



“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



Attorney General James Launches Legal Observation Project to Monitor Federal Immigration Enforcement in New York

New Initiative Will Send OAG Legal Observers to Document Enforcement Actions

New York Attorney General Letitia James this week announced the launch of the Legal Observation Project, a new Office of the Attorney General (OAG) initiative to monitor and document federal immigration enforcement activity in New York state and protect New Yorkers’ rights.

Through the project, OAG will collect reports of enforcement actions throughout New York and send trained personnel to observe and document that activity where appropriate, as well as any related protests, as they occur. These legal observers will serve as neutral witnesses on the ground, recording information that may inform future legal action. According to the Attorney General, as federal immigration enforcement activity increases nationwide, the Legal Observation Project will help ensure that accurate, real-time information is collected and preserved, and that any violations of law are identified.

The project, staffed by trained OAG employees participating on a voluntary basis, will begin monitoring enforcement actions in the coming weeks. When necessary, OAG will send teams of legal observers to the location of reported immigration enforcement activity, outfitted in easily identifiable, purple OAG-branded safety vests, to witness and document enforcement actions. Observers will not interfere with enforcement activity; their role is solely to document federal conduct in a safe and lawful manner.

As New York’s chief law enforcement officer, Attorney General James has a responsibility to uphold the rule of law and protect the civil rights and constitutional freedoms of all New Yorkers. The Legal Observation Project will support this mandate by ensuring OAG has timely, accurate information to assess whether enforcement activity complies with the law.

Attorney General James is also urging New Yorkers to submit videos or other documentation of federal immigration enforcement actions directly to OAG through its secure [online portal](#). Reports submitted through the portal will help OAG assess activity and determine whether further investigation is warranted.

In addition, OAG has released guidance for [law enforcement agencies](#), [health care providers](#), [non-profits](#), [schools](#), and [workplaces](#) on navigating cooperation with federal immigration enforcement officers.



Medical Aid in Dying Legislation Awaits Governor Hochul's Signature

Midnight tonight is the deadline for New York's Medical Aid in Dying Legislation and Governor Kathy Hochul's signature will decide whether in six months terminally ill New Yorkers will have the ability to request life-ending medication. Both the original bill and an agreed-upon chapter amendment were on the Governor's desk at time of publication.

With the stroke of the Governor's pen New York will become the 14th state in the country to legalize Medical Aid in Dying for terminally ill patients expected to have less than six months to live. Most recently, Illinois and Delaware legalized similar measures late last year.

On Wednesday, the Assembly and Senate passed a chapter amendment to the original Medical Aid in Dying legislation. The amendment reflects agreed-upon language between Governor Hochul and bill sponsors former Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblymember Amy Paulin. In December, Governor Hochul said she would sign the amended version.

New York Governor Kathy Hochul told reporters on Thursday that she will officially sign the amended Medical Aid in Dying Act.

"This has been a very emotional issue for me," Governor Hochul said. "So I've wrestled with it, and I decided that I'll do my best to make it better, and I wanted to have a lot of guardrails in that bill before I would sign on to it and ensure that the concerns that we were hearing, was that this could be abused, that there could be people that don't want to take care of an elderly parent anymore, or someone that's in their care with disabilities and other challenges, that they could find an easy out for themselves without the consent of the individual. So I said that cannot happen in New York."

The agreed-upon legislation added safeguards that limit access to patients with less than six months to live, included a residency requirement, mandated that patients submit a video or audio request for the lethal medication, and imposed a five-day waiting period between when a prescription is written and filled.

The new law also will require patients seeking aid in dying to get evaluated by two doctors and undergo a mental health screening with a psychologist or psychiatrist. Also, anyone who stands to benefit from a patient's death financially will be barred from serving as a witness or interpreter for their request for the medication.

State lawmakers indicated that they appreciated the amendments, but some contend they did not go far enough.

"I can tell you, because I have unfortunately, close personal experience with the disease ALS that when you're at the end of your life, you're not physically able to put a pill in your mouth," Senator George Borriello explained, in published reports. "...It's not being administered by a health care professional, and no one will be there when it happens...That's the problem with this bill."

In The News-New York City



NYC Office of the Mayor

Mayor Mamdani Announces New Executive Director of Mayor's Office to Combat Antisemitism

Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani announced the appointment of Phylisa Wisdom as executive director of the Mayor's Office to Combat Antisemitism.

Wisdom most recently served as the executive director of the New York Jewish Agenda. She has also worked in advocacy through the Union for Reform Judaism's Religious Action Center.

