

ACROSS THE BOARD

MARCH 2026

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District Manager's Report

Great news! The following roadways will be resurfaced this spring by the NYC Dept. of Transportation:

Franklin Avenue from Atlantic Avenue to Eastern Parkway

Sidewalks around Grand Army Plaza and Plaza Street East



Municipal Services Update

The following is a summary of the year-to-date CompStat Crime report covering the week of 03/02/2026 through 03/08/2026.

	Year-to-Date		
	2026	2025	%Chg
Murder	0	1	-100
Rape	8	4	100.0
Robbery	19	22	-13.6
Felony Assault	58	69	-15.9
Burglary	22	28	-21.4
Grand Larceny	55	54	1.9
GL Auto	22	13	69.2

The overall change year-to-date is **-3.66**.



NYC GARBAGE BIN UPDATE

Buildings with 1 to 9 residential units will be required to use NYC Bins for their trash starting in June 2026, yet another step in the city's plan to remove the mountains of black bags from our sidewalks, reclaim public space and improve quality of life.

DSNY announced that all nine sizes and colors of official NYC Bins are now available at NYC Home Depot locations, for in-store pickup via homedepot.com/NYCBins, or for delivery via Instacart, DoorDash or Uber Eats.

The official bin is only required for trash, however, there are bins available for trash/paper, metal/glass/plastic, and for compost which are optional.

Some New Yorkers had previously ordered bins online but have not yet received delivery of their bins; all outstanding online delivery orders are ongoing and are targeted for completion by late March. Those customers will receive an email notification when the bins are scheduled for delivery.

Owners of one- and two-family homes who receive the STAR property tax benefit are eligible for an NYC Trash Bin reimbursement from the NYC Department of Finance.

If you purchase a bin from Home Depot or a delivery partner (DoorDash, Instacart, Uber Eats), you will need to apply for the reimbursement.

If you are eligible and have already purchased a bin online through the manufacturer (Otto), the NYC Department of Finance will automatically send you a check.

Learn more about the Trash Bin Reimbursement Program by visiting <https://www.nyc.gov/site/finance/property/free-trash-bins.page>.

Learn more about containerization at www.nyc.gov/usebins.

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### **KNOW BEFORE YOU OPEN THE DOOR: WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN A CITY INSPECTOR VISITS**

When something goes wrong at home, calling 311 is a step toward a solution — and residents should feel confident about what happens next, which is why Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is launching a new public service video and outreach effort to help tenants understand their rights and feel safe and secure when an inspector arrives. Every year, thousands of New Yorkers contact 311 with concerns about their homes and neighborhoods, from heat and hot water problems to pests and other housing issues. Many of these calls result in visits from inspectors, including those from HPD.

City inspectors are focused on ensuring safe, healthy living conditions and addressing the issues residents report. It can be alarming to receive an unexpected knock on the door by a stranger, even when you've filed a complaint with 311, especially during times of heightened immigration enforcement. Residents should feel comfortable asking questions and verifying who is at their door.

To help New Yorkers stay informed and confident, the City released a public service video (<https://bit.ly/47nOgzS>) outlining what official inspectors must do, what they will never do, and how tenants can protect themselves.

### *What Happens After You Call 311?*

When a resident calls 311 to report housing issues, in most cases, the complaint is routed to HPD who will assign an inspector to investigate. In many cases, inspectors will visit the home and attempt to access the building or apartment to verify the reported condition in person. Inspections are expected to document violations, ensure compliance with City laws, and help protect tenants' health and safety.

### *When an Inspector Shows Up*

If an inspector is assigned to your complaint, they will visit your building and apartment to verify the issue and assess conditions on site.

City field personnel will always:

- Wear clothing that clearly displays the name of a City agency (uniform, jacket, branded hat)
- Carry a valid City-issued photo ID or badge
- Identify themselves by name and the agency they represent

City field personnel will never ask about your immigration status; wear bulletproof vests; or request passports, immigration papers, or other personal documents unrelated to the reported condition.

Know your rights! If someone comes to your door claiming to be a City inspector, it's okay to pause, ask questions, and make sure everything feels right. Knowing your rights helps you stay safe and confident during an inspection.

