



VOTE 2024

YOUR VOTE ★ YOUR VOICE

NYS General Election – Tuesday, November 5th

Early Voting Ends Sunday, November 3rd

Early voting for the 2024 general election runs until Sunday, November 3rd and Election Day is Tuesday, November 5th. New Yorkers will vote for US President and Vice President, one of the state's U.S. Senate seats, the State's 26 Congressional seats, representatives in the state Assembly and the state Senate, as well local judges.

Voting Locations

Early voting polling places may differ from Election Day voting sites and times vary by county.

- ✓ [NYS Voters \(outside NYC\)](#)
- ✓ [NYC Voters](#)

Absentee ballot deadlines

- ✓ [Return ballot by mail \(postmarked by\)](#): November 5th
- ✓ [Return ballot in person](#): November 5th by 9:00 p.m. EST

Can I Take a Picture of My Ballot: Only if it is Blank

According to the New York State's Board of Elections, taking a picture of a blank ballot is allowed.

“Taking a photo at the polling place or with a blank ballot is permitted, however, voters should not be disruptive to poll workers or other voters,” according to a spokesperson with the New York State Board of Elections.

However, it is illegal to take a picture of a completed ballot. Specifically, New York State Election Law (17-130(10)) forbids a voter from showing a “ballot after it is prepared for voting, to any person so as to reveal the contents, or solicits a voter to show the same.”

"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



Hochul Administration Sees NY's Rosy Financial Picture As an Opportunity to Reduce Debt



Armed with an additional \$2.4 billion in tax revenue from Wall Street profits, Governor Kathy Hochul this week indicated that she would like to use the additional funding to reduce New York's existing debt.

"I'd like to continue driving down our debt in our out-year gaps," Governor Hochul said in published reports. "That's what you do when you're trying to plan for the long-term."

In October, State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli released his annual report on the State's securities industry which found that Wall Street profits increased more than 79 percent in the first half of the year compared with the same period last year — and annual profits are expected to finish the year much stronger than 2023's mark.

On Tuesday, the State Division of budget released its [Mid-Year Update on the FY2025 budget](#) determining, "In view of the improved economic outlook and operational results to date...DOB has revised receipts and spending estimates across several functional areas and financial plan categories in this Mid-Year Update. Receipts have been increased by more than \$2 billion annually across all years of the Financial Plan in recognition of continued positive variances in PIT withholding and estimated payments, as well as updated economic indicators."

According to DOB, the cumulative outyear budget gaps are marginally higher than previously estimated and are now projected to total \$1 billion in FY 2026, \$6.2 billion in FY 2027, and \$7.1 billion in FY 2028.

In October, State Budget Director Blake Washington directed State agency heads to keep spending flat in FY2026 in the annual budget call letter. Agency budgets were due to the Executive by October 17th.

In an interview prior to the Tuesday mid-year release, Washington previewed the Governor's conservative stance.

"Whatever the receipt revisions are, we are good stewards of that and we don't make choices that jeopardize our ability to thrive into the future," Washington said, according to published reports.

To craft the FY2026 State budget, the Governor and legislative leaders will be faced with addressing increases in the State's Medicaid spending, changes to the school aid formula and a \$15 billion shortfall in the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's capital plan due to the congestion pricing pause.

In the News-New York City



NYCHA Adopts Master Development Agreement for the Redevelopment of Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Board this week adopted a Master Development Agreement, signaling the next phase of work at Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses, NYCHA developments located in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan.

Following years of negotiations, Essence Development and Related Companies will be NYCHA's Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) partner and project co-developers. With the Master Development Agreement in place, a Bridge Plan will provide repairs, resources, and improvements to residents of Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea as they await the construction of new homes.

NYCHA approved a plan to replace 18 buildings between Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses with modern apartments, developed by Essence and Related. This redevelopment provides 4,500 residents with new units featuring updated amenities like air conditioning, heating controls and in-unit laundry.

The proposed project also aims to create over 3,500 new apartments, including 1,000 units designated as permanently affordable. Additional plans include building health clinics, community centers, and open green spaces.

