



A PUBLICATION OF
PITTA BISHOP & DEL GIORNO LLC
Government Relations / Consulting

THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

AUGUST 7, 2026 EDITION



“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 Signs New Law Strengthening Cooling Tower Safety Amidst Deadly Upper East Side Legionnaires’ Outbreak

On August 5, 2026, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation strengthening inspection and maintenance requirements for cooling towers in New York City amidst this summer's deadly Legionnaires' disease outbreak on Manhattan's Upper East Side. As of this week the outbreak has resulted in seven confirmed deaths and approximately 90 confirmed cases, making it one of the City's most significant Legionnaires' disease outbreaks in recent years.

Legionnaires' disease is a severe form of pneumonia caused by inhaling water droplets contaminated with *Legionella* bacteria. Older adults, smokers, and individuals with weakened immune systems face the greatest risk of serious illness. Although health officials believe the contamination source has been eliminated, several hospitalized patients later succumbed to the disease, bringing the death toll to seven.

The outbreak has been concentrated in the Carnegie Hill and Yorkville neighborhoods, primarily affecting ZIP codes 10028, 10128, and 10075. During the City's investigation, health officials inspected 183 cooling towers and found that 77 tested positive for *Legionella* DNA. Building owners were immediately directed to disinfect contaminated systems. No new cases have been reported since mid-July, indicating the outbreak has likely been contained. The New York City Council will hold a hearing on September 2, 2026, to examine the City's response.

Governor Hochul signed [S08472-A/A09058A](#), sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare and Assemblyman Jordan Wright. The law requires owners and operators of New York City cooling towers to certify twice each year that their systems have been properly inspected, tested, cleaned, and disinfected. It also shortens the timeframe for correcting hazardous conditions identified during inspections and increases civil penalties for owners who fail to comply with maintenance and reporting requirements. The legislation builds on New York City's cooling tower safety program established after the 2015 Bronx Legionnaires' disease outbreak. It is intended to reduce the risk of future outbreaks through stronger oversight, more frequent compliance certifications, and enhanced enforcement.

Key Provisions of the New Law

- Requires biannual certification that cooling towers have been properly inspected, tested, cleaned, and disinfected.
- Accelerates remediation when *Legionella* is detected.
- Increases penalties for noncompliance with inspection, maintenance, and reporting requirements.
- Strengthens oversight to better protect public health and reduce the risk of future Legionnaires' disease outbreaks in New York City.

CSEA Ratifies New 5-Year Deal, Delivering Raises and Improved Benefits for More Than 55,000 State Employees

Governor Kathy Hochul has announced the ratification of new five-year labor agreements with all four bargaining units represented by the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), covering more than 55,000 New York State employees. The agreements, which run from April 2, 2026 through April 1, 2031, were approved with overwhelming support from CSEA members.

What's in the Contract

Each of the four agreements includes annual salary increases across the five-year term: 4.5% in year one, followed by 4%, 3.5%, 3%, and 3% in subsequent years — adding up to more than 18% in cumulative raises over the life of the contract. The agreements also include boosts to location pay and several unit-specific payments.

On the benefits side, members will receive 20 hours of paid pre-natal leave and an increase in the cap for sick leave accumulation. Health insurance provisions have also been updated to reduce out-of-pocket costs, including the elimination of certain co-pays and new incentives to use in-network providers.

"Every day, dedicated CSEA members perform essential work to keep New York moving, and these agreements recognize those efforts while also serving as a fair deal for New York's taxpayers," said Governor Hochul. "Our valued public servants are the backbone of a strong Empire State." CSEA President Mary E. Sullivan echoed that sentiment: "This contract is an investment in them and in the future of our state. Every day, more than 55,000 CSEA members keep our roads safe, care for our most vulnerable neighbors, maintain our parks and campuses, protect our communities and deliver the public services New Yorkers depend on."

In The News-New York City



More Than 2,000 Families Receive 2-K Offers as City Advances Universal Child Care

Governor Kathy Hochul and Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced that more than 2,000 New York City families began receiving offers for free 2-K seats on August 4, marking the official launch of one of the Mayor's signature affordability initiatives and a major milestone toward the shared goal of providing universal childcare for every New York City family with young children.

