaten Strike

New York City Uber and Lyft drivers are threatening a strike over continued “lockouts” from the rideshare apps despite a City-brokered agreement to reduce access limitations.

According to a report in *amNew York Metro*, the New York Taxi Workers Alliance (NYTWA), which represents over 20,000 yellow cab and rideshare drivers, is planning a march on City Hall next week to “give notice” that drivers will go on strike unless a new agreement is reached with the rideshare companies.

Representatives of the union indicate that the potential strike would be at least 24 hours long across the five boroughs.

Coming Up

New York State

No scheduled legislative meetings for the week of September 2nd through the 8th at time of publication.

New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government Lobbyist Bimonthly Lobbying Reports are due on Monday, September 16th.

New York City

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New York City Clerk Lobbyist Bimonthly Lobbying Reports are due on Monday, September 16th.

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