



“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 Readies to Deliver Annual State of the State Address

Governor Kathy Hochul will be offering her annual State of the State (“SOS”) address in Albany on January 13th in the newly renovated The Egg Performing Arts Center.

The Governor has begun to release advance peeks at her upcoming speech. So far, we have learned that the State will plans to make an unprecedented investment to deliver affordable, universal childcare for children under five years of age across New York State. In partnership with NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani, the Governor pledges to deliver free childcare for two-year-olds in New York City, and to strengthen the existing 3K program to serve all families across the city. In 2026, the State will continue to expand access to high-quality childcare programs throughout the state, through a diversity of models.

Another part of the Governor’s 2026 State of the State agenda, includes proposals to strengthen New York’s “nation leading gun laws” by cracking down on 3D-printed and illegal firearms. The new legislation would establish criminal penalties for the manufacture of 3D-printed firearms and order minimum safety standards to be established for 3D printer manufacturers to block the production of firearms and firearm components. Specifics of the proposal include:

- Require gun manufacturers to design their pistols so they cannot be quickly and easily modified into illegal machine guns.
- Require police departments and sheriffs’ offices to report recoveries of all 3D printed guns.
- Make it a crime for a person to intentionally sell, distribute, or possess digital instructions to illegally manufacture or produce a firearm or component parts without a license.
- Mandate the reporting of 3D printed guns to the Criminal Gun Clearinghouse database maintained by the New York State Police.
- Require the establishment of minimum safety standards for 3D printer manufacturers to mandate products are equipped with technology that blocks the printer from creating firearms and parts.
- Require gun manufacturers to design pistols so they cannot be quickly and easily modified into DIY machine guns through the use of illegal devices, such as Glock switches.

Governor Hochul will also be calling for “safety zones around houses of worship where people can go freely, to go to a safe place without threats of violence or protests” in her annual Message.



Attorney General James Sues Trump Administration to Protect Funding for Childcare

Trump Administration Announced \$10 Billion in Cuts to New York, California, Colorado, Illinois, and Minnesota

New York Attorney General Letitia James is leading a coalition of four other attorneys general in suing the Trump administration to stop the illegal withholding of over \$10 billion in funds to their states that help ensure low-income families can afford childcare, housing, and food.

On January 5th and 6th, the administration sent letters to New York, California, Colorado, Illinois, and Minnesota announcing that the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) was freezing funding for three programs: the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); and the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). Attorney General James and the coalition argue that freezing these funds will immediately jeopardize some of the most important anti-poverty programs in the states, putting vulnerable families at risk. Attorney General James and the coalition are seeking a court order declaring the funding freeze unlawful and preventing the administration from implementing it.

“After jeopardizing food assistance and health care, this administration is now threatening to cut off childcare and other critical programs that parents depend on to provide for their children,” said Attorney General James.

New York receives over \$2.4 billion in TANF funds, which provide direct cash assistance to over 200,000 families throughout the state to help families pay for housing, food, and other essentials. For Grant Year 2025, New York received \$638 million in CCDF funds, which provide childcare for low-income families. New York also receives \$93 million in SSBG funds, which support foster care, childcare, and other critical social services to prevent neglect, abuse, and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults.

Attorney General James and the coalition assert that the administration has provided no legitimate justification for freezing these funds. While the letters sent to states claim that the freeze is necessary to prevent “potential” fraud, the administration has failed to provide any evidence of this fraud.

The coalition argues that the administration’s actions – which ignore the detailed legal requirements for imposing sanctions under these programs – violate the law and the Constitution. The administration’s actions also ignore the laws and regulations governing these ACF programs and violate Congress’s power over spending and the constitutional principle of separation of powers.



State’s Energy and Environment Leaders Pledge to “Press Ahead” to Advance on Climate Change Despite Federal Action



Acknowledging that the Trump Administration’s decision to step back from the United Nations’ climate change treaty is “yet another setback,” NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Amanda Lefton and NYS Energy, Research and Development Authority President and CEO Doreen Harris asserted “it will not slow New York down.”

President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that the United States would withdraw from international and U.N. entities, including the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and the scientific Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that "operate contrary to U.S. national interests" of focusing on oil, gas and mining development.

