



*“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 City*

### **Federal Judge Dismisses Case Against NYC Mayor Eric Adams**

Manhattan Federal Judge Dale Ho dismissed the corruption case against Mayor Eric Adams on Wednesday with prejudice, bringing an end to the federal inquiry.

“The Court declines, in its limited discretion under Rule 48(a), to endorse that outcome. Instead, it dismisses this case with prejudice—meaning that the Government may not bring the charges in the Indictment against Mayor Adams in the future. In light of DOJ’s rationales, dismissing the case without prejudice would create the unavoidable perception that the Mayor’s freedom depends on his ability to carry out the immigration enforcement priorities of the administration, and that he might be more beholden to the demands of the federal government than to the wishes of his own constituents. That appearance is inevitable, and it counsels in favor of dismissal with prejudice. Notably, Mayor Adams has filed his own motion seeking dismissal with prejudice on other grounds, and DOJ has not opposed his motion, effectively waiving any objection to permanent dismissal of this case. The parties offer the Court no basis to dismiss this case in a manner that would allow DOJ to reinitiate it in the future, and the Court declines to do so.”

The mayor was indicted last September on conspiracy, wire fraud, and bribery following allegations that he accepted illegal campaign contributions and travel perks. He pleaded not guilty and was scheduled to stand trial this month. However, in February, the Justice Department moved to drop the charges against the Mayor without prejudice, retaining the right to refile. Judge Ho rejected this proposal in the [78-page decision](#).

“As I've said all along, this case should have never been brought and I did nothing wrong, Mayor Adams said, speaking at Gracie Mansion following the decision, Mayor Adams said. “I am now happy that our city can finally close the book and focus solely on the future of our great city. I want to thank New Yorkers who stood by my side, who prayed for me, who supported me from day one and stuck with me while we focused on the work at hand...I also want to apologize to New Yorkers for having to go through this with me, a baseless case that should have never been brought in the first place.”



## Governor Hochul Announces Actions to Boost Outdoor Dining in New York City

Governor Kathy Hochul announced yesterday that, effective immediately, the New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) will accept Conditional Approvals issued by the New York City Department of Transportation as proof of municipal authorization for the use of public space under the Dining Out New York program. This change streamlines the approval process for restaurants and bars seeking to expand their licensed premises to include outdoor municipal space.

“Outdoor dining has become an essential part of New York City’s vibrant hospitality industry, and my administration is committed to ensuring businesses have the support they need to thrive,” Governor Hochul said. “By recognizing NYC DOT’s Conditional Approvals, we are making it easier for restaurants and bars to offer al fresco options while ensuring compliance with the law and consideration of local input.”

Under the new policy, licensees must submit a complete alteration application to the SLA within 60 days of receiving a municipal permit or written authorization, including an NYC DOT Conditional Approval. These applications, which require proof of workers’ compensation and general liability insurance for the municipal space, can be submitted at [municipalspace@sla.ny.gov](mailto:municipalspace@sla.ny.gov) and will be processed without a fee.

“The SLA is committed to delivering licensing decisions efficiently to support small businesses while protecting public safety,” New York State Liquor Authority Chair Lily Fan said. “We appreciate the hard work and collaboration of our partners at the NYC DOT and the guidance of the Executive Chamber. Our shared goal is to make NYC’s Dining Out program a success, and I thank our staff for their diligence in processing these alteration applications.”

About 80 percent of requested sidewalk set-ups — or 1,808 out of 2,241 applications — have gotten approval, according to the city Department of Transportation. Add that number to the 600 of 1,178 requests for dining set-ups in the actual street that were approved, and the outdoor roadside dining areas total more than 2,400. The Adams administration said dozens more such al fresco situations are expected to obtain conditional approvals in the coming weeks.

## Mayor Adams Leads Rally Thanking State Partners for Supporting "Axe the Tax for the Working Class"

New York City Mayor Eric Adams this week led a rally at City Hall promoting the inclusion of his *Axe the Tax for the Working Class* proposal in the Fiscal Year 2026 New York state budget and thanking state partners, labor unions, and nonprofit advocates for their support. The ambitious proposal will bring significant tax relief to working-class families by eliminating and cutting city personal income taxes for more than 582,000 filers and their dependents.