### **Residents have the right to:**

- Ask to see identification: You can request that the inspector show a City-issued photo ID or badge before allowing them entry.
- Take time to review it: Examine the ID carefully: check the name, agency, and photo to make sure it matches the person at your door.

- Confirm the agency and purpose: Politely ask which City agency they represent and the reason for their visit.
- Decline entry if something feels wrong: You are never required to let someone in if you feel uncertain about their identity or purpose.

New Yorkers should feel comfortable asking questions and taking a moment before opening the door. Sharing this information with neighbors, especially older adults, new tenants, or anyone who may feel uncertain interacting with government agencies, helps everyone in the community stay safe and informed.



***GET A PROPERTY TAX BREAK!***

It's time for homeowners to renew their property tax exemptions for the 2026–27 tax year, including the Senior Citizen Homeowners' Exemption (SCHE), Disabled Homeowners' Exemption (DHE), and Clergy Exemption.

The **deadline to renew is March 16, 2026**. Homeowners who do not renew may lose their exemption and see an increase in property taxes.

Renew online or by paper application. Visit [www.nyc.gov/contactdof](http://www.nyc.gov/contactdof).



***UNITED AIRLINES NYC HALF MARATHON***

The 2026 United Airlines NYC Half is scheduled for Sunday, March 15, 2026, featuring a 13.1-mile course from Brooklyn, over the Manhattan Bridge, through Times Square, to a Central Park finish. Expect road closures around Prospect Park and surrounding areas and significant traffic delays. Use public transportation as much as possible.



***SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT***

Applications are now open for NYC's 2026 Summer Youth Employment Program. NYC's

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is the nation's largest youth employment program, connecting NYC youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with career exploration opportunities and paid work experiences each summer.

By participating in structured project and work-based opportunities, NYC youth are better prepared for careers of the future. **The deadline to apply is March 13, 2026.**

If you have questions or need assistance applying, the Brooklyn Neighborhood Improvement Association located at 465 Sterling Place (near Washington Avenue) is CB8's partnering organization. Please stop in or give them a call at 718-773-4116.



***FREE COMPUTER CLASSES FOR SENIORS***

Local Development Corporation will be offering 12 weeks of free computer classes for seniors beginning April 1, 2026.

All classes will be held on Wednesdays from 11AM to 12:30 PM at Crown Heights Apartments, 1055 St. Johns' Place. For more information or to sign up, call Carmen Martinez at 718-604-0020.



***THE 77<sup>TH</sup> PRECINCT NEEDS YOUR HELP!***

In response to an uptick in youth violence in 2025, the 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Affairs, spearheaded by Detectives Wallen and Marte, are partnering with the community on several youth-centric events. But to be successful, they need your help! Vendors are welcome to table at either of the events on May 9<sup>th</sup> at Lincoln Terrace Park or June 4<sup>th</sup> at Stroud Playground, but all services and resources must be free. Preferred are resources geared towards helping youth and families to accomplish the following:

- Restore and build a strong state of health, mental and physical
- Cope with stress and anxiety
- Manage anger issues

- Mitigate peer pressure and bullying
- Foster effective communication skills
- Prioritize making good choices

Volunteers are also needed to spearhead group activities for both events. The following instructors (and suggestions for missing activities if you know of someone that can provide them) are:

- Yoga Instructor
- Health Fitness Instructor
- Basketball (volunteer referees, players and coaches)
- Soccer participants (including players and coaches)
- Volleyball participants

To learn more, to volunteer, make suggestions, or otherwise help in planning or event organizing, contact either Detective Wallen at (917) 683-6757 or Detective Marte at (929) 291-8481.

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CANNABIS REINVESTMENT PROGRAM

Guided by the Cannabis Advisory Board, the Community Reinvestment Program seeks to address the harms of past drug policies by reinvesting adult-use cannabis tax revenue into communities that faced disproportion enforcement of prior drug laws.