“Governor Kathy Hochul has made clear that New York will keep moving forward,” New York environment and energy leaders explained. “While Washington walks away, New York is delivering results: reducing pollution, investing at scale in affordable clean energy and climate resilience, strengthening grid reliability, and creating good-paying jobs in communities across the State...New York will continue to press ahead and work with partners at every level to advance climate action that delivers for New Yorkers today and for future generations.”

New York State Legislative Calendar – January 2026

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 7th – Opening Day of the State Legislature

January 13th – Governor’s State of the State Address

January 20th – Governor’s Budget Release (anticipated – required by the second Tuesday following the first day of the legislative session).

In The News-New York City



Mayor Mamdani's Team Takes Shape

Zohran Mamdani was sworn in on January 1st as the 112th Mayor of New York City. Since Day 1 the Mayor has been blanketing the City, announcing new programs and introducing the members of his Administration.

In his first full week as Mayor, Zohran Mamdani made a number of appointments to senior roles in his administration. Mayor Mamdani appointed Dina Levy Commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation & Development and Christine Clarke as Chair of the Commission on Human Rights. Levy previously served as Senior Vice President of Single Family and Community Development at NYS Homes and Community Renewal. Clarke previously served as Chief of Litigation and Advocacy at Legal Services NYC. The Mayor also announced the members of his communications team. Anna Bahr will serve as Director of Communications. Joe Calvello will serve as Press Secretary. Monica Klein will serve as Senior Advisor for Communications. Dora Pecek will serve as Senior Spokesperson, continuing her role from the campaign. Lekha Sunder will serve as Deputy Director of Communications, also joining City Hall from the Mayor's campaign team.

These individuals join those appointed last week, including Mike Flynn as Commissioner of the Department of Transportation, Cea Weaver as Director of the Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants, Ramzi Kassem as Chief Counsel, Steven Banks as Corporation Counsel, Ahmed Tigani Commissioner of the Department of Buildings, Louise Yeung as Chief Climate Officer, and Emmy Liss as Executive Director of the Office of Child Care. The Mayor also re-appointed Michael Garner as Chief Business Diversity Officer, Mitchell Katz President and CEO of Health and Hospitals, and Jason Graham as Chief Medical Examiner, and announced that he would retain Javier Lojan as Acting Commissioner of DSNY and Zach Iscol as Commissioner of the Office of Emergency Management through the end of the snow season.

A few of the Mayor's earlier appointments have faced public scrutiny for past actions. While expressing support for Director Weaver, Mayor Mamdani has stated that he would review the actions of Chief Business Diversity Officer Garner while he was at the MTA.



Safer Streets: Governor Hochul, Mayor Mamdani, Police Commissioner Tisch Announce Crime in New York City Continued to Fall in 2025; New York Remains the Safest Big City in the Nation

Governor Kathy Hochul, Mayor Zohran Mamdani, and NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch this week announced that New York City remains the safest big city in the country. New 2025 data released by the NYPD shows that the city is safer above and below ground, with murders, retail theft, robberies, and subway crime continuing to decline. Shooting incidents and the number of individuals harmed by gunfire also reached record lows last year across the city.

“These historic reductions in crime did not happen by chance or accident — they are the direct product of a deliberate, data-driven strategy achieving unprecedented public safety milestones for New York City,” Commissioner Tisch explained. “The NYPD drove shooting incidents and shooting victims to the lowest levels in recorded history and delivered the safest year on our subway system, outside of the pandemic era, since 2009. These numbers describe an agency that’s firing on all cylinders: taking down violent gangs, removing thousands of guns off the street, and shattering record-low violent crime numbers. New York City is still the safest big city in the country, thanks to the extraordinary work of the women and men of the NYPD who answer the call every day to protect and serve.”

In 2025, New York City recorded 688 shooting incidents, with the previous record low set in 2018 by 10 percent with 66 fewer shootings (688 vs. 754). Compared to 2024, shooting incidents declined 24 percent, 216 fewer shootings (688 vs. 904). In the fourth quarter of 2025, shooting incidents decreased 36 percent (134 vs. 211) compared to the same period last year. The number of people shot in New York City also fell 5 percent to a low in 2025 with 856 shooting victims citywide, compared to the previous low of 897 reported in 2018. Compared to 2024, shooting victims declined by 22 percent, with 247 fewer people shot (856 vs. 1,103).

According to the Commissioner, in addition to addressing gun violence, the NYPD successfully drove down major crime by implementing a data-driven, precision policing strategy that resulted in consistent declines throughout the entire year. The Department deployed an unprecedented number of officers assigned to nightly foot posts to areas with high crime across precincts, public housing, and the subway system. This targeted strategy led to a three percent decline in major crime in 2025 (121,542 vs. 125,026).