First announced in December 2024 with the support of New York State Senator Leroy Comrie and New York State Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, the plan would return over \$63 million to New Yorkers by eliminating the New York City Personal Income Tax for filers with dependents living at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty line, as well as lowering city personal income taxes for filers with dependents immediately above that threshold too. If enacted, *Axe the Tax for the Working Class* could bring relief to working-class families as soon as tax year 2025 and help strengthen the Adams administration's efforts to make New York City the best place to raise a family.

*Axe the Tax for the Working Class* would eliminate New York City Personal Income Taxes for filers with dependents — largely families with children — living at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty line. Additionally, the proposal would gradually phase out the New York City Personal Income Tax for filers whose income is immediately above — within \$5,000 — of 150 percent of the federal poverty line.

“Hardworking New Yorkers, including the hospitality workers we represent, deserve a city that prioritizes their financial well-being. While our members are able to band together to fight for living wages and quality benefits, tens of thousands of workers earning minimum wage continue to struggle to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. *Axe the Tax for the Working Class* is a meaningful step towards providing much needed-relief for working families, helping them keep more of their hard earned wages,” said Rich Maroko, president, Hotel and Gaming Trades Council. “The Hotel & Gaming Trades Council is proud to stand with Mayor Adams and our partners in Albany as we work to make New York City a more affordable place to live and work, and we look forward to getting this across the finish line.”

## *In The News-New York State*



### **State Files Amicus Brief Affirming That State Law Does Not Interfere with FARE Act Taking Effect This June**

Governor Kathy Hochul yesterday highlighted her support for New York City's FARE Act, which will prohibit landlords from passing brokers' fees onto tenants when the law goes into effect this June. The State filed an amicus brief to affirm that State law does not interfere with the FARE Act.

The brief, supporting the city against a lawsuit filed by the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY), argues that the state has a “strong interest in ensuring that state law is not improperly interpreted to invalidate tenant-protective local laws like the FARE Act.”

REBNY's lawsuit argued that the FARE Act, which requires landlords to pay for rental brokers they hire, is preempted by state law

However, State officials maintain that state law does not cover every aspect of residential brokerage.

“It does not dictate, with any intent to occupy an entire sphere of oversight, how a broker earns or can claim entitlement to a commission—the issue that the FARE Act primarily regulates,” the amicus brief states.

The City Council approved the FARE Act in November. The measure requires landlords to pay brokers who they hire, rather than forcing tenants to pick up the tab, which in many cases is 15 percent of the first year’s rent. REBNY has argued that landlords will shift these costs to renters by increasing rent (though they can’t do so at stabilized properties).

“New Yorkers deserve a fair chance at affordable housing, and the FARE Act advances that critical goal,” Governor Hochul said. “Renters should not have to face the burden of paying thousands of dollars up front for an apartment, especially when they often are not requesting the services. Come this June, renters will be able to keep their hard-earned money in their pockets which will help them afford to live in the greatest city in the world.”

As part of her FY2026 Money in Your Pockets Budget promotion, Governor Hochul released a [video](#), joining FARE Act sponsor Councilmember Chi Ossé.

“I thank the Governor for her support,” New York City Councilmember Chi Ossé said. “As New Yorkers already know, the lawsuit is a meritless attempt to delay relief for the renters of our city. It is bad-faith and will fail. Come summer, the abusive system of forced broker fees will end.”



## Chapters of the Laws of 2025

**Chapter 102 – Sponsored by AM Pretlow/Senator Krueger** – Authorizes the state comptroller to refund all or any part of bonds when it is to the advantage of the state.

**Chapter 105 – Sponsored by Senator Mayer/AM Jacobsen** – Permits a candidate for office to be employed by a board of elections with prior authorization and a majority vote of the elections commissioners.

**Chapter 114 – Sponsored by Senator Gianaris/AM Dinowitz** – Relates to including rifles and shotguns in warnings to consumers regarding the risk of death or suicide.

**Chapter 115 – Sponsored by Senator Hoylman-Sigal/AM Simon** – Classifies pistol converters as a rapid-fire modification device.