It is anticipated that applications for Round 2 of the Community Reinvestment Program will open soon. Interested applicants are encouraged to sign up for OCM email alerts to be informed when the Request for Applications is published. All interested applicants should be aware that to apply for New York State grants you must be prequalified in New York’s Statewide Financial System (SFS)! Interested applicants are encouraged to start the prequalification process today or if you have previously prequalified, check that your prequalification status is still up to date.

The Community Reinvestment Program issues grants to communities disproportionately affected by prior federal and state drug policies in order to

redress a wide range of community needs—from housing to childcare to job skills training and many areas in between. The grants are not limited to activities related to cannabis.

Taxes from legal adult-use cannabis sales in New York State go into the Cannabis Revenue Fund. Per the Cannabis Law (§ 99-ii), 40% of Cannabis Tax Revenue goes back to the communities disproportionately affected by prior drug policies in the form of grants overseen by the Cannabis Advisory Board (CAB) via the Community Grants Reinvestment Fund.

Through these grants, it is the goal of OCM and the CAB to distribute impactful funding to areas of the state that have been historically under-resourced, underserved, and over-policed. The future programmatic focus of the Community Reinvestment Program can change according to the guidance provided by the Cannabis Advisory Board.

Who can apply? 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing youth services in New York State with a minimum operating expenditure of \$50,000 or more. Organizations do not have to be affiliated with any cannabis-related businesses or activities to apply.

Applications must propose youth-serving programs (targeting populations 0 to 24 years old) in the areas of mental health, harm reduction & substance use disorder, workforce development, and housing for communities disproportionately affected by prior federal and state drug policies.

For full details, instructions, and helpful links, visit <https://cannabis.ny.gov/reinvestment>.

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### ***BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY’S BUSINESS AND CAREER CENTER***

BPL’s Business & Career Center (B&CC) provides information and services that promote the economic well-being of Brooklyn residents. They provide Entrepreneurial Assistance; Personal

Financial Literacy; and Resume & Career Help services.

Business Counseling is offered for free also through Pace SBDC - Get help on access to financing, marketing and sales strategies, government procurement, and business planning.

NELP Legal Counseling - Meet with a team of pro bono attorneys to discuss legal issues related to their small businesses, such as intellectual property rights, contracts/agreements, business structure and incorporation, commercial leasing and more.

MWBE Certification Clinics and Office Hours - Provides access to valuable resources, including government contracting opportunities, financial assistance programs, and networking events for underrepresented entrepreneurs.

Multilingual Business Help - Offers free, one-on-one support for multilingual entrepreneurs of all origins, backgrounds and industries.

A wealth of information can be found by visiting: <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/business/small-business>.

Schedule One-on-one research assistance for business planning, market analysis, industry trends, and competitive intelligence by visiting [www.bklynlibrary.org/balrequest](http://www.bklynlibrary.org/balrequest).

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TEEN WRITING CONTEST

If you're a teen writer from New York City in grade 6-12, you're invited to submit your poetry and prose to be judged by a panel of Brooklyn Public Library's expert young adult librarians for creativity, style and voice. Submissions will be accepted through March 31, 2026.

Entries are accepted in two categories: Poetry (up to 500 words) and Prose (up to 2,500 words—short stories, reviews, news stories, rants, raves, everything else)

Winners in poetry and prose will receive the Ned Vizzini Teen Writing Prize with cash awards (\$500; \$250), have their pieces published in the Teen Writing Journal distributed by the Library, and be honored at a reception in June.

For more information or to submit your work, visit <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/teen-writing-contest>.

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### ***CITY VOICES: COMPANION CONNECTIONS***

City Voices, Inc. is a long-standing peer-run nonprofit serving New Yorkers living with mental health challenges. They run a free mutual-aid program called Companion Connections, which pairs adults in 1-to-1, platonic companionships to help reduce loneliness and isolation. Participants receive weekly supportive calls or texts, and when both people are NYC-based, they can eventually meet in a public space if they choose. In addition to the 1-1 matches, they host free monthly social events in Manhattan that bring people together in a warm, welcoming environment.

For more information, visit <https://cityvoicesonline.org/about/>.