Citywide, robberies declined by nearly 10 percent, with 1,600 fewer incidents compared to last year (15,065 vs. 16,696). For the month of December, robberies declined by 15 percent (1,039 vs. 1,224). Burglary dropped nearly four percent (12,777 vs. 13,301), marking the third consecutive year of declines. In December, burglary decreased by more than 15 percent (1,017 vs. 1,201) and by 9.9 percent (3,168 vs. 3,518) in the fourth quarter. Auto theft decreased by five percent (13,520 vs. 14,233) citywide in 2025, with a nearly eight percent (3,127 vs. 3,386) drop in the fourth quarter compared to 2024. Grand larceny declined nearly two percent (48,034 vs. 48,963).

In the city’s housing developments, crime declined by 3.6 percent (5,794 vs. 6,009). Hate crimes decreased by 12 percent compared to 2024 (576 vs. 657). Antisemitic incidents were down three percent but still accounted for 57 percent of all hate crimes reported in 2025, despite Jewish New Yorkers representing approximately 10 percent of the city’s population.



Julie Menin Elected Speaker of the New York City Council

Speaker Menin is a three-time City Commissioner and former regulatory attorney with a history of strengthening consumer and worker protections

The New York City Council this week voted during its 2026 Charter Meeting to elect Julie Menin as Speaker.

Speaker Menin will lead the City Council while the lawmaking body will address the affordability crisis, an affordable housing shortage, and other key issues. In her first speech as Council leader, Speaker Menin laid out a “bolder, more proactive vision” for the Council to confront New York’s challenges, including building more affordable housing; lowering health care costs; reducing fines and bureaucratic red tape for small businesses; and rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse from city government.

“I am deeply honored and humbled that my City Council colleagues have elected me as Speaker,” said Speaker Julie Menin. “New York has a long history of turning moments of challenge into moments of opportunity. Together, we will forge a new City Council that takes a more forceful and proactive approach to New York’s shared goals. That includes enacting universal childcare, lowering skyrocketing health care costs, building more affordable housing, and slashing fines and bureaucratic red tape for small businesses.”



Council Speaker Menin

Speaker Menin is a three-time City Commissioner and former regulatory attorney. Prior to her election to the Council in 2022, Speaker Menin served as Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Affairs, Commissioner of Media and Entertainment, and the city’s 2020 Census Director. She is a former adjunct professor at Columbia University. The Speaker graduated magna cum laude from Columbia University and received her law degree from Northwestern University School of Law.

Speaker Menin tapped Miguelina Camilo, counsel to Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, to serve as the chamber’s chief of staff. Rounding out her leadership team are: Deputy Chief of Staff Simone A. Jones who will serve as the Council’s first-ever Chief Equity Officer; Jonathan Szott who will serve as Senior Deputy Chief of Staff; Simone A. Jones who will serve as Deputy Chief of Staff and the Chief Equity Officer; Bhav Tibrewal who has been named Chief Advisor; and John Tritt who will be joining as Senior Advisor for External Affairs.

Briefs

MTA & Governor Hochul Celebrate the Success of Congestion Pricing on its First Anniversary

27 Million Fewer Vehicles Entered the Congestion Relief Zone, Traffic Down 11%; Crossing Speeds Up by as Much as 51%; Transit Ridership Up 7%

Congestion Pricing Delivers Cleaner Air and Safer Streets: Pollution Down 22% in the Zone and Down Throughout Region; Crashes Down 7% and Traffic Injuries Down 8%

Manhattan Economy is Thriving: Best Year for Office Leasing in 23 Years; Foot Traffic Up From 2024; Sales Tax Receipts up Over 6%

On its one-year anniversary, New York City’s first-in-the-nation congestion pricing program has successfully reduced traffic and supported billions in transit upgrades, according to the MTA’s [First Year Report](#). Congestion pricing has reduced emissions, made streets safer, improved quality of life, and generated over \$550 million in net revenue in its first year, allowing the MTA to proceed with \$15 billion in transit improvement projects, according to the Hochul Administration.

The report shows congestion pricing has consistently met monthly revenue targets needed to generate the projected \$500 million in annual net revenue. As of November 2025, \$518 million in net tolling revenue has been collected and allocated to support transit improvements and mitigation initiatives, with preliminary projections for year-end exceeding \$550 million in net revenues.