Universal childcare was a central part of Mayor Mamdani's successful 2025 mayoral campaign and a key component of Governor Hochul's FY 2027 New York State Budget. Throughout the campaign, the Mayor argued that the high cost of childcare had become one of the greatest financial burdens facing working families, often forcing parents—particularly women—to leave the workforce or spend tens of thousands of dollars annually on childcare.

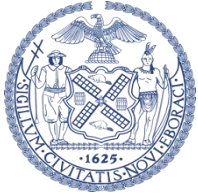
The initial rollout will provide more than 2,000 free seats for two-year-olds this fall, with plans to expand to approximately 12,000 children by 2027 before ultimately achieving citywide universal availability. The initiative is being funded through a partnership with Governor Kathy Hochul, whose administration committed more than \$1.2 billion to expand early childhood education and launch the City's new 2-K program. The first phase focuses on neighborhoods selected based on a combination of economic need, projected demand for childcare, existing gaps in access, provider capacity, and readiness to rapidly expand services, allowing the City to build the infrastructure needed for a future successful citywide rollout. The initial communities include Washington Heights and Inwood in Manhattan; Fordham, Kingsbridge, Riverdale, and Belmont in the Bronx; Canarsie, Brownsville, and Ocean Hill in Brooklyn; and Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, Woodhaven, and the Rockaways in Queens.

Announcing the expansion, Governor Hochul emphasized that affordable childcare has been a cornerstone of her administration's agenda. "Today, for the first time, families across NYC can begin applying for free childcare for their two-year-old, making the dream of 2-K in NYC finally a reality," the Governor said. She added that expanding access to affordable childcare is critical to helping working families remain in New York while strengthening the state's economy.

Mayor Mamdani said the program is designed to reflect the realities facing working parents. "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. Universal childcare must meet the real lives of working people."

Unlike traditional school-day programs, the City's new 2-K model is designed around the needs of working families. Most participating programs will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 260 days each year, replacing the traditional school calendar with full-day, full-year programming that provides reliable childcare while parents are at work.

City officials reported that demand for the inaugural class significantly exceeded available seats, highlighting the need for expanded affordable childcare. More than 5,700 families applied for the initial 2,000 seats, and officials said the phased rollout is intended to build the workforce and infrastructure necessary to support universal access while maintaining high-quality programming for participating children.



New York City Council Launches Push to Improve Pedestrian Safety Amid Rising E-Bike Concerns

New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin announced on August 4 that the Council will undertake a comprehensive review of pedestrian safety and the regulation of electric bicycles, e-scooters, and other micromobility devices in response to a growing number of crashes and public safety concerns. As part of the initiative, the Council's Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will hold a major hearing on September 30 to examine a broad package of legislative proposals aimed at making city streets and sidewalks safer.

The Council will consider 17 separate proposals, including recommendations that require New York State to authorize registration, licensing, and insurance requirements for certain classes of electric bicycles, particularly higher-speed models. Because state law governs vehicle registration and licensing, the City cannot impose those requirements independently, the Council is urging the state legislature and Governor to provide the necessary authority in next year's session.

The Speaker's announcement does not come as a surprise to many who have been following the issue closely. During a recent City Council Health Committee hearing on legislation concerning horse-drawn carriages in Central Park, Speaker Menin foreshadowed that the Council was preparing a broader package of legislation addressing pedestrian safety and the growing challenges posed by micromobility vehicles.

The renewed focus comes amid heightened public concern over dangerous riding behavior by some operators of e-bikes and other micromobility devices. Although New York City law limits electric bicycles to 15 miles per hour, complaints have mounted regarding riders traveling at excessive speeds, operating on sidewalks, and disregarding traffic signals. The Council's review is expected to examine whether stronger enforcement of existing laws, additional safety requirements, or new legislative tools are necessary to better protect pedestrians while preserving micromobility as an important transportation option.

Speaker Menin has emphasized that the Council intends to pursue a balanced, data-driven approach. The September 30 hearing will include testimony from city agencies, transportation experts, advocates, labor representatives, delivery workers, and members of the public to evaluate the proposals before any legislation advances.

Governor Hochul Announces Completion of \$161 Million Grand Central Parkway Bridge Rehabilitation Project

Governor Kathy Hochul has announced the completion of a \$161 million project to rehabilitate seven bridges along the Grand Central Parkway in Queens. The seven crossings now carry new concrete decks, repaired steel, and fresh concrete barriers built to last another 40 years.

