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THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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"Obstacles don't define us. Rather, it is the unparalleled courage and character of us that defines us as a people. So my confidence in the future is steeped in our glorious past - in the face of adversity, we always persist. We persevere, we prevail." Governor Kathy Hochul



In The News-New York State



Governor Hochul Meets with Domestic Violence Survivors, Pledges to Fix Discovery Laws

As New York moves deeper into FY2026 without a spending plan, Governor Kathy Hochul staunchly maintains her "line in the sand," meeting with domestic violence survivors in Albany this week, promising to fight for changes to New York's discovery laws that she says are denying victims justice.

"I'm really proud to be fighting on their behalf, and people all over this state who are denied the justice because of some technicality in the discovery laws that are written out," Governor Hochul explained. "And they put their heart and soul into trying to get justice and it's thrown out because something minor, irrelevant, is missing — I'm going to keep fighting until we fix this. I'm going to keep fighting to put this in the Budget."

Both the Senate and Assembly omitted the Governor's Executive Budget discovery amendments in their respective one house budgets. The Senate committed to "collaborating with the Executive and the Assembly throughout the budget process to develop a balanced solution that ensures prosecutors fulfill their discovery obligations while also preventing the dismissal of serious cases for mere technicalities," while Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie prefers to discuss policy outside of the budget negotiations.

The divergence has slowed the budget negotiations and the Legislature has passed four budget extenders to keep the State funded. The Legislature left Albany on Thursday for the Passover Holiday and will return on Tuesday to continue their work.



CMS Spotlights NY Medicaid Programming in Policy Shift Announcement

New York's Medicaid demonstration programs under the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) 1115 waiver face expiration, as CMS is "[taking action to preserve the core mission of the Medicaid program](#)" by putting an end to spending that duplicates resources available through other federal and state programs or is not directly tied to healthcare services.

CMS sent a [letter](#) to states on Thursday notifying them that it does not intend to approve new or extend existing requests for federal matching funds for state expenditures on these two types of programs — designated state health programs (DSHP) and designated state investment programs (DSIP).

CMS indicated that DSHPs and DSIPs are state-funded health programs that, without "creative interpretations" of section 1115 demonstration authority, would not have qualified for federal Medicaid funding. In the press release, CMS cited examples of programs that do not tie directly to services provided to Medicaid beneficiaries including:

- \$11M in grants to a labor union in New York to reduce costs of health insurance for certain childcare providers;
- \$241M for a program in New York for non-medical in-home services, such as housekeeping; and
- \$3.8M for a diversity in medicine initiative in New York.

According to *Politico*, New York currently has the authority to spend up to \$7.5 billion on a demonstration program tackling health equity under a section 1115 waiver that expires in March 2027.



Comptroller DiNapoli: State Must Improve Management of Medical Equipment Stockpile After Spending Millions During the COVID-19 Pandemic

New York state bought over \$450 worth of medical equipment at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, including ventilators and x-ray machines, that is now unused in storage facilities across the state, missing recommended maintenance and costing taxpayers storage expenses, according to an audit released today by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

“During the pandemic, New York state quickly purchased medical equipment to address the public health crisis,” Comptroller DiNapoli said. “Now, hundreds of thousands of unused devices sit idle. I urge the Department of Health to develop and execute a strategic plan for the maintenance and use of these and future medical equipment purchases, so New York is well prepared for the next public health emergency.”

According to the Comptroller, to compete for the purchase of durable medical equipment (DME) at the start of the pandemic, the state took emergency steps to accelerate its procurement process, inconsistent with Office of General Services (OGS) guidance. According to the Department of Health (DOH) and OGS, procurement orders during the onset of the pandemic were determined by the former Executive Chamber with assistance from a consultant who was responsible for projecting the quantity of DME the state would need to respond to COVID-19.

Comptroller DiNapoli’s auditors determined the state paid \$452.8 million to purchase 247,343 items of DME and received 51 items donated by others or from the federal government, for a total of 247,394 items procured during the onset of COVID-19. Of the total DME available for use (including pre-COVID-19 inventory), only 324 items were distributed during the public health emergency, and only three items from the 247,343 DME purchased during COVID-19.