Overall, the program allows the MTA to proceed with \$15 billion in funding for the 2020-2024 Capital Plan, advancing projects to rebuild, improve and expand the transit system. A third of that funding is dedicated towards performing critical state of good repair work to ensure the continued reliability of the transit system. Projects funded by congestion pricing include:

- Second Avenue Subway Phase 2 (\$3B)
- Signal upgrades along the AC and BDFM lines (\$3B)
- Accessibility improvements to 23+ subway stations (\$2B)
- New railcars and buses (\$2B)
- State of Good Repair projects (\$5B)

As of January 1, 2026, more than \$6 billion in projects “unlocked” by Congestion Relief are in construction, including Second Avenue Subway Phase 2, ADA upgrades at nine stations, new signals serving more than 600,000 A/C riders in Brooklyn and Queens, and systemwide state of good repair work.

Comptroller DiNapoli Releases Bond Calendar for First Quarter

Tentative Schedule Includes \$5.34 Billion of New Money and Refunding Debt Sales

New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli announced a tentative schedule of planned bond sales for New York State, New York City and their major public authorities during the first quarter of 2026.

The planned sales of \$5.34 billion include \$3.89 billion of new money and \$1.45 billion of refundings as follows:

- \$4.48 billion scheduled for January, \$3.28 billion of which is for new money purposes and \$1.20 billion of which is for refunding purposes.
- \$615 million scheduled for February, all of which is for new money purposes.
- \$250 million scheduled for March, all of which is for refunding purposes.

These anticipated sales in this first quarter compare to past planned sales of \$5.32 billion during the fourth quarter of 2025, and \$3.78 billion during first quarter of 2025.

The prospective first quarter calendar includes anticipated bond sales by the following issuers: the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, the Long Island Power Authority, the New York City Transitional Finance Authority, the New York City Housing Development Corporation, the New York City Municipal Water Finance Authority, the New York State Thruway Authority, and the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority.

Opening of NY PLAYS Grant Opportunities to Expand Playgrounds Across New York

Governor Kathy Hochul yesterday announced the opening of the New York Places for Learning, Activity, and Youth Socialization (NY PLAYS) Initiative, a competitive grant program that will provide \$67.5 million in capital funding to help municipalities and nonprofit organizations construct, expand and renovate public playgrounds for all abilities across New York State.

The NY PLAYS Initiative is overseen by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. Of the total funding available, not less than \$35 million will be reserved for playground projects located in underserved communities.

Eligible municipalities and nonprofit organizations may apply for NY PLAYS grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$2.5 million for the acquisition, design, construction, major renovation or equipping of public playgrounds, along with other related capital costs necessary to complete a project. Grantees must demonstrate a 20 percent match toward total project costs. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

The NY PLAYS Request for Applications (RFA) and supporting materials are available on DASNY's website at www.dasny.org/PLAYS. An informational webinar for potential applicants will be held on February 13, 2026. Applications will be accepted from May 4 through June 15, 2026. Grant awards will be announced no earlier than August 3, 2026.

Mayor Mamdani Signs Two Emergency Executive Orders

Mayor instructs city agencies to work with federal monitor & Nunez parties to develop plan to implement Local Law 42 banning solitary confinement

Directs city agencies to develop plans to come into compliance with Minimum Standards & city shelter laws

Emergency Executive Order 1 instructs the Department of Corrections and the Law Department to develop a plan within 45 days to come into compliance with the Board of Corrections' Minimum Standards. Additionally, the Mayor has directed the Law Department to work with the federal monitor and all Nunez parties to develop a plan to implement Local Law 42, which bans solitary confinement.

Emergency Executive Order 2 instructs the Law Department and Department of Social Services to develop a plan within 45 days to come into compliance with city shelter law requiring cooking facilities in shelters for families with children and capacity limits on adult shelters. Effective immediately, the executive order will end the suspension of a broad range of health and safety codes, building codes, and land use rules, which the City used to open new shelters.

Mayor Appoints Simonia Brown to Help Deliver Affordability Agenda

Mayor Zohran Mamdani appointed New York City and State policy and budget veteran Simonia Brown as Senior Advisor for Policy and Strategy. In this role, Brown will work alongside partners in Albany to help deliver on the Mayor’s affordability agenda. Brown will report to the First Deputy Mayor.