The Grand Central Parkway bridges carry roughly 300,000 vehicles every day, making them among the busiest crossings in the state. The project, delivered through a design-build process, included structural repairs, new safety barriers and drainage systems, pavement improvements, and upgraded lighting — all improvements that will make travel throughout Queens more reliable for residents, commuters, and visitors alike.

As the \$19 billion modernization of JFK International Airport continues, the rehabilitated corridor serves as a critical gateway to the airport, and is part of Governor Hochul's historic \$34.5 billion investment through the State Department of Transportation's five-year capital plan.

Mayor Mamdani Targets Illegal Online Sales of High-Speed Motorized Devices

Mayor Zohran Mamdani has announced a major enforcement initiative aimed at curbing the online sale of illegal high-speed electric vehicles that cannot legally be operated on New York City streets. Under New York City law, electric bicycles and electric scooters are subject to a maximum operating speed limit of 15 miles per hour. The City has issued cease-and-desist orders to 42 online retailers, directing them to immediately stop selling prohibited motorized devices to customers in all 175 New York City ZIP codes. Retailers that fail to comply by August 18 could face civil penalties of up to \$2,000 for each illegal sale. The enforcement action is intended to prevent the sale of high-speed motorized vehicles that exceed the City's legal operating limits or otherwise fail to comply with applicable state and local laws.

The action follows a series of serious and fatal crashes involving high-speed electric motorcycles, scooters, and oversized e-bikes, including the recent death of a 17-year-old New Yorker. According to City officials, many of these vehicles are marketed as "e-bikes" despite exceeding New York City's legal limits for speed, motor power, or weight, making them illegal to operate on public streets.

The enforcement effort targets online marketplaces and retailers that continue to directly advertise, and ship prohibited devices into New York City. Officials contend that consumers should not be expected to determine whether a vehicle complies with complex municipal regulations and that retailers have a responsibility to ensure the products they sell comply with local law.

Mayor Mamdani stated that the City will use all available legal tools to prevent the sale of dangerous vehicles that threaten pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and riders alike. The administration emphasized that safer streets require accountability not only from operators but also from businesses that profit from selling illegal devices.

New York City Council Announces AI-Powered Tree Canopy Partnership and Initiative to Combat Extreme Heat

On August 5, 2026, New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin joined Cornell Tech, New Yorkers for Parks, and fellow Council Members to announce the launch of the Generative Canopy Project, an innovative initiative that will use artificial intelligence, advanced mapping technology, and community engagement to identify the locations where new trees can provide the greatest environmental and public health benefits. The project is designed to help address the growing impacts of extreme heat while expanding the City's urban forest.

The initiative will focus on neighborhoods in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx that are particularly vulnerable to urban heat island effects and limited tree coverage because of a lack of green spaces. Researchers will combine AI-driven analysis with local input to prioritize future tree planting locations that maximize shade, improve air quality, and enhance neighborhood resilience.

The announcement supports New York City's broader Urban Forest Plan, which establishes a long-term goal of increasing the City's tree canopy to 30 percent. Expanding tree coverage is expected to reduce summer temperatures, improve public health, manage stormwater, and enhance the quality of life for residents across the five boroughs.

New York City Commission on Human Rights Announces More than \$682,000 in Anti-Discrimination Enforcement Awards

On August 4, 2026, the New York City Commission on Human Rights announced that it had issued four final decisions ordering more than \$682,000 in damages, civil penalties, and other relief for victims of unlawful discrimination, underscoring the City's continued commitment to enforcing one of the nation's strongest civil rights laws.

The Commission's decisions addressed a range of violations of the New York City Human Rights Law, including religious discrimination, disability accommodations, and unlawful housing practices involving employers, landlords, and real estate professionals. In addition to financial awards, the respondents were ordered to implement corrective measures designed to prevent future violations and ensure compliance with the law.

Commissioner and Chair Christine Clarke emphasized that vigorous enforcement remains essential to protecting New Yorkers from discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. The Commission also encouraged individuals who believe they have experienced discrimination to file complaints so that their rights can be investigated and protected under the City's Human Rights Law.

Coming Up

New York State

*There are currently no meetings at the State Level at the time of this Publication**

New York City

Tuesday, August 11th

Committee on Finance, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, August 12th

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, Resiliency and Dispositions, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 10:30 a.m.

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, August 13th

Committee on Finance, Committee Room – City Hall, 11:00 a.m.

Committee on Land Use, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 11:00 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.

40 Wall Street, 24th 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