DME now in storage includes CPAP/BiPAP machines, ventilators, oxygen tanks, pulse oximeters (which measure the saturation of oxygen carried in red blood cells), oxygen concentrators, and infusion pumps.

When the public health emergency ended, a Medical Stockpile Steering Committee was created to make recommendations on what quantity and type of DME should be retained in the emergency stockpile. The committee recommended DOH retain 51,140 DME items, and that 4,468 items should receive scheduled preventive maintenance, leaving almost 200,000 DME items without a plan for utilization. DOH could not provide auditors with documentation supporting how the steering committee reached their decisions, leaving auditors without a way to assess the committee’s conclusions.

Auditors found that DOH began to identify ways to reduce its inventory as COVID cases decreased, but did not finalize a process or create written procedures. Auditors determined limited action was taken to reduce the stockpile. DOH conducted some surveys of the medical community, with facilities expressing interest in 24,585 DME items, but very few items were sent to the medical facilities.

Auditors also found a lack of controls during the pandemic contributed to DOH being unable to account for all the DME purchased, with credit card transactions an issue. Looking at a sample of nine credit card purchases, auditors found DOH could not provide proof of delivery for four purchases which included 140 pieces of DME worth \$312,644. The audit notes that the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and the New York National Guard may have purchased, stored or transported DME, as well as confirmed if equipment was received during the early stages of the pandemic.

Early in the pandemic, DOH contracted with a vendor to perform initial inspections of the DME, as well as preventive maintenance and repairs on certain equipment. Auditors found that the contract ended in December 2023, and DOH had not secured another contractor. As of December 2024, 4,036 of the 4,468 DME items recommended to have scheduled preventive maintenance were overdue. That could affect product warranties and risk additional costs to the state for repairs that could have been covered. In addition, failure to maintain DME increases the risk that equipment will need more costly repairs or will not be ready for emergency distribution or function if needed.

In The News-New York City



Mayor Adams, NYPD Commissioner Tisch Launch New Quality of Life Division to Enhance Public Safety and Community Trust



New York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York City Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner Jessica Tisch this week announced the formation of the NYPD's new Quality of Life Division — a citywide public safety initiative focused on enhancing trust between communities and the police while addressing everyday issues that impact New Yorkers' sense of safety and well-being.

The Quality of Life Division will unite specially-trained officers from various existing community-oriented roles — including neighborhood coordination officers, youth coordination officers, and traffic safety officers — into a citywide effort to tackle persistent quality-of-life concerns.

According to the Mayor, non-emergency 311 concerns, such as noise complaints, illegal parking, homelessness-related issues, outdoor drug use, aggressive panhandling, and other issues that affect New Yorkers' everyday life, have risen steadily across the five boroughs over the last six years.

The Quality of Life Division will roll out in phases, beginning with a pilot program in five precincts and one housing Police Service Area: the 13th, 40th, 60th, 75th, and 101st precincts, along with Police Service Area 1. Over the next two months, the initiative will be evaluated and refined before expanding to other commands.

The Division will be led by Deputy Chief William Glynn. Glynn.



Speaker Adams Readies to Take Action Against Adams' Administration Decision to Allow ICE to Operate on Rikers Island

The New York City Council yesterday passed [Resolution 836](#), sponsored by Speaker Adrienne Adams, authorizing the Speaker to take legal action to defend against the Adams Administration's violation of Sanctuary Laws and the Trump Administration's attacks on the City of New York.

On Tuesday, First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro's issued [Executive Order 50](#) to re-establish the ability for ICE agents to operate on Rikers Island for criminal enforcement.

"Today, I have entered an executive order to re-establish a federal law enforcement office space at Rikers Island solely for criminal investigations, consistent with New York City law, after Mayor Adams delegated all powers and responsibilities related to this topic to me. This directive is driven by one priority and one priority alone: to keep all New Yorkers safe," First Deputy Mastro said.