"I am thrilled to welcome Phylisa Wisdom as executive director of the Mayor's Office to Combat Antisemitism," Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani said. "Phylisa is a respected leader and powerful voice in the fight against antisemitism in New York City, Albany and across the country. Day in and day out, across all five boroughs, we will work together to root out antisemitism and build a New York City where Jewish New Yorkers are safe, respected, and free."

Wisdom began her career as an educator, working with students with special educational needs, and helped establish educational intervention centers in Melbourne, Australia, and Tokyo, Japan. She later worked in public affairs at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, supporting youth anti-violence initiatives and efforts to improve LGBTQ+ public health outcomes. Wisdom attended California State University and King's College London, where she earned a master's degree in public policy.

"What an excellent appointment by Mayor Mamdani. Phylisa Wisdom has committed her life to effectively combining her dual identities as an American, a Jew and a pluralistic progressive," said State Senator Liz Krueger. "The NYC Jewish community is not only enormous, it is incredibly diverse. Ms. Wisdom will increase the expertise of the Mayor's team in responding to antisemitism and bringing together our many communities."



Comptroller DiNapoli: NYC's Open Streets Program Supported Retail and Restaurant Job Recovery in Manhattan, Brooklyn

Report Suggests Continued Recovery May Be Aided by Mitigating Community Concerns

New York City's Open Streets program helped support the recovery of more than 67,000 retail and restaurant jobs between the first and most recent year of operation, to [a report released](#) by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. Gains were concentrated in the Open Streets' areas in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

“The Open Streets program provided an outlet for residents, businesses, and community partners to congregate safely during the pandemic, and continues to encourage foot traffic to support shopping, dining and other activities in many parts of the city,” Comptroller DiNapoli explained. “Still, there are further steps the city could take to help improve the program’s reach and effectiveness.”

In the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) created Open Streets as a temporary program based on its Weekend Walk program and it was made permanent in May 2021.

Between 2020 and 2024, a total of 510 unique Open Street locations were in operation across the city, with 2021 marking the most popular year. Manhattan had the greatest share of locations, with 34.9% in 2020 and rising to 44.1% in 2023 as the number of locations dropped in each of the outer boroughs.

From 2020 to 2024, 62 locations (12.2%) operated every year and were concentrated in parts of Manhattan and Brooklyn. The largest share (37.5%) operated only two years, followed by one year (22.9%).

Manhattan's Financial District and Greenwich Village boasted the greatest number of Open Street locations citywide with 40, followed by 30 in Brooklyn's Downtown Brooklyn and Fort Greene neighborhoods, and Manhattan’s Midtown, East Midtown and Flatiron neighborhoods with 28, according to the Comptroller.

NYC DOT places Open Street locations into three broad categories: full closure – schools, full closure, and limited local access – each of which has different reasons for operating. Comptroller DiNapoli’s report found that over 74% of non-school Open Street locations operating for more than one year added retail and restaurant jobs between their first and most recent year of operation. These locations created over 67,200 jobs, with nearly 46% created in the 62 locations that were present for all five years between 2020 and 2024.

Of the total retail and restaurant jobs created during the analysis period, nearly 79% (53,023) were in Manhattan, followed by 18.7% (12,578) in Brooklyn. About 27.4% of non-school Open Street locations citywide that added jobs saw an increase over their pre-pandemic level. Citywide, combined retail and restaurant jobs have not fully recovered pandemic-era job losses.

To boost the effectiveness of the Open Streets program, Comptroller DiNapoli recommends the city:

- Provide enhanced operational support for sponsors through more timely reimbursements;
- Address community concerns about parking, signage, and accessibility to sustain public support; and maintain a comprehensive database of Open Street locations to better monitor outcomes and identify areas where additional assistance is needed; and
- Direct resources toward corridors where community support exists, which have not yet regained pre-pandemic retail and restaurant employment and lag behind the rate of recovery in the rest of the borough – especially in Queens and Staten Island – to help ensure the program contributes more evenly to the city’s overall employment recovery especially in the retail sector, which remains well behind pre-pandemic levels.

Briefs

Port Authority Board of Commissioners Approved Nomination of Kathryn Garcia as Executive Director

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Board of Commissioners yesterday approved the nomination of Kathryn Garcia to serve as the agency's next executive director. Her first day as Executive Director will be Monday, February 9th.

Garcia brings three decades of experience across government, most recently serving in the administration of New York Governor Kathy Hochul as director of state operations and infrastructure, where she oversaw major initiatives like the launch of New York City's congestion pricing program, the Interstate 81 Viaduct project in Syracuse, N.Y., the Gateway Hudson Tunnel Project, the Interborough Express, and the redevelopment of John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Previously, Garcia served in senior roles in New York City government, including as Commissioner of the city Department of Sanitation, interim chair of the New York City Housing Authority, and as the city's COVID-19 food czar, where she distributed 130 million meals to New Yorkers during the pandemic.