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LOCAL LAW 152, GAS PIPE INSPECTIONS

New York City Local Law 152 of 2016 requires all buildings (except 1-2 family homes) to have their exposed gas piping systems inspected by a Licensed Master Plumber (LMP) at least once every four years. Inspections are aimed at identifying hazardous conditions like leaks or corrosion, and the certification must be submitted to the NYC Department of Buildings. **In calendar year 2026, all qualifying properties in District 8 must be inspected.**

The Dept. of Buildings has created a step by step guide for property owners required to have the inspection.

STEP 1: Determine if your building is required to comply with Local Law 152 of 2016.

LL152 of 2016 applies to all properties except one- and two-family homes and other buildings classified in occupancy group R-3. If your building has one of the following Department of Finance Building Classification, you do not need to comply with LL152: A0, A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, B1, B2, B3, B9, CM, M3 (with 2 or less permanent dwelling units), M4 (with 20 or fewer occupants in the building), N2, S0, S1, S2, or V.

If LL152 applies but your building does not contain gas piping, a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification, signed and sealed by a Registered Design Professional (a New York State licensed professional engineer or registered architect) or a Licensed Master Plumber, stating that such building contains no gas piping must be submitted to DOB. No further action is necessary.

STEP 2: If LL152 of 2016 applies to your building and it contains gas piping:

Hire a Licensed Master Plumber (LMP) to inspect the gas piping system in your building. LMPs are licensed by DOB to perform plumbing work in New York City. DOB encourages anyone hiring an LMP to check both their current license status and disciplinary and voluntary surrender records.

Before hiring an LMP, keep this in mind:

Use the License Search tool to make sure the LMP's license is active. The tool allows you to search a licensee by name, business name, or license number.

Review the disciplinary actions taken against a licensee by DOB or voluntary surrender records by using the Know Your Construction Professional tool.

If are unable to have your building inspected by the deadline of your reporting year, you can request a one-time 180-day extension of the due date using the online portal. You must have your building inspected before the extension period expires.

STEP 3: LMP must submit a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Report to the building owner within 30 days of inspection showing the results of the inspection.

If an inspection reveals any unsafe or hazardous condition(s), the LMP must immediately notify you, the utility providing gas service to your building, and DOB. You must take immediate action to correct the unsafe or hazardous condition(s) in compliance with the NYC Construction Codes, including obtaining any required work permits.

STEP 4: Submit Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification to DOB within 60 days of inspection using DOB's using online portal.

If the Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification submitted to DOB indicates that conditions requiring correction were identified during the gas piping system inspection, you must submit to DOB, within 120 days of the inspection, a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification signed and sealed by the Licensed Master Plumber who conducted the inspection, stating that the conditions have been corrected.

If the Gas Piping System Inspection Certification submitted to DOB indicated that additional time was needed to correct the condition(s) identified during the gas piping system inspection, you must submit to DOB, within 180 days of the inspection, a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification signed and sealed by the Licensed Master Plumber who conducted the inspection, stating that the conditions have been corrected.

Correction of conditions identified during a gas piping system inspection must be performed in compliance with the New York City Construction Codes, including obtaining any required work permits.

Failure to file a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification by the applicable due date may result in a civil penalty of \$5,000.

STEP 5: If LL152 of 2016 applies to your building and your building contains gas piping, but the

building is not currently supplied with gas and has no appliances connected to the gas piping:

You must submit to DOB, through the online portal, the following two documents:

1. a signed statement from the utility company containing:

- the last date gas was supplied to the building; and
- the date on which gas service was no longer provided to the building; and

2. a signed statement from the owner of the building containing the following:

- a certification that the building no longer receives gas service; and
- a certification that the building no longer contains appliances connected to gas piping.

Before resuming gas service to the building, the owner must hire a Licensed Master Plumber to obtain a DOB permit and conduct all gas-related inspections; submit a Gas Authorization Request in DOB NOW: Inspections; and submit the Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification through the online portal.

If you need to report an unsafe condition or have general questions about gas piping inspections, contact the Plumbing Enforcement Unit at (212) 393-2557. If you have general questions about gas piping inspections, please call the Gas Piping Compliance Unit at (212) 323-8001 or email LL152of16@buildings.nyc.gov.

