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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



Department of Financial Services Superintendent Adrienne A. Harris to Step Down

Governor Hochul Appoints Kaitlin Asrow as Acting Superintendent

Governor Kathy Hochul this week announced that, after four years of service, Superintendent Adrienne Harris will be leaving the Department of Financial Services (DFS). The Governor is appointing Kaitlin Asrow as Acting Superintendent of the Department of Financial Services effective October 18, 2025.

Superintendent Harris was nominated by Governor Hochul to lead DFS in August 2021. Since then, DFS has, among other steps, issued guardrails around the use of artificial intelligence in insurance underwriting and pricing; required insurers to cover insulin without cost sharing; adopted market conduct rules to govern pharmacy benefit managers and began examining these entities; expanded banking development districts; and built the first virtual currency unit for the regulation and supervision of digital assets.

In addition, DFS reports it has recovered more than \$725 million in restitution for New Yorkers since 2021. Nationally, Superintendent Harris became the state's representative on the U.S. Financial Stability Oversight Council.

Superintendent Harris began her career as an attorney with Sullivan & Cromwell LLP in New York representing corporations in various forms of litigation and regulatory matters, before accepting a position at the U.S. Department of the Treasury under President Barack Obama. She later joined the White House, as part of the National Economic Council. In this role, she managed the financial services portfolio, which included developing strategies for financial reform and the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, as well as consumer protections, cybersecurity, and housing finance reform priorities.

In an [interview](#) this week with *Politico*, Harris said that she plans to take time off when she leaves DFS. "My checking account will tell me how much time I get," she joked.

Kaitlin Asrow has worked at DFS for the past four years as Executive Deputy Superintendent of the Research & Innovation division. Ms. Asrow came to the Department from the Federal Reserve System, where she served as a Senior Policy Advisor for both the Bank of San Francisco and the Board of Governors. Prior to the Federal Reserve, Ms. Asrow worked for the Center for Financial Services Innovation, now the Financial Health Network.

She graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Arts degree and subsequently earned her Master of Public Policy degree from the University Chicago.



Chapters of the Laws of 2025

Chapter 420 – Senator Serrano/AM Sione – Creates an option on dog registration applications for a dog owner to donate to a local animal pound or shelter.

Chapter 422 – Sponsored by Senator Mayer/AM Otis – Requires nonpublic schools provide and maintain on-site automatic external defibrillators on school grounds.

Chapter 423 – Sponsored by Senator Bailey/AM Jackson – Expressly mandates that any police training for handling and responding to matters involving those with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities be accompanied by meaningful training in the appropriate use of force and de-escalation techniques when interacting with such individuals.

Chapter 425 – Sponsored by Senator Fernandez/AM Solages – Clarifies that all funds received from settlements from opioid manufacturers and distributors is to go towards efforts to combat the overdose epidemic and aid those who have been impacted by substance use disorders.

Chapter 428 – Sponsored by Senator Kavanagh/AM Rosenthal – Extends certain provisions relating to the COVID-19 emergency rental assistance program (ERAP) which prohibits landlords from initiating a monetary action or proceeding for the collection of rent covered by an ERAP payment that a landlord refused to accept.

In The News-New York City



MTA Board Adopts Fare and Toll Increases to Take Effect January 2026

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Board this week approved toll and fare increases, along with a series of fare and ticket policy changes on New York City Transit's subways and buses, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and the Metro-North Railroad. The vote was 11-0, with two abstentions.

According to the MTA, most of the changes will take effect in January 2026 to align with the full systemwide rollout of the tap-and-ride technology.

New York City Transit

The base fare for subways, local buses, and Access-A-Ride is increasing 10 cents, from \$2.90 to \$3. The reduced fare is increasing from \$1.45 to \$1.50, and the express bus base fare is increasing from \$7 to \$7.25.