He asserted that the executive order is expressly limited to establishing office space and coordinating with federal law enforcement on criminal investigations, not civil matters.

“Re-establishing such office space on Rikers Island for federal agencies, such as the FBI, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, will allow our correctional intelligence bureau to better coordinate on criminal investigations — in particular, those focused on violent transnational criminal gangs — and make our city safer,” First Deputy Mastro explained.

Bills Passed by the City Council

Introduction 168-A, sponsored by Majority Leader Amanda Farias, requires the New York Police Department (NYPD), upon request, to provide the Department of Investigation (DOI) with an itemized list of all surveillance technologies currently used by the Department, and provide information on all data access and retention policies for data collected by such technologies.

Introduction 233-A, sponsored by Council Member Crystal Hudson, requires the NYPD to publish on its website a written policy that establishes procedures and regulations for the Department's use of facial recognition technologies.

Introduction 480-A, sponsored by Council Member Julie Won, modifies the [Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology \(POST\) Act](#) to require the NYPD to publish Impact and Use policies for each distinct surveillance technology it uses and make clear which entities use the data gathered from their technologies, how the data is protected, and the potential impact of such technologies on protected groups.

Introduction 694-A, sponsored by Council Member Sandy Nurse, creates a strategic planning process for establishing and maintaining a citywide public bathroom network. The agencies would be required to produce a strategic planning report, to be updated every four years, with the goal of providing at least 2,120 public bathrooms by the year 2035, at least half of which would be publicly owned.

Introduction 800-A, sponsored by Council Member Nantasha M. Williams, requires the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to develop criteria by which they prioritize tree maintenance, taking into account the likelihood of potential harm to nearby or adjacent structures, whether a tree or limb that has already fallen is still capable of causing harm, and the proximity of a damaged tree or limb to nearby buildings.

Introduction 1114-A, sponsored by Council Member Julie Won, requires the DOT Commissioner to create and maintain an online capital project tracker on its website, to be updated three times a year, to provide detailed information on each pending public-facing capital project under DOT's jurisdiction.

Briefs

Former NYS Corrections Officers Eligible for Local Jobs as Executive Order Expires

Former New York State corrections officers are eligible to be hired for local jobs, as part of an executive order signed by Governor Kathy Hochul expired April 9th. Local governments are now allowed to start hiring those who were terminated following wildcat strikes at State correctional facilities. The officers are eligible to work at town, city, village and county-level jobs in New York State.

The hiring ban for state jobs remains in place, and it is unclear if or when it will be lifted.

Also starting Wednesday, DOCCS Commissioner Daniel Martuscello will begin assessing the safety of state corrections facilities and evaluate re-introducing the HALT Act on a facility-by-facility basis.

U.S. Supreme Court Declines to Rule on Constitutionality of NYS's Law Requiring "Good Moral Character" to Carry a Handgun

The U.S. Supreme Court declined Monday to decide whether a New York law that requires residents to have "good moral character" to carry a handgun is constitutional, leaving in place most of the state's ban on carrying weapons in "sensitive places," such as schools, parks and theaters.

"New York's strong gun safety laws save lives, and gun violence has declined by 53 percent since a pandemic-era peak," said Governor Hochul. "Today, the Supreme Court has officially rejected an attempt to block this critical legislation, ensuring the core tenets of the law I signed in 2022 will remain in effect. Public safety will always be my top priority, and I'll continue fighting to keep New Yorkers safe."