FIRST ANNUAL NYS CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT CONFERENCE

The New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), in partnership with the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the New York State (NYS) Oversight Consortium, is proud to announce the first annual NYS Civilian Oversight Conference sponsored by Sivil. This event will be held on April 14th from 9am – 5pm at The Theater at City Tech, located at 285 Jay St, Brooklyn, New York 11201.

This conference brings together civilian oversight professionals, advocates, policymakers, and students to network and strengthen police accountability across New York State. The conference will include panelists with expertise in the State's unique challenges and opportunities and will facilitate dialogue and collaboration among New York State oversight agencies with the goal of developing effective strategies for holding law enforcement accountable, protecting civil rights, and building public trust in oversight systems.

This event is free of charge; however, registration is required. To register, visit <https://forms.office.com/g/Mq0qQzdre8>.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is officially recognized as Women's History Month in the United States, designated annually to honor the achievements, contributions, and history of women. It grew from a local 1978 California celebration to a national, month-long observance established by Congress in 1987. Have you celebrated the women in your life recently? Perhaps consider attending one of these celebrations:

Kings County District Attorney Eric Gonzalez

Join KCDA Eric Gonzalez on March 23, 2026 from 6 to 8PM at Central Library located at 10 Grand Army Plaza for “The Green: Women Weaving Justic With Sustainable Fashion.” Light refreshments will be served and all attendees are encouraged to wear upcycled or vintage clothes.

RSVP at <https://bklynlib.org/womens-history>.

Bridge Street Development Corporation

As we celebrate Women's History Month this month, Bridge Street Development Corporation is pleased to extend a warm invitation to join them for their upcoming event titled "She Means Business" on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. She Means Business will go from 6 to 9PM at La Mode BK located at 1401 Bedford Avenue.

In recognition of the remarkable achievements and contributions of women across Brooklyn, "She Means Business" aims to highlight the empowerment and resilience of women in various fields, from entrepreneurship to leadership and beyond. This event will serve as a platform to celebrate the successes of women while also discussing the challenges they have overcome and continue to face in today's world.

To RSVP, email Tiara Robertson at Trobertson@bsdcorp.org.

BROOKLYN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CONFERENCE

Join the Prospect Park Alliance on Saturday, March 28, 2026, for the 2026 Brooklyn Parks & Open Spaces Conference at the Picnic House in Prospect Park. RSVP at www.prospectpark.org/conference. Attendance is free, but space is limited.

This year's conference will bring together park advocates, community leaders, public officials, and practitioners from across the borough for a full day of conversation and connection focused on the future of Brooklyn's parks and open spaces.

The program features an inspiring lineup of leaders from across Brooklyn's parks, planning, and environmental justice landscape. Together, they'll explore:

- State of Brooklyn Parks – A look at system-wide challenges and opportunities
- Infrastructure + Capital Projects – Understanding investment priorities and implementation
- Fundraising + Resource Mobilization – Building sustainable support for parks
- Advocacy Strategies – Effective approaches to advancing park equity

For a full list of confirmed panelists, visit <https://bit.ly/4s9mIGX>.

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM YOUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

Councilmember Crystal Hudson

The member's office is partnering with Brooklyn Prom Project and Brooklyn Sports and Entertainment to bring Brooklyn's biggest prom wear giveaway to District 35 at Barclays Center on Sunday, March 15, 2026. Free prom wear—including dresses, suits, and accessories—will be available to graduating seniors. Registration is required at <https://bit.ly/BKLYNPROM>.

Parents can also volunteer to help with setup or the giveaway day. Registration is required. Register for setup at <https://bit.ly/BKLYNVolunteerDay1>. Register for giveaway at <https://bit.ly/BKLYNVolunteerDay2>.

Any questions can be sent to brooklynpromproject@gmail.com.

Councilmember Chi Osse

The following services are offered on-going at the members office located at 1360 Fulton Street, 5th Floor:

Affordable Housing Counseling: Every Tuesday, from 11 AM to 4PM, our office hosts an experienced affordable housing counselor to help constituents with assistance on applying for the NYC Affordable Housing Lottery. This is provided in partnership with CUFFH.