As Executive Director, Garcia will lead day-to-day operations across the Port Authority's air, rail, bridge, tunnel, and seaport operations and will deliver the recently approved 10-year Port Authority capital plan.

Comptroller DiNapoli: Local Sales Tax Collections Grew in 2025

Local government sales tax collections in New York state totaled \$24.4 billion in calendar year 2025, an increase of 4.5%, or \$1 billion, from 2024, according to a [report](#) released today by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

"Local sales tax growth ticked up last year," said Comptroller DiNapoli. "However, with the potential for policy changes at the federal level to affect every level of government funding, as well as the continued impact of tariffs, local officials must budget carefully to safeguard the services their communities rely on."

Quarterly year-over-year growth ranged from 3.2% in the first quarter to 5.4% in the third quarter.

New York City's sales tax growth of 5%, or \$521 million, was slightly higher than the city's pre-pandemic (2010-2019) average 4.8% growth rate. Growth in the city's collections was boosted by robust domestic tourism, including record average nightly hotel rates and solid Broadway attendance.

Governor Hochul Announces Increased Patrols to Curb Impaired Driving During Super Bowl Celebrations

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced that the New York State Police and local law enforcement agencies statewide are participating in the national enforcement initiative to eliminate impaired driving during this year's Super Bowl celebrations.

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) funds the campaign, which began Tuesday, February 3, 2026, and runs through Super Bowl Sunday, February 8, 2026. Along with increased patrols and sobriety checkpoints to deter, identify and arrest impaired drivers, police will target speeding, distracted driving and other reckless driving behaviors.

During the 2025 Super Bowl weekend campaign, law enforcement officers arrested 1,021 people for impaired driving and issued 49,948 total tickets.

Mamdani Administration Launches 2-K and 3-K Request for Information

Mayor Zohran Mamdani this week announced the City is opening a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) for new providers interested in offering 2-K and 3-K services. Submissions are due February 19th.

According to NYC Public Schools, the purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to identify eligible, high-quality early childhood care and education programs who are willing to collaborate with the New York City Department of Education's (DOE) Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) to implement services for 2-K and 3-K services across School Day and Year (SDY), School Day and Year Plus (SDY+), and an expanded day and full year models, respectively, as a part of the unified birth-to-five system through a negotiated services agreement.

The administration is also releasing surveys to existing contracted early childhood providers who may be interested in expanding current capacity or providing 2-K programs in the fall. The RFI and expansion surveys are being issued by New York City Public Schools in coordination with the Mayor's Office of Child Care and both submissions are due by February 19th.

City Council Leaders Call Upon DOI to Investigate Post -9/11 Air Quality Reports

Push Follows Release of City Memo Regarding Exposure Liability

City Council Member and former Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer (D-Manhattan), City Council Speaker Julie Menin (D-Manhattan), organized labor representatives and advocates for 9/11 survivors, called for an expedited Department of Investigation (DOI) inquiry into post-9/11 air quality records.

The call comes after attorneys found a City memo detailing the anticipation of lawsuits related to air quality effects in the weeks following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"The City of New York has failed to take responsibility for telling the Downtown community and first responders that the air was safe to breathe," Council Speaker Julie Menin said at the news conference. "...It is unconscionable that the City of New York did not take responsibility for basically lying to not only first responders but to the whole downtown community."



City Council Speaker Menin points to 9/11 air quality memo during a press conference at City Hall

The Council passed legislation in July 2025, ordering a two-year DOI probe. However, Council Member Brewer questioned whether the department had the necessary resources to complete the review. The Council Members proposed a \$3 million allocation to help fund the probe, according to published reports.

Thomas Hart, President and Business Representative of Local 94 Operating Engineers, asserted "It's time for our new mayor to step up and do what he needs to do to get the information out to the people who really need it."

2026 Full Scholarships for Labor & Social Justice Champions

The "Diversity in Labor" Scholarship Program at the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies awards full scholarships plus additional funds to students to earn a B.A. or M.A. in Labor Studies. Open to It is open to both full-time and part-time students. The deadline for applications is March 11, 2026.

For information, CUNY is holding Diversity Scholarship Info Sessions, sign up [here](#). In addition, interested individuals can email: rose.imperato@slu.cuny.edu or call / text: 646-316-2483.