Simonia Brown has more than two decades of experience in New York City and New York State government, advising elected officials and negotiating policy and budget issues. Under Mayor Bill de Blasio, Brown served as the Director of New York City’s State Legislative Affairs Office, where she was responsible for advancing the City’s budgetary and legislative agenda.

Brown served as an Associate Director at the NYC Office of Management and Budget, where she oversaw the budgets for the NYC Department of Education, the City’s investments at CUNY, and the 59 Community Boards. Additionally, at OMB, Brown led the Intergovernmental Relations unit, advancing the City’s fiscal priorities at the city, state, and federal levels.

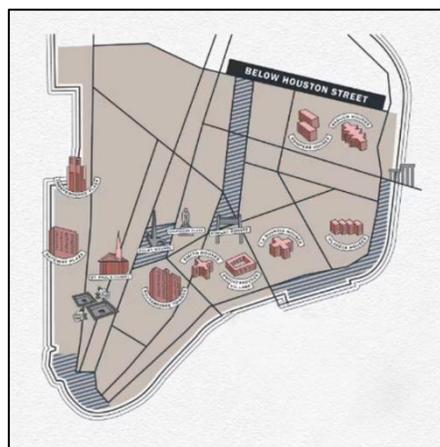
Before working in New York City government, Brown held several roles at the New York State Assembly advising the Speaker and Assembly leadership, directing budget analysis, developing policy initiatives, and leading budget and policy negotiations. Currently, Brown serves as the Assistant Deputy Comptroller at the Office of the State Comptroller where she leads several teams in overseeing local government and school district finances including the distribution of more than \$1 billion annually and statewide fiscal stress monitoring.

“I am thrilled to welcome Simonia Brown to our administration,” said Mayor Mamdani. “Simonia is an experienced and deeply committed leader. Her track record of winning budgets and policies that lift up working people will be invaluable as we deliver on our affordability agenda for New Yorkers.”

9/11 Solidarity Network Helps Claimants Obtain Vital Documentation for 9/11 Compensation Fund Claims

It is becoming increasingly difficult for some claimants to find documents to prove their presence at an eligible location so many years after the attacks. In fact, earlier this year, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) went to the State Legislature for assistance in verifying its members’ 9/11 service. On September 10th, Governor Kathy Hochul signed chapter 390 of the Laws of 2025 which establishes a presumption that a New York City Police Pension Fund member participated in the rescue, recovery, and clean-up operations at the World Trade Center, unless their employer proves the contrary by competent evidence.

The 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) understands this challenge and encourages individuals who were present in the exposure zone to gather and save their proof of presence documents now, even if they aren't currently ill or planning to file a claim.



9/11 Exposure Zone

To help members of the general public verify their 9/11 service, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC's affiliate [Pitta & Baione LLP](#) is developing the 9/11 Solidarity Network, a system where members can act as witnesses for one another in verifying 9/11 service. The network utilizes sworn *Witness Presence Statements* from people who can attest to a claimant's presence which are accepted as secondary evidence by the VCF when primary documentation is unavailable.

By participating, individuals can provide the crucial testimony a fellow member might need while also securing potential support for their own future claims. This initiative formalizes the collective memory of its members to help ensure no one is left to prove their presence alone.

For more information regarding the 9/11 Solidarity Network, please contact Pitta & Baione at 844-901-1262.

Coming Up

New York State

Monday, January 12th

New York State Senate Session,

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

New York State Assembly Session,

Assembly Chamber – New York State Capitol, Albany, 2 p.m.

New York State Board of Regents Meeting,

New York State Education Building – 89 Washington Ave, Albany, 10:45 a.m.

Tuesday, January 13th

New York State of the State,

Hart Theater at The Egg, Albany, 1 p.m.

New York State Senate Session,

Senate Chamber – New York State Capitol, Albany, 11 a.m.

New York State Assembly Session,

Assembly Chamber – New York State Capitol, Albany

Wednesday, January 14th

Public Hearing: To discuss risks, solutions, and best practices with respect to the use of artificial intelligence in consequential or high-risk contexts, and related issues, such as classification of the types and risk levels of AI uses, frameworks for auditing AI tools for bias, and transparency improvements
250 Broadway – Senate Hearing Room – 19th Floor, 10 a.m.

New York City

Thursday, January 15th

Committee Rules, Privileges and Elections,

250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 11:30 a.m.

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

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