Laying out the terms, conditions, and expectations for the project as a whole, the Master Development Agreement directs the redevelopment at Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea and memorializes protections for the residents as they prepare to move into new apartments:

1. **One-for-one replacement:** All existing NYCHA apartments will be replaced with new, "high-amenity" permanently affordable homes.
2. **Build first:** Ninety-four percent of households will remain in their existing apartments while NYCHA replacement buildings are constructed, thus avoiding the need for temporary relocation.
3. **A dignified transition:** The Bridge Plan will add capacity to NYCHA property management with additional security, pest control, building system repairs, and in-unit repairs while the replacement buildings are being constructed.
4. **Comprehensive, equitable planning:** The campuses will be reimagined as mixed-income, mixed-use communities that are better integrated into the surrounding neighborhood and provide new affordable housing and other amenities, including new community facilities and neighborhood retail.

5. **Resident-led community planning:** Resident input and expertise will be centered in the planning and design of each campus, culminating in the creation of a Master Plan to guide the overall redevelopment.
6. **Right to remain and right to return:** All resident rights will be preserved through **NYCHA's PACT program**. Federal rules mandate that residents have the right to a new apartment on their home campus or the right to return should temporary relocation be necessary.
7. **Collaborative process:** NYCHA and the PACT partners are committed to continuing existing and creating new partnerships with public and private stakeholders, businesses, non-profits and voluntary organizations for the benefit of NYCHA residents and project goals.

The Master Development Agreement ensures that all NYCHA replacement buildings are completed, and residents moved to their new homes before the completion of any mixed-use buildings on the campus. The first two NYCHA buildings can be constructed within current zoning regulations and are expected to begin construction shortly following the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's (HUD) approval of Environmental Review in 2025.

Briefs

NYS Workers' Compensation Rate Will Decrease by 22 Percent in 2025

The NYS Workers' Compensation Board approved reduced workers compensation assessment rates for 2025, saving the State's employers more than \$191 million dollars. The 2025 rate set this week goes into effect on January 1, 2025 and will be 7.1 percent of the standard premium or premium equivalent, a 22 percent decrease from 2024.

The employer assessment rates are determined by the Workers' Compensation Board's need and budgeted statewide premium. The rate is calculated by dividing the Board's total estimated annual expenses by a base of total estimated statewide premium. Insurers are required to apply the assessment rate to their premium or premium equivalent.

The assessment rate has been steadily declining in recent years, largely due to accelerating the "runoff" of special workers' compensation liabilities — known as special funds — which are funded by the assessments. The 2025 rate of 7.1 percent reflects an over 43 percent decrease since 2019, when the assessment rate was 12.6 percent.

Year	Rate
2019	12.6
2020	12.2
2021	11.2
2022	10.2
2023	9.8
2024	9.2
2025	7.1

NYS Court of Appeals Upholds 2021 State Law Allowing Immediate Absentee Ballot Counting

The New York State Court of Appeals on Thursday rejected a challenge to a 2021 state law that allows boards of election to count absentee ballots as soon as polls close on Election Day.

Plaintiffs asserted that the immediate counting of the absentee ballots impedes the ability of a judicial review of problematic ballots. State Election law requires boards of election to “compare the signature, if any, on each ballot envelope” with the signature on the applicable registration records.

The suit challenged the portion of the law that allows a commissioner from one party to decide to count a ballot, even when the other commissioner questions the ballot’s validity, specifically asserting that the provision violates the constitutional requirement that there be equal representation of both parties during the counting of ballots, and that equal representation requires bipartisan agreement.

“We disagree,” the Court of Appeals wrote, as the board of elections satisfies the equal representation requirement since it is equally divided with one Republican and one Democrat. Either board member can declare a ballot invalid or valid during both the initial and subsequent reviews. “Thus, no single Board member has any more authority than any other member over the canvassing process, and neither party carries more sway over the process than the other,” the court wrote.

Attorney General James Leads Coalition to Protect Undocumented Family Members of U.S. Citizens

New York Attorney General Letitia James this week led a coalition of 20 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief in *Texas v. DHS* in support of the federal program “Keeping Families Together.” The brief, filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, argues that the federal government has the authority to implement this program--which allows certain undocumented spouses and stepchildren of U.S. citizens to apply for permanent residence--to protect family unity.