Below are the fare policy updates that will take effect next year:

- **OMNY seven-day fare-capping becomes permanent.** The 7-day rolling fare cap, which allows customers to pay for 12 rides in a 7-day period and automatically ride free for the rest of the week with no pre-payment required, is becoming permanent. At the adjusted and approved base fare, no customer will pay more than \$35 for subway and local bus rides in a week; reduced-fare customers will pay no more than \$17.50 in a week. The prepaid MetroCard 7-Day, 30-Day, and Express Bus Plus unlimited passes will retire and be replaced with the automatic fare cap for all riders.
- **Fare-capping extended to express bus network.** Express bus customers will pay no more than \$67 a week for unlimited express bus, local bus, and subway rides in any 7-day period.
- **Tap-and-ride will be required for fare payment on subway, local and express bus.** Beginning later in 2026, coins will no longer be accepted on buses but will continue to be accepted at card vending machines in subway stations and at one of the 2,700 local businesses that sell OMNY cards.
- **Promotional \$1 OMNY card fee ends by mid-2026.** The fee for a new OMNY card will be \$2 when the MTA no longer accepts MetroCard for fare payments.

Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad

For the commuter railroads, an average increase of up to 4.5% will apply to monthlies, weeklies, and one-way peak tickets (excluding City Tickets). There will be no increase to Metro-North's Port Jervis and Pascack Valley lines. To view the full Metro-North fare table, see [here](#). To view the full LIRR fare table approved today, see [here](#). Monthly ticket fares will not exceed \$500.

Below are the upcoming ticketing policy changes for the commuter railroads:

- **Universal reduced-fare ticket valid** for travel at all times. There will be a universal reduced-fare ticket for seniors, people with disabilities, and people on Medicare that will be valid 24/7, including on morning peak trips.
- **One-way tickets** will be valid until 4:00 a.m. the next day. All one-way tickets, both paper and mobile, will expire at 4:00 a.m. the day after purchase. Current one-way tickets are valid for 60 days.
- **New unlimited Day Pass.** A Day Pass will be available to purchase for unlimited daily travel, replacing the round-trip ticket, and will be valid until 4:00 a.m. the next day. On weekdays, the Day Pass would cost 10% less than two one-way peak tickets; on weekends, it would cost the same as two one-way off-peak tickets.
- **"Pay-as-you-go" mobile** discount replaces 10-trip ticket. A new "pay-as-you-go" discount will be available for mobile customers. After 10 peak or off-peak trips in 14 days, mobile customers would get an 11th peak or off-peak one-way trip for free in the same 14-day period. Unlike today's 10-Trip, which will be discontinued, this new fare product does not require customers to pre-pay upfront to receive a discount.

- **Onboard surcharges** for late mobile ticket purchases and activations. Customers who repeatedly purchase or activate mobile tickets on board would be subject to an onboard surcharge after “an escalating” series of warnings. This change is aimed at speeding up fare collection by encouraging customers to have their tickets activated and ready for inspection.

Bridges and Tunnels

One-way passenger-vehicle toll rates will increase between 20 cents to 60 cents at all bridge and tunnel facilities. This includes E-ZPass and Tolls by Mail. The existing toll discount programs for Queens, Bronx, and Staten Island drivers will remain in effect.

According to the MTA, these changes are pursuant to the 2025 Budget approved by the MTA Board in December 2024.



Adams Administration Opens Application Portal for Homeowners to Build Ancillary Dwelling Units

Delivering on the Promise of “City of Yes”, Administration Publishes Finalized ADU Rules and Establishes Pre-Approved Plan Library

The City Department of Buildings (DOB) has officially begun accepting applications for the construction of code-compliant Ancillary Dwelling Units (ADU) in the five boroughs of New York City.

Applications for the construction of ADUs are available through the [**DOB NOW: Build filing portal**](#). Each ADU must comply with requirements for zoning, construction, fire safety and occupancy.

Acceptable types of ADUs under new city rules include basement apartments, attic apartments in one-family homes, and backyard cottages on the same lot as one- and two-family residential homes, that can be used by household family members or rented out long-term to other New Yorkers.

DOB agency rules include specific technical requirements for ADUs including occupant safety, flood mitigation, water sensors, entrance identification, and exits and fire protection requirements. In addition, the rules for cellar apartments would have additional egress, window and sprinkler requirements.

Department of Environmental Preservation agency rules included the creation of an updated interim flood risk area map, showing the 10-year rainfall flood risk area and the coastal flood risk area, to delineate specific flood hazard areas where subgrade ADUs would be prohibited due to the increased flood risk. Department of Health and Mental Hygiene agency rules included a certification process regarding the maximum allowable levels of radon and certain organic chemical vapors found in a basement or cellar areas for the safety of occupants in proposed ADUs.