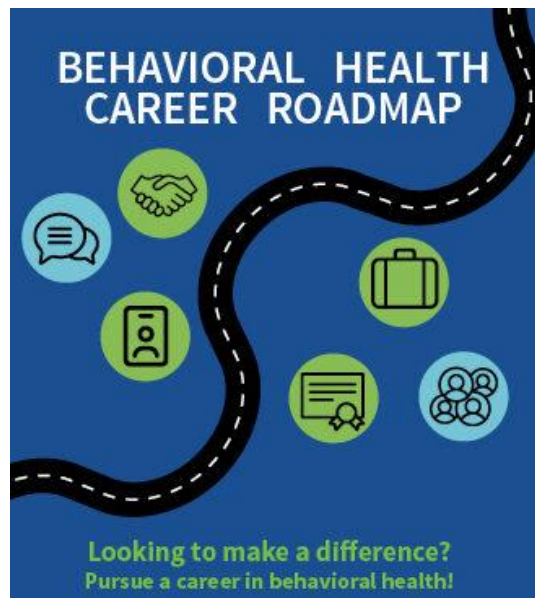
NYS Office of Cannabis Management & NYS Department of Labor Launch Cannabis Responsible Workforce Training Program

The New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) and the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) this week announced the launch of the [Responsible Workforce Training Program](#), an initiative aimed at providing comprehensive safety education to workers in the cannabis industry.

New York is the first state to require and develop Cannabis Product Safety and Responsibility and Cannabis Workforce Responsibility courses related to the health, safety, and employment standards for all cannabis workforce participants. These courses, in addition to training on implicit bias, cultural competency, and licensee specific trainings, represent a significant step toward building a workforce empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the New York cannabis industry.

New York State adult-use cannabis regulations require that all persons performing activities under a licensed cannabis business complete Responsible Workforce Training within 30 days of the employee's start date.

Behavioral Health Career Roadmap: Looking to Make a Difference?



The Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health has launched the [Behavioral Health Career Roadmap](#), outlining job opportunities as well as certifications and college degrees to help you prepare for success. According to the Office, behavioral health professionals respond to the mental, emotional, or substance use challenges of individuals and communities, promoting well-being through positions in direct service and administration.

The behavioral health public sector workforce includes jobs in government agencies, public hospitals and clinics, schools, facilities that accept Medicaid, faith-based organizations, and non-profits and community-based organizations. There are many job openings at every level of experience, and the growth of behavioral health careers is projected to continue expanding by more than 25% through 2030. The Office also encourages career coaches, case managers, and college counselors to utilize the Career Roadmap as an advising tool.

Sexual Violence Awareness Month: Building a Culture of Consent

As part of Sexual Violence Awareness Month, the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence is highlighting the importance of working together to reduce sexual violence by fostering a safe and respectful environment. Consent is a building block of respectful, healthy communication and it is something we can teach to promote healthy relationships and prevent sexual violence. Here are some ways we can build respect through consent in our communities:

- Model enthusiastic consent where applicable.
- Challenge myths such as the idea that past consent applies to future situations.
- Believe survivors and support them how they would like to be supported.



SIEDC & Staten Island Chamber of Commerce Announces Next Round of Small Business Grant Opportunities

Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) and the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce this week released applications for Round 2 of the Small Business Grant Fund.

Businesses located along the commercial corridor in St. George, Tompkinsville, and Stapleton can now apply for funding up to \$100,000 to improve their commercial businesses as part of the \$10 million New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant secured for Staten Island through a partnership between the organizations. Projects must be completed by December 2025.

Applications are due May 9, 2025 by 4:00 p.m. Visit siedc.org/dri to view funding requirements and download an application.

Coming Up

New York State

Tuesday, April 15th

New York State Senate Session, Senate Chamber, Albany, 11 a.m.

New York State Assembly Session, Assembly Chamber, Albany, 9 a.m.

New York City

Tuesday, April 15th

Committee on Public Housing, 250 Broadway – Committee Room, 14th Floor, 10 a.m.

Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Immigration, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, April 16th

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation,
250 Broadway – Committee Room, 16th Floor, 10 a.m.

Committee on Finance, 250 Broadway – Committee Room, 16th Floor, 10 a.m.

Committee on Aging, Committee Room – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Criminal Justice, Council Chambers – City Hall, 12 p.m.

Thursday, April 17th

Committee on Women and Gender Equity, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Civil Service and Labor, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises,

250 Broadway – Committee Room, 16th Floor, 11 a.m.

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