



“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



Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes Announces Year End Retirement



Assemblywoman Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes has announced that she will not seek re-election in 2026. She has served Buffalo’s 141st Assembly District since 2003. She was elevated to the position of Majority Leader of the New York State Assembly in December 2018.

In June 2019, Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes successfully passed a law to decriminalize possession and the expungement of minor marijuana convictions from New Yorkers’ criminal records, a critical accomplishment along the path towards legalization. In March 2021, Peoples-Stokes did just that, successfully passing The Marijuana Regulation & Taxation Act (MRTA).

The daughter of a school teacher and a sanitation worker, Peoples-Stokes attended Buffalo Public Schools before earning her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Master’s Degrees in Student Personnel Administration from Buffalo State College.

Speaker Carl Heastie released the following statement: “I’ve known Crystal since before I was elected to the Assembly, and have been honored to call her a friend. Long before we were able to make it a state holiday, she taught me about the meaning of the Juneteenth Celebration. As speaker, I have been so lucky to have Crystal to be by my side as majority leader as we worked to put forward an agenda to lift up all New Yorkers. Her wisdom and knowledge have been invaluable to me and to so many that have had the privilege of serving with her. Crystal has been more than a majority leader to me. She has been my friend, advisor, sister and my biggest supporter. I know I speak not just for myself but for all our colleagues in the Assembly Majority when I say that we will miss her here in the People’s House”.

This year has proved to be one with an unusually large number of announced retirements by New York State legislators. The number is approaching twenty. The group includes decisions to run for other offices, departures for other employment and actual retirements based on long time service. There are many reasons for the large number; one such reason is the impending limits on outside income. There are no term limits on New York State legislative positions. It has been reported that, historically, the average tenure for New York State Senators is under 12 years and for Assemblymembers about 10 years with many examples of individuals serving much longer. Amongst this year’s retirees are several members serving over 20 years and one serving for 35 years.



State Budget Delays & Extenders

For the second time this month, the New York State Legislature passed a **one-week budget extender** on April 7, 2026, to keep the government operational and ensure state workers are paid through April 14, 2026.

Key issues awaiting resolution before a final agreement can be reached include the Governor's proposal to reform car insurance laws, efforts to amend the 2019 climate law, efforts to enhance the Tier 6 public employee pension system and school aid.

Key public budget issues have also included demands by some to increase taxes on “the wealthy”. Both the Senate and Assembly have proposed raising income taxes on high earners (those making over \$5 million) and increasing corporate taxes to fund expanded social programs. Governor Hochul has publicly opposed new tax hikes, arguing they would harm the state's economy.

In addition, Governor Hochul has proposed to relax or delay certain mandates of the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, citing concerns over the high costs to households. Climate activists have resisted the changes, advocating for the state to maintain its current environmental goals.

The Governor has called for Car Insurance Reform proposing changes to liability standards and new measures to combat auto insurance fraud to lower premiums. These proposals have faced intense pushback from trial lawyers and have been largely omitted from the legislature's versions of the budget. Various businesses, notably Uber, have aggressively supported the Governor's insurance proposal.



Attorney General James Offers Tips to Protect Consumers from Fraud During Tax Season

With only days until Tax Day, Attorney General James warned New Yorkers to stay vigilant, to protect their personal and financial information, and report suspected scams to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

“Scammers are increasingly using sophisticated AI programs to create more deceptive schemes this tax season,” said Attorney General James. “As New Yorkers file their taxes, I encourage everyone to be on the lookout for scammers who try to steal their money and personal information. I encourage everyone to follow the tips from my office and contact us immediately if you believe you have been targeted or victimized by a scam.”

Attorney General James is warning New Yorkers about AI-powered tax scams, including:

Fake videos of government officials or celebrities providing false tax information. AI allows scammers to quickly and easily create lifelike videos of well-known figures who may push fake tax incentives or deductions, or otherwise convince unsuspecting victims to give up money or sensitive information.