**Chapter 116 – Sponsored by Senator Myrie/AM Solages** -- Strengthens current law which requires credit and debit card issuers to use the merchant category code (MCC) for firearms and ammunition retailers by ensuring that it captures retailers whose bulk sales come from firearms, ammunition and firearms accessories.



## Comptroller DiNapoli: Improved Guidance Needed for State Agencies Using AI To Avoid Risks

New York state's centralized guidance and oversight of agencies' use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is inadequate and creates a risk that the technology could be used irresponsibly, according to an audit released this week by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. The audit looked at the state's overall AI policy and how AI was used at four state agencies: the Office for the Aging, the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Department of Transportation.

"New York state agencies are using AI to monitor prisoners' phone calls, catch fraudulent driver's license applications, assist older adults, and support government services," Comptroller DiNapoli explained. "Our audit found insufficient central guidance and oversight to check that these systems are reliable and accurate, and no inventory of what AI the state is using. This audit is a wake-up call. Stronger governance over the state's growing use of AI is needed to safeguard against the well-known risks that come with it."

According to the Comptroller, while the state has moved to implement AI systems, guardrails for these technologies have not kept pace. Without adequate guidelines and oversight, AI systems that are meant to help expedite and expand services can, for example, expose data to unintended sources and create inequalities in decision-making and the delivery of services.

In New York State, use of AI is governed by the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), which issued its [Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies Policy](#) (AI Policy) in January 2024. The AI Policy requires agencies to assess the risks in the AI systems they use.

Comptroller DiNapoli's audit highlights a "disconnect" between the state's eight-page AI Policy and how agencies understand AI and their responsibilities. While New York's AI Policy gives an overview of responsible AI use, it lacks any detailed guidance on its implementation and instead simply directs agencies to [federal guidelines](#) for further information.

A major problem with the AI Policy, the Comptroller asserted, is that it leaves agencies free to determine what is, or is not, responsible use of AI. Conflicting and confusing guidance regarding use of confidential information with AI systems as well as lack of staff training also create opportunities for inadvertent noncompliance and contribute to concerns about unintended uses and consequences.

The audit made seven recommendations, including that ITS strengthen its AI Policy by including guidance for agencies on adopting AI, work with agencies to support their responsible use of AI, and implement training. The recommendations for the other agencies included creating AI governance structures and policies and coordinating with ITS. The audit also recommended that DMV review its facial recognition system with ITS to determine if it's complying with the state's AI Policy.

# ***Briefs***

## **PEF Executive Board to Consider No-Confidence Vote Against OMH Commissioner Sullivan**

The 120 members of the PEF Executive Board, representing more than 54,000 New York State employees, voted unanimously at their quarterly meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup> to consider a no-confidence vote against Office of Mental Health (OMH) Commissioner Ann Sullivan when they meet again on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

“The board spoke strongly and in unison because they are sick and tired of the lack of action by Commissioner Sullivan when it comes to addressing conditions in the agency that are leading to violent assaults against PEF members and other staff who work there,” said PEF President Wayne Spence.

The board agreed to draft a resolution before its June meeting that will list all the assaults the union is aware of that have not been addressed. In addition, the union leaders committed to holding rallies and press conferences in the coming months outside facilities where workplace violence is occurring.

Not every assault makes headlines, but since April of last year three people were stabbed at Buffalo Psychiatric Center (PC), a PEF member was struck in the head and spent weeks on a respirator after an attack at South Beach PC on Staten Island in September, and just this month a PEF member was sexually assaulted at Pilgrim PC in Suffolk County.

“PEF members at OMH understand they work in a dangerous setting, but this is not part of the job,” said President Spence. “They care for New Yorkers who really need the services they provide, and it’s time for the State to do everything in their power to protect its workforce.”

PEF is advocating for funding to install body scanners at OMH and other State agencies in this year’s budget and is committed to discussing additional policy changes with OMH that will make all facilities safer.

## **NY to Begin Releasing Prison Inmates Early as Staffing Crisis Persists**

State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision Superintendent Daniel F. Martuscello III issued a memo Monday to all state prison superintendents directing them to create spreadsheets of the inmates who would qualify for early release as part of a program to reduce staffing stress at the State prisons.