2026 Queens Community Board Application

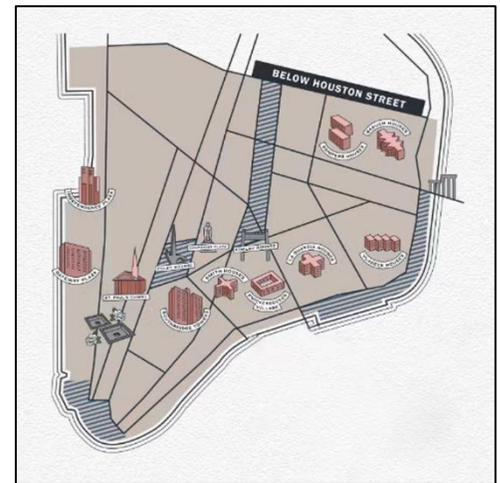
Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. is now accepting [applications](#) from qualified and civic-minded individuals interested in serving on one of Queens' 14 local community boards. Applications close on February 13, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

To be eligible to serve on a Queens Community Board, you must be a resident of New York City and must live, work, or have a professional or other significant interest in that board's district. If you are uncertain about which community board district in which you live, work, or otherwise have an interest, please visit boundaries.beta.nyc and search your address.

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, last 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, February 9th

Senate Insurance Committee, State Capitol, Room 124, 11:30 a.m.

Senate Health Committee, State Capitol, Room 124, Noon.

Tuesday, February 10th

NYS Senate/Assembly Hearings on Executive Budget - Health/ Medicaid, Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany, 9:30 a.m.

Senate Higher Education Committee, State Capitol, Room 124, 9:30 a.m.

Senate Education Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 510, 10 a.m.

Senate Social Services Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 410, 10 a.m.

Senate Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 913, 10:30 a.m.

Senate Housing Committee, Construction and Community Development Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 511, 10:30 a.m.

Senate Racing Committee, Gaming and Wagering Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 810, 11 a.m.

Senate Civil Service and Pensions Committee, State Capitol, Room 124, Noon.

Senate Budget and Revenue Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 913, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 11th

NYS Senate and Assembly Hearing on Executive Budget - Local Government/General Government, Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany, 9:30 a.m.

Senate Labor Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 308, 9:30 a.m.

Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee, Legislative Office Building, Room 611, 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, February 12th

NYS Senate and Assembly Hearing on Executive Budget – Public Protection, Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany, 9:30 a.m.

New York City

Monday, February 9th

Committee on Housing and Buildings, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 3, 10 a.m.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 2, 10 a.m.

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Relations, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Oversight - Affordability in New York City's Arts and Cultural Sector.

Committee on Cultural Affairs and Libraries, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, February 10th

Committee on Education, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 2, 10 a.m.
Oversight - Mayoral Control of NYC Public Schools

Committees on General Welfare & Public Safety, Council Chambers - City Hall, 10 a.m.
Oversight - Protecting Lives in the Cold: Oversight of NYC's Code Blue Operations

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

Wednesday, February 11th

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, Resiliency and Dispositions, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1, 11 a.m.

Committee on Land Use, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 1, 11:30 a.m.

Committee on Contracts, 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 2, 1 p.m.
Prohibiting city agencies from procuring single-use water containers.

Thursday, February 12th

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

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

Disclaimer: The materials in this ***This Week in New York*** report are provided for informational purposes only and are not intended to be a comprehensive review of legislative or governmental or political developments, to create a client-consultant/lobbyist relationship, or to provide consulting, lobbying or political advice. Readers are cautioned not to attempt to solve specific problems on the basis of information contained in this ***This Week in New York***. If consulting, lobbying or government relations advice is required, please consult a professional expert in such matters.

The information contained herein, does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC, or any of its members or employees or its clients. Neither Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC, nor its members or employees make any warranty, expressed or implied, and assume no legal liability with respect to the information in this report, and do not guarantee that the information is accurate, complete, useful or current. Accordingly, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC is not responsible for any claimed damages resulting from any alleged error, inaccuracy, or omission. This communication may be considered an advertisement or solicitation. To request that copies of this publication be sent to a new address or fax number, to unsubscribe, or to comment on its contents, please contact Theresa Cosgrove at tcosgrove@pittabishop.com or at (518) 449-3320.

To Our Clients: If you have any questions regarding any of the matters addressed in this newsletter, or regarding any legislative, government relations or political or consulting or related issues in general, please contact the Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC professional with whom you usually work. ***This Week in New York*** is a publication of Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC.

120 Broadway, 28th Floor
New York, New York 10271
Telephone (212) 652-3890

111 Washington Avenue, St. 401
Albany, New York 12210
Telephone (518) 449-3320

1220 19th Street NW, St. 600
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone (202) 964-4753