Tax-related phishing emails. AI technology allows attackers to send highly convincing, personalized emails disguised as tax notices or tax preparation offers to steal users' personal information. Previously, these emails may have been identifiable by typos or awkward grammar, but AI can make phishing emails extremely difficult to detect.

Clone phone calls. Scammers can use AI to pretend to be an IRS official or a tax preparer. New technology allows users to copy and replicate voices and images to create believable, lifelike impersonations of tax professionals or people in official positions. Scammers may manipulate the caller ID so that the call appears to come from a recognized number and may reference information from a victim's recent credit card transactions to appear legitimate. New Yorkers should be wary of surprise calls from people claiming to be affiliated with the tax return or refund process who demand money or sensitive information.

False information in Google's AI Overview. Scammers can manipulate results in Google's AI Overview to show false phone numbers or links alongside legitimate information. Users searching for tax return-related assistance or information are more likely to find accurate information in non-AI-created web entries on trusted websites, which should appear below the Google AI Overview.

<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2026/attorney-general-james-offers-tips-protect-consumers-fraud-during-tax-season>

In The News-New York City



New York City Council Holds Hearing on Last Mile Delivery Legislation

[Intro. No. 518](#), would require operators of certain warehouses and storage facilities from which goods are delivered to final consumers in the City to obtain a business license from the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. Intro. No. 518 would set forth the conditions of such license, including safety, training and employment requirements and enforcement options available to the City and to workers. Amid the explosive growth of online ordering in recent years, more than 1 billion packages are expected to be delivered in NYC this year alone. Yet distributing these goods quickly comes at a cost to people and the environment.

Various parties held competing rallies before the hearing. Those in favor of the legislation, were led and organized by Teamsters Joint Council 16 (for informational purposes – represented by our firm) whereas those in opposition to the legislation appeared to be led and organized by Amazon and a group called “The Five Borough Jobs Campaign”(“FBJC”) which claims to be “the only citywide organization that brings together businesses of all sizes in every corner of the city – including 30+ chambers of commerce, business improvement districts, and economic development organizations”.

An [analysis](#) prepared by consulting firm AKRF, paid for by FBJC, estimates that more than 10,000 NYC jobs could be lost from industry consolidation and the relocation of operations to facilities outside New York City if the bill takes effect. The report notes that New York City's last-mile delivery sector employs approximately 50,000 workers as of early 2026, up from an estimated 45,400 in 2024. The Council Committee report stated that “The high volume of last-mile delivery combined with the demands for speed create conditions for both street safety and worker health and safety concerns. A report published by the

Office of the New York City Comptroller in November 2025 found that the arrival of a last-mile facility in an area is correlated with an increase in traffic incidents. The analysis examined the areas within a 0.5-mile radius of 18 last-mile facilities 50,000 square feet or larger that opened between 2017 and 2022, and found that 14 (78 percent) had an increase in injury-causing crashes after the last-mile facility opened. Across the 18 facilities, the total number of individuals injured by crashes near last-mile facilities increased by an average of 15 percent. Unsafe practices may be a result of unreasonable expectations for the speed of deliveries. Many last-mile delivery workers report that their supervisors' productivity demands lead them to drive faster, even if it is unsafe for them to do so."

The legislation has a broad base of support from the Mandani administration. It is sponsored by Council Members Cabán, Restler, P. Sanchez, Avilés, Marte, Nurse, Brewer, Hanif, Stevens, Williams, Hudson, Krishnan, De La Rosa, Louis, Ossé, Abreu, Schulman, Brooks-Powers, Gutiérrez, Won, Banks, Farías, Zhuang, Santosuosso, J. Sanchez, Aldebol and Epstein (in conjunction with the Brooklyn Borough President).

Ahead of the 10 a.m. hearing, about 100 opponents of the bill rallied on the City Hall steps with signs that read, "Don't kill jobs!" and "Intro 518 hurts NYC small businesses." Several hundred more waited outside the gates and were not let in until the hearing.

The bill's lead sponsor, Tiffany Cabán of Queens, was among several electeds who joined the group of Amazon Teamsters rallying to pass the bill.