In August 2024, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a process under which certain undocumented spouses and stepchildren of U.S. citizens living in the United States can apply for a discretionary grant of immigration parole. *Keeping Families Together* allows certain undocumented family members to apply for permanent residence without first needing to depart the United States.

Governor Hochul Announces New York Has Landed the First National Semiconductor Technology Center Facility

Governor Kathy Hochul this week celebrated the designation of NY CREATES’ Albany NanoTech Complex as the location of the CHIPS for America EUV Accelerator, a National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) facility. This designation unlocks \$825 million in federal funding and makes New York State the first state in the nation to land one of three NSTC facilities.

NY CREATES' Albany NanoTech Complex is the “most advanced, publicly-owned, accessible” 300mm semiconductor R&D center in North America and is uniquely positioned to host the CHIPS for America EUV Accelerator, an NSTC Facility, according to Governor Kathy Hochul.

New York City Will Continue to Shut Down Unlicensed Cannabis Shops Despite Court Ruling

The Adams Administration will continue its initiative to shut down unlicensed cannabis shops despite a Queens judge’s ruling that found the recent law authorizing *Operation Padlock to Protect* is unconstitutional, according to published reports.

On Tuesday New York Supreme Court Justice Kevin Kerrigan ruled that the law allowing New York City to shut down businesses accused of selling cannabis without licenses is unconstitutional because it denies shop owners their rights to due process.

State authority for the City’s *Operation Padlock to Protect* was included in the FY2025 State Budget. The law gave the city the power to padlock stores after one inspection. Since then, the initiative has closed over 1,200 shops and confiscated over \$82 million of illegal products, according to the Mayor’s office.

The city updated the administrative code earlier this year to facilitate *Operation Padlock to Protect*. However, Justice Kerrigan ruled that the portions of the city's law that allows the sheriff to unilaterally decide whether to keep a store closed for up to a year are unconstitutional.

“This decision should not be interpreted to condone such unlicensed activity,” Judge Kerrigan wrote in his decision. “However, summarily shuttering a business for one year, despite the fact that it was exonerated from allegations of illegal activity, stands against the cornerstone of American democracy and procedural due process.”

Judge Kerrigan’s decision was based upon a specific instance in which the City Sheriff opted to close a business, overruling the decision of the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). According to court papers, the OATH officer recommended that the sheriff reopen the store because cannabis products were not being sold or marketed at the time of the inspection.

“If the final arbiter has the authority to confer no weight to the hearing, there is no real meaningful opportunity to be heard, which ... raises a due process concern,” Judge Kerrigan wrote.

According to a spokesperson for the Mayor, the city’s Law Department has filed a notice of appeal on the case and will continue the operation.

“Illegal smoke shops and their dangerous products endanger young New Yorkers and our quality of life, and we continue to padlock illicit storefronts and protect communities from the health and safety dangers posed by illegal operators,” she said in published reports.

NYC Will Not Issue Permits for New Street Fairs In 2025 Under Proposed City Rule

New York City is planning to reject applications for new street festivals in 2025, according to a [public notice](#) published in the *City Record Online* this week.

The Mayor’s Office of Citywide Event Coordination and Management Notice of Public Hearing indicated, “To more effectively deploy police resources and control overtime costs, the NYPD has recommended that SAPO [The Street Activity Permit Office] exercise its discretion to deny permit applications for new events in calendar year 2025. The proposed rules will authorize SAPO to deny permit applications for street fairs if the street fair was not held in the calendar year 2024. Events that received permits in calendar year 2024 may be eligible to receive permits again in calendar year 2025.’

Each year the City’s street activity office issues “permits to over 200 street fairs and over 5,000 other events,” according to the public notice. A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for November 20th at 10 a.m.

NYC Comptroller Lander Launches Immigrant Workers Resource Guide

In celebration of National Immigrants Day, New York City Comptroller Brad Lander and the Office’s Bureau of Labor Law released the [Immigrant Workers Resource Guide](#), an informational tool designed to inform immigrant workers on the labor protections afforded to them by City, State, and Federal labor law.