The details of the early release program, per the memo, included : the incarcerated person must be within 15 to 110 days of an approved release date and has identified an approved residence to use upon release; the program prohibits the early release of anyone serving a sentence for an A-1 or A-1 non-drug offense, a class B through E violent felony offense, or a sex offense, and the list of early release candidates is to be finalized by Friday.

According to published reports, Superintendent Martuscello explained that incarcerated individuals are not eligible for the early release program if they have been convicted of sex crimes, violent felonies or more serious felonies like murder, terrorism, and arson. In addition, those being released early must also have an approved residence, which is not a shelter or Department of Social Services placement. Qualifying individuals would be supervised by a parole officer until their official release date.

## MTA Unveils First Fully Redesigned Subway Map in Half a Century

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) this week unveiled a reimagined subway map, its first new design since 1979.

The new map, which draws from previous versions, aims to simply map reading and the most essential travel information. Designers also focused on text legibility, keeping text on one line wherever possible. The legend on the map is now more detailed and includes accessibility, transfer, and safety information.

The new subway map for weekdays, late nights, and weekends is already displayed on station digital screens and soon will be onboard R211 cars. Replacing physical maps in the remaining subway cars will be done in phases over the coming weeks.

Although this map is a new design, MTA drew from previous maps including:

- Preserving the official brand colors established by the 1979 and 1998 Hertz maps.
- Using a similar geometric and diagrammatic aesthetic introduced to the New York City Subway with the 1972 Vignelli diagram and revived by its successors, Waterhouse Cifuentes.



# *Coming Up*

## *New York State*

### *Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>*

*New York State Assembly Session*, Assembly Chamber, Albany

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

*New York State Board of Regents Meeting*,  
89 Washington Ave – Seminar Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 9 a.m.

*Senate Housing, Construction and Community Development Committee Meeting*,  
511 Legislative Office Building, 3 p.m.

*Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee Meeting*,  
611 Legislative Office Building, 3:30 p.m.

*Senate Judiciary Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 4 p.m.

### *Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>*

*Senate Civil Service and Pensions Committee Meeting*, 123 Capitol, 9:30 a.m.

*Senate Finance Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 10 a.m.

*Senate Transportation Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 10 a.m.

*Senate Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 10 a.m.

*Senate Agriculture Committee Meeting*, 901 Legislative Office Building, 11 a.m.

*Senate Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 11 a.m.

*Senate Libraries Committee Meeting*, 612 Legislative Office Building, 11:30 a.m.

*New York State Board of Regents Meeting*,  
89 Washington Ave – Seminar Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 11:55 a.m.

*Senate Cities 1 Committee Meeting*, 411 Legislative Office Building, 12 p.m.

*Senate Health Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 12 p.m.

*Senate Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting*,  
123 Capitol, 12:30 p.m.

*Senate Education Committee Meeting*, 510 Legislative Office Building, 12:30 p.m.

*Senate Labor Committee Meeting*, 308 Legislative Office Building, 12:45 p.m.

*New York State Senate Session*, Senate Chamber, Albany, 3 p.m.

*New York State Assembly Session*, Assembly Chamber, Albany

### ***Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>***

*Senate Codes Committee Meeting*, 124 Capitol, 9 a.m.

*New York State Senate Session*, Senate Chamber, Albany, 11 p.m.

*New York State Assembly Session*, Assembly Chamber, Albany

## ***New York City***

### ***Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>***

*Committee on Health*, Committee Room – City Hall, 10 a.m.

*Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations*,  
Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

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

*Sub Committee on Zoning And Franchises*,  
250 Broadway – Committee Room, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, 11 a.m.

*Committee on Oversight and Investigations*, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1 p.m.

*Committee on Economic Development*, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1 p.m.

### ***Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>***

*Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions*,  
250 Broadway – Committee Room, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, 11 a.m.

*Committee on Land Use*, 250 Broadway – Committee Room. 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1 p.m.

### ***Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>***

*Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections*, Committee Room – City Hall, 9:30 a.m.

*Committee on Finance*, Committee Room – City Hall, 10 a.m.

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

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