"We've seen workers forced to drive vans literally held together with f—ing tape, and they're forced to urinate in bottles so that they can meet impossible quotas and ever shorter delivery windows," Cabán said. "This is a public safety issue, period."

Epstein, who chairs the committee overseeing the hearing, also joined supporters.



"I'm going to stand with workers and stand with this union and these union brothers and sisters, and say this is enough. People deserve to work in safe conditions."

Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso said the last-mile industry can undergo successful reform without folding, using the trash carting industry as an example. He said no one is asking Amazon to leave New York City but rather to meet higher standards.

"The least you can do is have a standard that matches your profit margins," he said. "Make it so that you're the greatest company in the city of New York, that your employees get paid more than anyone else, have the best health insurance, have the best safety standards. That is the standard that we want you to set here in New York City."

Following the rallies, the 10 a.m. hearing by the Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection, chaired by Harvey Epstein of Manhattan, was the bill's first public discussion and drew a packed chamber. At the hearing, Carlos Ortiz, chief of staff for the city Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, said the agency and the Mamdani administration support the bill. Ortiz said that licensing can be an important means of holding bad actors accountable, and the subcontractor model has thus far "shielded" companies from liability. He said that if the bill becomes law, DCWP will balance business needs with the new regulations.

Briefs

Rent Guidelines Board reports reasons for and against a rent freeze

“Section 26-510 (b)(iii) of the Rent Stabilization Law requires the NYC Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) to consider the “costs and availability of financing (including effective rates of interest)” in its deliberations. To assist the Board in meeting this obligation, each winter the RGB research staff surveys lending institutions that underwrite mortgages for multifamily properties containing rent stabilized units in New York City.

The survey provides details about New York City’s multifamily lending market during the 2025 calendar year as well as the first few months of 2026. The survey, which reports data solely for buildings containing rent stabilized units, is organized into three sections: financing availability and terms; underwriting criteria; and additional mortgage questions, including vacancy and collection losses, operating and maintenance expenses, and portfolio performance information. In addition to the survey analysis, sales data of buildings containing rent stabilized units, obtained from the NYC Department of Finance, are also examined.

This year’s Mortgage Survey of buildings containing stabilized units revealed a decline in interest rates but an increase in points charged. The average interest rates for new multifamily mortgages decreased by 59 basis points, falling to 6.13% this year. The average points for new loans increased from 0.30 points last year to 0.32 points this year. Additionally, the average maximum loan-to-value ratios increased from 72.5% last year to 73.6% this year, while vacancy and collection losses increased from 3.14% last year to 5.00% this year.

Furthermore, our analysis of sales of buildings containing rent stabilized units indicated an increase in both sales volume and average sales price per unit between 2024 and 2025. A total of 730 buildings containing rent stabilized units were sold Citywide in 2025, a 33% increase from the previous year. The average per-unit sales price Citywide in 2025 was \$289,478, an inflation-adjusted increase of 10.5% from 2024. Moreover, among 100% stabilized buildings, the average price per unit sold in 2025 was \$218,182, an inflation-adjusted increase of 20.4%.

This year, the Price Index of Operating Costs (“PIOC”) for all rent stabilized apartments increased by 5.3%. Increases occurred in all seven PIOC components. Taxes, which carry the highest weight in this year’s Index, increased by 2.6%. The largest proportional increase was seen in Fuel (11.0%), followed by Insurance Costs (10.5%). More moderate increases were seen in Maintenance (6.0%), Utilities (5.6%), Administrative Costs (4.8%), and Labor Costs (3.0%). Each of these components, except for Fuel and Maintenance, increased at a slower pace than the previous year, including Taxes, which declined by 1.3 percentage points.

The growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures inflation in a wide range of consumer goods and services, was lower than the PIOC, rising by 3.3% during this same time period. Excluding the cost of shelter, the CPI rose by 2.7% in the PIOC time period.² See the table on the previous page and Appendix 2 for changes in costs and prices for buildings that contain rent stabilized apartments between 2025 and 2026.”