The *Immigrant Workers Resource Guide* includes:

- **The Workers’ Bill of Rights**, an overview of labor laws and protections.
- **A directory of organizations that offer immigrant workers support** in areas such as workforce development, legal assistance, and education.
- **A section on Deferred Action for Labor Enforcement (DALE)**, a federal program that provides temporary immigration relief to non-citizen immigrant workers who experience or witness labor violations and support labor agencies’ investigations into such violations.
- **A sample timesheet** to help workers track their hours and document employer details.

The guide will be available in multiple languages online and distributed via community outreach programs, worksites, and partner organizations across the city.

Adams Administration Announces New Family-Based Benefits

New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom, New York City Office of Labor Relations (OLR) Commissioner Renee Campion, and New York City Councilmember Lynn Schulman this week announced a new suite of employee benefits to increase access and support for city workers in building a family.

Members of the “[Management Benefits Fund](#)” — which provides benefits to approximately 27,000 non-union employees and retirees — will be eligible for “Family Building Benefits” that provide up to \$10,000 in reimbursement for costs associated with adoption, surrogacy, and egg or sperm donation.

This benefit will provide up to \$10,000 in reimbursement for costs such as adoption agency fees, legal fees associated with adoption or surrogacy, fees to a surrogate, costs of transferring an embryo to a surrogate, costs an employee incurs for medical costs of the surrogacy, and costs of procuring donor sperm or eggs.

The New York City’s Health Benefits Program currently provides coverage for fertility treatments, including up to three cycles of in-vitro fertilization, for employees and their covered beneficiaries, services such as surrogacy and sperm/egg donation involving individuals not covered by an employee’s health insurance benefits are not included, and there is no benefit to defray the costs of adopting a child.

Pitta Bishop’s Tony Quesada Returns from Hurricane Response Effort

Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno is happy to report that our Senior Government Relations Specialist, J. Antonio (Tony) Quesada, has returned safely from Greenwood, South Carolina, where he assisted in the response efforts following the devastation of Hurricane Helene.

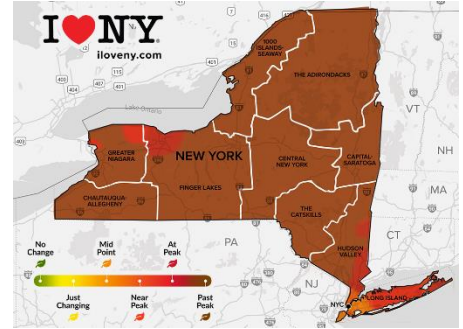
Tony is a volunteer with Team Rubicon, a veteran-led humanitarian organization that serves communities across the globe before, during and after disasters and crisis. While in Greenwood, Tony served as a Sawyer Team Strike Leader, leading a team responsible for clearing debris and providing vital assistance to those affected. Over the course of his deployment, Tony's team was responsible for the removal of approximately 20,000 cubic feet of debris and helped to restore 7 homes in the area.



Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno is immensely proud of Tony and his generosity and service to those directly affected by Hurricane Helene. Nice job Tony and it’s good to have you home!”

NYS Fall Foliage Report

Beautiful peak foliage will be arriving at its final destinations in Upstate New York this weekend, while peak conditions will be found throughout much of Long Island. Most parts of New York City should see leaves at midpoint of change to near-peak, with a few peak colors expected in the southern portion of Brooklyn. This is according to the field reports from more than 85 volunteer observers for the Empire State Development Division of Tourism's *I LOVE NY* program.



I LOVE NY defines "peak" as the best overall appearance the foliage will have during the season, taking into account color transition, brilliance, and leaf droppage.

Coming Up

New York State

Monday, November 4th

Board of Regents Meeting, 89 Washington Ave – Seminar Room, 5th Floor, 9 a.m.

Tuesday, November 5th

State, Local, and National Election Day, Polls open from 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Board of Regents Meeting, 89 Washington Ave – Seminar Room, 5th Floor, 10:55 a.m.

New York City

Tuesday, November 5th

State, Local, and National Election Day, Polls open from 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.

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