The Adams Administration also launched *ADU For You*, a new homeowner assistance program which will serve as an online resource for homeowners, providing guidance on how to navigate the process of adding an ADU to their existing property. The program will also allow homeowners the option to pick a pre-approved ADU design from a new Pre-Approved Plan Library (PAPL).

Licensed design professionals can help the city grow the PAPL by submitting their own plans for potential inclusion in the library. These plans will be reviewed by the DOB, and if approved they will be issued a Pre-Approved Plan Number and then added into the PAPL. Homeowners that select an ADU option from the PAPL will be able to contact the registered design professional (RDP) who created the design directly and hire that RDP to complete the project.

Briefs

Governor Hochul Appoints Kathy Moser to Serve As Acting State Parks Commissioner

Governor Kathy Hochul this week appointed Kathy Moser to serve as Acting Commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Moser will serve in an acting role as she awaits confirmation by the New York State Senate next year.

Acting Commissioner Moser most recently has been Chief Conservation and Policy Officer at the Open Space Institute (OSI), an East Coast land trust based in New York, where she directed OSI's Parks, Stewardship and Government Relations programs. Before taking on the role in June 2020, she served as OSI's Senior Vice President of Parks and Policy.

Prior to OSI, Acting Commission Moser was appointed Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in December 2011. She directed DEC's portfolio in Lands and Forests, Fish and Wildlife, and Marine Resources. Acting Commissioner Moser has also worked as Managing Director for Strategic Initiatives at World Wildlife Fund and held various senior positions at The Nature Conservancy in New York State (Acting State Director) and in their International Program (Regional Director for Central America) from 1992 to 2009.

She earned her undergraduate degree in botany and master's degree in forest productivity, both from Duke University.

New York State Gaming Commission Appoints New Gaming Facility Location Board Member

The New York State Gaming Commission (NYSGC) has named Cindy Rubi Estrada to the New York Gaming Facility Location Board, which is overseeing the commercial casino siting process.

Estrada currently serves as the executive director at the New York City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She joins Vicki Been, Terry Brown, Marion Phillips, III and Greg Reimers on the board.

The board is responsible for reviewing and evaluating casino applications and recommending up to three facilities for licensure. Community Advisory Committees (CAC) have advanced Bally's proposal in the Bronx, Empire City Casino's proposal in Yonkers, Hard Rock International's proposal in Queens, and Resorts World's proposal in Queens for consideration. The Board will award the three licenses by the end of 2025.

Labor Dispute at El San Juan Hotel Raises Concerns Ahead of SOMOS Puerto Rico Conference

The SOMOS Puerto Rico Conference is fast approaching, scheduled for November 5–9 in San Juan. The annual gathering serves as an important forum for leaders and advocates to celebrate and uplift Latino communities across New York and Puerto Rico.

This year’s conference, however, is unfolding against the backdrop of a labor dispute at the Fairmont El San Juan Hotel, where management has refused to respond to a contract proposal from Unite Here Local 610. Workers are seeking fair wage increases, affordable healthcare, safe working conditions, and pension contributions. According to the union, hotel management has instead tried to roll back long-standing workplace protections.

The Hotel & Gaming Trades Council (HGTC) has urged conference attendees not to stay at or attend events at the El San Juan until an agreement is reached. “SOMOS is meant to uplift Latino communities, not lend legitimacy to a hotel that undermines workers’ rights,” the union said in a statement. Union leaders stressed that the conduct of the Fairmont El San Juan’s management undermines the very purpose of the SOMOS conference by disregarding the rights and dignity of hardworking Puerto Ricans.

Port Authority Airports Have “Busiest Month Ever” for Travel in August

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey this week announced that August 2025 was its airports’ “busiest month ever” as the four commercial airports collectively welcomed 13.8 million passengers.

Bolstered by the airports’ busiest Labor Day holiday travel period, August’s total of 13.8 million passengers eclipsed the previous record high of 13.7 million passengers from July 2024. August 2025 also saw more international passengers at Port Authority airports than in any other month in agency history at 5.5 million. August 2025’s passenger total was a jump of 2.6 percent from August 2024.

August 2025 also was the busiest month ever at John F. Kennedy International Airport, welcoming 6.2 million passengers, while LaGuardia Airport recorded its busiest August ever with 3 million passengers. Newark Liberty International Airport, which faced Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air traffic control staffing and equipment issues for much of the year, marked its first month of year-over-year growth since January 2025. Its August 2025 total of 4.5 million passengers was 4 percent above August 2024.