Homeownership Counseling: Every other Thursday, from 10 AM to 3PM, our office hosts an experienced homeownership counselor to guide constituents with homeownership, foreclosure, and financing. This is provided in partnership with Neighborhood Housing Services of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Immigration Law Counseling: Every other Wednesday, from 10 AM to 4PM, we have an experienced immigration lawyer to assist with citizenship applications, understanding your rights, and other immigration-related legal issues.

Civil Law Counseling: Every other Thursday, from 10AM to 4PM, we have an experienced lawyer available to provide legal assistance on a wide range of issues, with a specialization in landlord and tenant matters.

Veterans Benefits Assistance: On the 2nd Friday of every month, we host a veteran service officer who helps veterans and their families obtain health, dependent, education, home loan program, and other state and local benefits.

For more information or to register, call 718-919-0740.

Assemblyman Brian Cunningham

The member would like to share the following:

Tenant Thursdays in partnership with Churches United for Fair Housing: every Thursday from 10AM to 5PM (by appointment only), receive free housing assistance and referrals for immigration, finance, and legal services at the district office located at 249 Empire Blvd. Call 718-771-3105 to schedule an appointment.

The Mobile legal Help Center will be partnering with the Assemblyman to provide free civil legal services to New Yorkers in need via the NYLAG mobile van. Private meeting rooms and technology inside the vehicle enable it to function as a full-service office. The van will be located outside of Crown Heights Apartments located at 1055 St. John's Place from 10AM to 3 PM on the following dates:

Thursday, April 9th
Mondays, May 11th and June 8th

Appointments are recommended to ensure service. To schedule and appointment, visit <https://bit.ly/NYLAG26>.

Finally, the 2026 Women of Distinction Awards will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2026 from 6 to 8PM at Central Library, Dweck Cultural Center, 10 Grand Army Plaza.

Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman

Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman is accepting nominations for the 2026 Women Of Distinction Awards until March 16th. Nominees must live within the 56th AD and be submitted at www.nyasembly.gov/zinerman.

“Together, let’s recognize the extraordinary women who are making our communities stronger.”

Senator Zellnor Myrie

Senator Zellnor Myrie is pleased to announce the All Girls Basketball Clinic on Saturday, March 21, 2016 from 10:30AM to 1PM. The clinic will be held at Brooklyn Basketball Training Center located at 140 Flatbush Avenue, across from the Barclays Center (in the old Modells).

FREE TAX PREPARATION

As the April 15th Tax deadline quickly approaches, there are several ways residents can file their taxes for either free or extremely low cost.

Brooklyn Public Library

Brooklyn Public Library is here to help with all your tax filing needs. Book an appointment for free tax assistance. Individuals and households earning \$97,000 or less with dependents OR \$68,000 or less without dependents in 2025 can receive free tax help.

Central Library Free Tax Assistance:

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00AM - 6:00PM (with Single Stop)

Book an appointment online

Book by phone appointment: (800) 290-7189

Tuesdays, 10:30AM - 2:30PM (with AARP)

Thursdays, 10:00AM - 2:00 PM

Book an appointment online

Book by phone appointment: 888-227-7669

Other nearby branches with tax help are:

Bedford | 496 Franklin Ave.

Thursdays, 10:30AM - 2:30PM (with AARP)

Book an appointment online

Book by phone appointment: 888-227-7669

Bushwick | 340 Bushwick Ave.

Tuesdays, 1:00PM - 6:00PM

Book an appointment

online: <https://growbrooklyn.org/appointments/>

Book by phone appointment: (347) 682-5606

Crown Heights | 560 New York Ave.

Fridays, 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Saturdays, 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Book an appointment

online: <https://growbrooklyn.org/appointments/>

Book by phone appointment: (347) 682-5606

Flatbush | 22 Linden Blvd.