<https://rentguidelinesboard.cityofnewyork.us>

DiNapoli: Despite Third Straight Year of State Workforce Expansion, OT Costs Increased by \$1.6 Billion in 2025

New York State agency overtime costs increased 22.7% in 2025 for a total of \$1.6 billion, while the number of overtime hours increased by 5.9%, or 1.4 million hours, higher than the previous year, according to [the annual report issued today](#) by State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli examining state agencies' overtime and workforce trends. The size of the state workforce, not including SUNY and CUNY, grew for a third straight year in 2025 increasing by 2.7%, or 4,139 positions, from 2024, to an average annual total of 155,448.

“The use of overtime by state agencies continued to climb with overtime as a share of payroll at its second highest rate since at least 2007,” DiNapoli said. “Agencies need to ensure usage is justified while continuing to safely and effectively provide the services New Yorkers expect and deserve.”

Overtime hours and earnings have continued to surge at the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (Corrections), growing by 1.3 million hours and \$264 million in 2025, the most of any agency. The agency experienced a 29.8% decrease in workforce since 2020 when there were 8,544 more employees than in 2025. Between 2024 and 2025, the Corrections workforce decreased by over 2,700 while overtime hours per employee grew 32.7% to reach an average of 432 hours – nearly triple what it was in 2020. These figures were influenced by the strike by some Corrections employees that took place between Feb. 17, 2025 and March 10, 2025.

Mayor Mamdani Announces 2-K Will Be Full Day And Full Year

Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani announced that, beginning this fall, most of the first 2,000 2-K seats will operate on a full-day and full-year schedule. The program is being introduced in select neighborhood and will run from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 260 days a year. The shift reflects the Mamdani administration's commitment to using early childhood education to address the rising costs facing working families requiring child care.

“For many families working nine to five, an eight to three program isn't going to cut it. For too long, parents have been forced to choose between their livelihood and their children, or to drain their savings just to make it through the workday. That ends now,” said Mayor Mamdani. “Universal child care must meet the real lives of working people. That begins with full-year, full-day 2-K

As the city prepares to welcome its first 2-K families, the Mamdani administration has begun building out the needed infrastructure through a system of outsourcing. Providers that responded to the City's RFI are expected to be notified in the coming weeks. Some providers will still offer a 2-K program aligned to the school calendar. Full-day and full-year care is not a current requirement for a family to accept a seat.

The Mayor earlier announced an additional 1,000 new 3-K seats to meet demand and expedited the opening of an Upper East Side early childhood education center. In March, Mayor Mamdani and Governor Hochul announced the first four communities to receive free 2-K seats. Communities in five school districts will get access to over 2,000 free seats this fall. In addition, the Mayor recently announced a first-of-its-kind child care provider map and online resource hub, designed to make it easier for families to find care and understand the options available to them, and the City's first free child care program pilot for municipal workers.

Coming Up

New York State

Monday, April 13th

Board of Regents Meeting, 89 Washington Ave – Albany – Room 217, 9 a.m.

New York State Senate Session, Senate Chamber – Capitol Building, 3 p.m.

New York State Assembly Session, Assembly Chamber – Capitol Building,

Tuesday, April 14th

Board of Regents Meeting, 89 Washington Ave – Albany – Room 217, 10:30 a.m.

New York City

Monday, April 13th

Committee on General Welfare, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 2, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, April 14th,

Committee on Civil Service and Labor, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10 a.m.

Committee on Criminal Justice, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10:30 a.m.

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation,

Council Chambers – City Hall, 10:30 a.m.

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 3, 11 a.m.

Wednesday, April 15th

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises,

250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 3, 11:30 a.m.

Committee on Land Use, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 3, 12 p.m.

Committee on Higher Education, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Committee on Workforce Development, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Subcommittee on Early Childhood Development,

250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Thursday, April 16th

Committee on Finance, Committee Room – City Hall, 11 a.m.

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

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