Approximately 95.4 million passengers flew through Port Authority airports over the first eight months of the year. This was 2.2 percent below the total from the same period of 2024, largely driven by operational limits related to Newark Liberty’s FAA challenges, according to the Port Authority.

Mayor Adams Extends ‘Big Apple Connect’ Program at 220 NYCHA Sites

The Adams’ Administration announced the three-year extension of ‘Big Apple Connect,’ ensuring 330,000 residents across 220 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) sites continue to receive free high-speed internet and basic cable TV access through June 2028.

The extension also includes \$1.2 million in new funding from Optimum and Spectrum for digital literacy programming at libraries across the five boroughs and the creation of a new online hub that will provide virtual training sessions to NYCHA residents.

First launched in September 2022 by Mayor Adams, Big Apple Connect saves subscribed households an average of more than \$1,700 annually.

Due to Increased Fire Risk, Governor Hochul Implements Temporary Statewide Burn Ban

Governor Kathy Hochul, with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, yesterday announced a statewide burn ban in effect, October 2nd due to [increased fire risk](#) and continued dry conditions. The ban will be in effect for 14 days through October 15th and will be reviewed prior to expiration.

The statewide burn ban now in effect prohibits the starting of outdoor fires for purposes of brush and debris disposal, as well as all uncontained fires, including campfires, and open fires used for cooking. Backyard fire pits and contained campfires less than three feet in height and four feet in length, width or diameter are allowed, as are small, contained cooking fires.

MLC Approves NYC Employees PPO Plan

Office of Employee Relations Accepting Public Comment on the Contract Until October 8th

The Municipal Labor Committee (MLC), a coalition of unions representing 400,000 city workers, approved a proposed new health plan offered jointly by EmblemHealth and UnitedHealthcare, the NYC Employees PPO (NYCE PPO) Plan.

The plan, which required a two-thirds majority of the MLC membership to pass, received 88% of the weighted vote. The plan is the largest offered by the City of New York and covers 750,000 lives, including active workers, pre-Medicare retirees, and their dependents

“...approval of the proposed NYCE PPO Plan is the outcome of years of research, deliberation and negotiations to develop a health plan that addresses what matters most to our members: comprehensive medical coverage, accessible care, and zero premiums,” the joint statement MLC statement said. “We’ve been able to improve benefits, expand the network of providers while allowing our members to keep their existing doctors, and maintain premium-free health care without increasing out-of-pocket costs— especially important in an economic climate where every cent counts for our members’ bottom line.”

According to the MLC, the NYCE PPO Plan will take effect January 1, 2026. The open enrollment and transfer period will begin November 1, 2025.

Meanwhile, the Office of Labor Relations is seeking comments from the public on the NYCE PPO Plan. Comments can be submitted via email to OLRNotice@olr.nyc.gov and must include the E-PIN: 00223N0002KXL. Comments must be submitted before 5:00 P.M. on October 8, 2025. Final approval of the contract is pending review of the public comment.

Lawyers Invited to Join the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office

The Kings County District Attorney's Office is undertaking a major hiring initiative and actively recruiting both new and experienced attorneys. The Office is hiring at all levels of experience.

Entry-level Assistant District Attorneys receive comprehensive training and gain courtroom experience. The Office is also seeking lateral attorneys from across the legal profession with backgrounds in prosecution, defense, public interest, or private practice.

Interested candidates are invited to complete online applications at apply.brooklynnda.org

Coming Up

New York State

Monday, October 6th

Board of Regents Meeting, OCM BOCES – Large Group Instruction Room, Syracuse, 9:30 a.m.

Cannabis Control Board Meeting, Andrew Freedman Home – Princess Room, Bronx 11 a.m.

Tuesday, October 7th

Board of Regents Meeting, Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, 1:30 p.m.

Friday, October 10th

Public Hearing: The Treatment Court Expansion Act (S4547), 250 Broadway – Senate Hearing Room – 19th Floor, 10 a.m.

New York City

Wednesday, October 8th

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions,
250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10 a.m.

Thursday, October 9th

New York City Campaign Finance Board Meeting,
100 Church Street – 12th Floor, 10 a.m.

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises,
250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10:15 a.m.

Committee on Land Use, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10:30 a.m.

Committee on Finance, Committee Room – City Hall, 10:30 a.m.

City Council Stated Meeting, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1:30 p.m.

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