Fridays, 10:00AM-5:00PM

Saturdays, 10:00AM-4:00PM

Book an appointment online

Book by phone appointment: (800) 290-7189

Macon | 361 Lewis Avenue

Saturdays, 10:00AM – 3:00PM

Book an appointment

online: <https://go.oncehub.com/UrbanUpbound>

Book by phone appointment: (718) 784-0877 (Hotline available in English, Chinese and Spanish)

NYC Dept. of Consumers and Worker Protection

Check out NYC's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection Free Tax Help Map

(https://a866-dcwpwb.nyc.gov/ftps_map/#/?search=%7B%7D)

to find a Free Tax Assistance location near you.

File Your Taxes Online. GetYourRefund.org provides free online tax filing for households with an income of under \$69,000.

Councilmember Crystal Hudson

The Councilmember is pleased to announce that Free Tax Preparation Services are available in the

office every Tuesday from now thru tax day from 10AM to 4PM. Services are provided by the Urban Upbound Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) to those making \$97,000 or less. Call 718-260-9191 to schedule your tax appointment today.

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***BRAVE VIDEO CONTEST***

To raise awareness about bullying and intolerance, the UFT's BRAVE Campaign (Building Respect, Acceptance and Voice through Education) is holding its annual video contest. BRAVE encourages students to share their experiences with bullying and intolerance either from the "inside" (firsthand) or "outside" (witnessed) point of view.

The contest is open to all middle and high school students in New York City public schools. Students are invited to submit a three-to-five minute video that responds to one of the contest prompts. Winners' schools will receive cash prizes, and winning students will attend an awards ceremony at UFT headquarters in May.

Suggested topics:

What does it feel like to be the target of bullying, witness a bullying situation or engage in bullying behavior?

How do you and your classmates stand up for others in a positive way?

How can students and teachers create school communities that promote acceptance, tolerance and respect?

What do students want adults to know about bullying and intolerance?

Entries will be accepted until Monday, May 18, 2026. Cash prizes will be awarded to the schools earning first, second and third place! Prize distributions will take place at each school site at a later date. To enter, please email the video to [uftbravevideos@gmail.com](mailto:uftbravevideos@gmail.com) with the subject line "2026 BRAVE video contest." Alternatively, you may submit your video by mail on a USB flash drive to: UFT Brave Video Contest, 52 Broadway, 14th floor, New York, NY 10004.

## **55<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL**

The 55th Annual International African Arts Festival is coming to CB8! Friday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 9PM, stop by Lincoln Terrace Park for a Brooklyn cultural fave!

Experience the African marketplace of makers, designers, healers and dreamers. Find unique fashion, presents for everyone, and treats you can't find anywhere else at our handmade products store. Shop racks of clothing, accessories, and more that tell the story of the people who create them. Be creative and fun with your selections, and experience something new and amazing here!

Artisans, artists, vendors, and patrons from across the globe will participate in this rich cultural event. The vendor application is still open, so if you are a maker, artist, or otherwise interested in tabling, visit the IAAF vendor page at <https://www.iaafestival.org/vendor-registration>.

### **POWER UP BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION**

Turn your business idea into a reality with help from the Library and you may win \$20,000 in start up capital. Entrepreneurs throughout Brooklyn are eligible to participate in Brooklyn Public Library's PowerUP Business Plan Competition. All contestants have access to free resources and services to help them write a business plan. Everyone wins because the Prize is in the Process!

Participants attend online classes on creating business plans, marketing, financial projections, and doing business research with Library resources. They are also referred to business counselors in the community.

Over the past twenty-two years the competition has fostered the development of a host of new businesses. Join the competition, and you may be on the list next year!

If you are 18 years of age or older, live in Brooklyn and want to start a business in Brooklyn, you are

eligible. "PowerUP" is a competition to help applicants start a business. Additional details, including the competition rules and the application process will be supplied during the orientation session.

First Place - \$20,000

Second Place - \$10,000

Third Place - \$5,000

Five Merit Awards - \$1,000

Audience Choice Award - \$1,000

Applicants must attend a virtual or in-person orientation to apply. More information about PowerUP and Orientation registration is online at: <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/business/powerup>.

### **STUDENT LOAN DEBT RESOURCES**

The NYC Dept. of Consumers and Worker protection (DCWP) is pleased to share information about student loan resources available at [www.nyc.gov/studentloans](http://www.nyc.gov/studentloans). The program provides free, confidential, and personalized guidance online, in person, or by phone, to help New Yorkers lower their student loan payments.

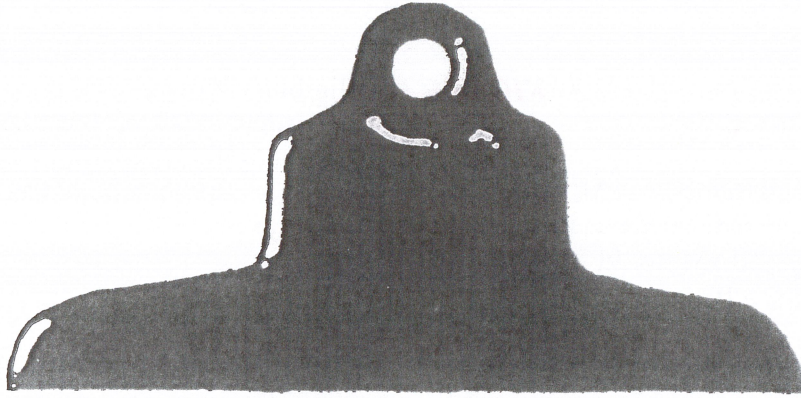
**Student Loans:** Federal student loan payments resumed in late 2024, and there is a sharp rise in borrowers falling into delinquency and default. Falling into default can cause severe credit damage and, eventually, can lead to a tax refund offsets and/or wage garnishment. In NYC, an estimated 274,000 residents may already have defaulted or seriously delinquent loans, underscoring the need for accessible and accurate guidance.

**Financial Empowerment Centers:** NYC Financial Empowerment Centers provide one-on-one financial counseling and coaching on savings, banking, credit and debt, including student loan debt. Services are available in-person and by phone.

NYC residents or City of New York employees can obtain resources and apply for assistance at:

For NYC residents: [www.nyc.gov/studentloans](http://www.nyc.gov/studentloans)

For City employees: [www.nyc.gov/studentloans](http://www.nyc.gov/studentloans)



Book an appointment at [www.nyc.gov/TalkMoney](http://www.nyc.gov/TalkMoney) or call 311 and use key phrase, "Financial Counseling"

**Borrowers with federal Parent PLUS loans must take action by March 31, 2026** to maintain access to affordable repayment options and Public Service Loan Forgiveness.



### ***BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES***

Brooklyn Neighborhood Services offers affordable home ownership, development program, and home improvement projects courses in partnership with NYS Homes and Community Renewal.

Income eligible homeowners of one- or two-family homes can qualify for up to \$50,000 each to make the necessary repairs in their home to avoid hazardous living conditions. Eligible repairs include plumbing and sewer related repairs; water main; gas emergencies; water leaks; roofs and windows; boiler replacement/conversions; handicap accessible installations; and much more.

Brooklyn Neighborhood Services is located at 20 Bancroft Place. For more information, you may call their office at 718-919-2100.



We wish the happiest of birthdays to Mr. Drew Gabriel, Mr. Tafari John-King, Ms. Xeerxeema Jordan, Mr. Bobby LaPointe, Mr. Meredith Staton, Ms. Lesley Steele, and Ms. Sharon Wedderburn, who will celebrate all celebrate a birthday in the month of March.

The next **78<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council** meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 7:30PM at the 78<sup>th</sup> Precinct located at 69 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The next **77<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council** meeting will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 7PM at a location to be determined.

Precinct Community Council meetings are an opportunity to come together, share concerns, hear important updates, and work collaboratively toward a safer, stronger, and more connected community. Your voice matters, and your presence makes a difference.



The next meeting of Community Board 8 will be held on Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 6PM at Concern Rochester located at 155 Rochester Avenue (corner of St. Marks Avenue), Brooklyn. All are invited to attend.



***ACROSS THE BOARD is a monthly publication:***

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**Michelle George, District Manager/Editor**  
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